

DRI busts two-way gold-diamond smuggling syndicate at Mumbai airport

Seizure of around 8.5 kg foreign-origin gold and more than 1,100 carats of diamonds worth over Rs. 13.5 crore; 8 arrested

Airport staff found facilitating both smuggling of gold into India and illicit export of diamonds to Dubai

Posted On: 02 OCT 2026 9:59PM by PIB Delhi

Continuing its sustained crackdown on organised smuggling, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has busted a sophisticated two-way smuggling syndicate operating through Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport, Mumbai, resulting in the seizure of 8.564 kg of 24-carat foreign-origin gold valued at approximately Rs. 12.64 crore and 1,168.97 carats of diamonds valued at approximately Rs. 1.09 crore. Eight persons, including an airport staff member, six transit passengers and an Indian outbound passenger, have been arrested.



Seized diamonds

Seized diamonds

On 30.09.26, acting on specific intelligence, DRI officers intercepted an airport staff member in the departure area while he was handing over diamonds to an Indian passenger travelling to Dubai for their illicit export from India. During his personal search, the airport staff was also found carrying three capsules containing foreign-origin gold dust in wax form, which had been handed over to him by a transit passenger.

During further interrogation, the airport staff disclosed the identity of the transit passenger who had handed over the gold to him. The said passenger was subsequently intercepted. The airport staff further revealed that five more transit passengers arriving on different flights from Dubai, Doha, Jeddah and Fujairah were also scheduled to deliver smuggled gold to him.



Seized 23 capsules of gold

DRI officers maintained discreet surveillance and intercepted all five passengers while they were handing over gold capsules to the airport staff in the transit area. The passengers were travelling onward to Singapore and Dhaka after delivering the smuggled gold. All eight persons have been arrested under the relevant provisions of the Customs Act, 1962.

In all, 23 capsules containing 24-carat foreign-origin gold dust in wax form, weighing 8.564 kg gross and valued at approximately Rs.12.64 crore, were recovered and seized. In addition, 1,168.97 carats of diamonds, comprising 132.17 carats of natural diamonds and 1,036.80 carats of lab-grown diamonds, collectively valued at approximately Rs.1.09 crore, were recovered and seized. The operation once again highlighted the insider threat involving compromised airport staff in facilitating gold smuggling through airports.

The operation has uncovered a distinctive two-way modus operandi, wherein the same airport staff member was allegedly facilitating the movement of contraband in both directions—receiving smuggled foreign-origin gold from international transit passengers for clandestine removal into India, while

simultaneously facilitating the illicit export of diamonds to Dubai through an outbound passenger.

SR/KT/KMN

(Release ID: 2318501) Visitor Counter : 89