

DRI seizes China-made cigarettes

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In one of the biggest seizures, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence has seized illegal foreign-origin cigarettes worth Rs 2.13 crore from areas in and around Kolkata.

The cigarettes were smuggled into India from Myanmar and were seized on Wednesday, a statement issued Friday by DRI said.

A total of 7,39,000 cigarette sticks of WIN brand of China and ESSE LIGHTS brand of Korea valued at Rs 73.9 lakh packed in 29 sacks containing 74 cartons and loaded on a pick-up van were initially recovered from a truck terminal in Dankuni, it said.

The driver of the van disclosed he had loaded the cigarettes from another truck parked inside the terminal, DRI said.

A further inquiry revealed the cigarettes were brought from Guwahati for delivery in Kolkata, it said.

Acting on leads derived from the preliminary investigation, immediate follow-up searches were carried out at a godown near Topsia, where the cigarettes were to be delivered, the statement said.

A search of the godown led to the seizure of another 12,59,470 sticks of illegally-imported cigarettes of brands such as Dunhill, Gudang Garam (Indonesia), Monde (UAE) of approximate value of Rs 1.24 crore.

The driver of the pick-up van as well as the driver of the truck from which the cigarettes were loaded in the van were arrested and produced before a court on Thursday.

The duo have been remanded to judicial custody till April 30.