

## DRI seizes USD 1 million, arrests 2 foreign nationals

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In two separate incidents, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) officials at Delhi airport and Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru seized a total of USD 1 million (approx Rs 7 crores) on December 17 and 18 and arrested one Afghan national and one Singaporean national, respectively.

The two foreign nationals were arrested while trying to smuggle foreign currency out of India. In its continued crackdown on the smuggling of foreign currency out of India, the DRI, in the two operations, seized USD 4,90,000 valued at Rs 3.59 crore, and assorted US Dollar/ Euro/ Saudi Riyals currencies equivalent to Rs. 3.50 crore. "The foreign currency was being smuggled out of India to Dubai and Singapore, respectively," read an official statement from DRI.

In the operation conducted in Delhi on December 17, DRI officials intercepted the Afghan national who was about to board a flight from Delhi Airport to Dubai. A detailed search of the baggage of the passenger resulted in the recovery of US Dollars concealed in the inside walls of a microwave oven, in the packaging of ceramic mugs and the inner lining of the checked-in suitcase.

Initial investigations revealed that the foreign currency was being smuggled out of India as payment for gold that had been smuggled into India previously. The accused also admitted to having smuggled foreign currency out of India on three previous occasions, taking the total detection in the case to USD 1.04 million.

In an operation carried out in Bangalore, DRI sleuths intercepted the Singaporean national and recovered assorted foreign currencies such as US Dollar, Saudi Riyal and Euro of various denominations from his checked-in baggage. The total worth of foreign currency, in this case, was about Rs 3.5 crore.

This year, Indian Customs has arrested a total of 219 foreign nationals so far on charges of smuggling gold into India and foreign currency out of India. Arrested individuals include foreign nationals from South Asia, East Asia, South-East Asia, and Africa.