

Pak Origin Waterkeeper and Mushroom Seeds from Dubai Seized in Nhava Sheva

- Investigation uncovers Dubai-routed transshipment and misdeclaration of country of origin; Detection of total 46,920 kg Pakistani origin watermelon and muskmelon seeds smuggled into the country
- *Major seizure: The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) seized approximately 25,000 kg of Pakistan-origin watermelon seeds, valued at around ₹2.02 crore, at Nhava Sheva Port.*
- *Country-of-origin misdeclaration: The consignment was falsely declared as UAE-origin muskmelon seeds to circumvent India's prohibition on Pakistani goods.*
- *Dubai transshipment: Investigations revealed that the goods were shipped from Karachi to Jebel Ali, Dubai, transferred into different containers and loaded onto another vessel for onward shipment to India.*
- *Two arrests: The son and nephew of the Importer Exporter Code (IEC) holder were arrested on 22 October 2026 for their alleged roles in the operation. The son owned and directed the Dubai-based supplier firm, while his cousin handled import formalities and domestic sales in India.*
- *Earlier suspicious consignment: The importer had previously imported 22,000 kg of muskmelon seeds from the same Dubai-based supplier in February 2026, also declared as UAE-origin.*
- *Import policy violations: The consignment violated:*
 - *DGFT Notification No. 06/2025-26 dated 2 May 2025, prohibiting direct or indirect imports or transit of goods originating in or exported from Pakistan.*
 - *DGFT Notification No. 02/2023 dated 5 April 2024, restricting imports of watermelon seeds with effect from 1 July 2024.*
- *Total detection: The investigation uncovered a total of 46,920 kg of Pakistan-origin watermelon and muskmelon seeds allegedly smuggled into India.*
- *Previous enforcement actions: The operation follows DRI seizures involving over 362 metric tonnes of Pakistani-origin dry dates routed through Dubai and 7,311 metric tonnes of Pakistani-origin industrial/ Himalayan rock salt routed through Colombo.*
- *Objective: DRI is continuing its investigation to dismantle networks involved in customs fraud, origin misdeclaration and circumvention of India's import prohibitions.*

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The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), under *Operation Deep Manifest*, has unearthed another attempt to circumvent India's prohibition on the import of goods originating in or exported from Pakistan. The operation, conducted between 11 September and 22 October 2026, led to the interception of a consignment of around **25,000 kg Pakistan-origin watermelon seeds** that had been routed through Dubai and falsely declared as of UAE origin to evade the import prohibition. Two persons were arrested on 22nd October 2026.

Acting on specific intelligence, DRI officers examined a consignment of around 25,000 kg seeds, declared as of UAE-origin muskmelon seeds, imported through Nhava Sheva Port. Although, examination revealed that the goods were watermelon seeds, with evidence indicating their Pakistani origin.



Preliminary investigation revealed a deliberate transshipment arrangement designed to conceal the true origin of the goods. The seeds were initially shipped from Karachi Port, Pakistan, to Jebel Ali Port, Dubai, in one set of containers aboard a vessel. Following transshipment at Jebel Ali, the goods were transferred into another set of containers and loaded onto a different vessel for onward shipment to India. The change of containers and vessels, coupled with the misdeclaration of country of origin and fabricated import documentation, was intended to disguise the Pakistani origin of the consignment. The investigations yielded crucial documentary evidence, clearly establishing the movement of the consignment from Pakistan through Dubai to India, contradicting the declared UAE origin.

The investigation further revealed that the import was in contravention of the applicable import policy on two counts. First, the direct or indirect import or transit of all goods

originating in or exported from Pakistan is prohibited under DGFT Notification No. 06/2025-26 dated 2 May 2025. Second, watermelon seeds have been restricted for import into India with effect from 1 July 2024, vide DGFT Notification No. 02/2023 dated 5 April 2024.

Accordingly, the consignment, having a market value of approximately Rs. 2.02 crore, was seized on 14 October 2026 under the relevant provisions of the Customs Act, 1962.

Further investigation revealed that the importer had brought in an earlier consignment of **22,000 kg muskmelon seeds** in February 2026 from the same Dubai-based supplier, declaring the goods as UAE-origin. The evidences indicates that this consignment had also been transshipped, thus casting serious doubt on the declared country of origin.

Investigation has revealed the involvement of two related persons, the son and nephew of the Importer Exporter Code (IEC) holder, who were allegedly handling different legs of the operation. The son is the owner and director of the Dubai-based supplier firm, while his cousin was handling import-related formalities and domestic sales in India. Both persons were arrested on 22 October 2026.

This operation follows DRI's recent major enforcement actions against Pakistani-origin goods routed through third countries to evade India's import prohibition. In September 2026, DRI seized over 362 metric tonnes of Pakistani-origin dry dates packed in 13 containers at CFS Ambad, Nashik, after uncovering their transshipment through Jebel Ali, Dubai, and misdeclaration of origin. More recently, in Oct.2026, DRI detected an illegal import of 295 containers carrying 7,311 metric tonnes of Pakistani-origin industrial/Himalayan rock salt routed through Colombo, Sri Lanka, using fabricated certificates of origin and invoices.

Following the Pahalgam terror attack in April 2025, the Government of India prohibited the direct or indirect import or transit of all goods originating in or exported from Pakistan, in the interest of national security and public policy, vide DGFT Notification No. 06/2025-26 dated 2 May 2025.

DRI remains committed to identifying and dismantling networks engaged in customs fraud and the circumvention of import prohibitions, thereby safeguarding the integrity of India's trade controls and economic security.