



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**HEALTH SCIENCES AUTHORITY
PRESS RELEASE
27 FEBRUARY 2020**

HSA SEIZES \$250,000 WORTH OF CHEWING TOBACCO AND ELECTRONIC VAPORISER-RELATED ITEMS IN ONE DAY

On 19 February 2020, the Health Sciences Authority (HSA) mounted two operations that disrupted the peddling of banned tobacco products. A total of \$250,000 worth of chewing tobacco, electronic vaporisers (e-vaporisers) and related accessories were seized from these two operations.

Largest ever haul of chewing tobacco

2 In the first operation, HSA officers laid an ambush at a storage facility in Woodlands suspected of being used to store chewing tobacco, which is banned in Singapore.

3 A truck was observed entering the storage facility and soon after, a man exited the premises, pushing a trolley with wrapped bundles. He was arrested and the bundles were found to contain chewing tobacco.

4 In total, more than 118,000 sachets of Khaini and Gutkha chewing tobacco were seized from the storage facility and the truck. This is the largest seizure made by HSA to-date, with an estimated street value of about \$200,000. Preliminary investigations revealed that the chewing tobacco was meant for supply to the Little India and Tuas areas. Investigations are ongoing.

WeChat e-vaporiser peddler caught

5 On the same day, acting on a tip-off, HSA officers apprehended a peddler using the messaging platform, WeChat, to sell e-vaporisers and associated accessories. A search conducted on the vehicle and residence of the accused revealed more than 3,600 of e-vaporisers and related accessories intended for sale. The items with an estimated street value of \$50,000 were seized.

6 The accused, a 46-year-old male Singaporean, is believed to have acquired his supply of e-vaporisers and related accessories from overseas. The accused's illicit activities came to light through HSA's online surveillance. He is currently assisting HSA in investigations.

Penalties for such offences in Singapore

7 HSA takes a very serious view of the smuggling and peddling of chewing tobacco and e-vaporisers, which are banned in Singapore. We will continue to work with relevant agencies to clamp down on such activities and will not hesitate to take stern actions against offenders.

8 The Tobacco (Control of Advertisements and Sale) Act prohibits the import, distribution, possession for sale, sale or offer for sale of emerging tobacco products. This includes purchases made through the Internet and from overseas. Products covered under the ban include shisha tobacco, smokeless tobacco, chewing tobacco such as Gutkha, Khaini, Zarda, e-vaporisers and their accessories.

9 Any person convicted of an offence is liable to a fine not exceeding \$10,000, or to imprisonment for up to six months or to both, for the first offence and a fine not exceeding \$20,000, or to imprisonment for up to 12 months or to both, for the second or subsequent offence for each count of the offence. Information pertaining to prohibited tobacco products in Singapore is available on the HSA [website](#).

10 The purchase, possession and use of such products are also prohibited in Singapore. Any person who is convicted is liable to a fine of up to \$2,000.

Consumer advisory

11 Members of the public who have information on illegal activities involving e-vaporisers and chewing tobacco 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.

Photographs of the seized products – chewing tobacco

Chewing tobacco found on the trolley



Chewing tobacco found in the truck



Chewing tobacco found in the storage unit



Chewing tobacco seized (Total)



Photographs of the seized products – e-vaporisers

E-vaporisers seized



E-vaporisers seized

