



# State of New Jersey

Department of the Treasury

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For Information Contact:  
Mark Perkiss  
(609) 984-7110 (Treasury)

For Information Contact:  
Det. Fred Batelli (Little Falls P.D.)  
973-256-2411

## **Taxation, Little Falls, P.D. seize contraband cigarettes**

TRENTON – The owner of a Little Falls store has been charged with possessing more than 190 cartons of contraband cigarettes that did not bear proper tax stamps in a joint law enforcement action by the Division of Taxation’s Office of Criminal Investigation and the Little Falls Police Department, the Division of Taxation and the Little Falls Police Department announced today.

Investigators from the Division and the Little Falls Police Department on February 21 seized 192.5 cartons of contraband cigarettes from the Valley Spa store on East Main Street in Little Falls. The seized cigarettes did not bear valid New Jersey tax stamps. The cigarettes have an estimated retail value of \$12,500.

“This joint enforcement action is another reminder to consumers and merchants that all cigarettes sold in New Jersey must carry valid tax stamps ensuring that the proper taxes have been paid,” said Division of Taxation Acting Director Maureen Adams. “We are grateful to the citizens who alerted law enforcement to this case and we are extremely thankful for the cooperation of the Little Falls Police Department, which so ably cooperated in this joint effort.”

The enforcement action stemmed from a citizen complaint to the Little Falls Police Department. The citizen alleged that a pack of unstamped cigarettes had been bought recently from Deepali and Pinku Inc. which does business as Valley Spa.

“We notified the Division of Taxation and were glad to work with them on this case,” said Little Falls police detective Fred Batelli, who investigated for the police department. “This was a good team effort and showed the spirit of cooperation needed in law enforcement.”

The owner of the store, Daxesh Parikh, 32 of Wayne, NJ, was arrested and charged with:

Possession of greater than 20,000 cigarettes to which the required NJ tax stamp has not been applied (A 4<sup>th</sup> degree offense that carries a \$1,000 fine and/or up to 1 year in jail);

Possession of greater than 2,000 cigarettes to which counterfeit NJ revenue stamps has been applied (A 3<sup>rd</sup> degree offense that carries a \$15,000 fine and/or up to 5 years in prison) and five disorderly persons offenses , including failure to examine and return cigarettes not bearing the required New Jersey tax stamp, which carries a penalty of \$25 per carton.

The Division of Taxation will continue its investigation to insure that Deepali and Pinku, Inc. have properly filed all the required tax returns for which the business is subject.