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51 Quintals of Mango Destroyed At Fancy Bazar Fruit Market In Guwahati, 2 Nabbed

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GUWAHATI: The sleuths of the Food Safety Wing seized 51 quintals of mango and destroyed them at Fancy Bazar Fruit Market in Guwahati on Tuesday, besides nabbing two West Bengal-based traders. Three other traders, however, fled the scene.

It looks like an ordinary incident, but it is not as the crime involved in it has a direct bearing on human health, involving dreaded diseases like cancer.

The mangoes seized were artificially ripened ones. Ripening agents, when pricked to fruits, speed up the process of their ripening. These agents are particularly unsaturated hydrocarbons like acetylene, ethylene, etc. However, a chemical known as calcium carbide (CaC₂) is the most commonly used one for artificial ripening of fruits. This chemical is only allowed for industrial use. The use of calcium carbide in fruits is banned in accordance with the Food Safety and Standards Act 2006. The Act is to consolidate the laws relating to food and to establish the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India for laying down science-based standards for articles of food and to regulate their manufacture, storage distribution, sale and import etc.

Consumption of artificially ripened fruits may lead to diarrhoea and vomiting. Prolonged consumption of fruits ripened by calcium carbide may lead to cancer in the alimentary canal.

The two nabbed West Bengal-based traders – Niranjan Roy and Sheikh Nurul Islam – have been handed over to Fancy Bazar police outpost.