

DRI Chennai zone seizes red sanders logs, gold and mollusc shells

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CHENNAI: The Chennai zone of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence made a string of seizures in the last 10 days which included red sanders logs, mollusc shells and several kilograms of gold. Nine people have been arrested.

All the seizures were made during different operations. The last seizure was on Wednesday morning when 7.968 kg of gold -- worth Rs 2.61 crore - - was seized from two passengers at Chennai Egmore who had come from Kokrajhar in Assam.

The gold was smuggled through the Indo- Myanmar border at Moreh. It was hidden in specially stitched pockets in their jeans, the DRI said. Both were arrested.

On Tuesday, the DRI arrested six passengers, who were flying from Chennai to Singapore, for smuggling 352 large mollusc shells weighing 180 kg. The shells were concealed in their check-in baggage.

Wildlife crime control bureau officials said the shells were of the endangered species *Turbo marmoratus* listed in schedule IV of the Wildlife Protection Act. They were procured from ecologically sensitive locations like the Gulf of Mannar and the Andaman Islands.

On May 2, DRI officials seized cigarettes of foreign origin -- which are prohibited for import and sale -- from an import container. Thirty lakh cigarettes worth Rs 4.5 crore were seized. The declared goods were diapers.

On April 29, the DRI seized two containers -- which had 14 metric tonne of red sanders logs -- from Chennai port and Krishnapatnam port. The declared goods were food items and textiles.