

Bengaluru RPF seizes Korean cigarettes worth Rs 30 lakh from Delhi parcel train

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Bengaluru: After illegal liquor, smugglers are now allegedly using parcel trains from Delhi to traffic foreign-brand cigarettes into Bengaluru, exposing what authorities suspect is a growing interstate smuggling network. In the third major seizure linked to the same Delhi-Bengaluru route within a week, Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel at Yeshwantpur station seized nearly 2 lakh foreign-manufactured cigarettes worth around Rs 30 lakh Tuesday. The consignment, comprising Korean brand ESSE Light Super Slim cigarettes, arrived on parcel special train no. 00630 from Okhla in Delhi — the same train from which more than 1,000 litres of illegal liquor were seized last Thursday. On Monday night, RPF officials also intercepted liquor worth Rs 17

lakh, packed in 17 carton boxes, on the same route.

Officials said the latest seizure was made following a specific alert from Delhi authorities. During inspection of coach no. SWR LWRRM 178854, they found 20 carton boxes suspected to contain foreign cigarettes. Verification revealed the consignment contained 1,99,600 cigarette sticks, allegedly smuggled into the country in violation of Customs Act provisions.

RPF immediately alerted the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), customs officials, and local police. The seized cartons were later handed over to customs, Bengaluru zone, which has initiated further investigation.

“In both cases, the parcel van was booked by the same logistics company. We are collecting details and investigating how it happened. We have arrested one individual here, while Delhi police have arrested three,” Karnataka excise commissioner R Venkatesh Kumar told TOI.

Checks intensified

Following repeated seizures, RPF, Government Railway Police (GRP), and the excise department have intensified checks on trains arriving from Okhla. Officials suspect the consignments were moved using false declarations to bypass scrutiny.

RPF sources said the parcel train had been contractually leased to Mumbai-based AVG Logistics. Such dedicated special parcel expresses are run by railway zones when the demand between routes is high.

“What the smugglers generally do is move cigarettes from border regions and sell them in the local market at cheaper rates,” a senior official said, adding that investigators are trying to identify both the source and intended recipients of the consignments.

Senior divisional security commissioner (RPF) Shreyans Chinchawade said intensified random inspections will continue. “Initially, we weren’t much involved because the excise department was checking, but now with this new modus operandi, we’ll keep random checks going. Now it is a whole train, it’s also about how they are bypassing security and putting false declarations. We will work in coordination with the customs, excise and civil police,” he explained.