



SINGAPORE CUSTOMS 新加坡关税局 **KASTAM SINGAPURA** சிங்கப்பூர் கங்கத்துறை

MEDIA RELEASE

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More offenders caught for storing contraband cigarettes in their HDB flats and selling the cigarettes in the neighbourhood

An increasing number of offenders have been caught for storing contraband cigarettes in their HDB flats and selling these duty-unpaid cigarettes to residents in the neighbourhood.

In the first nine months of this year, 37 such offenders were arrested.

Singapore Customs has since stepped up its enforcement efforts in the HDB heartlands to clamp down on such illegal activities.

In two recent operations on 23 September 2014, Singapore Customs enforcement officers kept a close watch on two HDB units at Corporation Drive and Ang Mo Kio Avenue 4.

A team of officers raided the unit at Corporation Drive, recovered 660 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes and arrested the flat-owner Sujono Bin Kassan, 51. Investigations revealed that the Singaporean had been selling the duty-unpaid cigarettes to residents in his neighbourhood. The amount of duty and Goods and Services Tax (GST) evaded amounted to almost \$6,955. Sujono was sentenced by the State Courts on 23 October 2014 to three months' imprisonment and fines totalling to \$3000 or in default 15 days' imprisonment.

Earlier the same day, another team of Singapore Customs enforcement officers raided the unit in Ang Mo Kio Avenue 4. A total of 105 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes were recovered from the unit. Singaporean Teo Siew Choo, 51, was arrested for her involvement in peddling the cigarettes. The amount of duty and GST evaded amounted to almost \$895. Teo was sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment by the State Courts on 24 September 2014.

"Singapore Customs will not let up on our enforcement efforts in HDB estates," said Mr Lim Guan Cheong, Head of Suppression and Community Engagement, Singapore Customs (新加坡关税局反走私与社区参与处处长林元璋).

“We urge members of the public to contact Singapore Customs if they come across illegal cigarette activities in their housing estate. By doing so, they can help to keep their neighbourhood free of such illegal activities.”

Under the Customs Act and the GST Act, offenders caught buying, selling, conveying, delivering, storing, keeping, possessing or dealing with duty unpaid goods are liable to a fine of up to 40 times the amount of duty evaded, or imprisonment for up to six years, or both.

The minimum court fines for first-time and repeat offenders of tobacco-related offences are \$2,000 and \$4,000 respectively. Repeat offenders who are caught with more than two kilogrammes of tobacco products will also face mandatory imprisonment.

Members of the public with information on smuggling activities or evasion of customs duty or GST can contact the Singapore Customs hotline on 1800-2330000 or email customs_intelligence@customs.gov.sg

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ANNEX



Some of the duty-unpaid cigarettes found in the HDB unit in Ang Mo Kio Avenue 4.



Some of the 660 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes recovered from the HDB unit at Corporation Drive.

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