

# DRI seizes 48 kg Gold Paste worth 25.26 crore at Surat International Airport under Operation Goldmine

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As a part of Operation Goldmine, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has seized 48.20 kg of Gold Paste at Surat International Airport. This is one of biggest gold seizures at an airport in recent times.



Based on specific intelligence, officers of DRI intercepted 3 passengers arriving from Sharjah by Air India Express Flight No. IX172 at Surat International Airport on 07.07.2023 suspected to be carrying gold in paste form to be smuggled into India. Examination of their hand baggage and check-in baggage was carried out and 43.5 kg of gold in paste form was found concealed in 20 white colour packets hidden in 5 black belts. The interrogation of passengers revealed that the gold was concealed for smuggling into India with the help of officials posted at the Surat International Airport. The exchange of gold was planned to be done in a toilet located before the immigration to evade screening and examination by authorities. Subsequent actions resulted in further recovery of 4.67 kg of gold in paste form, found abandoned in the men's washroom adjacent to the immigration checkpoint, which was handed over by CISF to DRI. A total of 48.20 kg gold paste recovered from the passengers was subjected to extraction, and more than 42 kg of gold (purity 99%) worth Rs. 25.26 crore approx. was recovered.

Statement of persons were recorded under Customs Act, 1962, and based on their role, 3 passengers along with one official have been arrested. From the investigation so far, it appears that an organised smuggling

racket has been operating at the Surat International Airport. Further investigation to find out involvement of other persons including officials at the airport, is being carried out, to dismantle the whole syndicate.

The action by DRI has busted the operation of the smuggling syndicate. These seizures are part of a sustained effort by DRI to combat the illicit smuggling of high-value goods into the country.

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**PPG/KMN**

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