

DRI thwarts organised red sanders smuggling; seizes 15 MTs of red sanders worth ₹6.26 crore at Chennai; four arrested

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The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has thwarted an attempt to illegally export restricted/prohibited red sanders valued at ₹6.26 crore. A total of 15 MTs of red sanders was seized from various warehouses and four persons were arrested in the case. Red sanders (*Pterocarpus santalinus*) is an item listed in Appendix II of CITES and in Schedule-IV of Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 and prohibited/restricted for exports under Foreign Trade Policy.

Specific intelligence was developed by the officers of DRI that red sanders were being clandestinely secreted at various godowns in Chennai and its outskirts and the same are being attempted for export from Chennai via Delhi. Accordingly, DRI officers carried out coordinated systematic searches at three premises from 09.12.2025 to 11.12.2025.

A total of 169 red sanders logs of Grade A quality weighing 5.55 MT, out of which 76 logs were wrapped and concealed using white HDPE packing material and ready to be loaded onto a truck for transporting to Delhi for illicit export, with the cover cargo of 'Household articles' was recovered in one premises. The offending goods as well as the cover goods meant for illicit export were seized under the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962. In other two premises, 9.55MTs of red sanders in the form of logs, roots and furniture were recovered and seized.

The four arrested persons include the key operative, his two associates involved in packing and transportation of red sanders, and a supplier-side intermediary. Further investigation is under progress.





The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence remains committed to continuing its relentless crackdown against those attempting to compromise the economic frontiers of India and endangering the country's rich biodiversity.

NB/KMN

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