

Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) officials seized 4 Leopard (*Panthera pardus*) Skins in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir

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An operation was launched by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) after it developed specific intelligence over a period of time that a few gangs in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) are involved in the illegal wildlife trade and, were searching for prospective buyers for the sale of leopard skins. Accordingly, a detailed plan was made to apprehend the members of the gangs.

Posing as buyers, officer of Mumbai Zonal Unit (Goa Regional Unit) reached Srinagar in J&K.

After several rounds of negotiations, the sellers brought the first skin of a leopard to a pre-designated place in Srinagar near Dalgate. Officers on surveillance intercepted a person who was carrying a leopard skin near the designated place. On the basis of his information, another accomplice was also intercepted at a public place in Srinagar.

After securing the first catch, the rounds of intense negotiations were continued with another gang of sellers. After overnight negotiations, the sellers finally agreed to bring 3 leopard skins to a pre-designated location. 3 people carrying the contraband (3 leopard skins) were intercepted. The leads generated by information gathered from them indicated that 3 more persons connected to the transaction were waiting nearby at a public place. 2 teams of officers were immediately dispatched and they intercepted 3 persons at the public place. Thus, total 8 persons involved in this illegal trading of wild life, including one serving police constable, were intercepted and total 4 skins of Leopard (*Panthera pardus*) were recovered. Initial investigation suggested that the leopards were poached from Ladakh, Doda and Uri.

The subject 4 leopard skins were seized under the provision of section 50(1)(c) of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 as amended.





The seized contraband and the 8 persons who committed the offence under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 were handed over to the officials of Department of Wild Life Protection, Jammu and Kashmir after initial seizure proceedings under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

PPG/KMN

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