

DRI throws new light on cannabis smuggling

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KOLKATA, 25 MAY: The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has found that consignments of cannabis cultivated in Manipur are smuggled to Uttar Pradesh and Bihar from north-east states through Nabadweep in Nadia, some parts of South Dinajpur and Behrampore in Murshidabad.

The observation of the DRI has come at a time when Intelligence agencies ~ both Central and state ~ have repeatedly alerted the state police saying that Maoists are raising funds through the smuggling of narcotic substances including cannabis. The DRI's Kolkata zonal unit had seized more than 56,000 kilograms of cannabis from various places in West Bengal and the country's north-east states last year.

Most of the seized consignments of cannabis had come from Manipur and other north-east states. In West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh there is high demand of cannabis cultivated in Manipur.

"Small consignments of cannabis are sent to Uttar Pradesh via Nabadweep, Murshidabad and some parts of South Dinajpur," Mr Vasa Seshagiri Rao, additional director general, DRI's Kolkata zonal unit, said. He, however, refused comments on the strategy of the Maoists to raise funds through narcotic trade. "You should ask this question to the police," he said.

Regarding modus operandi of the gangs

involved in smuggling these narcotics, the officer said: "Small as well as large consignments of cannabis are sent to Siliguri, South Dinajpur, Nabadweep and Behrampore through trucks. Sometimes cannabis are packed and kept in oil tankers of the trucks." The agency also came to know that there are some wholesale dealers of cannabis in Nabadweep and sometime cannabis are also sent to other states through consignments of coal, he added

From Nabadweep and Behrampore, consignments of cannabis are sent to other states in the same way, he added. The officer said Siliguri is another city where the agency had made major seizures of cannabis.

The DRI sleuths, according to the officer, had recovered nine tons of cannabis from a vehicle in Dimapur.

"To avoid being noticed by police and other security agencies, the smugglers wore police uniform.

The car, in which the narcotic item was being smuggled, was painted to look like an Indian Army vehicle. Arms and ammunition were also seized from the smugglers," Mr

Rao said. Besides some parts of north Bengal, Cannabis are also smuggled out to country's north and north-east states via Dibrugarh.

Mr Rao said the Kolkata zonal unit of the agency had seized a consignment of heroin, placed under a train coach, worth Rs 8 crore from Malda district.

"The consignment of heroin actually came from Pakistan. We had information that the train had entered India through the Atari border."

