



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

MEDIA RELEASE

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Singapore Customs seizes over 1,000 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes and arrests four men in two related operations

Singapore Customs seized a total of 1,024 cartons and 710 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes from two related operations conducted on 4 and 5 December 2017.

A male Chinese national, Xu Songxin, 32, and three Singaporean men were arrested in the operations for their involvement in duty-unpaid cigarette activities.

On 4 December 2017, Singapore Customs officers conducted an operation at a condominium in Holland Road. They saw Xu leaving a unit in the condominium and walking towards the staircase landing. The officers moved in to conduct a check on Xu and subsequently they searched his room in the unit, where they found 260 cartons and 421 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes. Xu was arrested and the duty-unpaid cigarettes were seized.

Investigations revealed that Xu had stored the duty-unpaid cigarettes in the room while waiting for further instructions on delivery.

Related investigation led Singapore Customs officers to mount another operation on 5 December 2017. They trailed a car driven by a man to a car park in Jurong West Street 41 and saw the driver parking the car next to a van. Two other men approached the vehicles to transfer a box from the van to the car and the officers moved in to conduct a check. A total of 764 cartons and 289 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes and the two vehicles were seized in this operation. Three Singaporean men were arrested for their suspected involvement in duty-unpaid cigarette activities.

The total duty and Goods and Services Tax (GST) involved in these two cases amounted to about \$96,140 and \$7,060 respectively.

Xu was sentenced by the State Courts on 6 December 2017 to six months' imprisonment for storing duty-unpaid cigarettes. Investigations are ongoing for the three Singaporean men.

Buying, selling, conveying, delivering, storing, keeping, having in possession or dealing with duty-unpaid goods are serious offences under the Customs Act and the GST 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.

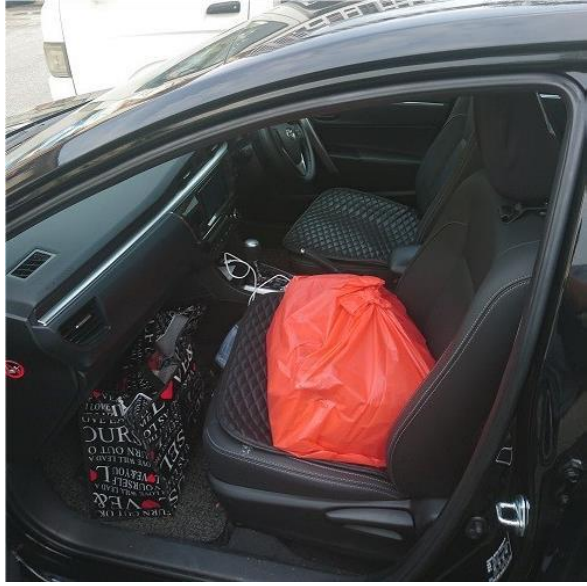
Repeat offenders who are caught with more than two kilogrammes of tobacco products will also face mandatory imprisonment. Vehicles used in the commission of such offences are also liable to be forfeited.

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ANNEX



A total of 260 cartons and 421 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes were seized from Xu's room.



A total of 764 cartons and 289 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes, a van and a car were seized in the operation on 5 December 2017.

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