

SMUGGLING ACROSS INDO-MYANMAR BORDER

Five held with foreign cigarettes, spices worth ₹6cr

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MUMBAI: The Mumbai wing of Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) on Wednesday arrested five people for allegedly smuggling Gudang Garam cigarettes and black pepper across the Indo-Myanmar border. Officials seized 32.04 lakh cigarettes and 6,000kg of black pepper, collectively worth ₹6.09 crore, after intercepting two trucks in Guwahati. The consignment came to Guwahati via Imphal and was going to be transported to various places in India, said officials.

“The cigarettes originate in Indonesia and reach Myanmar through the sea route. It is

brought to India via the Indo-Myanmar border and then taken to New Delhi via Guwahati by road,” said an officer.

According to investigations, owing to the porous border with Myanmar at Moreh in Manipur, the state has become a hub for smuggling, with large quantities of gold, spices, cashew nuts, betel leaves and cigarettes being exchanged. “In the past one year, smuggled goods worth more than ₹100 crore have been seized,” said a source.

According to sources, smuggling cigarettes has become a lucrative option as imports are highly taxed, increasing the pack price by 200%. “Owing to the high margins, smugglers are opting



■ Smuggling Gudang Garam, an Indonesian brand of cigarettes, has increased owing to rise in import taxes.

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for sneaking in cigarettes,” said the officer. “If the value of the seized good is ₹6 crore, the actual value will be ₹2 crore while the

rest are taxes. So even if a consignment is caught, smugglers continue to trade.”

“We have a bilateral trade

DRI PROBES GOA CASE LINK

The DRI is probing whether the recent seizure of smuggled goods is connected to seizures worth more than ₹6 crore made in Goa last month. “In the Guwahati case, probe pointed to an Indian-origin person in Dubai as the kingpin. The goods at Goa were also brought in from Dubai,” said an officer.

agreement with Sri Lanka so smugglers often show that the goods originate in Sri Lanka,” the officer said.



NORTHEAST NOW

DRI Guwahati officials seize foreign origin cigarettes, black pepper

Officials of DRI, Guwahati Zonal Unit recovered 3204000 sticks of cigarettes and 6000 kg of black pepper of foreign origin; 5 arrested



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Based on specific intelligence input, the officers of the [Directorate of Revenue Intelligence](#) (DRI), Guwahati Zonal Unit, intercepted two ten-wheeler trucks near a godown at Nalapara in [Guwahati](#) and seized 32,04,000 sticks of cigarettes of foreign origin.

Further search in the godown also led to recovery of 6,000 kg of foreign origin black pepper.

Dr T. Yhome, Assistant Director, DRI, Guwahati Zonal Unit, in a statement said that “the goods had been smuggled into India through the porous [Indo-Myanmar border](#) town of Moreh in Manipur and was carried to Guwahati and stockpiled here”.

The entire consignment of cigarettes of Korean and Indonesian origin valued at Rs 5,59,98,000 was seized along with 6000 Kg of black pepper.

“The two carrier vehicles, which were exclusively being used for carrying smuggled cigarettes and black pepper, were also seized and a case has been booked under various provisions of Customs Act 1962,” Dr Yhome added.

The total value of the seized items is Rs 6.09 crore.

“Seizure of such huge quantity of cigarettes valued at more than Rs 6 crore, even by a conservative estimate is likely to cause a serious damage to the cartels running the smuggling operation in this region,” said Dr Yhome.

He also informed that five persons have been arrested in connection with the case and further investigation is in progress.

DRI has been increasingly making its presence felt in the Northeast during the last few years and has had a very positive impact on the prevention of smuggling and drug trafficking, said an official press communiqué on Tuesday.

In an effort to expand its operations in the Northeast, the DRI, Guwahati, carved out of DRI, Kolkata, has recently been upgraded to a Zonal Unit with jurisdictional Regional and Sub-Regional Units stationed in Northeast’s major cities and towns – Itanagar, Dimapur, Shillong, Agartala, Aizawl, Imphal and Silchar.

Source: <https://nenow.in/north-east-news/dri-guwahati-officials-seize-foreign-origin-cigarettes-black-pepper.html>