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Elon Musk's Starlink Used by Maritime Smugglers Caught With INR 36,000 Crore (\$4.26 Billion) Methamphetamine in Andaman Waters



Tarun Karthick

Campbell Bay,
29 November 2024

In a significant revelation, Elon Musk's satellite internet service, Starlink, has been linked to a massive drug bust in the Andaman Sea, where approximately 6,000 kilograms of methamphetamine were discovered aboard a Myanmar fishing trawler near Barren Island of the UT of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India. The Indian Coast Guard intercepted the vessel and apprehended six Myanmar nationals onboard.

Initial reports indicated that the suspects were in possession of an Inmarsat satellite phone. However, recently, the Director General of Police (DGP) of Andaman and Nicobar Police, Mr. Hargobinder Singh Dhaliwal, informed PTI that investigators also found a Starlink mini dish, along with sim cards from multiple countries, Myanmar currency, and the previously reported Inmarsat device.

This marks the first instance of smugglers using Starlink's high-speed internet connectivity to navigate remote and rough sea routes in the region. According to the DGP, while Starlink services

are unavailable in Myanmar—the fishing trawler's country of origin—they are accessible in nearby regions. Investigators plan to approach SpaceX, Starlink's parent company, to gather details regarding the device's purchase, usage, and activity history.

A Game-Changer in Smuggling Operations

Starlink is a satellite-based broadband service developed by SpaceX, a private aerospace manufacturer and space transportation company founded by Elon Musk in 2002. The service leverages a constellation of low Earth orbit satellites to deliver high-speed internet access, particularly in remote or underserved areas.

Primarily designed to bridge connectivity gaps worldwide, Starlink offers low-latency internet with download speeds suitable for real-time communication and advanced navigation. Its portable hardware, including mini dishes, has now been identified as a tool in facilitating illicit activities in remote maritime regions.

Smuggling Network and Investigation Progress

The fishing trawler, towed to Sri Vijaya Puram Port, was carrying

Methamphetamine valued at approximately 36,000 crore (USD 4.26 Billion) in the international market. Authorities are investigating the larger smuggling network, focusing on identifying international and regional operatives.

The DGP further clarified that the consignment was not intended for delivery in India. However, he added that the smugglers had contacted someone in India and investigation is being conducted to ascertain whether a fraction of the drugs was meant for distribution in India. The Deccan Herald reported this detail, the report was later shared on micro-blogging platform X (formerly Twitter) by the Andaman and Nicobar Police.

Implications of Technology in Crime

The use of advanced technology such as Starlink underscores the growing sophistication of smuggling operations. This incident highlights the dual-use nature of innovations like satellite internet, capable of transforming global connectivity while posing challenges for law enforcement.

The Andaman and Nicobar Police, in collaboration with other agencies, continues to investigate this high-stakes case.

Bishnu Pada Ray Requests Nitin Gadkari to Renew Proposals and Convert Six State Highways of A & N Islands into National Highways



Rohit Kumar

Sri Vijaya Puram,
29 November 2024

Mr. Bishnu Pada Ray, Member of Parliament (MP) for Andaman & Nicobar Islands in the 18th Lok Sabha, has urged the Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Mr. Nitin Gadkari, to revive the long-awaited upgradation of six key State Highways to National Highways (NH).

The push for these road upgrades began during Mr. Ray's earlier tenure in the 16th Lok Sabha (2014-2019), when he successfully secured principal approval for the upgradation of six State Highways in 2017. These roads were seen as crucial for enhancing connectivity and spurring development in the region. In response to his efforts, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) had tasked the Andaman Public Works Department (APWD) with preparing Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for the projects, as outlined in MoRTH's letter No. NH-14014/187/2015-P&M dated 6th July 2017.

The six State Highways earmarked for NH status include:

- Jetty Hut Bay to RK Pur and VK Pur (Little Andaman) – 22 km (SH-1)
- Havelock Jetty to Ramnagar Beach (Havelock Island) – 11 km (SH-4)
- Govindnagar Junction to

Kalapathar (Havelock Island) – 9 km
-Neil Jetty to Sitapur (Shaheed Dweep) – 4 km
- Kalara Junction to Ramnagar (SH-14, Diglipur) – 20 km
- Diglipur Bazaar (NH-4) to Hatilevel (SH-15) – 24.7 km

However, after the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, progress on these projects stalled, and the DPRs were not finalised. The delay in advancing these critical infrastructure projects left local residents, who had hoped for improved connectivity and economic growth, disheartened.

To revive these projects, Mr. Bishnu Pada Ray met Mr. Nitin Gadkari in Parliament on November 28, 2024. During the meeting, he urged the Minister to renew the proposal for the upgradation of the six roads and directed the A&N Administration to expedite the preparation and submission of the DPRs for early approval and execution.

Mr. Gadkari responded swiftly, instructing the concerned Secretary to fast-track the necessary actions for the implementation of these long-awaited projects.

Mr. Ray highlighted that the completion of the six NH projects would significantly address the region's infrastructure needs and improve the quality of life for its residents, marking a major milestone for the development of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

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Police Team from PS Chatham Arrests Accused in Gold Mortgage Fraud Case



Tarun Karthick criminal breach of the islands with the members. Acting Authorities have on this lead, urged the public to

Campbell Bay, 29 November 2024 fraudulent Following the authorities closely report any mortgage of gold. complaint, an FIR was filed under the Savarkar International activities by calling 112, 03192-232100, or 03192-236641. The arrested an Chatham against combination of apprehended by informants will individual involved her brother-in-law, mobile the Police at VSI remain in a case of P.K. Murugeshan, surveillance and airport. confidential.

a resident of local intelligence, This arrest Anarkali. In her the police team highlights the complaint, Sumathi gathered the commitment of the alleged that information Andaman and Murugeshan had suggesting that Nicobar Police in mortgaged her Murugeshan would ensuring justice gold ornaments be arriving in Sri and holding without her Vijaya Puram in criminals consent at Muthoot November to meet accountable for Finance and fled his family their actions. on this lead, urged the public to authorities closely report any monitored Veer information related to crime or illegal activities by calling 112, 03192-232100, or 03192-236641. The arrested an Chatham against combination of apprehended by informants will individual involved her brother-in-law, mobile the Police at VSI remain in a case of P.K. Murugeshan, surveillance and airport. confidential.

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Industries Department & A&NI KVIB to Organise Awareness Campaigns on Self-Employment Schemes in North & Middle Andaman



Tarun Karthick
Campbell Bay,
29 November 2024

The Directorate of Industries, along with the A&NI KVIB, has unveiled plans to organise a series of awareness campaigns under the "Berozgar Mukh UT" initiative. These campaigns aim to educate

the public, particularly unemployed youth and aspiring entrepreneurs in North and Middle Andaman districts, about government-sponsored self-employment and flagship schemes such as the PMEGP, PMFME, and PM Vishwakarma. The primary objective of the campaign is to

promote industrialisation by encouraging the establishment of micro-enterprises, individual units, and self-employment ventures through government financial assistance. Participants will receive detailed information on schemes implemented by various departments, including the Directorate of Industries, Agriculture, Fisheries, and others. Additionally, the programs will offer vocational guidance and consultancy services on critical aspects such as online loan applications, documentation, and project proposal preparation. Unemployed individuals

interested in setting up Hall, Danapur, jointly for ventures in the Gram Panchayats Pokadera and Mayabunder. - December 4, 2024, at 4:00 PM: Gram Panchayat Hall, Kishori Nagar. The schedule for the campaign is as follows: - December 5, 2024, at 10:00 AM: Gram Panchayat Hall, Kalighat. - December 2, 2024, at 10:00 AM: Gram Panchayat Hall, Nilambur, 3:00 PM: Gram Panchayat, Ganesh Diglipur. - December 2, 2024, at 3:30 PM: Gram Panchayat Hall, Kadamtala. - December 3, 2024, at 10:00 AM: Community accessible platform for Hall, Gram Panchayat rural entrepreneurs to gain insights and support for their business aspirations. For further details, individuals can contact the Directorate of Industries or the A&NI KVIB office. - December 3, 2024, at 4:00 PM: Zilla Parishad Vegetable Market, Gram Panchayat Hari Nagar. - December 4, 2024, at 10:30 AM: Community KVIB



Tribal Leaders Ayesha Majid and Rayhaan Pasha Welcome Dr. Chandra Bhushan Kumar - New Chief Secretary of A&N Islands



acknowledged his deep commitment to the welfare of the people, which earned him the trust and admiration of the Nicobarese people.

“The tribal people of Nicobar have always been his well-wishers, recognising his dedication to their progress,” Majid stated. “We are confident that under his leadership as Chief Secretary, the administration will foster a renewed spirit of collaboration, bringing significant prosperity and development to the Nicobar Islands.”

The tribal community remains optimistic that Dr. Kumar’s leadership will address their unique needs and aspirations, nurturing a harmonious relationship with the administration and promoting sustainable growth in the region.

Tarun Karthick

Campbell Bay,
29 November 2024

Tribal Community Leader, Kumar, IAS, on his appointment as the Chief Secretary of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Mrs. Majid commended Dr.

Kumar’s exemplary service during his tenure as the Deputy Commissioner of Nicobar, highlighting his close association with the tribal community. She

Ayesha Majid, a renowned

to Dr. Chandra Bhushan

Mrs. Majid commended Dr.

tribal community. She

growth in the region.

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Training Programme on 'Addressing Child Needs through Bal Sabhas' Conducted in Little Andaman



speech, emphasising the significance of the training and its potential to empower the participants.

The programme included an insightful session by Ms. S. Parmeswari, Block Programme Manager (BPM), who introduced the concept and highlighted the importance of Bal Sabhas in addressing children's needs. Mr. Krishna Kanta Golder, Cluster Coordinator (CC), elaborated on the roles and responsibilities of child members in Bal/Balika Sabhas, stressing the importance of child empowerment, community participation, and child rights protection.


The event also saw contributions from Mr. Mohan Rao, Station House Officer (SHO) Hut Bay, and Ms. Albakka, Mukhya Sevika, ICDS, who added valuable perspectives on community involvement in child welfare.

The training session is part of an ongoing effort to engage and educate local stakeholders in fostering a child-friendly environment in Little Andaman.


Tarun Karthick
Campbell Bay,
29 November 2024

Training Programme on officials, including Pradhan, students from Govt. Model Bal Sabhas' at the Panchayat Senior Secondary School Samiti Hall. The event, held under the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Functionaries, Child Protection Abhiyan (RGSA), was designed to benefit a diverse group of local teachers.

The session was inaugurated by Mr. S. Paramanathan, Pramukh of Panchayat Samiti, Little Andaman, who graced the occasion as the chief guest. Mr. Belthazer, Block Development Officer, gave an introductory






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Training Program for Master Trainers on Vessel Communication System Held in N&M Andaman



Fisheries Office for organizing the event and highlighted the vital role of this technology in safeguarding lives.

The session was conducted by Mr. Shrikant Rao, Senior Manager at Tejas Networks, who elaborated on the significance of transponders and their benefits for multiple stakeholders, including the Department of Fisheries, fishermen, boat owners, and maritime agencies. He explained that transponders allow fishermen to send SOS signals in case of emergencies such as medical assistance, fire accidents, engine malfunctions, or man-overboard situations. In turn, maritime agencies can use these devices to send weather alerts, such as warnings about cyclones, heavy rains, or high tides, to fishermen at sea, advising them to move to safer locations.

Key features of the transponders include two-way communication, SOS signals, Potential Fishing Zone (PFZ) data, and weather alerts. A video demonstration on the installation of transponders was also shown to the participants, offering practical insights into the system's application.

Tarun Karthick
Campbell Bay,
29 November 2024

A training program was organized by the Department of Fisheries, A & N

Administration, in collaboration with Tejas Networks and the Zonal Fisheries Office, at the District Office conference hall, North & Middle Andaman (N&MA). This initiative, part of the national rollout of the Vessel Communication and Support System projects by the Ministry

of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Government of India, aimed to train Master Trainers on the application and maintenance of transponders. The program was inaugurated by the Deputy Commissioner of N&MA, Mr.

Dilkhush Meena, IAS, who addressed the gathering of Master Trainers and local fishermen. In his address, Mr. Meena emphasized the importance of transponders in ensuring the safety of fishermen at sea. He praised the efforts of Tejas Networks and the Zonal

The program was coordinated by Mr. Tapan Kr. Biswas, Assistant Director of Fisheries, N&M Andaman District, who expressed his gratitude to the Deputy Commissioner for motivating the participants and ensuring the success of the training.



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Transport Director Conducts Inspection at Sri Vijaya Puram Bus Terminus



washrooms.

During the visit, the Director addressed concerns about the poor condition of roads within the premises and instructed APWD engineers to expedite roadworks, which are already underway. With the renovation of the canteen building completed, Dr. Sohal also issued directives for its prompt operationalisation, ensuring it serves both daily commuters and employees at the terminus.

Engaging directly with commuters, Dr. Sohal listened to their grievances and issued immediate instructions for their resolution. He also took the opportunity to remind bus drivers and conductors about the importance of soft skills and sensitivity towards passengers.

Additionally, Dr. Sohal visited the Central Workshop, where he inspected the repair and maintenance of buses. He stressed that all buses should not only be in perfect working condition but also comply with legal standards.

Similar inspections will be carried out across all the Islands of the Union Territory, with feedback from commuters to be collected and addressed promptly.

A press release issued by the Transport Department confirmed the ongoing commitment to improving public transport services for the benefit of commuters.

Tarun Karthick

**Campbell Bay,
29 November 2024**

In a bid to improve public transport services, Dr. Jatinder Sohal, Director

of Transport, along with other senior officials, recently conducted an inspection of the Sri Vijaya Puram Bus Terminus to assess the facilities and services available to commuters. The inspection covered key areas such as bus conditions, terminus


infrastructure, parking arrangements, and commuter amenities.

Dr. Sohal reviewed the condition of buses, including their fitness expiry dates, and emphasized the importance of timely inspections and

repairs to ensure passenger safety. He also directed officials to maintain cleanliness and hygiene within the buses and the bus terminus, including ensuring good upholstery and proper facilities for commuters such as drinking water and

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