



Singapore Customs Media Release

TAXI DRIVER SENTENCED TO 12 MONTHS' JAIL FOR DELIVERING 1,500 PACKETS OF ILLEGAL CIGARETTES

On 18 June 2009, a 45 year-old Singaporean taxi driver, Goh Zhengan Colin (伍證安) pleaded guilty to two charges of delivering 1,500 packets of illegal cigarettes using his taxi. He was convicted and sentenced by the court to a total of 12 months' jail for committing offences under the Customs and GST Acts. The cigarettes were worth more than \$13,600 and the duty and GST evaded amounted to more than \$11,510.

2 On 2 June 2009, Singapore Customs officers kept watch in the vicinity of Dunman Road for a taxi suspected to convey illegal cigarettes. Upon sighting the taxi, the officers began to trail the vehicle all the way to Joo Chiat Road outside Katong Mall. At this juncture, Singapore Customs officers moved in, identified themselves and searched Goh's vehicle in his presence. No other persons were found in the cab with Goh. Officers found 1,500 packets of illegal cigarettes in the boot.

3 Investigations revealed that he was using his taxi to deliver illegal cigarettes to some back lanes at the Geylang area. Goh had been driving a taxi since January 2009. This was his fifth time performing the delivery of illegal cigarettes. He was paid \$80 for every successful delivery.

4 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. 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, buyers face a minimum fine of \$500 or prosecution in court.

ISSUED BY: SINGAPORE CUSTOMS (新加坡关税局) (KASTAM SINGAPURA)

DATE: 23 JUNE 2009

Please credit SINGAPORE CUSTOMS for below case photographs. Thank you.



Singapore Customs officers stopped and searched taxi driver Goh Zhengan's vehicle along Joo Chiat Road outside Katong Mall ...



Suspicious-looking cardboard boxes were found inside the car boot.

Upon slitting open the boxes, Customs officers confirmed their suspicion that Goh was using his taxi to deliver illegal cigarettes.



Voila!

Officers counted 1,500 packets x 20 sticks of illegal Marlboro cigarettes altogether.