

## 2 Indian women arrested in Nepal with banned currency notes

Two Indian women from the northeast state of Mizoram have been arrested in Nepal for carrying banned Indian currency notes.

Lalring Heti, 41, and Lal Moonbami, 37, were arrested Monday at the airport in Bhadrapur in eastern Nepal while trying to catch a flight to Kathmandu, police said Wednesday.

The two women, both of whom are residents of Champai, a district nearly 200 km from Aizawl, the capital of Mizoram, were carrying Rs.195,000 in Indian currency notes of Rs.500 and Rs.1000 denomination, both of which are banned in Nepal.

The two women have been sent to Kathmandu to undergo investigation by the revenue investigation department, police said.

The arrest of the two Indian women comes less than 10 days after a British national, Venkatraman Jagannathan, was arrested at the Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu for carrying Rs.50,000 in Indian 1,000-rupee currency notes.

Though lower denominations Indian currency notes are accepted in Nepal, the government banned the use of 1,000-rupee and 500-rupee notes more than a decade back following the Reserve Bank of India guidelines.

The step was taken to prevent the growing counterfeiting of Indian currency by organised criminal networks running through several countries as well as to prevent the sponsoring of terrorist activities. However, people in India and other countries still largely remain ignorant about the restrictions, resulting in trouble at Nepal airports.

In June, Indian national Anil Sharma faced a harrowing time after he was found to be carrying Rs.140,000 in 1,000-rupee notes. Carrying large sums in Indian currency, be it in the banned notes or even lesser denomination, is also a punishable offence in Nepal if the carrier is not an Indian or a Nepali national.

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