

AI staffers held for abetting gold smuggling at airport

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Two Air India employees — ground staff at Kempegowda International Airport — were nabbed on charges of abetting gold smuggling from the Gulf.

One of them, a 22-year-old woman, was caught on Wednesday while she was picking up smuggled gold paste worth Rs 40 lakh from two passengers. She was to hand over the paste to two gang members waiting outside the airport. All the suspects are from Malayamma in Kozhikode.

KIA officials said the gold smuggling nexus with Air India contract staff came to light after Emirates flight EK 564 from Dubai landed at KIA on Wednesday morning. A couple alighted from the flight with nearly 1kg of gold paste and before heading for Customs, met the woman AI staffer inside the terminal.

The trio admitted to the

30 IPHONES AND 15 IWATCHES SEIZED

Customs sleuths on Wednesday caught six passengers who landed from Dubai with 30 iPhones, 15 iWatches, 20,000 imported cigarettes and 32 bottles of foreign liquor. The smuggled goods hidden in their luggage are worth Rs 45 lakh.

On Thursday morning, another team nabbed a 30-year-old man, from YSR district in Andhra Pradesh, while he was trying to board IndiGo flight 6E095 (Bengaluru to Dubai) with



foreign currency worth Rs 9.6 lakh hidden inside his socks. There were 50,105 Saudi Riyals and 695 UAE Dirhams.

smuggling to an Air Intelligence Unit team and the AI woman employee said two men were waiting outside the airport to collect the paste. Customs sleuths in the guise of smugglers met the two near the parking area and apprehended them.

The five suspects said a 25-year-old Air India SATS staffer, also posted at KIA, was part of the gang.

Woman held at MIA with gold worth ₹1.1 crore

In one of the biggest hauls in the recent past, Mangaluru Customs officials seized 2.4kg of gold valued at Rs 1.1 crore from a woman flying in from Dubai. Kapil Gade, deputy commissioner, Mangaluru Customs, said Sameera Mohammed Ali, 40, is from Kerala. She hid the gold in her inner garments and sanitary pads.