

DRI seizes huge quantity of red sanders

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The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has seized 14 metric tonnes of red sanders logs attempted to be exported to Dubai from here, an official statement issued today said.

Upon preliminary verification, it was noticed that the high-valued timber logs were found in a consignment declared to contain granite slabs being consigned to Dubai, it said.

The logs were found stacked in the container, behind boxes of the declared cargo, ostensibly to deceive customs authorities, the statement issued by the DRI said.

Last month, the DRI had recalled a container which had sailed from Chennai to Malaysia, and on examination found the consignment containing 12.42 metric tonnes of red sanders logs, concealed behind bags of atta (wheat flour).

During 2017-18, the DRI Chennai zonal unit had seized 187.6 metric tonnes of red sanders logs. In the current financial year, the unit has seized about 56 metric tonnes of red sanders, valued at approximately Rs 22 crore, in four cases.

Red sanders is an endangered species endemic to the Indian subcontinent, particularly the states of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. In view of its endangered nature, its timber is prohibited for export.

However, smugglers take risks to export the timber due to its high demand in China where it is valued for medicinal purposes and for making furniture, parts of musical instruments and handicrafts.