

DRI determined to check economic offences

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To focus on smuggling of gold, drugs, ganja and other banned products

Officials of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) are stepping up vigil in the State to check smuggling of narcotics and drugs, fake currency, gold, ganja and other banned and non-duty paid products.

Many foreign smugglers are operating with the help of local operatives causing huge revenue loss to the government, said DRI officials.

The Vijayawada unit of the DRI, which was established recently, is focussing on illegal import of foreign cigarettes evading tax in crores of rupees.

Smuggler gangs have developed a wide network in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and other neighbouring States, according to the officials.

“We seized about 40 lakh sticks of foreign cigarettes worth about ₹5.25 crore on Vijayawada outskirts along with a lorry.”

The ‘Paris’ brand cigarettes were reportedly imported from Myanmar and were being smuggled to Guntur, said DRI Vijayawada unit Deputy Director V. Ramakrishna.

Raid in Patna

The DRI arrested a distributor and produced him before the Economic Offences Court, Visakhapatnam.

A case under the Customs Act, 1962 has been registered against the accused.

The cigarettes were smuggled from Patna and a Bihar gang was behind the racket, Mr. Ramakrishna told The Hindu.

“Based on the information provided by the accused, we raided the godown in Patna. We are probing whether the cigarettes were locally made and given foreign brand names or imported from Myanmar as claimed by the accused,” the Deputy Director said and warned that severe action would be taken against the distributors, agents and sellers.

Mr. Ramakrishna said the DRI had a wide network and vigil had been strengthened on the National Highways, ports and railway stations.

Coordination

The DRI is coordinating with the Intelligence Bureau (IB), State and Central police and the line departments, he said.

“A few days ago we seized about 2 kg of gold. We will check smuggling of fake currency, ganja, narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances (NDPS), wildlife, gold and other banned products and deal sternly with the persons involved in economic offences,” he warned.

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