



SINGAPORE CUSTOMS 新加坡关税局 KASTAM SINGAPURA சிங்கப்பூர் கங்கத்துறை

MEDIA RELEASE

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Logistics company director sentenced to 40 months' imprisonment and \$8.7 million fine for dealing with duty-unpaid cigarettes

A logistics company director, Iskandar Bin Abu Bakar, 44, was sentenced by the State Courts on 15 January 2018 to 40 months' imprisonment and a fine of \$8.7 million, or in default 20 months' imprisonment, for dealing with and storing of duty-unpaid cigarettes.

He pleaded guilty to two charges. Another two charges were taken into consideration in the sentencing.

Iskandar was previously sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment on 23 June 2008 for dealing with 500 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes. As a repeat offender, he is liable to an enhanced punishment under the Customs Act, which includes a mandatory jail term of up to six years, as well as a heavier fine of no less than 30 times the duty or Goods and Services Tax (GST) evaded.

Iskandar was arrested on 6 July 2017 when Singapore Customs officers conducted an operation at the Changi Airfreight Centre (CAC). The officers inspected a consignment of two wooden crates, declared as "machinery parts and accessories", that were supposed to be sent to Iskandar's logistics company. The officers uncovered a total of 3,050 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes in the two wooden crates.

Investigations revealed that Iskandar had ordered the cigarettes from Jakarta, Indonesia, and had engaged another Singaporean, Hashbullah Taufiq Bin Mohd Amin, 44, to retrieve and repack the duty-unpaid cigarettes from the wooden crates. Iskandar had

intended to smuggle the duty-unpaid cigarettes in his car out from the CAC in multiple trips. However, their plans were foiled by Singapore Customs.

Singapore Customs officers conducted a follow-up search of Iskandar's car later that day and found local and foreign currencies of over S\$120,000, and an additional one carton and 25 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes.

All the duty-unpaid cigarettes were seized and the total duty and GST evaded amounted to about \$287,330 and \$21,000 respectively. The seized cash was handed over to the Commercial Affairs Department (CAD) on 4 October 2017 for further investigation.

Hashbullah had been dealt with separately and was sentenced to 30 months' imprisonment on 31 July 2017 for dealing with duty-unpaid cigarettes.

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 3,050 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes were seized from two wooden crates in a consignment declared as “machinery parts and accessories”.



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