

DRI seizes gold biscuits worth Rs 4.99 crore in Odisha, highest ever haul in state

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BHUBANESWAR: Odisha unit of directorate of revenue intelligence (DRI) seized nearly 13 kg smuggled foreign gold biscuits worth about Rs 4.99 crore from two passengers of an express train between Rourkela and Jharsuguda on Thursday. This is highest ever seizure of smuggled gold by the DRI in Odisha.

“We received specific intelligence about smuggling of gold biscuits in Mumbai-bound Jnaneswari Super Deluxe Express from Kolkata. Our officers acted on the intelligence report and raided a 3rd AC compartment in the train. During search, we seized 110 pieces of gold biscuits from two passengers. The gold biscuits weighed 12.932 kg worth Rs 4.99 crore,” a DRI officer told TOI.

DRI did not disclose details of the two persons, who have been detained for interrogation. Sources said the two persons belonged to Maharashtra. “They are just carriers of the smuggled consignment. We are interrogating them to identify the kingpin and others in the gang. We strongly suspect that the gold was smuggled to Kolkata from Dubai. UAE-Dubai and 10 tola is engraved on some of the gold biscuits. Source of procurement of the gold biscuits is being investigated,” the officer said.

DRI said the two passengers had hidden the gold biscuits under their waists. “Their trousers had special pockets under the waists in which they had hidden the gold biscuits. When we tried to search them they resisted and showed us their valid journey tickets. They later cooperated when we warned them of strong action,” the officer said.

DRI suspect that the accused persons chose rail route to avoid tight security by customs (air intelligence) at the airports, including Biju Patnaik International Airport. At least ten cases, involving seizure of smuggled gold were reported in the Biju Patnaik International Airport here in last one year. The highest haul of smuggled gold at the city airport was made in April 2018. Cost of the smuggled gold was nearly Rs 1.18 crore.