

Three, including airport staff, held in Rs 1.9cr gold haul

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Thiruvananthapuram: In a major haul, gold worth Rs 1.9 cr was seized by customs sleuths at Trivandrum International Airport on Thursday. Two passengers from Abu Dhabi and an airport employee were arrested by officers of Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) regional unit for smuggling the valuable metal.

The passengers were identified as Ibrahim Manzoor (33), a native of Kasaragod and Kannan V (32), a native of Ernakulam, who arrived in Abu Dhabi - Thiruvananthapuram Air India Express flight IX 538 at around 2.30am. Mohammed Shinaf (33), a customer service officer of Air India SATS (AISATS) service provider company, was arrested for helping them evade customs check.

The two passengers, who boarded bus from bay to the terminal building, handed over the gold to the customer service officer, who was also present in the bus. Based on intelligence information, the DRI officers intercepted the customer service officer and took him to customs office and recovered the gold from his custody.

The gold, weighing 5.7kg, was in the form of 50 gold biscuits of 24 carat weighing 116.6 gram each. It was covered with black insulin tape. Ibrahim carried 30 gold biscuits weighing 3.6kg (Rs 1.15 cr) and Kannan was carrying 20 pieces of gold weighing 2.1kg (Rs 70 lakh). A case was registered as per Customs Act and a probe has been launched.