

Mumbai Crime: DRI Seizes ₹20 Crore Worth of Foreign-Origin Cigarettes At Nhava Sheva Port

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The DRI seized nearly 85 lakh foreign-origin cigarette sticks worth Rs 20 crore from a container at Mumbai's Nhava Sheva Port that was allegedly misdeclared as plastic storage boxes. Officials said the investigation is underway to identify those behind the suspected smuggling network.



Mumbai, July 21, 2026: In a major crackdown on contraband smuggling, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) seized a massive consignment of illicit foreign-origin cigarettes valued at Rs 20 crore at the Nhava Sheva port in Mumbai.

Container Misdeclared As Plastic Goods:

Acting on specific intelligence, DRI officers recently intercepted an import container arriving from Dubai. The shipping manifest falsely declared the cargo as "Plastic Storage Boxes" to evade customs scrutiny.

However, a physical examination of the container exposed a sophisticated concealment operation, revealing row after row of premium contraband instead of the declared plastic goods.

Authorities recovered nearly 85 lakh sticks of foreign-made cigarettes packed inside the shipment. The entire consignment, estimated to have a market value of Rs 20 crore, was immediately seized under the provisions of the Customs Act. The importation was in clear violation of the Customs Act and the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Packaging and Labelling) Rules.

Probe Into Smuggling Network

"The operation highlights the persistent use of misdeclaration by international smuggling syndicates," a senior official said. "By masking high-tariff goods like cigarettes as low-value plastic items, syndicates attempt to bypass our risk-profiling systems. Continued intelligence-led profiling remains our strongest tool to disrupt these networks," the official added.

An intensive follow-up investigation is currently underway to trace the domestic masterminds behind the import consignment. DRI officials are mapping the logistical network and identifying the intended recipients in India to dismantle the supply chain completely. No arrests have been officially announced yet, but further enforcement action is expected soon.

Threat To Revenue And Public Health

The smuggling of foreign-origin cigarettes not only results in substantial revenue loss to the government and distorts fair competition in the domestic tobacco industry, but also poses a serious threat to public health.

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