

RPF intercepts imported cigarettes worth Rs 33.42 lakh at Ngp stn

■ Staff Reporter

RAILWAY Protection Force (RPF) seized stock of imported cigarettes worth Rs 33.42 lakh from Nagpur Railway Station. Two brands of cigarettes were found stacked in railway parcel totalling 2.54 lakh plus and same were being transported evading imported duty and local tax. Even otherwise, transportation of cigarettes are banned on Indian Railways, and hence after the parcels were detected on Itarsi end of platform past Wednesday midnight, it raised eyebrows in the establishment.

Jawans of RPF were on patrolling duty on platform no. 6 and 7 when they came across five parcels lying unattended. The jawans Pravin Chavan, Rajesh Gadpalwar and Deputy



Imported cigarettes seized by RPF at Nagpur Railway Station.

Inspector H M Jaiswar on the closer inspection of the parcels smelled cigarettes. The matter was reported to Inspector R L

Meena who reached the spot.

The on-duty Chief Parcel Supervisor (CPS) Atul Srivastava was called to the spot and a joint

check of the parcels revealed foreign cigarettes of Paris brand. Further investigation revealed that the said parcels came to Nagpur station in Train No. 02888 dated June 29-30 and were booked from New Delhi to Visakhapatnam. Half of the parcels were unloaded at Nagpur station by Commerce Department while other half reached Visakhapatnam.

As the case was of foreign cigarettes, RPF informed the Central Excise Customs (DRI) Department. DRI officials said the cigarette traffic was unauthorised from the railways and tax was evaded.

A joint *panchnama* was conducted after opening and checking 16 cartoons in the said five parcels. A total of 194 bundles in each cartoon total means about

1,58,800 cigarettes worth Rs 23,82,000 plus 96,000 pieces of Gold Stag cigarettes worth Rs 9,60,000 were found in parcels.

The case is being investigated by taking action under Customs Act 1962 under section 110 on handing over the seized cigarette to the Director Revenue Intelligence (Central Excise) Department, Nagpur.

Meanwhile, the local RPF contact their Visakhapatnam counterpart and shared information about load of imported cigarette being shipped evading Custom Duty.

The action has been taken under the direction of Senior Divisional Safety Commissioner (Sr. DSC) Ashutosh Pandey and Assistant Safety Commissioner Kota Joji of Central Railway's Nagpur Division.