



SINGAPORE CUSTOMS MEDIA RELEASE

SUB-WOOFERS AND BAMBOO POLES CONCEALED 123,440 PACKETS OF CONTRABAND CIGARETTES, TWO MEN ARRESTED

Cigarette smugglers had found new ways to hide their contrabands. Sub-woofer systems and bamboo poles are the latest concealment tactics employed by smuggling syndicates to hide contraband cigarettes. Once again, Singapore Customs foiled the syndicates' ruse and a total of 123,440 packets of contraband cigarettes worth \$1.12 million were seized in two separate operations on 4 and 9 October 2008. The duty and GST involved in these cigarettes amounted to more than \$945,200. Two Singaporean men (aged 29 and 30) were arrested.

Case 1: 4 October 2008

– Subwoofer Systems Concealing Contraband Cigarettes

2 On 4 October 2008, Singapore Customs officers conducted surveillance at a warehouse at Tagore Industrial Estate suspected to be involved in dealing with contraband cigarettes. Five pallets of boxes were moved into the said warehouse after being received by a Chinese man. After locking the storehouse, Singapore Customs officers trailed the suspect when he left. The man was subsequently detained by officers and was escorted back to the warehouse. A search in the warehouse revealed that the five pallets of boxes contained 60 units of subwoofers. Each subwoofer was hollowed out and stuffed with contraband cigarettes. In all, 89,980 packets of contraband cigarettes were seized. The 29-year-old man was arrested and charged in Court on 6 October 2008.

Case 2: 9 October 2008

– Bamboo Poles used as Cover Loads

3 Five days later on 9 October 2008, Singapore Customs officers raided a store at Woodlands Industrial Park for illegal cigarette activities. At first sight, the crates appeared

innocently packed with bamboo poles. However, on inspection, 33,460 packets of contraband cigarettes were found neatly packed under the 6,220 bamboo poles. The importer of the five crates was arrested and charged in Court on 10 October 2008.

Crushing Syndicated Cigarette Smuggling

4 Commenting on the two recent successful operations, Assistant-Director General of Customs (Investigation & Intelligence), Mr Lee Boon Chong (李文聰) said, “Singapore Customs will spare no effort to crush smuggling syndicates, and will continue to intensify operations. No matter how “ingenious” smugglers are, our enforcement and intelligence will ultimately prevail. We warn offenders not to even consider taking a chance with us.”

5 Singapore Customs warns that buying, selling, conveying, delivering, storing, keeping, having in possession or dealing with contraband cigarettes are serious offences under the Customs and GST Acts. Stiff penalties are imposed for such offences. On conviction, offenders can be jailed as well as fined. The vehicles used in the commission of such offence are also liable to be forfeited. The public are strongly advised not to buy duty-unpaid cigarettes. For possessing a packet of duty-unpaid cigarettes, an offender may face a minimum fine of \$500 or prosecution in court.

6 Members of the public with information on smuggling activities or evasion of Customs duty or GST should contact the Singapore Customs Hotline at 1800-2330000 or email to customs_intelligence@customs.gov.sg.

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(Left) The subwoofer looks just like any audio equipment. (Right) In fact, it has been hollowed-out to hide contraband cigarettes



60 subwoofer sets were seized, together with 89,980 packets of contraband cigarettes



Wooden crates containing bamboos



Under the bamboos were contraband cigarettes!



6,220 pieces of bamboo poles were used as a cover load to conceal 33,460 packets of contraband cigarettes