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1 crore worth illegal cigarettes seized in Vijayawada

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Vijayawada: The officers of anti-evasion, Guntur Central GST commissionerate foiled major illegal storage and trading by seizing 25,38,000 sticks of cigarettes and 46,000 pouches of spit tobacco (khaini), with total worth of 1 crore.

According to Sadhu Narasimha Reddy, commissioner of customs & central tax, Guntur CGST commissionerate, on Saturday, the officers of anti-evasion, along with the assistance of officers of customs commissionerate (preventive) in Vijayawada, conducted a search operation at unregistered premises in Ambapuram Panchayat, and Ajith Singh Nagar in Vijayawada. These premises were involved in the illegal storage and possible trading of Indian-origin cigarettes and khaini (spit tobacco) without proper documents, thereby evading tax payment.



Upon inspection, it was discovered that a substantial quantity of Indian-origin cigarettes was stored at these premises. It was found that there were 102 HDPE sacks containing 25.38 lakh sticks of cigarettes valued at 96.82 lakh, and 23 HDPE sacks containing 46,000 pouches of spit tobacco (khaini) valued at 3.68 lakh. The tenant of the premises, who is the owner of the goods, did not turn up and could not produce the invoices evidencing legitimate purchase, thus indicating evasion of applicable taxes to govt. The search was carried out till late evening.

The seized cigarette packages lacked essential markings, manufacturing date, and/or expiry date, raising suspicion about the legality of the goods, and the maximum retail price (MRP) of one brand of cigarettes is less than the taxes payable. Due to these findings, the anti-evasion officers seized the entire consignments of cigarettes and spit tobacco (Khaini), believing that the goods were transported unlawfully and stored for further illegal trade. Investigation into this matter is currently underway.

Source: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/vijayawada/1-crore-worth-illegal-cigarettes-seized-in-vijayawada/articleshow/117378320.cms>