

Misbranded cigarettes worth ₹15 cr seized

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Chennai: In two separate cases, directorate of revenue intelligence (DRI) sleuths have seized nearly one crore misbranded cigarettes of an Indian brand worth 15 crore smuggled from Thailand and Dubai in ships.

The cigarettes had been imported with a false declaration as consumables (wafers) and were to be distributed as original cigarettes for retail sale across the country, said DRI sources.

The first consignment arrived at Chennai port from Thailand on Aug 8. Based on inputs, DRI sleuths searched a container and found Indian brand cigarettes hidden in them.

Investigations revealed they were fake cigarettes with false branding. In total, 62.5 lakh cigarettes worth 10 crore were seized. Further investigation is on to ascertain whom the consignment was destined for.

On Aug 14, another vessel that arrived at Chennai port from Dubai was searched based on a tip-off. DRI sleuths found 30 lakh fake cigarettes in one of the containers. The second seizure is worth 5 crore, according to DRI sources. Two separate cases have been registered for false declaration and smuggling of fake products and duty violation. Further investigation is on. The DRI is yet to secure people behind the two cases.

Source: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/misbranded-cigarettes-worth-15-crore-seized-in-chennai/articleshow/112958590.cms>