MEDIA RELEASE

Immediate

24 Nov 2026

EIGHT MEN ARRESTED FOR SUSPECTED INVOLVEMENT IN SMUGGLING DUTY-UNPAID CIGARETTES THROUGH PARCEL CONSIGNMENTS

Singapore, 24 Nov 2026 – Eight male Chinese nationals, aged between 29 and 44, were arrested following enforcement operations conducted by Singapore Customs ("Customs") and the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority ("ICA") between 6 and 11 November 2026. More than 113 cartons of assorted brands of duty-unpaid cigarettes were seized, with the total duty and Goods and Services Tax (GST) evaded amounting to approximately $17,235.

2 Through information sharing and targeting efforts between ICA and Customs, suspicious parcel consignments were identified at Changi Airfreight Centre. Upon inspection, ICA officers found duty-unpaid cigarettes concealed in consignments falsely declared as containing coffee and books. The cases were subsequently referred to Customs for investigation.

3 Acting on the information, Customs officers investigated and arrested the intended recipients of the parcels at various locations across Singapore, including Ang Mo Kio, Balestier, Chinatown, Woodlands and Yishun. Investigations revealed that the duty-unpaid cigarettes had been purchased through online platforms and shipped to Singapore

in parcel consignments. Further searches at some of the men's residences uncovered additional duty-unpaid cigarettes.

4 Four of the men are undergoing court proceedings, while investigations into the remaining four are ongoing.

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

6 Singapore Customs, together with ICA, remains committed to enforcing strict compliance with customs regulations and protecting revenue. We take a serious view of attempts to evade duty and GST, including through online purchases and parcel consignments. Goods imported into Singapore are subject to duty and GST, regardless how they are purchased or shipped. ICA and Singapore Customs will continue to leverage technology and data analytics to enhance our targeting and detection capabilities, and work closely to detect and deter smuggling attempts.

7 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

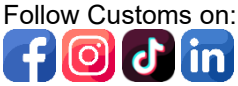
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About Singapore Customs

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 concealed in parcel consignments.