

/AHMEDABAD/CRIME/ACCUSED TARGETED ILLITERATES TO PUT FAKE NO

Accused targeted illiterates to put fake notes in circulation

By Brendan Dabhi, Ahmedabad Mirror | Updated: Nov 26, 2019,



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Even as Surat Police Crime Branch on Monday was granted 20-day remand from a local court to interrogate four of the five accused in the fake currency notes case, it has now come to light how the illegal operation, killed in its infancy by the alert police, would have spread its tentacles in Gujarat's economy.

Police officials on Monday revealed that the five accused, including a swami from a temple in Kheda district, planned to press the fake Rs 2,000 notes into circulation through localities with high illiteracy in rural and semi-urban areas, where people would not instantly realise they had been duped with counterfeit notes.

While police believe they seized most of the fake currency printed by the gang in a temple in Ambivav village of Kheda using sophisticated equipment, they suspect a few notes may have escaped their grasp and landed in the hands of owners of small shops and retailers who were targeted by the gang.

DCP Rahul Patel of Surat Crime Branch, when asked if they were sure all the counterfeit currency had been seized, told Mirror, "While we are very sure that we have arrested the gang after their very first attempt at printing fake currency notes, we believe that at least some amount has been distributed among retailers before their arrest, but it is a very small amount."

When asked about the probability of these fake notes circulating in the economy, DCP Patel said, "These notes have not been printed in a mint. The real Rs 2,000 currency notes have been scanned using a high-definition scanner and printed on good quality paper. However, one may not be able to gauge at first glance that the notes are counterfeit; their touch and feel are different from the original."

The Surat crime branch had, on the basis of a tip-off, seized 5,013 fake notes of Rs 2,000 denomination with Rs 1,00,26,000 face value on Sunday.

This operation was undertaken after Crime Branch arrested Pratik Chodwadia from a farm house near Kamrej in Surat, recovering 203 fake notes of Rs 2,000 denomination from him. It was his interrogation that revealed the names of four others including the Swami.

On Sunday, the police arrested Praveen Chopra, Kadu Chopra, Mohan Madhav and a priest named Radha Raman Swami.

While Praveen Chopra, Kadu Chopra and Mohan Madhav were arrested with fake currency worth Rs 19 lakh, Rs 15 lakh and Rs 12 lakh respectively, their interrogation led to the arrest of the temple priest Radha Raman Swami with fake currency worth Rs 50 lakh.

Praveen, arrested on Sunday from Sarthana area of Surat, is a habitual offender and has been arrested at least nine times. He had been absconding in another fake notes case filed in Amreli when he was arrested in the current case. The arrest in the earlier case will be made after the remand process in this case has been completed, said DCP Patel.

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