

# DRI seizes 114MTs of Areca Nuts worth Rs. 8.61 crore smuggled into the country through Tuticorin and Chennai Ports

Posted On: 06 FEB 2023 8:35PM by PIB Delhi

Based on specific information that Areca Nuts in huge quantity are being illicitly imported into India from Jebel Ali, Dubai and Singapore in containers by mis-declaring the goods as “Compounded Animal Feed” and Barley, through Tuticorin and Chennai port, totally five containers (2 containers at Tuticorin port and 3 containers at Chennai Port) were intercepted and taken up for investigation. On examination of the said containers, it was found that the gunny bags stacked in the first two rows contained the declared cargo “Compounded Animal Feed” as well as “Barley” and the remaining gunny bags contained “Areca Nuts”.

The total quantity of 114.372 MTs of smuggled Areca Nuts totally valued at Rs. 8.61 crore along with the cover cargo *viz.*, Compounded Animal Feed and Barley were seized under the Customs Act, 1962 for violating the provisions of the Customs Act. The goods of Areca Nuts are classifiable under CTH 08028020 which attracts Customs Duty @ 100% on the prevailing tariff value of \$9093/MT and hence, in order to evade payment of appropriate Customs duty, the gang attempted to smuggle the Areca Nuts by way of concealment in the guise of ‘Compounded Animal Feed’ and ‘Barley’.

The preliminary investigation revealed that the import of all 05 containers were arranged by a person from Chennai. Swift follow up action initiated, led to apprehension of the said king pin who has arranged smuggling of all the consignments by way of concealment. He was arrested and remanded to Judicial Custody.

Further, DRI Chennai Zonal Unit had earlier seized 232.349MTs of Areca Nut, valued Rs.11.72 crore concealed along with various cover goods and imported from Indonesia in the last few months. In the financial year 2022-23, about 3670.19 MT of areca nuts valued at Rs 143 crore has been seized by the various units of DRI.

Busting of such a huge racket of Areca Nut smuggling by DRI, not only saved the revenue of public exchequer, but also safeguarded the interest of domestic industry especially of those farmers, cultivators and traders whose livelihoods are entirely dependent on Areca Nut business.

\*\*\*\*

**RM/PPG/KMN**

(Release ID: 1896781)