

PRESS NOTE – DRI recovers smuggled exotic birds

Acting on specific input that live exotic birds of foreign origin smuggled into India from Bangladesh through Indo-Bangla border at North 24 Parganas are being transported in a vehicle heading towards Kolkata via Chakdaha/Kalyani Expressway, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) sleuths immediately swung into action. The DRI sleuths identified and intercepted the car near Muragacha More on Kalyani Expressway with three occupants including the driver.

Three Red and Blue Macaws, three Eclectus parrots, eight Pygmy Falcons, and seven white ducks were found badly crammed up in plastic bags and kept inside the car and also in the dicky of the vehicle.

DRI immediately contacted the office of Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, West Bengal and also the Director of Alipore Zoo, Kolkata. Accordingly, the items were taken by DRI to Kolkata Zoo to whom the birds were handed over.

Illegal import of wildlife which is in violation of the Wild Life Protection Act automatically becomes a violation of the Customs Act by virtue of Section 111(d) of the Customs Act. **All the birds have consequently been seized under the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962 read with the Wild Life protection Act, 1972.** Further investigation is in progress.

DRI is committed to combating Wild Life Crime including cross border crime such as trafficking in wild life art-crafts. DRI has been regularly making seizures of Wild Life articles such as Red Sanders wood which is highly valued in the markets of China and East Asia, Star Tortoises and other species of turtles, Deer antlers, Tiger & leopard skins and also ivory from elephant tusks.

In March this year DRI seized 214 numbers **of Indian star tortoise** at Kolkata. Less than a month back, two **Hollock Gibbons** (Endangered species under Schedule 1 of the Wild life Protection Act, 1972) and two **Palm Civets** (Endangered species under Schedule II of the Wild life Protection Act, 1972) along with a variety of exotic birds which had all been smuggled through Bangladesh were recovered and seized by DRI.

There is an urgent need to step up the fight against wild life crime, which has environmental, social and economic impact and a concerted effort is needed by all the law enforcement agencies in combating the same.

DRI welcomes information from public about any cross border crime including wild life crime. There are reward schemes as well for informants with complete anonymity assured.



