Bhutan Large Case



Overview

With just over 9,000 cases registered last year, Bhutan''s judiciary saw a reduction in its overall caseload compared to more than 9,800 cases filed the year before.

Key Takeaways

Operation Numkhor uncovered one of India's largest cross-border luxury vehicle smuggling syndicates involving Bhutan, with over 460 vehicles illegally registered and multiple key arrests. Overview of the CaseThe Bhutan vehicle smuggling case, known as Operation Numkhor, is a major cross-border criminal operation where luxury and high-end vehicles were illegally imported from Bhutan into India without paying customs duties. The syndicate used forged registration documents and fraudulent paperwork to legitimize the vehicles, which included both foreign-made luxury cars and Indian-manufactured vehicles that were exported and then smuggled back into India.

Scale and Impact

Investigations revealed that the racket involved at least 460 vehicles with fake registrations, and a recent CAG report highlighted 15,849 vehicles across seven Northeastern states sharing identical chassis and engine numbers, with 12,112 registered in Assam alone. In Kerala, it is estimated that 150–220 high-end SUVs were smuggled, of which 49 have been seized by customs authorities. Officials warned that the nationwide sale of vehicles with forged registrations poses a serious threat to national security, as these untraceable assets could be exploited by criminal or extremist groups.

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Key Arrests

The investigation has led to multiple arrests across India: Biswadip Das, a senior IT engineer and alleged mastermind, arrested near the Indo-Bhutan border on February 22, 2026. Deepak Patowary, a District Transport Officer in Assam, arrested for involvement in fraudulent registrations. Other operatives including Dipak Patowary, Ayub Ali, MD Mostafa Ahmed alias Rinku, Jalal Mandal, and Yash, an interstate coordinator from Jaipur, were also arrested for coordinating logistics and sales.

The Kochi Customs (Preventive) team conducted a coordinated operation covering nearly 3,000 km to apprehend suspects in multiple states.

Modus Operandi

The syndicate exploited Bhutan's open border arrangements to smuggle vehicles into India. Vehicles were often exported from India, then re-imported illegally to evade high customs duties. The network used forged documents and fraudulent registrations to sell these vehicles across multiple states, including Kerala and Assam.

Ongoing Investigation

The case remains under investigation, with authorities examining the full extent of the syndicate's operations and potential links to other criminal activities. A comprehensive report is expected to be submitted to central investigative agencies to address the national security implications of the racket. Operation Numkhor represents a significant example of cross-border smuggling and highlights the challenges faced by customs and law enforcement agencies in curbing sophisticated vehicle fraud networks.

Article Content

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Bhutan could be one of them as it has simplified the case through developing three core goals with each containing measurable indicators. This

Investment opportunities in Bhutan – Royal Bhutanese Embassy, New

Bhutan: Overview Bhutan is a small landlocked country in South Asia with a population of 763,249 in 2022 and a GDP per capita of Nu. 248,334.31 (equivalent to USD 3026.99) in 2021.

Large Shipping and Transport Cases

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Geography – Royal Bhutanese Embassy, New Delhi

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Geography Bhutan has a land area of 38,394 sq km bordered by China in the north and India in the east, west and south. The country is not only landlocked, but has one of the most

Opportunities and Challenges in Sustainable Development and

Bhutan''s greenhouse gas pollution is mitigated by its vast forests covering nearly three-fourths of its total area and reduced by creating and exporting renewable energy. Bhutan is a special

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