



MEDIA RELEASE

Immediate

6 November 2023

OVER \$600,000 OF DUTY AND GST EVADED AS 5,800 CARTONS OF DUTY-UNPAID CIGARETTES SEIZED IN KAMPONG AMPAT AND GEYLANG

- **Three men arrested and one woman assisting investigations**
- **The three caught in Geylang were also referred to CNB as they were suspected of possessing controlled drugs**

Singapore, 6 November 2023 – On 31 October 2023, Singapore Customs conducted two operations in Kampong Ampat and Lorong 17 Geylang respectively. Three male Singaporeans aged 23, 35 and 59 were arrested and 5,800 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes were seized. The total duty and Goods and Services Tax (GST) evaded amounted to about \$646,207.

2 At a carpark located in Kampong Ampat, Customs officers saw a male driver alighting from a van. They moved in and uncovered 2,400 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes in the van. The 23-year-old man was arrested, and the duty-unpaid cigarettes were seized. Investigations are ongoing.

3 At Lorong 17 Geylang, a driver and two passengers were seen alighting from a van. Following checks, Customs officers uncovered 3,000 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes in the vehicle. A follow-up search at the driver's residence led to another 400 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes and were seized. The 59-year-old male driver and 35-year-old male passenger were arrested. Another passenger, a 35-year-old woman, was requested to assist with investigations. Separately, the trio were found in possession of sachets containing substances suspected to be controlled drugs and

drug paraphernalia. This matter was referred to the Central Narcotics Bureau for further investigation.

4 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.

5 Members of public with information on smuggling activities or evasion of duty or GST can email customs_intelligence@customs.gov.sg to report these illegal activities.

Annex A: Photos of the operations

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About Singapore Customs

Singapore Customs, a lead agency under the Ministry of Finance, protects revenue and facilitates trade. We make trade easy, fair and secure. We ensure compliance with customs regulations and collect taxes and duties on dutiable and taxable goods. We regulate the export of strategic goods and implement Singapore's commitments to some international trade regulations such as the United Nations Security Council Sanctions.

We work closely with other government agencies, industry partners, and international organisations in our mission and operations. With the use of data analytics, digitalisation of processes and various technologies, we continuously improve the efficiency and effectiveness of customs processes.

By proactively balancing the intricate requirements of trade facilitation, security and regulatory compliance, Singapore Customs strengthens Singapore's position as a global trade hub trusted by businesses operating in Singapore and foreign trading partners.

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ANNEX A



The duty-unpaid cigarettes found in the van at Kampong Ampat.



The duty-unpaid cigarettes found in the van at Lorong 17 Geylang.



The duty-unpaid cigarettes found in the residence of one of the men arrested at Lorong 17 Geylang.