

# International gang of wildlife smugglers busted in Chennai

*The kingpin, who was arrested at Aizawl in Mizoram, confessed to his role in the smuggling and also named the persons, for whom he is indulging in the smuggling activity.*



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Around 100 different species of foreign birds and animals were seized from the gang by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, in the city (Photo | Express Photo)

By Express News Service

**CHENNAI:** An international syndicate of exotic wildlife smugglers having links to Chennai was busted by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence which seized 100 different species of foreign birds and animals.

In a coordinated swoop on the syndicate smuggling exotic wildlife like birds and animals, the officers of the DRI here in tandem with the officers of Aizawl, Guwahati, Kolkata carried out operations.

Officials said the searches were carried out at two locations in Chennai. These include residential premises and a farmhouse on the outskirts of the city. The searches

resulted in the seizure of 70 species of wildlife consisting of birds like a scarlet macaw, harlequin macaw, blue gold macaw, various varieties of conure, cockatoos, etc.

The searches also resulted in the seizure of wildlife animalChennais such as squirrel monkey, Callithrix monkey and a pair of a red iguana. One of the masterminds was apprehended in Chennai during the operations conducted.

The raids were carried out after sleuths at Aizwal in Mizoram and Kolkata intercepted a consignment of assorted wildlife of foreign origin consisting of 35 birds of various species, animals and one baby marmoset and one Bengal cat at the Kolkata airport, which was smuggled through the porous Indo-Myanmar border.

The kingpin, who was arrested at the weekend by the DRI unit at Aizawl in Mizoram, confessed to his role in the smuggling and also named the persons, for whom he is indulging in the smuggling activity and who are based out of Mumbai, Pune, and Chennai etc., DRI sources said.

The import, export, and re-export of any live animal or plant of a species listed in the CITES Appendices (or of any part or derivative of such animal or plant) require a permit or certificate. International trade in all wild fauna and flora in general, and the species covered under CITES in particular, is regulated jointly through the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, the Foreign Trade (Development Regulation) Act, 1992 and the Foreign Trade Policy of the Government of India and Customs Act, 1962. As per Customs Act, 1962, the offenses are punishable with an imprisonment for a term which may extend to seven years and with fine. Further investigation is in progress.

### **Kingpin arrested**

The kingpin, who was arrested at the weekend by the DRI unit at Aizawl in Mizoram, confessed to his role in the smuggling and also named the persons, for whom he is indulging in the smuggling activity and who are based out of Mumbai, Pune and Chennai. Species were smuggled through the Indo-Myanmar border

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