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DRI busts intl kerosene smuggling racket, 3 held

By Brendan Dabhi, Ahmedabad Mirror | Oct 6, 2018, 06.00 AM IST



The consignment came from UAE

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence busted an international kerosene smuggling racket and seized kerosene worth Rs 11.48 crore from Kandla port on Friday. They also blew the lid off an inter-state syndicate by arresting three men, who admitted this was not their first attempt at smuggling industrial-grade kerosene. Their confession has brought the role of government officials under scanner.

The DRI on Friday seized 139 containers carrying 2,442.88 metric tonnes of kerosene from the Middle-East, particularly Jebel Ali Port in the UAE.

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The accused were arrested and produced before Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate in Gandhidham who remanded them to judicial custody till October 17.

They confessed that they had previously smuggled in kerosene more than twice the value of current seizure. DRI is currently investigating the involvement of unnamed government officials supposedly working at the Customs House Laboratory at Deendayal Port in Kandla.

DRI sources said, "Although we cannot reveal the names of the three accused yet, they were settled in Gandhidham and running this racket for quite some time."

Sources said, the accused admitted to "illegally importing more than 300 containers of kerosene into the country" by mis-declaring it as another industrial grade solvent. This means they have smuggled in around 5,272.40 MT of kerosene worth Rs 24.77 crore already.

Sources revealed, "Importers based in four states - Punjab, Delhi, Rajasthan and Gujarat -had formed a cartel to illegally import/smuggle industrial-grade kerosene. They would sell it to industries using it for manufacturing

purpose. The accused had brought in a total of 7715.28 MT of kerosene worth Rs 36.25 crore in 439 containers. Only 31.66% of these has been seized by the DRI."