



National Investigation Agency
Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India



NIA, PUNJAB POLICE AND HARYANA POLICE CONDUCT A MASSIVE MULTI-STATE JOINT CRACKDOWN CODENAMED 'OPERATION DHVAST' IN TERRORIST-GANGSTER-DRUGS NEXUS CASE

In a massive multi-state operation, the National Investigation Agency (NIA), in coordination with Punjab Police and Haryana Police, on Wednesday raided 324 locations and seized a huge cache of arms and ammunition, besides other incriminating material, in the notorious terrorist-gangster-drug smugglers nexus cases.

Several suspects were detained during the raids, conducted as part of 'Operation Dhvast' in eight states, namely Punjab, Delhi, Haryana, UP, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Chandigarh and Madhya Pradesh.

While NIA knocked 129 doors, Punjab Police launched searches at 143 places in 17 districts and Haryana Police raided 52 location in 10 districts simultaneously beginning 5.30 a.m.

The day-long searches were aimed at breaking the terror nexus of Arsh Dalla, a designated terrorist, apart from dreaded gangsters such as Lawrence Bishnoi, Chhenu Pehalwan, Deepak Teetar, Bhupi Rana, Vikash Lagarpuriya, Ashish Choudhary, Gurpreet Sekhon, Dilpreet Baba, Harsimrat Simma, Anuradha etc.

The focus of today's raids was on weapon suppliers, financiers, logistic providers and hawala operators associated with the hardcore gangs working with drug smugglers and terrorists based out of other countries like Pakistan and Canada. The raiding parties have seized 1 Pistol, assorted ammunition (both live and used cartridges), in addition to 60 mobile phones, 5 DVRs, 20 SIM cards, 1 hard disk, 1 pen drive, 1 dongle, 1 WiFi router, a digital watch, two memory cards, 75 documents and Rs. 39, 60,000 in cash.

These were the sixth in the series of such crackdowns launched by NIA following the registration of three cases since August 2022 of conspiracies related to targeted killings, terror funding of pro-Khalistan outfits, extortion etc. Notable among these cases are the sensational killing of Maharashtra builder Sanjay Biyani and international Kabaddi player Sandeep Nangal Ambia in Punjab last year.

NIA investigations have revealed that the conspiracies were being hatched in jails of different states and were being executed by an organized network of operatives based abroad. The spotlight on these gangs has become sharper after reports of several prisons becoming havens of the deadly nexus and hubs of gang wars, which recently resulted in violence and murder inside Goindwal Jail and Tihar Jail.

The NIA has further found that many criminals, who were leading the gangsters in India, had fled to countries like Pakistan, Canada, Malaysia and Australia, from where they were engaged in planning serious crimes in association with criminals lodged in jails across India. These groups were carrying out targeted killings and raising funds for their nefarious activities through smuggling of drugs and weapons, hawala and extortions.

Some of the locations where raids were conducted today included: Abohar, Moga, Fazilka, Ludhiana, Mohali, Ferozpur, Tarn Taran, Ludhiana, Faridkot, Roopnagar, Nawashahar, Ferozpur, Amritsar, Patiala, Bernala and Jalandhar districts of Punjab; Gurugram, Yamuna Nagar, Ambala, Rohtak, Sirsa, Kurukshetra and Jhajjar districts of Haryana; Sri Ganga Nagar, Churu, Bikaner and Jaipur districts of Rajasthan; Baghat, Meerut and Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh; Bhind and Barwani districts of Madhya Pradesh; besides Dwarka, North, North-east, South-east, South, Outer and Outer North districts of Delhi/ NCR.

NIA had previously conducted searches at 231 locations and seized 38 arms, including 4 lethal weapons, along with 1129 rounds of ammunition. It has so far frozen 87 banks accounts and attached 13 properties, besides seizing 331 digital devices, 418 documents and two vehicles. Two absconders have been declared as designated individual terrorists, and NBWs have been issued against 10 persons and LOCs against 14 others.

Further investigations are on to dismantle such terror networks as well as their funding and support infrastructure.

