

Ahmedabad DRI seizes smuggled cigarettes worth Rs 1.44 crore

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

AHMEDABAD, FEB 12

DIRECTORATE OF Revenue Intelligence (DRI), Ahmedabad on Monday seized a consignment of cigarettes worth Rs 1.44 crore in the domestic market from the Mundra port. According to the officials, the consignment was being smuggled by the importer in the guise of Gypsum powder.

Acting on a tip-off that a "syndicate engaged in smuggling of cigarettes would be attempting to smuggle cigarettes concealed in an import consignment of Gypsum Powder in the name of

M/s. Champion Impex Private Limited, Ahmedabad," the officials intercepted two 20-foot containers which were declared to be carrying 1950 bags of Gypsum powder at Mundra port.

After an examination of the containers, 50 boxes of cigarettes were found to be arranged in the last two rows arranged behind bags of gypsum powder. Around 100 boxes with 14,40,000 cigarettes of the international brand, Gudang Garam were found inside the concealed boxes.

"Conservative estimates put the value of the smuggled 14,40,000 cigarettes in excess of Rs 1.44 crore in the Indian domestic market. A case of smug-

gling of cigarettes has been booked by DRI and an investigation in the case has been launched," the DRI said in a press release.

The release added, "Cigarettes, being demerit goods, attract heavy rate of custom duties and thus smuggled cigarettes that escape to Indian market without suffering duties of customs fetch lucrative profits. Smuggling syndicates thus adopt various kinds of modus operandi to take undue advantage of liberalized customs examination procedures. In the present case also, physical examination of consignment was not prescribed by system."