

HYDERABAD

## 14 held for smuggling gold worth ₹2.17 crore



### STAFF REPORTER

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In a joint operation by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) and [Hyderabad](#) police, 14 passengers who arrived at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) after completion of their holy Umrah trip were detained for trying to smuggling in 6.46 kg of foreign-marked gold worth ₹2.17 crore. The passengers who failed to provide any documents pertaining to the purchase of the yellow metal, informed DRI officials that some travel agents blackmailed and forced them to smuggle gold.

The passengers were found to be carrying gold in the form of cut pieces, 24 carats kadas and 24 carats chains. "All of them are residents of Hyderabad who had arrived by Saudi Airlines flight No.SV-744 from Jeddah on Tuesday. The gold was concealed by the passengers and they had no purchase invoices," the DRI officials said here on Wednesday.

Explaining the modus operandi adopted by the international smuggling syndicate, the officer said that poor people who wanted to go for Umrah were lured by some agents by offering the trips at a lucrative price. "During their return journey, the passengers were asked to carry gold stating that the yellow metal would be collected by a person here," the officials said.

The passengers were blackmailed by agents at Jeddah with consequences of penalty or recovery of the full charge of Umrah if they do not obey, they added.



## Gold worth Rs 2.7 cr seized in Hyderabad

Based on a tip-off, passengers who arrived on a Saudi Airlines flight from Jeddah were searched, said a DRI official.

Written by [Sreenivas Janyala](#) | • Hyderabad |

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Police are questioning two agents who were suspected to be waiting for the 14 passengers, said officials. (Express archive photo)

Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) officials and a team of Hyderabad's South Zone Task Force on Wednesday uncovered a smuggling racket after intercepting 14 passengers returning from the Umrah pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia with 6.46 kg of gold, worth Rs 2.17 crore, at the [Rajiv Gandhi International Airport](#).

Based on a tip-off, passengers who arrived on a Saudi Airlines flight from Jeddah were searched, said a DRI official. "The 14 passengers are residents of Hyderabad. Each of them was found to be carrying Foreign Marked Gold in the form of cut pieces, 24 carat bracelets and chains..." said the official.

"The modus operandi is that some agents pay for the trip for people who want to go to Umrah with the condition that while returning, they carry back gold handed over to them at Jeddah by other agents. If they come out without getting caught, local agents collect the gold from them. They are blackmailed by agents at Jeddah if they refuse to act as per the instructions of agents," the official said.

Police are questioning two agents who were suspected to be waiting for the 14 passengers, said officials.