

DRI sleuths seize foreign cigarettes, gold; 9 held

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Foreign origin cigarettes and gold worth Rs 7.11 crore besides Red sanders and endangered shells were seized over the last six days in different cases and nine people arrested in this connection, DRI officials said here Wednesday.

DRI sleuths seized 7.9 kg of gold worth Rs 2.61 crore from two passengers who arrived from Assam at the Chennai Egmore Railway Station Wednesday.

The duo allegedly smuggled the gold across the India-Myanmar border by concealing it in specially made pockets stitched to their clothes, a Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) release said.

Foreign cigarettes, which are prohibited for import and sale under the Customs act, were seized from Chennai port on May 2. The cigarettes, concealed in cartons, were declared as diapers.

About 30 lakh cigarettes worth Rs 4.5 crore were seized, the release said.

In another incident, DRI officials intercepted six passengers bound for Singapore from Chennai airport and recovered 180 kg of 352 large shells.

The shells belong to endangered marine species 'Turbo marmoratus' listed in the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

In another case, 14 tons of Red sanders were recovered at Chennai Port Trust and Krishnapatnam Port in Andhra Pradesh which were declared as textile materials and food items.

Nine people have been arrested for their alleged involvement in the series of smugglings, the release added.