

# SMUGGLING RED GOLD

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**1** Profits are steep in illegally slipping sanders out of the country, the seizures all-told make up barely 1%-5% of total quantity smuggled out

**2** Big guns, top netas, reportedly involved

**3** Gangs from Chennai, Vellore, Tiruthani & Moreh near Myanmar border involved, politicians get share of booty

**4** Agents hire workers from Tiruvannamalai & Vellore who are sent to AP to fell trees

**5** Woodcutters/labourers process the red sandalwood trees into sanders, which essentially involves removing the tree's bark and sap wood, leaving the heartwood trunk intact (sander)

## COST OF SANDERS

### FIRST STAGE

**₹2,000/kg | The price of sanders loaded onto trucks**

- Smuggled out of forests in four-wheel-drive vehicles in small quantities
- Make their way to godowns on Chennai's outskirts in cars and passenger vehicles
- Most often, transported from stockyards on fringes of the forests in trucks in which logs are concealed under piles of vegetables and fruits
- Smugglers ensure ownership of such property is under fake names and addresses

### SECOND STAGE

**₹3,000/kg | Price once sanders reach stockyards in Chennai's suburbs**

**IN SMALL QUANTITIES OF 35-50 KG, RED SANDERS TAKEN OUT IN AIR CARGO AND AIR PASSENGER BAGGAGE IN CONNIVANCE WITH CUSTOMS OFFICIALS**



- Ports favoured exit routes, contraband is packed in large quantities inside containers
- Once regular containers are inspected and sealed at container freight stations, the vehicles are taken to remote locations, where experts remove container door hinges

**and replace the goods with red sanders logs**

- Chennai and Tuticorin ports are where bulk of the commodity sent out
- Of late, Mumbai and Kolkata have been used as exit routes
- Seizures have been made recently at Bengal's Haldia port
- For smuggling via air, Gurgaon godowns preferred exit point to Delhi's international airport

### THIRD STAGE

**International Market: China, Japan**

**₹12,000 — ₹15,000/kg or ₹1.2cr — ₹1.3cr/tonne**

**PAYMENTS BROUGHT BACK INTO COUNTRY THROUGH HAWALA IN DOLLARS AND GOLD**