

Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected illicit cigarettes and illicit heat-not-burn products worth about \$26 million (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs today (January 15) seized about 8.9 million suspected illicit cigarettes and 600 000 suspected illicit heat-not-burn (HNB) products with an estimated market value of about \$26 million and a duty potential of about \$18 million in Ping Che. Customs believes that a suspected illicit cigarette storehouse has been raided during the operation.

During an anti-illicit cigarette operation conducted in Ping Che in the early hours today, Customs officers seized the batch of suspected illicit cigarettes and illicit HNB products from a metal hut and a light goods vehicle (LGV). A 24-year-old man suspected to be in connection with the case was arrested and the LGV has been detained.

Investigation is ongoing and the likelihood of further arrests is not ruled out.

Customs will continue to enhance enforcement against illicit cigarette activities on all fronts through intelligence analysis.

Under the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance (DCO), tobacco products are dutiable goods to which the DCO applies. All HNB products containing tobacco in content are also dutiable goods subject to the control of the DCO. Any person who imports, possesses, sells or buys dutiable commodities without a valid licence commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$1 million and imprisonment for two years.

Members of the public may report any suspected illicit cigarette activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

