



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

MEDIA RELEASE

19 September 2017

Eleven drivers who took up “lucrative” online job offers end up in jail

Have you come across online advertisements for part-time drivers, which offer flexible working hours and high salary?

Drivers who took up such “lucrative” job offers, either through websites or social media platforms, to drive cars carrying duty-unpaid cigarettes across the border will find themselves on the wrong side of the law.

From January to mid-September 2017, eleven drivers were jailed for their involvement in such duty-unpaid cigarette activities. They were sentenced to between four and eight months’ imprisonment. Court proceedings are ongoing for another driver caught in July 2017 for being involved in conveying duty-unpaid cigarettes across the border.

In a recent case, a Singaporean, Manap Bin Umas, 61, was sentenced to six months’ imprisonment by the State Courts on 13 September 2017 for smuggling duty-unpaid cigarettes from Malaysia into Singapore.

Investigations revealed that Manap saw an advertisement on Carousell which offered a high salary looking for drivers. He contacted the owner of the advertisement and was told that the job involved smuggling duty-unpaid cigarettes. He was promised a payment of \$500 for every successful trip he made. Manap accepted the job and was subsequently asked to drive a modified car concealed with duty-unpaid cigarettes from Malaysia to Singapore.

Manap was arrested at the Woodlands Checkpoint on 12 September 2017. A total of 226 cartons and 760 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes were found concealed in various modified compartments of the car Manap was driving. The duty and Goods and Services Tax (GST) evaded amounted to about \$23,440 and \$1,740 respectively.

In another case, two Malaysian women – Chai Fei Yun, 31; and Teng Siaw Fean, 20 – were sentenced on 23 August 2017 by the State Courts to six months’ and 22 weeks’ imprisonment respectively for smuggling duty-unpaid cigarettes into Singapore.

Investigations revealed that Chai took up a job offer on Facebook to smuggle duty-unpaid cigarettes from Malaysia to Singapore, and got Teng, who was in debt, to assist

her with the smuggling job. Both women were promised a total payment of \$420 for every successful delivery. With Teng as her passenger, Chai attempted to drive the car concealed with duty-unpaid cigarettes through the Woodlands Checkpoint on 18 August 2017 but they were stopped and arrested.

A total of 256 cartons and 701 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes, with duty and GST evaded amounting to about \$25,310 and \$1,880 respectively, were seized.

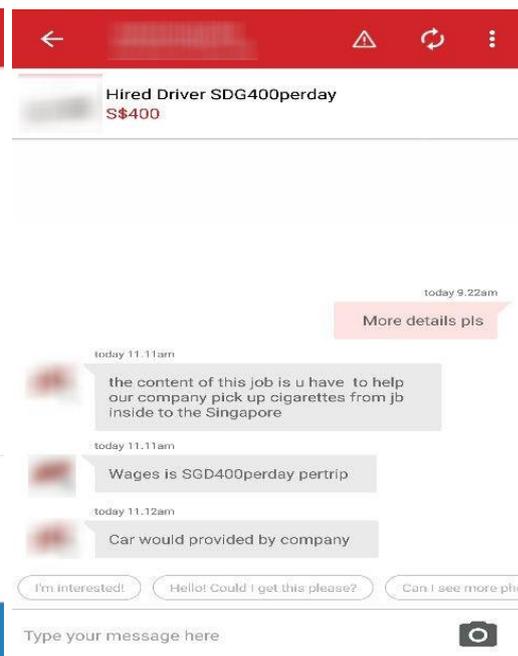
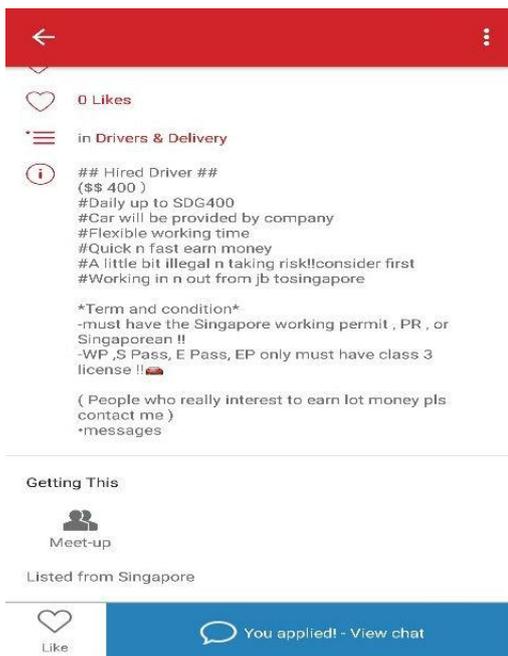
“We have noticed more people falling prey to online advertisements seeking for drivers to convey duty-unpaid cigarettes across the border. Such job offers may appear attractive but they often make false promises for payment and you will end up paying a high price when you are caught,” said Mr Yeo Sew Meng, Assistant Director-General (Intelligence and Investigation), Singapore Customs [新加坡关税局助理局长(情报与调查)杨秀明].

Buying, selling, conveying, delivering, storing, keeping, having in possession or dealing with duty-unpaid goods are serious offences under the Customs Act and the Goods and Services Tax Act. Offenders will be severely dealt with. They can be fined up to 40 times the amount of duty and GST evaded and/or jailed for up to six years.

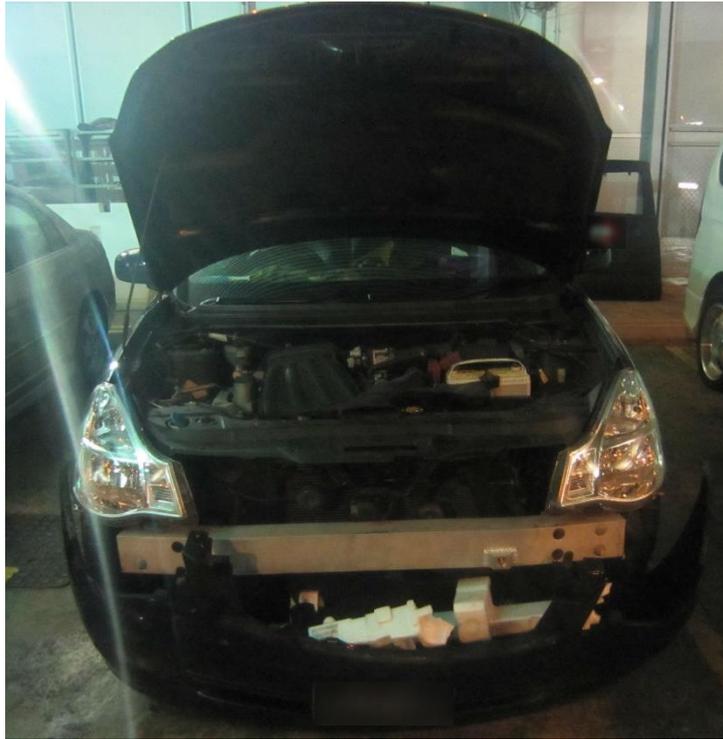
Repeat offenders who are caught with more than two kilogrammes of tobacco products will face mandatory imprisonment. Vehicles used in the commission of such offences are also liable to be forfeited.

###

ANNEX



Examples of advertisements posted on Facebook (top) and Carousell looking for drivers to smuggle duty-unpaid cigarettes from Malaysia to Singapore.



Manap attempted to smuggle 226 cartons and 760 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes into Singapore. He obtained the smuggling job from an advertisement on Carousell.





Chai and Teng attempted to smuggle 256 cartons and 701 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes into Singapore. Chai took up the smuggling job offer and got Teng, who was in debt, to assist her with the smuggling job.

###