Smuggling

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# Introduction

Smuggling is the illegal transportation of objects, substances and goods from the international border and transits through different means. It might also include person but that talks about the issue of the human trafficking that has completely different moral and legal implications. The act of smuggling is the violation of the applicable laws of the country as well as other regulations. There are different reasons due to which people might be motivated to smuggle goods and other belongings. There might be a case of drug trade, or they might be looking for the exotic wildlife trade. There are cases of the illegal emigration as well as the tax evasion that might prompt people to be part of the smuggling.

# History of Smuggling

Smuggling has a long history in terms of the fact that it started with the dawn of time itself. Most of the times, smuggling is used in the context when the contraband items are attempted to be moved from international transit without following the safety regulations and laws of that country. It was in 13th century that smuggling considered to be a legitimate problem when it was seen that it was causing considerable damage to the life and populace of the people. The merchants would use to smuggle goods so that they are able to circumvent prohibitions as well as the avoid embargoes on certain goods and products. Most of the history that belongs to the smuggling refers to the historical and legal records. The problem with such official records is that they only detail the activities that were reported under the law and does not take into account the instances when these efforts were carried out without much notice by the legal authorities. One of the reasons that the smuggling started was the high level of duties and taxes that were levied on teas. Wines and other luxury goods and the merchants would start to smuggle these goods to make sure that they are able to avoid legal penalties and repercussions for these cases.

# Types of Smuggling

There are various types of smuggling activities that are carried out at the different point of time. Some of the examples of the range of activities that constitute smuggling are as followed.

## Goods

Most of the times, the instances of smuggling occur when the enterprising merchant attempts to make sure that they supply and demand for the good or service is heavily taxed. Most of the times, the duties and taxes are one of the prime reasons that the people are motivated to smuggle goods from the international border. As in most of the cases these are the luxury goods that are smuggled, so the merchant that tends to smuggle these goods is able to charge heavy premium for these goods in the illegal market. It has to be noted that the profits that are involved in the smuggling of the goods are quite lucrative. The profits for the obvious matter are also derived from the avoidance of the duties and taxes that are levied on the imported good. So not only the smugglers are able to bring their down their cost, they are able to charge the heavy premium on these goods.

## Wildlife Smuggling

The wildlife smuggling happens due to the demand for the exotic species and animals across the globe. There is high element of risk involved when such a movement is carried out. There are many bodies that are trying to regulate the practice of making sure that how the transfer of animals from one country to the another is controlled. There is human trafficking and organ trafficking as well that are being talked about in the context of the smuggling, but the fact is that their nature is inherently different as compared to the other instances when the legal and ethical implications of the smuggling are supposed to be carried out.

# Economics Behind Smuggling

Despite the fact that the smuggling has been carried out for quite some time now, one does not get to see enough economic research with regards to the way smuggling is being done at the broader level in the region. Most of the economists are of the point of view that how smuggling can be viewed as import substituting activity. The main consideration though that has to be kept in mind is that there is certain warfare consideration as well when one talks about the extent to which the smuggling is being carried out at the given point of time. The argument is being made that how smuggling might cause the lack of enhancement of the social welfare and how it does not provide any implicit benefit to the society. There are other implications as well such as the fact that how government loses the control of the international good trade, the impact on the fiscal recovery as well as the prevalence of the black market.

# Different Methods of Smuggling

There are various methods that are being used when one talks about the way smuggling is being carried out. There is concealment and containment that is being done on the clothing of the person. This has been done at the most extensive level and is one of the common ways through which the smuggling activity is carried out. There are some smugglers that tend to hide the whole transportation vehicle and the ship that are supposed to be used to bring about an illegal good an area. The other thing that is being done is that the border checks are being avoided such as overloading the cargo in the container and the ship and strategically placing it among the areas. The illegal crossing of the border is one of the other things that include the whole thing. There are some extreme measures as well that are taken by people such as hiding the smuggled items in their body and clothes. There are many people who are being caught during the course of the smuggling activity by the authorities but there are people who are still lured in this thing due to the higher reward that it provides to them. The existence of the Multi-Consignment Contraband (MCC) smuggling method (smuggling two or more different types of contraband such as drugs and illegal immigrants or drugs and guns at the same time) was verified following the completion of a study that found 16 documented cases of smugglers transporting more than one type of contraband in the same shipment.

# Conclusion

Smuggling is something that is being used and talked about in different context. Most of the times, the illegal transmission of the good, person and some other units is being termed as smuggling. It has to be noted that smuggling is considered to be an illegal activity and the punishments in some of the countries are considerably harsh when someone who is involved in smuggling is being caught. In popular perception smuggling is synonymous with illegal trade. Even [social scientists](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_sciences) have misconstrued smuggling as illegal trade.[[32]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smuggling#cite_note-32)While the two have indeed identical objectives, namely the evasion of taxes and the importation of contraband items, their demand and cost functions are altogether different requiring different analytical framework. As a result, illegal trade through customs stations is differently considered, and smuggling is defined as international trade through ‘unauthorized route’.

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