

Kochi: DRI busts gang involved in smuggling

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KOCHI: The directorate of revenue intelligence on Tuesday said they had arrested intermediaries, carriers and even an investor, thus completely busting a gang involved in smuggling in at least 25 kilogram of gold through the Cochin International Airport Limited (Cial) in the recent past.

In the latest incident, DRI on Tuesday recorded the arrest of six persons who were nabbed on Monday for smuggling two kilogram of gold. The arrested persons were presented in court and remanded in judicial custody till August 20. Officers said that they had information regarding the passenger himself being an investor for the smuggling. Apart from him, two ground handling staff and three persons who were waiting outside the airport to collect the smuggled in goods were arrested.

The arrested persons are identified as Najeeb Ismail of Vamanapuram in Thiruvananthapuram, who was the passenger; ground handling workers Amal Bhasi and Midhun P N, both residents of Angamaly and contract staff of Celebi Ground Handling. The three dealers who waited outside to receive the gold were identified as Azees, Rahul and Jayakrishnan, all residents of Thrissur.

DRI officers nabbed the passenger who landed at Cial on a Dubai-Kochi Emirates flight at 3.30am on Monday after seizing two kilogram of gold worth Rs 70 lakh. Seized gold was in the form of four bars of 500g each. The metal was concealed in his pockets by the passenger who entered the smoking room near emigration soon after landing. The accused had kept the gold beneath a waste bin in the room before leaving the airport.

Bhasi and Midhun, who are drivers of passenger buggy inside the terminal came to the smoking room. DRI officers nabbed them while they were trying to hide the gold in their shoes. Others were nabbed from outside the terminal based on the information collected from them.