

SINGAPORE CUSTOMS PRESS STATEMENT

SINGAPORE CUSTOMS ARRESTED TWO MEN FOR IMPORTATION OF CONTRABAND CIGARETTES

On 18 Aug 2003, acting on intelligence gathered, Singapore Customs officers arrested two male Indian Malaysians (aged 33 and 22) and seized 1,800 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes from a Malaysian registered lorry. The customs duty and GST of the cigarettes are \$91,800.00 and \$5,083.20 respectively.

On 18 Aug 2003 morning, officers kept surveillance outside Woodlands Checkpoint for the suspect Malaysian lorry. At about 7.30 am, officers spotted the suspect lorry coming out of Woodlands Checkpoint, and trailed it to Woodlands Loop. The lorry was seen to be parked at around the vicinity of Woodlands Loop and officers continued to keep surveillance.

At about 9.00 a.m, the lorry driver and attendant were seen behaving suspiciously. At this juncture, officers decided to conduct a check on the cargo of the lorry. After verifying with the Customs permits, the cargo was found to contain some vertical blinds and its accessories.

Upon further searching, officers found 36 boxes x 50 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes hidden below the declared cargo. The driver and the attendant of the lorry were arrested and all the exhibits were seized.

Preliminary investigations revealed that both men were working for a cigarette smuggling syndicate. Their role was to smuggle the cigarettes into Singapore. The smuggled cigarettes would be subsequently delivered to the local buyers. The men claimed that they were paid RM400.00 each for every trip made.

The two men will be charged in court on 20 August 2003 for the offence committed. Upon conviction by the Court, the offender may be fined up to 20 times the tax evaded.

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18 August 2003