

Embryo smuggling racket: IVF clinic Co-founder grilled

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MUMBAI: Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) officials on Friday questioned Goral Gandhi, co-founder and scientific director of Indo-Nippon IVF clinic on Turner Road, Bandra, in connection with the embryo smuggling racket.

Officials said she denied her role but they have summoned her again on Monday. DRI had unearthed a racket involving smuggling of frozen embryos into the country and arrested Pariban Durai, who arrived from Malaysia, carrying an embryo in a specialised nitrogen cannister on March 15. Durai worked for a commission and, officials said, he has admitted to making 10 trips to the clinic in 18 months. He would arrive in the morning with the package and leave by an evening flight.

The embryo was to be delivered to Indo-Nippon, officials said. It would then be transplanted into the womb of an Indian surrogate, officials added, as the process could be cheaper in India. Rules on assisted reproduction are nebulous, but import of embryo is banned, except for research.