

**NEWS RELEASE**

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**R.I. Division of Taxation investigations unit joins  
Central Falls police in cigarette sales arrest**

*Massachusetts man pleads guilty to selling cigarettes without license*

**PROVIDENCE, R.I.** – Investigators from the Rhode Island Division of Taxation’s Special Investigation Unit joined members of the Central Falls Police Department earlier this month in an investigation leading to the arrest of a Massachusetts man illegally selling tobacco at a store in Rhode Island.

Mohammad Ghori, of Norton, Mass., pleaded guilty in District Court, Providence, October 18 to a charge of operating as a cigarette dealer without a license, a charge punishable by a \$10,000 fine. A misdemeanor charge of possessing unstamped cigarette packages was dismissed.

“We are pleased with the outcome of the case as the court understood the dramatic impact tobacco trafficking has on state tax revenue, imposing a significant monetary penalty for violating licensing laws,” said Neena S. Savage, Acting Tax Administrator of the Rhode Island Division of Taxation. “We appreciate the cooperation of the Central Falls Police Department in this investigation.”

Special Investigation Unit members Thomas Noret and Michael Colluci discovered the improper cigarette inventory during a random check of a Central Falls convenience store. In addition to charging Ghori, Central Falls police helped the SIU investigators confiscate approximately \$2,000 of untaxed tobacco, rolling papers and little cigars.

“I’d like to thank the Rhode Island Division of Taxation for its initiative,” said Col. James J. Mendonca, Chief of Police of the Central Falls Police Department. “Division staff continue to be great partners in the continued efforts to thwart the sale of illegal cigarettes. This type of activity not only harms law-abiding retailers, but deprives our state of vital revenues.”

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The Rhode Island Department of Revenue, based in Providence, oversees the Division of Motor Vehicles, the Division of Lottery, the Division of Municipal Finance, the Division of Taxation, and the Office of Revenue Analysis.

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