



## **IMMIGRATION & CHECKPOINTS AUTHORITY AND SINGAPORE CUSTOMS**

### **JOINT NEWS RELEASE**

24 February 2017

### **ICA and Singapore Customs seized 14,492 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes**

On 22 February 2017, at about 6.25am, an Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) officer at the Tanjong Pagar Scanning Station directed a Singapore-registered truck for inspection. The officer had noticed anomalies in the scanned images of the 40-footer container that was declared to contain 16 pallets of gypsum boards.

When the ICA officers removed the top layers of gypsum board, they found duty-unpaid cigarettes concealed within specially-hollowed areas of the boards. Singapore Customs was alerted and its officers followed up with an operation and arrested six Malaysian men, aged between 19 and 28, in a warehouse in Tuas South Avenue 10.

A total of 14,492 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes were seized. The total duty and Goods and Services Tax (GST) evaded amounted to about \$1.1 million and \$83,340 respectively. Investigations are ongoing.

Buying, selling, conveying, delivering, storing, keeping, possessing or dealing with duty-unpaid goods are serious offences under the Customs Act and the GST Act. Offenders can be fined up to 40 times the amount of duty and GST

evaded and/or jailed for up to six years. Vehicles used in the commission of such offences are also liable to be forfeited.

Our borders are our first line of defence in safeguarding Singapore's security. The security checks are critical to our nation's security. The ICA will continue to conduct security checks on passengers and vehicles at the checkpoints to prevent attempts to smuggle undesirable persons, drugs, weapons, explosives and other contraband. The same methods of concealment used by contraband smugglers may be used by terrorists to smuggle arms and explosives to carry out attacks in Singapore.

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## ANNEX



Consignment of gypsum boards (Photo: ICA).



Duty-unpaid cigarettes concealed within hollowed-out areas of the gypsum boards (Photos: Singapore Customs).



Six Malaysian men were arrested by Singapore Customs officers in a warehouse in Tuas South Avenue 10 on 22 February 2017 (Photo: Singapore Customs).



A total of 14,492 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes were seized (Photos: Singapore Customs).

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