



Singapore Customs Media Release

MAN CONVICTED FOR FAILURE TO DECLARE GOLD COINS

A Swiss National, Theveraja Thambirajah, 46 years old was fined \$3,000 or to serve three weeks' imprisonment by the Subordinate Court yesterday after he pleaded guilty to having failed to declare taxable goods comprising 58 pieces of gold coins valued at nearly \$21,000. The Goods and Services Tax (GST) involved amounted to about \$1,460.

2 On 2 March 2010, at about 9.30p.m, Theveraja Thambirajah was arrested at the Arrival Hall of Changi Airport Terminal 1, Singapore, for failing to declare 58 pieces of gold coins. Theveraja, who had arrived from Switzerland, replied negatively when asked by Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) officers at the baggage clearance duty if he had anything to declare. However, upon screening and physical checking of his luggage, officers found 58 pieces of gold coins in a purse within the luggage. Theveraja admitted ownership of the 58 gold coins and was detained by ICA officers. Singapore Customs took over the case from ICA for further investigations.

3 Investigations revealed that Theveraja had no intention to declare and pay the GST on the 58 pieces of gold coins which he had brought from Switzerland. He pleaded guilty for failing to declare taxable goods and was sentenced to a fine of \$3,000 or to serve three weeks' imprisonment for his offence.

4 In general, all goods imported into Singapore, regardless of whether they are dutiable or non-dutiable are subject to 7% GST under the GST Act. Singapore Customs wish to emphasise that it is the responsibility of travellers to declare goods beyond the GST relief amount at the Red Channel as required under Singapore's customs regulations. Failure to make a declaration of goods imported for the payment of GST an offence under both the Customs and GST Acts. Any person who is found guilty for failing to make a declaration can be fined up to \$10,000 or jailed up to 12 months, or both.

5 It is the responsibility of travellers to familiarise themselves with the customs regulations of the destinations which they are arriving at. For more information on Singapore's customs regulations and GST reliefs, please visit the Singapore Customs website at www.customs.gov.sg.

**ISSUED BY: SINGAPORE CUSTOMS
KASTAM SINGAPURA**

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A total of 58 coins worth nearly \$21,000 were seized by Singapore Customs officers.