

DRI busts several wildlife trafficking networks across India operations

Over 440 endangered/protected wild life animals and about 15 kg in ivory articles and elephant ivory seized in coordinated operations across country; 33 arrested

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In a series of intelligence-driven pan-India operations against illegal wildlife trafficking, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has seized **440 endangered/protected wild life animals and about 15 kg in ivory articles and elephant ivory in coordinated operations across country; and arrested 33 persons** involved in wildlife trafficking.

On 10.07.26, officers of DRI intercepted persons engaged in the illegal trade of elephant ivory near Sujangarh, Rajasthan. The operation resulted in the recovery and seizure of **about 11 kg elephant ivory**. Four persons were apprehended and, were handed over to the Forest Department along with the seized ivory, for further action under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. The Indian elephant (*Elephas maximus*) is listed under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, which prohibits trade in elephants and their derivatives. Commercial trade in ivory is also prohibited in India in line with its obligations under CITES, and the import and export of ivory are prohibited under the Foreign Trade Policy.



Ivory Tusks



Ivory Idols of Deities

Earlier, in Howrah, DRI officers, apprehended two persons and seized **two idols of deities made of ivory**, which were suspected to have been smuggled into India from Bangladesh.

In another operation at Mysuru, Karnataka, DRI officers seized **4 kg elephant ivory** and apprehended three persons involved in its illegal trade before handing them over to the Forest Department for further action.

On 7th-8th July, 2026, an interstate wildlife trafficking syndicate was busted at multiple locations across Maharashtra and West Bengal. This was a first-of-its-kind of large joint operation conducted by the DRI, Mumbai, and the CBI, Economic Offences Branch (EOB), Mumbai, with the support from the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB). During the operation, several wildlife species listed under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, namely, 15 Slow Lorises, 2 Binturongs, 28 Star Tortoises, 6 Egyptian Vultures and 2 Shikra birds were recovered and rescued. The intelligence in the case was developed by DRI and the matter is now being investigated by CBI. Six accused persons were apprehended and subsequently arrested by the CBI.



Binturong



Egyptian Vultures



Shikra



Slow Loris



Yellow belly Ball Python & Silvery lutung

In some other instances, DRI has successfully foiled multiple attempts to smuggle protected wildlife into India through international airports by passengers arriving from Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur and Colombo. In which species like Albino Red eared Turtle, Hypo zero Bearded Dragon, African spurred tortoise, Borneo python, Green iguana, Mangrove monitor lizard, Argentine black and white tegu, Goeldi's marmoset, Yellow checked gibbon, Indonesian blue tongued skink, Siamang Gibbon, Woolley monkey, Silvery lutung, Yellow belly Ball Python, Pastel ball python etc. have been seized and rescued.



Wolley Monkey



Yellow Cheeked Gibbon



Siamang Gibbon



Argentine black & white Tegu



Star Tortoise



African Spurred Tortoise

DRI's coordinated operations in Bengaluru, Warangal, Pune, Surat, Chennai, Kolkata, Trichy, Madurai, Srikakulam, Hojai (Assam), Rajasthan, Mysuru, and Howrah, have led to the seizure and recoveries of wildlife products including, pangolin scales, leopard pelt, seahorse-based wildlife articles, Red sanders, and protected species of Gibbons, lizards, tortoises, birds, squirrels, snakes, red sand boa etc.



Seahorse based keychains

Various
types of
seized
reptiles



Several of these operations were executed in close coordination with partner enforcement agencies, including the CBI, WCCB, Airport Intelligence Units of Customs at Bengaluru, Kolkata, Trichy and Madurai, State Forest Departments, and local police authorities.

These sustained intelligence-led operations underscore DRI's commitment to combating organised wildlife crime and disrupting transnational trafficking networks dealing in endangered fauna and flora. DRI continues to strengthen India's obligations under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), thereby contributing to the protection of the country's rich biodiversity.

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