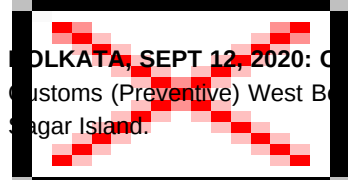


Customs seizes smuggled textiles worth Rs 3.3 Cr from fishing trawler

By TIOL News Service



KOLKATA, SEPT 12, 2020: On the basis of Specific Intelligence, a fishing trawler was intercepted by the officers of the Commissionerate of Customs (Preventive) West Bengal, in the intervening night of 06-09-2020 & 07-09-2020, which was coming from Diamond Harbour towards Sagar Island.

As per intelligence was to cross over to Bangladesh using an unauthorised riverine route and channel, carrying goods of Indian Origin in the guise of fishing. The officers of Customs with the support of Coast Guard had kept a vigil from various strategic points.

The fishing trawler was identified from a distance on the said route but the trawler changed the route and attempted to escape after noticing the official vessels. They were eventually intercepted near Geonkhali. The persons on board abandoned the trawler and jumped into the waters and attempted to flee but 6 of them were subsequently arrested with the help from Indian Coast Guard and the local police.

Upon search of the trawler, various incriminating documents along with identity cards of certain Bangladeshi and Indian nationals were found. Mobile phones with Bangladeshi SIM cards and personal effects, all made in Bangladesh, were recovered. The trawler also had flags of Bangladesh and it appears that the same would have been displayed after they had illegally crossed the International border.

The persons on board the trawler were engaging in smuggling of Sarees/Garments concealed inside the trawler in about 400 gunny bags having a value of Rs. 3.3 crore approximately. Interrogation of the arrested persons confirmed that the vessel was heading to cross over to Bangladesh through an unauthorised route with an intention to smuggle Indian goods to Bangladesh. Further investigation in the matter is under process.

This interception has revealed that all these unauthorised routes are being closely monitored by Government Agencies to prevent any illegal activities and in the interest of national security.

This is one of the biggest seizure in the recent past, involving the smuggling of export goods to Bangladesh.