

Jeweller gang ‘converted’ smuggled foreign gold bars into Indian ones

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Mumbai: The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has unearthed a racket wherein gold bars were smuggled into the country, thus evading customs duty, and the foreign markings were replaced with Indian etchings to hoodwink the authorities. The smuggled gold bars were melted in an unit at Zaveri Bazaar and poured into a mould that restored its shape with Indian markings, said officials. Gold imports attract a 36% duty and smugglers’ earnings depend on fluctuation in the price in the global market.

The DRI arrested jeweller Ridmal Parihar, Deepak Gerela, Prakash Soni and Nirmal Rathod and seized 6kg of gold and cash of a total value of Rs 3 crore. The DRI received a tip-off that Soni, who owns a workshop at Memon Street, was illegally melting smuggled gold bars. They recovered eight gold bars weighing a total 803.9gm and the dye used to put Indian markings on gold biscuits at his unit. “Soni said Parihar would bring smuggled gold bars to his workshop,” an official said.

DRI then searched Parihar’s showroom and found 15 gold bars with foreign markings weighing a total 1.7kg gold, 10 gold bars of Indian marking weighing a total 1kg and over Rs 1.2 crore cash. They also seized Rs 41 lakh from Parihar, Rs 25 lakh from Gerela, and Rs 35 lakh from Pawan Dusane, who is yet to be arrested. “Parihar would get the smuggled gold from Rathod, a middleman, and send them to Soni. He earned a profit of Rs 600 per kg,” said an official. Parihar has not revealed who would smuggle in the gold bars from abroad. —S Ahmed Ali

DRI seizes 6.02 kgs of foreign-marked smuggled gold bars, worth Rs 1.9 crore

By [Abhishek Sharan](#), Mumbai Mirror | Dec 22, 2018, 01:50 PM IST



The seized gold

The Mumbai zonal unit of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has seized 6.02 kgs of foreign-marked smuggled gold, worth around Rs 1.9 crore, from a gold-melting unit at Zaveri bazaar in south Mumbai. Four persons were arrested in connection with this case.

According to DRI sources, the gold was smuggled from Dubai, where its rate is cheaper than in India. “Gold brought in by evading the payment of customs duty is melted to remove the foreign marking. Later, special dyes are used to emboss Indian marking on the gold and is then circulated in the market,” said a DRI source. “By evading payment of duties, unscrupulous traders save paying at the rate of around 36% of the cost of the gold,” the source said. The DRI also recovered cash worth Rs 1.01 crore from the accused. Their origin is being ascertained.

The DRI arrested four persons - Deepak Gerela, Nitin Rathod, Ridmal Parihar and Prakash Soni - under the Customs act.

“There was a specific input that smuggled foreign-marked gold was being melted at a gold-melting unit at Zaveri Bazaar, which was searched. 3.2 kg of foreign-marked gold bars were seized,” said a DRI source.

The source added, “A search at the commercial premises resulted in the seizure of 15 gold bars, weighing 1.74 kg, and 10 gold bars, weighing 1 kg and bearing Indian brand name, which were purportedly melted out of foreign-marked gold bars that were smuggled in.” The DRI is looking for the persons who had smuggled the gold from Dubai.