

Andhra Pradesh: Foreign and illegal Indian cigarettes worth ₹3.45 crore seized

Rajulapudi Srinivas | VIJAYAWADA | AUGUST 03, 2022

Vehicle driver taken into custody; this is the highest-ever seizure, say officials

Officers of the Commissioner of Customs (Preventive Commissionerate) have seized huge quantity of foreign cigarettes and illegal Indian-made cigarettes, all valued at about ₹3.45 crore.

On a tip-off, the officers tracked a container at Kesarapalli village on the Vijayawada - Visakhapatnam National Highway on Wednesday.

Upon checking, the officers found that the container was loaded with 156 sacks containing the smuggled cigarettes. The vehicle was coming from Patna to Vijayawada.

The officers seized 26,40,000 'Paris brand' cigarettes packed in 262 cartons and 16,32,000 Gold Vimal brand cigarettes concealed in 136 cartons.

The vehicle, along with the material, was seized, and a case under Sections 111, 112 and 117 of the Customs Act, 1962, registered, the officers said.

"The value of the cigarettes recovered is about ₹3.45 crore. The Paris brand cigarettes are suspected to be of Myanmar origin, while the Gold Vimal brand product appears to be of the GST-evaded Indian-made cigarettes," the Customs authorities said.

"The seized cigarette packets do not have manufacturing details. There are no purchase bills or relevant documents," the officials said in a release.

The vehicle driver of Bihar was taken into custody, and a detailed investigation was on, the officials said, adding that this was the highest-ever seizure of smuggled foreign brand cigarettes by the Commissionerate of the Vijayawada division.

The container belongs to a private transport firm of Uttar Pradesh. The Customs officials took the driver into custody while he was waiting for the receiver, an official told The Hindu.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/andhra-pradesh/andhra-pradesh-foreign-and-illegal-indian-cigarettes-worth-345-crore-seized/article65721806.ece>