

Imported cigarettes seized in Assam's Hailakandi; 2 arrested

A police team stopped a vehicle (MZ-01 V-2018) and found 30 cartons of imported cigarettes (18 cartons of Korean cigarettes and 12 cartons of American cigarettes) concealed under the back seat of the vehicle.

by [Swapnaneel Bhattacharjee](#) | May 25, 2022

Silchar: Imported cigarettes valued at over Rs 10 lakh were seized from a vehicle and two men arrested from Lalapur under Lala police station in Hailakandi district in the wee hours of Tuesday.

Sources said the cigarettes were seized during a checking by police on Lalapur bypass around 3:30 am on Tuesday. A team stopped a vehicle (MZ-01 V-2018), searched it and found 30 cartons of imported cigarettes (18 cartons of Korean cigarettes and 12 cartons of American cigarettes) concealed under the back seat of the vehicle. The two men in the vehicle could not show any valid documents regarding the cigarettes. The men, identified as Ariyana Manik (29) and Lalrinwama Kaipang (34), were thereafter arrested, police sources said.

The cigarettes, whose market value is more than Rs 10 lakh, were seized and the vehicle was taken under custody by the police. During interrogation, the arrested duo confessed that they had smuggled cigarettes through the same route in the past. They told the police that the current consignment was collected from a person of Aizawl, Mizoram, and they were taking it to Shillong in Meghalaya. The spot (Lalapur bypass) from where the cigarettes were seized and the two men held is about 17 km from Hailakandi town.

An official at Lala police station told reporters that initial investigation has revealed the cigarettes were being smuggled to Shillong via National Highway-6 (previously known as National Highway-154). Further probe in the case are on.

A. Basumatary, the officer in-charge at Lala police station, told EastMojo on Wednesday that the two men were arrested from Lalapur bypass and a case under The Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003 has been registered against them.

Questions have been raised over how the vehicle managed to reach Lalapur bypass with the cigarettes despite the existence of multiple police outposts on the way from Mizoram. Before Lalapur bypass, police outposts are located at Ramnathpur, Jamira, Karicherra, Katlicherra and Abdullahpur. Concerned citizens have demanded a high-level inquiry to find out how the vehicle succeeded in reaching Lalapur bypass after crossing so many police outposts.

It may be mentioned that Barak Valley has witnessed seizures of imported cigarettes, drugs and various other intoxicating substances in the past few months. Two cartons

of Burmese cigarettes were seized from an Alto car and a youth held in Katigorah in Cachar district on May 20.

Ganja valued at around Rs 1.35 crore was seized in two different operations and four men held in Karimganj district between May 19-21. Ganja worth around Rs 1.20 crore was seized from a lorry and two men arrested in Churaibari in Karimganj district near the Assam-Mizoram border on May 16.

In another case, ganja valued at around Rs. 3 lakh was seized and two men held in Churaibari in Karimganj district on April 8. Heroin valued at around Rs. 18 crore was seized and four men arrested from Ishancherra under Ramakrishnanagar police station in Karimganj district on April 7.

Source: <https://www.eastmojo.com/assam/2022/05/25/imported-cigarettes-seized-in-assams-hailakandi-2-arrested/>