

# Kingpin escapes as Rs 5 lakh fake notes seized in Chennai

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CHENNAI: In one of the biggest single hauls of fake currency in recent times, police on Friday seized counterfeit Indian currency notes adding up to Rs 5.03 lakh from a gang in north Chennai. The kingpin managed to escape but three of his associates were nabbed, police said.

The notes, in denominations of 500 and 1,000, had most security features stipulated by the reserve bank, an investigating officer said, adding, "They could have been printed in Pakistan."

Acting on a tip-off, teams led by MKB Nagar assistant commissioner of police Govi Manoharan and two inspectors intercepted a car near Moolakadai on Erukancherry High Road at 9.30pm.

The four occupants abandoned the car and fled. Police managed to nab one of them, I Abdul Munaf (20) of Washermenpet, and seized fake notes adding up to 1.42 lakh. Based on the information provided by Munaf about S Rafeeqe, the brain behind the racket, special teams went to a building near Kodungaiyur, where he was staying for two months. "When our teams surrounded the building, Rafeeqe got out through a window and jumped on to the terrace of an adjacent building, went on to the next and escaped," joint commissioner (west zone) K Shanmugavel said.

Police searched the area but couldn't trace him. "We later found blood stains on the terrace of the building adjacent his and near the spot where he landed. We suspect he was injured and are checking all private hospitals in the area," a police officer said. Counterfeit notes adding up to Rs 2,65 lakh, a computer, a data card, two iPads and a credit card-swiping machine were seized from Rafeeqe's house. Police then nabbed A Abdul Ismail, 22, of Mannadi and B Wasim Raja alias Wasim, 24, of Putty Sahib Street in Mannadi and seized fake notes adding up to Rs 96,000.

Rafeeqe, who was initially involved with gangsters P T Ramesh and 'Tokyo' Mani near Red Hills and later worked for a rival gang of 'Ennore' Dhanasekaran, was arrested a couple of years ago, police said.

In prison, Rafeeqe mingled with some of those involved in fake currency rackets. After his release, he often visited Howrah in West Bengal to meet fake currency racketeers, police said. "We found some receipts of lodges and rooming houses in Howrah. He may also have been in touch with racketeers from Pakistan to pump fake currency into India," a senior police officer said.

Police said Rafeeqe paid the racketeers Rs 100 for a fake Rs 1,000 note and distributing the notes to his associates at Rs 200 per each Rs 1,000 fake currency note. The gang mostly 'supplied' the fake notes to the Tasmac shops in the city. "We have asked all Tasmac shops to check the notes while tendering change to customers," the officer added.

Source: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/Kingpin-escapes-as-Rs-5-lakh-fake-notes-seized-in-Chennai/articleshow/18095884.cms>