

73,000 cigarette sticks, gold and cosmetics worth Rs 38 lakh seized at Bengaluru airport

The eight passengers smuggling the items were all natives of Kasargod in Kerala and appeared to be operating as a group, said a senior official

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Cigarette sticks and beauty cream bottles seized from the passengers (Photo | Special arrangement)

By S Lalitha

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BENGALURU: Eight passengers on board an Air India Express flight which reached the Kempegowda International Airport from Dubai on Wednesday (January 27) were held for smuggling cigarette sticks, gold cut pieces as well as coins, cosmetics and beauty soaps in their check-in baggage. The total value of the items seized was slightly over Rs 38 lakh.

The seizure was made by the Air Intelligence Unit of the Airport Customs department around 4 pm after the flight IX 1246 touched base here. All of them were natives of Kasargod in Kerala and appeared to be operating as a group, said a senior official.

"A total of 73,600 cigarette sticks, nearly 500 grams of gold and cream and beauty soaps in bulk were seized from their baggage. The gold was in the form of tiny cut pieces in the baggage of 7 passengers while one passenger had placed two gold coins in the back cover of his mobile," he said. The value of the gold seized was around Rs 24.33 lakh while that of cigarette sticks stood at Rs 14,72,000.

This is the fourth such seizure of cigarette sticks and beauty products in the check-in baggage of passengers from Dubai within a week's time. "This is the first time that as many as eight passengers were caught on one flight attempting a similar kind of tactic. The volume of goods snatched was so high that it took us a day to assess them," the official added.

Profiling of passengers and past travel history helped in narrowing down on the passengers. Among the beauty creams seized were 708 of the 'Faiza' brand, 654 of 'Zulekha' and 174 of 'Goree' brand.

Source: <https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/bengaluru/2021/jan/29/73000cigarettesticksand-gold-and-cosmetics-worthrs38lakhseizedat-bengaluru-airport-2256662.html>