



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY
PRESS RELEASE
22 SEPTEMBER 2020**

FIVE MALAYSIAN DRIVERS JAILED FOR SMUGGLING AROUND \$213,000 WORTH OF CHEWING TOBACCO

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) has prosecuted five male Malaysian bowser lorry drivers for smuggling a total of 53,249 sachets of Khaini tobacco, a type of chewing tobacco into Singapore. The street value of the chewing tobacco is estimated to be around \$213,000. (Please refer to Annex A for photos.)

2 Their unlawful activities were detected by the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) officers at Tuas Checkpoint on 7 September. Packages of chewing tobacco were uncovered in black polythene bags hidden in the Malaysia-registered bowser lorries. They were found in various sections such as bed bunks and engine compartments.

3 HSA's investigations revealed that the smugglers used a similar mode of operation in their smuggling activities. All were instructed to proceed to designated carparks in Singapore to hand over the illegal chewing tobacco to a contact person.

4 The five smugglers were aged between 37 and 51. They were convicted in Court and sentenced to imprisonment terms ranging from five to 16 weeks. Please refer to the table below for details.

Name of accused	Sentence	No. of sachets smuggled
Azman Bin Ayob	16 weeks' imprisonment	16,200
Mohd Azizul Bin Mohd Sahir	6 weeks' imprisonment	6,000
Zuraime Bin Ahmad	5 weeks' imprisonment	5,969
Mohd Hairul Nizal Bin Hamzah	12 weeks' imprisonment	12,030

Mohd Hamzie Bin Naim	13 imprisonment	weeks'	13,050
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Chewing tobacco is strictly prohibited in Singapore

5 Khaini tobacco is a form of chewing tobacco that is intended to be used by placement in the mouth. It has a distinctive smell and consists of moist, dark brown tobacco leaf, mixed with slaked lime or spices.

Penalties for such offences in Singapore

6 HSA would like to remind the public that the Tobacco (Control of Advertisements and Sale) Act prohibits the import, distribution, sale or offer for sale of imitation tobacco products. These include shisha tobacco, smokeless tobacco, chewing tobacco such as Gutkha, Khaini, Zarda, electronic vaporisers and their accessories.

7 Any person convicted of an offence is liable to a fine of up to \$10,000, or imprisonment of up to six months or both for the first offence, and a fine of up to \$20,000, or imprisonment of up to 12 months or both for the second or subsequent offence. All imported chewing tobacco will be seized and confiscated.

Consumer advisory

8 Information pertaining to prohibited tobacco products in Singapore is available on the HSA [website](#).

9 The public is strongly advised not to purchase prohibited tobacco products, nor bring prohibited tobacco products into Singapore. Members of the public who have information on the illegal import, distribution, sale or offer for sale of prohibited tobacco products can submit a report conveniently using the online form at www.go.gov.sg/reporttobaccooffences. Alternatively, they can contact HSA's Tobacco Regulation Branch at Tel: 6684 2036 or 6684 2037 during office hours (9:00am to 5:30pm, Monday to Friday).

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About the Health Sciences Authority (HSA)

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) applies medical, pharmaceutical and scientific expertise through its three professional groups, Health Products Regulation, Blood Services and Applied Sciences, to protect and advance national health and safety.

HSA is a multidisciplinary authority. It serves as the national regulator for health products, ensuring they are wisely regulated to meet standards of safety, quality and efficacy. As the national blood service, it is responsible for providing a safe and adequate blood supply. It also applies specialised scientific, forensic, investigative and analytical capabilities in serving the administration of justice. For more details, visit <http://www.hsa.gov.sg/>.

For more updates on public health and safety matters, follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/HSAsg.

About HSA's Health Products Regulation Group

The Health Products Regulation Group (HPRG) of HSA ensures that drugs, innovative therapeutics, medical devices and health-related products are wisely regulated and meet appropriate safety, quality and efficacy standards. It contributes to the development of biomedical sciences in Singapore by administering a robust, scientific and responsive regulatory framework.

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Image 1 and 2: A total of 53,249 sachets of chewing tobacco were uncovered. (Photos: ICA)

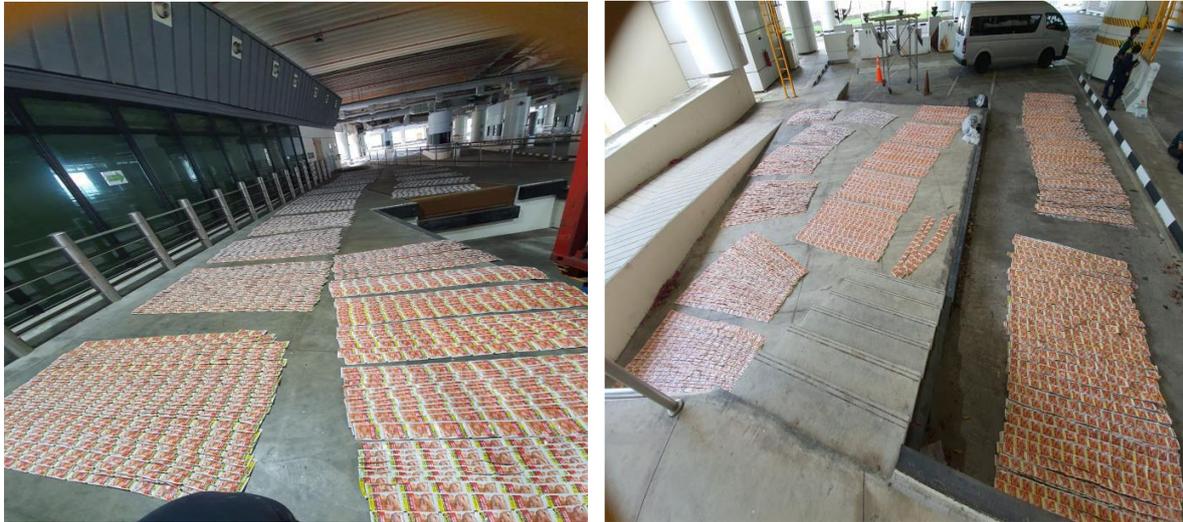


Image 3: Five bowser lorries held for further checks by the authorities. (Photos: HSA)



Image 4: Engine compartment where black polythene packages were found. (Photos: HSA)



Image 5: The engine compartment of the bowser lorries. (Photos: HSA)



Image 6: Compartment under bed bunks where black polythene packages were found.
(Photos: HSA)

