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Sand smuggling rampant in Odisha's Cuttack as officials turn blind to the menace

In a recent incident in Niali area, sand mafia had reportedly built an embankment to block the flow of Devi river, and constructed a road across it to facilitate illegal transportation of sand.



Mining officials demolishing the embankment on Devi river Photo | Express

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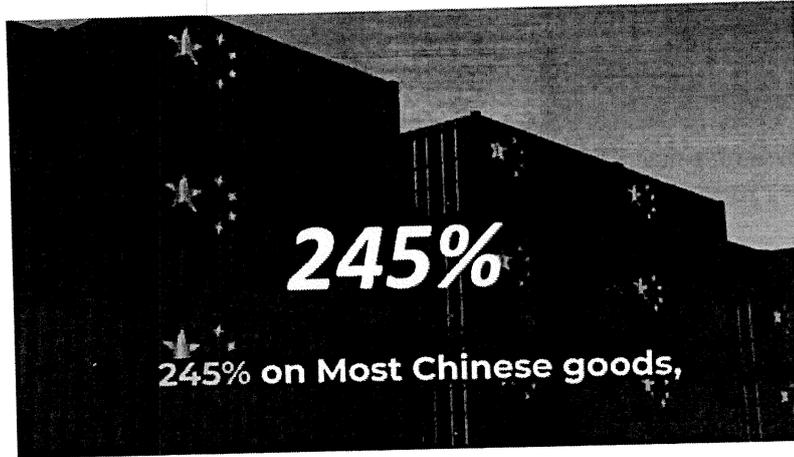


CUTTACK: Strict rules and regulations notwithstanding, illegal lifting and transportation of sand continues unabated in Cuttack district due to the alleged lack of inspection and enforcement activities by the Steel and Mines department.

In a recent incident in Niali area, sand mafia had reportedly built an embankment to block the flow of Devi river, and constructed a road across it to facilitate illegal transportation of sand. Turns out, the construction activities had been underway for the last almost two weeks but the



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As per sources, a sand quarry was shut down and fine amounting to Rs 2.45 crore imposed on the concerned lessee Benudhar Patra by the officials of Mines department after the latter was found to have been involved in illegal stacking of sand over a month back. While Patra is yet to pay the fine, it is being suspected that the embankment and road across Devi river was being constructed by Patra and his associates.

On being informed, a five-member team of the Mines department demolished the embankment and the road with the help of local police on Tuesday. Mines officer, Cuttack Circle Sambit Sahoo said they have sought a clarification from Patra in this connection, and necessary action would be initiated.

Local residents, however, have raised questions as to how the matter went unnoticed by the mining officials.

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sand smuggling

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