

## South Korean jailed 5 years, 9 months for drug possession



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SINGAPORE - A South Korean national who was originally charged with conspiracy to export not less than 1.5kg of heroin was given five years and nine months' jail for drug possession.

43-year-old Kim Gwang Seok admitted to an amended charge of having two bundles of substance containing not less than 550.7g of heroin concealed in his shoes at the Changi Airport departure hall on Aug 30, 2009.

According to The Straits Times, he had been contacted by a fellow South Korean calling from Thailand on Aug 25 that year asking if he wanted to go on a free trip to Singapore and Sydney from Aug 28 to Sept 4.

Kim was told that his air tickets and hotel accommodations would be paid for.

However, he had to help deliver some bundles from Singapore to Sydney which would be hidden in his shoes to avoid Customs' detection.

He was also promised US\$1,000 (S\$1255.90)

Kim then contacted a friend Han Tae Seop, 54, who agreed to join him. Han got hold of another friend, Kang Bong Je, 52, to join them after Kim asked him to look for one more person.

When they arrived in Singapore, a Nepalese drug courier Yubindra Bahadur Tamang, 25, pass them three pairs of shoes containing the six bundles of heroin.

The trio were arrested at Changi Airport. Yubindra and another Nepalese were also arrested.

Kim could have been jailed up to 10 years and / or fined up to \$20,000. His sentence was backdated to Aug 31, 2009.

The case against Han and Kang are pending in the High Court.

Yubindra has been sentenced to 21 years' jail and 24 strokes of the cane for drug trafficking.

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