

# Cop among two held for stealing, selling cigarettes worth Rs 2.16 cr seized in raid

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THREE PERSONS including an assistant police sub-inspector have been arrested for allegedly stealing cigarettes seized during a raid in 2018 and selling the goods off in the market.

During a raid in December 2018, Waliv police had seized 150 packets of Gudang Garam cigarettes, valued at Rs 3.24 crore, and a tempo while the goods was being stored in the vehicle.

Police Inspector Vinay Choughale of Waliv police station said that the tempo owner had recently applied before the court

**At least 100 of the 150 cigarette packets that were seized during the 2018 raid were stolen**

seeking that the vehicle is returned to him. Following the court's approval, when the police started the formality to return the tempo, it found that at least 100 cigarette packets worth Rs 2.16 crore were missing.

Police launched an investigation in the matter and found that Assistant Police Sub-inspector Ashfaq Shaikh, who is posted as a custodian in the police station's

locker room, along with two others had sold off the goods.

A case was registered in the matter Wednesday, following which Shaikh was arrested. He was produced in court which sent him to police custody till September 16.

According to police, Shaikh would steal the cigarettes and hand them over to the two other accused, both civilians, who allegedly sold the goods in the market. Palghar Superintendent of Police Gaurav Singh confirmed that three persons were arrested in the matter.

"We are checking if any other police officer were involved in this," he said.