



Smugglers still prefer trains for transportation

Trains continue to be a preferred mode of transportation of contraband goods for smugglers



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GUWAHATI: Trains continue to be a preferred mode of transportation of contraband goods for smugglers, and this fact is borne out by data shared by the Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Government Railway Police (GRP).

According to the data, apart from narcotic substances, the smuggled items include gold, foreign cigarettes, foreign garments, areca nuts etc.

According to the GRP, around 3,000 packets of contraband foreign cigarettes were seized in 2021 from various railway stations of the State, which marked a sharp increase from the 390 packets seized in 2020. However, the low amount of seizures could be attributed to the severe COVID-19 situation. The corresponding figure for 2019 was 4,410 packets of foreign cigarettes.

The GPF also seized 10,318.44 gm of gold in 2019, followed by 3,103.03 gm in 2020 and 583.330 gm in 2021.

On the other hand, the RPF seized around 2.22 lakh sticks of contraband foreign cigarettes from the Guwahati Railway Station in 2021 alone. This apart, the RPF also seize foreign garments worth around Rs 6 lakh in 2021.

It is relevant to mention that according to sources in the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), gold from Dubai is brought to Bangladesh and then to Tripura. From Tripura, the contraband gold is sent to Assam by train, from where it goes to West Bengal and Delhi and thence to other parts of India.

According to the sources, a new modus operandi used by the smugglers was detected recently at the Guwahati Railway Station. A woman tried to smuggle 700 gm of gold by train with the ploy of wearing it in the form of numerous ornaments.

The sources said that she had come from Dubai to Bangladesh. Subsequently, she entered Tripura and reached the Guwahati Railway Station by train. She was travelling to Kolkata when she was arrested.

According to the sources, she had smuggled gold using this route and method at least 15 times before she was caught. The sources said that the kingpins of this gold smuggling racket use smart middle-class women as couriers and pay them around Rs 8,000-Rs 10,000 per trip.

Source: <https://www.sentinelassam.com/topheadlines/smugglers-still-prefer-trains-for-transportation-587879>