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Foreign cigarettes worth Rs 3 crore seized by Vijayawada Customs Commissionerate



VIJAYAWADA: The officers of Vijayawada Customs Commissionerate seized a vehicle carrying Rs 3 crore worth of foreign-origin cigarettes on Monday. According to the Commissioner of Customs Commissionerate (Preventive) K Engineer, they intercepted the consignment based on a specific intelligence input. The vehicle, carrying cigarettes belonging to a Paris-based brand, was seized in the early hours of Monday on the outskirts of Narasaraopet town of Palnadu district.

“The foreign cigarettes were loaded on a lorry carrying wheat flour bags and were concealed with a tarpaulin sheet,” a release by the Customs department said. In fact, preliminary investigation revealed that the cigarettes were loaded in the vehicle at Muzaffarpur in Bihar.

Stating that 30 lakh sticks worth Rs 3 crore were detected, officials said that the markings on the packets reveal that they might have originated from Myanmar. Neither there was any pictorial warning nor any information regarding the manufacturing year and Maximum Retail Price (MRP) on the packet.

Officials said smuggling foreign cigarettes is a lucrative business. “It fetches huge profit to black marketers, who avoid customs duty. Smuggled cigarettes also don’t have pictorial warnings on them, which is mandatory as per the provisions of Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2003.”

Officials said that they were vigilant even on the night of January 1 and tracked down the vehicle in the early hours of the morning. Officials said they have seized more than 150 lakh foreign-origin smuggled cigarette sticks in the past six months.

Source: <https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/vijayawada/2024/Feb/11/saap-coach-nominated-to-train-india-badminton-team>