



**SINGAPORE
CUSTOMS**

Land Transport Authority

MEDIA RELEASE

Immediate

20 April 2026

TWO SINGAPOREAN MEN SENTENCED TO OVER \$2.6 MILLION FINE FOR EVADING DUTY AND GST ON IMPORTED MOTOR VEHICLES

Singapore, 20 April 2026 – Two Singaporean men were sentenced by the State Courts to a total fine of more than \$2.6 million for under-declaring the values of motor vehicles, which resulted in the fraudulent evasion of excise duties, Goods and Services Tax (GST) and the underpayment of the Additional Registration Fee (ARF) during registration of the vehicles.

2 Phang Boon Wee, Desmond (“Phang”) (彭文威), 51, pleaded guilty to two amalgamated charges of fraudulent evasion of duty under the Customs Act and was sentenced on 20 April 2026 to a fine of \$1,362,000 for suppressing the declared values of 142 vehicles imported by Metalox Autos Pte Ltd (“Metalox”) between January 2021 and January 2022 which resulted in duty evasion amounting to about \$185,477. Another two amalgamated charges of fraudulent evasion of GST amounting to about \$77,901 involving the same vehicles, and two charges of fraudulent evasion of duty and GST amounting to about \$3,476 for the import of one vehicle in December 2020, were taken into consideration during sentencing. Phang did not pay the fine and will serve 27 months’ imprisonment in default.

3 Loke Chern Meng (Lu Zhenming) (“Loke”) (陆振明), 45, was sentenced on 6 March 2023, to a fine of \$1,298,500 for charges similar to Phang’s. Loke abetted the

fraudulent evasion of duty and GST by allowing Phang to manage the company. Loke did not pay the fine and served 26 months' imprisonment in default.

4 Phang and Loke were also each sentenced to five weeks' imprisonment for under-declaring the values of 139 vehicles at the point of registration with the Land Transport Authority ("LTA"), which resulted in the underpayment of the ARF. Both men pleaded guilty to two amalgamated charges of giving incorrect information under section 11(9) of the Road Traffic Act in relation to the values of 130 motor vehicles. Two similar amalgamated charges for another nine motor vehicles were taken into consideration during sentencing. These incorrect declarations resulted in a total ARF shortfall of \$1,348,620, and the Court ordered both offenders to pay the same to LTA.

Investigations Uncovered an Elaborate Scheme

5 Singapore Customs launched an investigation into Metalox after suspecting that the Declaration of Facts (DOF) submissions for duty and GST assessments had been falsified.

6 Phang wanted to acquire Metalox in 2020 to import vehicles at suppressed values to pay less duty and GST. Attempting to avoid legal liability, Phang persuaded Loke to become the registered director and sole shareholder of Metalox, offering him \$200 per vehicle imported by Metalox. Loke agreed and allowed Phang full control over the company's operations, including access to Metalox's CorpPass account and cheque books pre-signed by Loke.

7 Phang sourced for local buyers and placed the orders with his overseas suppliers. He obtained false invoices containing lower than actual prices of the motor vehicle from the suppliers and submitted them to Singapore Customs as supporting documents in the DOFs. Phang split the payments to his overseas suppliers into two: one based on the false invoices and the other on the undeclared amount.

8 In total, the under-declaration of 143 vehicles between December 2020 and January 2022 resulted in unpaid duty and GST of about \$266,854.

9 Under the Customs Act, any person involved in the fraudulent evasion of any duty or GST on imported goods shall be liable on conviction to a fine of up to 20 times the amount of duty and GST evaded and/or imprisonment for up to two years.

10 Under the Road Traffic Act, any person who gives incorrect information in relation to any matter affecting the amount of ARF chargeable shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or to an imprisonment term not exceeding six months, with the maximum penalty doubled for amalgamated charges under s124(8) of the Criminal Procedure Code. The court shall also order the payment of any under-charged ARF to LTA.

11 Members of public with information on smuggling activities or evasion of duty or GST can provide information to Customs at <https://go.gov.sg/reportcustomsoffence>.

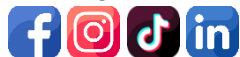
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About Singapore Customs

Singapore Customs protects revenue and facilitates trade for Singapore's economic growth while continuously striving to be a world-leading customs authority. As a partner of the Ministry of Finance, we ensure compliance with customs and tax regulations, safeguard the nation's financial interests, and combat illicit trade activities. We also enable seamless trade by simplifying customs processes, building global trade connectivity, and maintaining Singapore's position as a trusted global trading hub. Guided by our values of integrity, commitment, courage, responsiveness and teamwork, we strive for excellence with a professional and innovative team. Together, we ensure revenue and enable trade, fostering a thriving Singapore economy.

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About the Land Transport Authority, Singapore

The Land Transport Authority (LTA) spearheads land transport developments in Singapore. We plan, design, build and maintain Singapore's land transport infrastructure and systems. We aspire to strengthen Singapore's land transport connectivity and integrate a greener and more inclusive public transport system complemented by walk and cycle options. We harness technology to strengthen our rail and bus infrastructure and develop exciting options for future land transport.

The land transport network has transformed significantly since the inception of LTA in 1995, with more than 160km of expressways spanning the island, an MRT network of more than 200 km, over 600 km of cycling paths and park connectors, and increasingly varied commuting options.