



**SINGAPORE
CUSTOMS**

MEDIA RELEASE

Immediate

23 February 2026

ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS UNCOVER OVER \$1.5 MILLION IN DUTY AND GST EVASION FROM DUTY-UNPAID CIGARETTES

Singapore, 23 February 2026 – In two enforcement operations on 7 February and 11 February 2026, Singapore Customs (“Customs”) seized 14,550 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes (DUC) and arrested a 40-year-old male Chinese national. The total duty and Goods and Services Tax (GST) evaded amounted to about \$1,578,512.

2 Acting on intelligence and ground surveillance, Customs officers observed the man exiting an industrial building in the vicinity of Buroh Street on 7 February 2026. Upon questioning, he led officers to a unit within the industrial building, where 7,306 cartons of DUC were discovered concealed inside three air cooler units. The man was arrested and all the DUC were seized.

3 Follow-up investigations led to a second operation on 11 February 2026 at another industrial building at Tuas Bay Close. There, officers uncovered an additional 7,244 cartons of DUC, similarly hidden within three air cooler units.

4 Our investigations revealed that an unknown person had allegedly engaged the arrested man to retrieve the DUC from the air coolers and pack them for local distribution. Court proceedings against the man are ongoing.

5 “These operations reflect our firm resolve to detect and deter tax evasion. We will continue to act decisively against those who flout the law. Public vigilance is equally important, and we urge members of the public to report suspicious activities,” said a Singapore Customs spokesperson.

6 Under the Customs Act and the GST Act, buying, selling, conveying, delivering, storing, keeping, possessing or dealing in duty-unpaid goods are serious offences. Offenders can be fined up to 40 times the amount of duty and GST evaded and/or jailed for up to six years.

7 Singapore Customs remains committed to enforcing strict compliance with customs regulations and protecting revenue. Members of public with information on smuggling activities or duty or GST evasion can report it to Customs at <https://go.gov.sg/reportcustomsoffence>.

Annex A: Photographs of the operations

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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.

To find out more, visit our website at www.customs.gov.sg

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Annex A



Duty-unpaid cigarettes found at the industrial unit at Buroh Street.





Duty-unpaid cigarettes found at the industrial unit at Tuas Bay Close.