

Business Standard

DRI seizes nearly 17 kg elephant tusk in West Bengal

Press Trust of India | Siliguri (West Bengal) January 02, 2019 Last Updated at 17:20 IST

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has seized nearly 17 kg elephant tusk near here, according to an official statement issued Wednesday.

The recovery was done from a Kolkata-bound vehicle at Ghoshpukur in the outskirts of Siliguri.

The tusks in four pieces were being secretly transported in the vehicle, which was loaded with a consignment of black tea, from Guwahati, it said.

On interrogation, the driver of the impugned vehicle admitted that the elephant tusks were handed to him in Baihata Chariali town for transport to Kolkata, the statement said.

"Preliminary investigation has revealed that the tusks were extracted from poached elephants in the forested areas of Assam and were being carried to Kolkata for ultimate export to south east Asian countries via Bangladesh," it said.

Consequently, the tusks, valued at about Rs 1.69 crore in the international market, were seized, the statement added.

The DRI has detected a series of cases involving trafficking of elephants tusks in the past.

In four such cases, a total of 38.6 kg of elephant tusks were seized by the DRI last year. Eight people were arrested in these cases.

DRI seizes 16.962 kg elephant ivory in West Bengal

IANIS | Kolkata January 02, 2019 Last Updated at 17:40 IST

About 17 kg of elephant tusks, valued at Rs 1.69 crore, was recovered by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) on the outskirts of Siliguri in north Bengal on Wednesday.

One person was arrested, a DRI official said.

The elephant tusks, cut into four pieces, were being clandestinely transported in a vehicle that was loaded with a consignment of black tea.

"Driver of the vehicle was arrested and consequently, the elephant tusks valued at about Rs. 1.69 crore in the international market have been seized under the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962 read with the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972," the official said.

On interrogation, the driver of the impugned vehicle confessed that the elephant tusks were handed over to him in Baihata Chariali by an unknown person from Guwahati for transporting these to Kolkata.

Preliminary investigation revealed that the tusks were extracted from poached elephants in the forested areas of Assam and were being carried to the eastern metropolis for ultimate export to South East Asian countries via Bangladesh, the official said.

According to the agency, Indian (Asian) Elephant (*Elephas maximus*) is listed in Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and also in the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

DRI has detected a series of cases involving trafficking of elephant tusks. In four such cases in the past, a total of 38.604 kg of elephant tusks have been seized by the agency last year. Eight persons have been arrested in these cases.

-- IANS

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PTI January 02, 2019 17:13 IST

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