

DRI seizes smuggled gold worth ₹4 cr

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IN A significant seizure of smuggled gold from Myanmar, the Delhi and Lucknow zonal units of Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) arrested eight men for carrying 71 gold biscuits, each weighing 166 gms and cumulatively worth about Rs 4 crore. Four of them were arrested with 37 gold biscuits in Lucknow by the zonal DRI unit on their way back from Assam via Dibrugarh Rajdhani, while the rest were nabbed with 34 gold biscuits in Delhi on April 1, two officials said.

The modus operandi involved different group of smugglers making multiple trips from Punjab, which included taking the flight route for Assam, pick-

ing up the gold biscuits and then returning by the Dibrugarh Rajdhani. "Based on information from Kolkata zonal unit, we intercepted the group. Different group of smugglers were making multiple trips from Punjab. A specific input was received for a group which had taken flight for Assam and Dibrugarh Rajdhani in their return journey. Four members of the group of carriers (smugglers) in the same train were intercepted first by the Lucknow unit and then by the Delhi unit. Out of the arrested four men in Delhi, three came via the Dibrugarh Rajdhani while one of them was stationed at a hotel here," a DRI official said.

The arrested men had travelled to Bongaigaon in Assam, where they are believed to have been handed over the gold biscuits, the officials said. The men

then hid the gold biscuits in their turbans and travelled by train in their return journey to avoid getting caught at the airport, the officials said.

Officials said the smuggling of gold biscuits from Myanmar and Sri Lanka are becoming the popular routes as opposed to the earlier traditional routes such as Dubai. "The gold biscuits from Myanmar are in the standard size of 166 gms each. The smugglers remove the international markings from the gold bars and cut them into uniform sizes of 166 gms each. Other routes have gold bars weighing 1 kg or above, but the ones caught from Myanmar are always of the standard size of 166 gms. The gold comes from various south-east Asian nations and then is routed through Myanmar," another DRI official said.