



राजस्व आसूचना निदेशालय
DIRECTORATE OF REVENUE INTELLIGENCE

अहमदाबाद आंचलिक ईकाई AHMEDABAD ZONAL UNIT

यूनिट नं. 15 मैगनेट कॉर्पोरेट पार्क, सौ फीट थलतेज - हेबतपुर रोड,
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SHOW CAUSE NOTICE

(Issued under Section 124 of the Customs Act, 1962)

Intelligence developed by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, Ahmedabad Zonal Unit (hereinafter referred to as "DRI") indicated that a gold smuggling syndicate was operating through Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport (SVPI Airport), Ahmedabad, by using international flights arriving from Jeddah and Abu Dhabi.

2. Acting upon the specific intelligence, a team of officers of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, Ahmedabad Zonal Unit, together with independent Panch witnesses, assembled at about 02:40 Hrs. on 14.11.2025 at Bay No. 34R, SVPI Airport, Ahmedabad, for keeping surveillance over the arrival of Indigo Flight No. 6E-76 from Jeddah to Ahmedabad on the said date, as it was suspected that a passenger travelling by the said flight might be carrying contraband / dutiable goods and may clandestinely conceal and leave such goods beneath the seat in the aircraft.

2.1 Upon arrival of the flight and after disembarkation of all passengers, the officers, along with the Panch witnesses, boarded the aircraft and carried out a thorough search of the same, including the concerned seat area. During the course of such search, four capsules wrapped with white tape were recovered from beneath Seat No. 30F. On verification of the flight manifest, it was found that one passenger namely Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil was allotted the said seat. Thereafter, the officers rushed towards the Green Channel at the Arrival Hall of Terminal 2, SVPI Airport, Ahmedabad, along with the recovered contraband / dutiable goods and after verifying the passport of the passengers, who had arrived at Ahmedabad by the said flight from Jeddah. Thereafter, one passenger was intercepted at about 03:50 Hrs. and the details of the passenger are as below:

Sr. No.	Name	Father Name	DOB	Passport No.	Address	PNR /Seat No.
1	Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil	Imbichi Moyi Eranhona	20.10.1969	T8646460	Kunnummal House, Avilora PO, Kizhakkoth, Kozhikode, Kerala, India-673572	QB 2V3 K/3 OF

2.2. The officers of DRI enquired with Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil whether he had any goods to declare before Customs, to which the passenger denied. Thereafter the officers informed the passenger i.e. Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil that his personal search, along with their accompanied baggage, would be conducted. After scanning the baggage in the scanner installed near the green channel of the arrival hall at SVPI Airport, Ahmedabad, the officers did not observe any unusual images indicating objectionable items. Subsequently, the officers systematically checked the entire baggage of the passenger, but found nothing objectionable.

2.3. Thereafter, the officers asked the passenger, Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil whether he wished to be searched in the presence of an Executive Magistrate or a Superintendent of Customs; he agreed to be searched in front of a Superintendent of Customs (a Gazetted officer). He was then asked to pass through a Door Frame Metal Detector (DFMD) near the green channel in the arrival hall of Terminal 2, SVPI Airport, Ahmedabad, but no beep was heard from the machine.

2.4. Thereafter, in the presence of the Panch witnesses, the officers enquired from Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil about the four capsules wrapped in pairs with white tape recovered from the pouch found below the seat No. 30F wherein lifesaving jacket was placed. In response, Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil stated that he had brought the said four capsules wrapped in pairs with white tape from Jeddah and that, at the time of disembarkation, the said four capsules were concealed by him inside the pouch wherein the life-saving jacket was placed below Seat No. 30F. Further, in presence of the Panch witnesses, when specifically asked, Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil stated that the said four capsules was containing gold in paste form, that he did not know the exact weight of the capsules or the gold paste contained therein, and that he was not in possession of any purchase bill, invoice or other supporting document evidencing lawful import or possession of the

said capsules. Thereafter, in the presence of the Panch witnesses and Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil, the officers made a small cut on one of the capsules and found that a brown-coloured paste-like material was concealed inside the capsule.

2.5. Thereafter, the officer contacted one of the Government Approved Valuers, Shri Soni Kartikey Vasantrai, and informed him about the aforesaid suspected brown-coloured paste concealed inside four capsules wrapped in pairs with white tape. In response, Shri Soni Kartikey Vasantrai, Government Approved Valuer, informed that the removal and purification of the paste suspected to be gold from the packing material would be possible at his business premises, where requisite melting facility was available, as melting would be required in the present case. Accordingly, the DRI officers, along with the Panch witnesses and the passenger, left the airport in the official vehicle of the DRI office and reached the office of Shri Soni Kartikey Vasantrai. Thereafter, the officers produced before Shri Soni Kartikey Vasantrai the aforesaid four capsules wrapped in pairs with white tape, in which the gold was suspected to be concealed. Shri Soni Kartikey Vasantrai examined the said four capsules and thereafter removed the outer packing of white tape. Upon such examination, it was found that the inner packing of the capsules was made of rubber. The weighment of the said four capsules wrapped in pairs with white tape was carried out and the gross weight was found to be 1392.05 grams with the original packing in pairs, and 1382.17 grams after removal of the outer packing. The photographs of the same were taken and pasted as under:

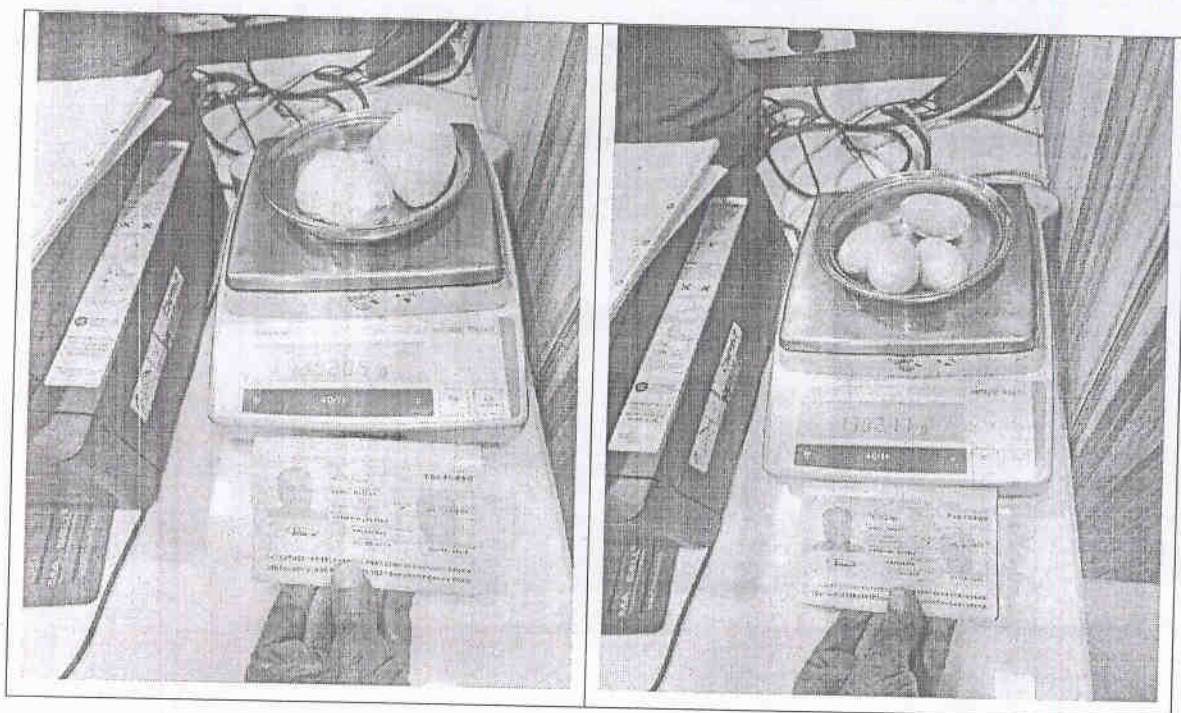


Image-1

2.6. Further, after extraction of gold from the recovered capsules containing gold paste mixed with chemical substances in semi-solid form, the purity test and weighment of the extracted gold were conducted. After completion of the said procedure, the Government Approved Valuer informed that one gold bar weighing 1246.48 grams and having purity 999.0/24 Kt. was derived from the semi-solid substance consisting of gold and chemical mixture, which had a gross weight of 1382.17 grams. After testing the said bar, the Government Approved Valuer confirmed that it was pure gold. Shri Soni Kartikey Vasantrai vide Certificate No. 705/2025-26 dated 14.11.2025 (**RUD-2**), certified that the said gold bar was having purity 999.0/24 Kt., tariff value of Rs. 1,43,35,455/- and market value of Rs. 1,62,04,240/- as on 14.11.2025. The value of the gold bar was calculated as per Notification No. 76/2025-Customs (N.T.) dated 31.10.2025 and Exchange Notification No. 41/2025 dated 07.11.2025. The details and weighment picture of which was as under:

S No	Details of Items	PC S	Net Weight in Gram	Purity	Market value (Rs)	Tariff Value (Rs)
1	Gold extracted from the 4 (Four) capsules wrapped in pairs with white tape recovered from Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil	1	1246.48	999.0/24Kt	1,62,04,240	1,43,35,455
	Total	1	1246.48		1,62,04,240	1,43,35,455

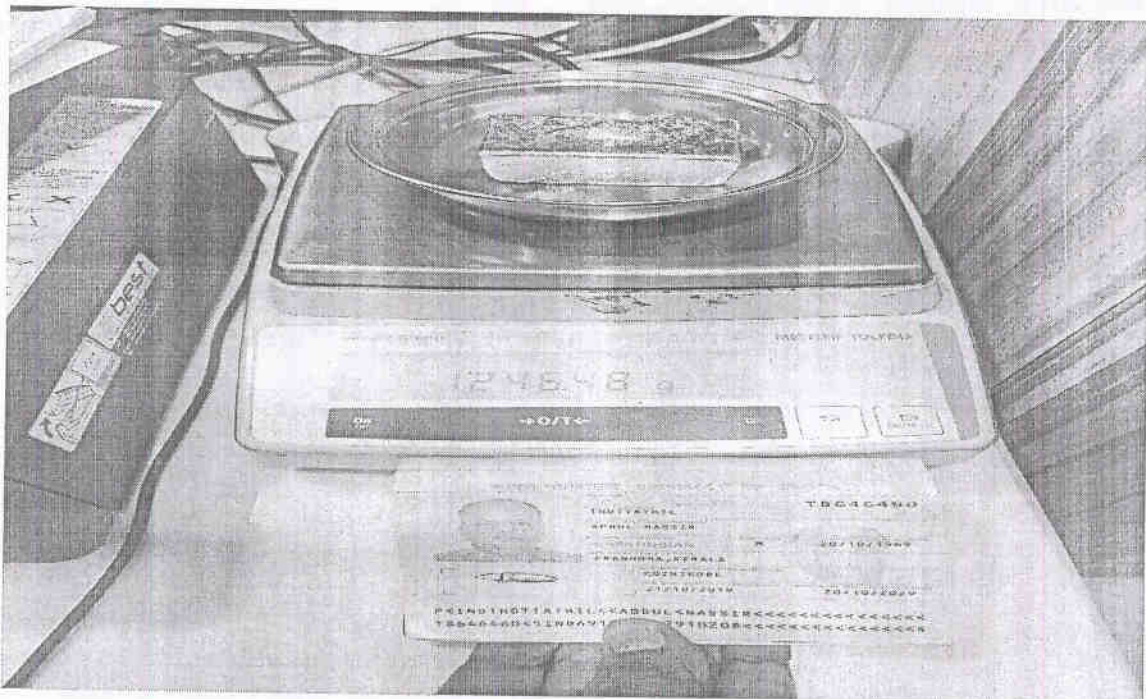


Image-2

The above said proceedings were recorded under Panchnama dated 14.11.2025 (**RUD No.1**).

Seizure of smuggled gold

2.7. Since the recovered gold bar (extracted from capsules containing gold paste mixed with chemical substances in semi-solid form) recovered from Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil was attempted to be smuggled into India in a concealed manner without any legitimate documents/records in violation of the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962. The said gold bars, along with the packing materials used for concealment were seized under Section 110 and 119 of the Customs Act, 1962 under the Panchnama dated 14.11.2025 with a reasonable belief that the same was liable to confiscation. Accordingly, the aforesaid gold bar along with the packing materials were placed under seizure on 14.11.2025 in respect of Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil. Seizure memo vide F. No. DRI/AZU/GI-02/Enq-74/2025 dated 14.11.2025 was also issued (**RUD No. 3**) for seizure of the above gold bar.

2.8. The seized gold bars, along with the packing materials used for concealment, were handed over to the Warehouse In-Charge, SVPI Airport, Ahmedabad, for safe custody vide Warehouse Entry Nos. 7806 and 7807 respectively, all dated 14.11.2025 (**Collective RUD No. 4**) for safe custody.

3. STATEMENT OF KEY PERSON:

3.1. Upon completion of the Panchnama proceedings at SVPI Airport, Ahmedabad, summons dated 14.11.2025 was issued to Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil, for recording of his statement.

3.2. Consequent to the above summons, statement of Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil, was recorded under Section 108 of the Customs Act, 1962 on 14.11.2025 (**RUD-5**) wherein he interalia stated that:

- He was shown the Panchnama dated 14.11.2025 drawn at SVPI Airport, Ahmedabad along with valuation certificate issued by Shri Soni Karthikey, Govt. Approved Valuer and stated that he agreed with the facts mentioned therein.
- He carried 4 capsules of foreign-origin gold wrapped in pairs with white tape, weighing 1392.05 grams, and hid them inside the pouch beneath seat No. 30F while travelling from Jeddah to Ahmedabad by Indigo Flight No. 6E-76
- He worked as a laborer in Master Company in Jeddah.
- His friend Ismail gave him the 4 capsules of foreign-origin gold at Kerala Market in Jeddah.
- He said he did not know Ismail's whereabouts.
- He carried the gold for a payment of 500 Saudi Riyal, i.e. about Rs. 11,800/-, and that he accepted the offer out of greed.

- Ismail instructed him to hide the gold beneath seat No. 30F and to get off at Ahmedabad Airport, but he did not know who was to receive or remove the gold.
- Ismail had booked his ticket to India and was also supposed to book his return ticket to Jeddah.
- He perused the Section 110, 111, 112 and 135 of the Customs Act, 1962 and after reading and understanding them, accepting the legal consequences of his actions. He acknowledged the gold was liable for confiscation.

4. Arrest of Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil:

4.1. Based on the evidences gathered and the statements recorded as above, it appeared that Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil had committed an offence punishable under Customs Act, 1962, as he had smuggled one gold bar (extracted from total of 04 (four) capsules wrapped in pairs with white tape, contained gold paste mixed with chemical substances in semi-solid form) without declaration of the same before Customs Authorities and with a view to evade payment of Customs duty. The said one gold bar smuggled by Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil was liable to confiscation under the provisions of Section 111 of the Customs Act, 1962. Thus, he had knowingly concerned himself in an offence punishable under Section 135(1) of the Customs Act, 1962, as he had knowingly concerned himself in dealing/carrying Net weight 1246.48 grams of smuggled gold of 24 carat having purity of 999 having total market value of Rs. 1,62,04,240/- and concerned himself in carrying, removing, depositing, harboring, keeping, concealing of smuggled Gold which he knows and/or had reasons to believe were liable to confiscation under Section 111 of the Customs Act, 1962. Hence, Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil were arrested on 14.11.2025 at Ahmedabad under the provisions of Section 104 of the Customs Act, 1962 vide Arrest Memo dated 14.11.2025, after getting required authorization from the competent authority. He was further produced before the Hon'ble Court of ACMM, Ahmedabad, who ordered for his judicial custody.

5. FURTHER INVESTIGATION CONDUCTED:

5.1. Further, on the basis of the information received and the statement of Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil dated 14.11.2025, Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal, whose name had emerged in the said statement and who was found to be arriving in India on 20.11.2025 by Indigo Flight No. 6E-76, was intercepted and informed that his name had surfaced in the earlier gold smuggling case and that he was required to appear before the officers of the

Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, Ahmedabad Zonal Unit, to give his statement under Section 108 of the Customs Act, 1962. Accordingly, he was served with summons dated 20.11.2025, which he voluntarily accepted, and he thereafter appeared before the officers at the office of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, Ahmedabad Zonal Unit, Ahmedabad, for recording of his statement. During inquiry, it further came to light that a *Botim* application group named "Restro" had been created, in which the names of Shri Althaf Usman and Shri Sandeep Mstrao, both employed with Indigo Airlines at SVPI Airport, Ahmedabad, had also surfaced. On further inquiry, Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal stated that the said Restro group had been created for executing gold smuggling activities at the direction of Shri Jaman/Zaman Sharif. Thereafter, Shri Althaf Usman and Shri Sandeep Mstrao were also served with summons requiring them to appear before the officers of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, Ahmedabad Zonal Unit, Ahmedabad, and to give their statements under Section 108 of the Customs Act, 1962 in connection with the said gold smuggling case. Both Shri Althaf Usman and Shri Sandeep Mstrao voluntarily accepted the summons and appeared before the office of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, Ahmedabad Zonal Unit, Ahmedabad, on 20.11.2025 for recording of their statements.

6. STATEMENTS OF SHRI ISMAIL KACHERI KUNNUMMAL, SHRI ALTHAF USMAN AND SHRI SANDEEP MSTRAO:

6.1. Consequent to the above summons, statement of Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal, was recorded under Section 108 of the Customs Act, 1962 on 20.11.2025 (**RUD-6**) wherein he interalia stated that:

- He had perused the Panchnama dated 14.11.2025, valuation certificate and Abdul Nassir Thottathil's statement dated 14.11.2025, and that he agreed to the facts stated therein.
- Jaman/Zaman Sharif, had handed over four capsules of gold wrapped in pairs with white tape at Abdul Nassir Thottathil's residence in Jeddah and that he was present there.
- The Botim application was used for communication and that the group named "Restro" had been created by Althaf Usman.
- He was also made an admin of the Restro group and that the group was created for communication among members related to gold smuggling and other activities.
- His role was recruitment of delivery persons, financial management of foreign-origin gold, and communication among the group

members. He further stated that Jaman/Zaman Sharif was the main investor in the gold smuggling syndicate and gave Jaman/Zaman Sharif's number as +971527361752.

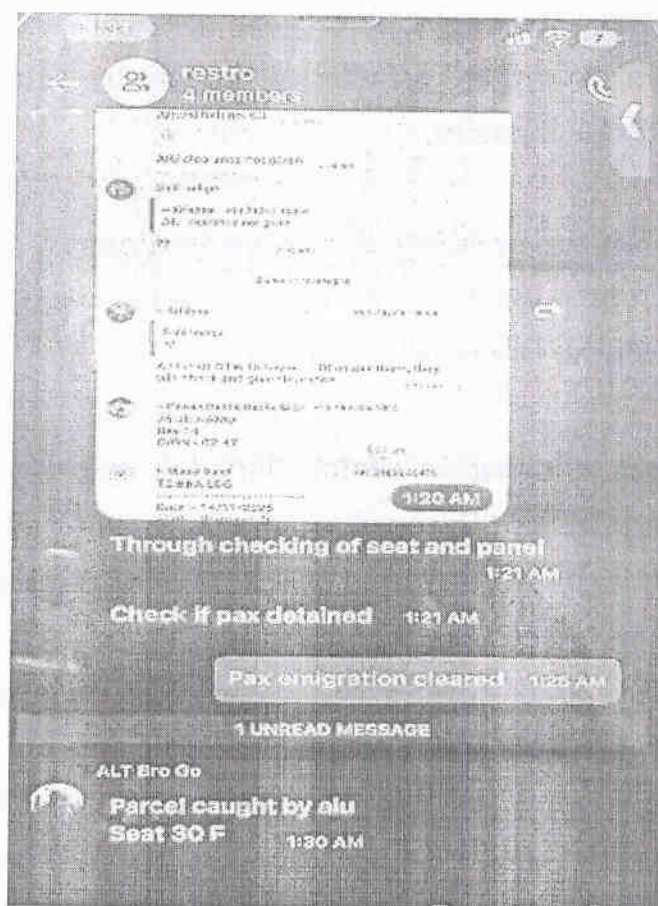
- Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal stated that the smuggling had initially started with around 700 grams and later exceeded 1 kg.
- Althaf Usman was his friend, worked in Indigo Airlines at SVPI Airport Ahmedabad, and that he had met him at his café namely "Spoon" at Khodasar, Gandhinagar.
- He stated that Sandeep Mstrao was added to the group by Althaf Usman, worked in Indigo Airlines at SVPI Airport Ahmedabad, and used the mobile number 9033558247.
- Althaf Usman and Sandeep Mstrao used to collect gold based on seat details shared in the group and confirm the collection in the Botim app chat group "Restro".
- He, Althaf Usman and Sandeep Mstrao were involved in the smuggling activity for monetary consideration, wherein he was getting Rs. 2,000 to 3,000 and Althaf Usman/Sandeep Mstrao getting Rs. 10,000 each per consignment.
- He came to know from Althaf Usman in the Botim app group that the parcel had been caught by AIU from seat No. 30F on 14.11.2025, and that Abdul Nassir's wife informed him that Abdul had been arrested. The parcel was 4 capsules of foreign-origin gold in semi-solid form wrapped in pairs with white tape weighing about 1392.05 grams.
- He perused Abdul Nassir's statement dated 14.11.2025 and after perusing Abdul Nassir's statement, he agreed with it except for the part that Ismail had given him the gold; according to him, Jaman/Zaman Sharif had given the parcel to Abdul Nassir.
- He admitted that he had been involved in such activities 10 to 12 times during the last two months.
- He admitted that Abdul Nassir did not have invoice or documents proving legitimate import and that the gold was brought with the clear intention of smuggling.
- He accepted that smuggling gold without declaration and payment of duty was illegal, and that he had become involved due to financial and family conditions.
- He agreed that the gold was liable for confiscation under Section 111 of the Customs Act, 1962.

- He confirmed the valuation details shown to him, including the extracted gold bar weighing 1246.48 grams having purity 999.0/24K, market value Rs. 1,62,04,240/- and tariff value Rs. 1,43,35,455/-.
- He agreed that the seized gold was liable for confiscation under Sections 110, 111, 112 and 135 of the Customs Act, 1962 and that he had committed an offence punishable under Section 135 in his individual capacity.

6.2. Consequent to the above summons, statement of Shri Althaf Usman, was recorded under Section 108 of the Customs Act, 1962 on 20.11.2025 **(RUD-7)** wherein he interalia stated that:

- He was working as senior executive security at SVPI, Airport for Indigo Airlines. He used to supervise the work related to departure of the flight i.e. boarding of the passengers, loading of the baggage, BMA (Baggage Makeup Area) monitoring and manpower allocation planning etc. Further he stated that he was doing the work of supervising for last 3 years.
- He had perused the Panchnama dated 14.11.2025, valuation certificate and Abdul Nassir Thottathil's statement dated 14.11.2025, and that he had knowledge of those proceedings.
- On 14.11.2025, his shift started at 02:00 Hrs. and the work of monitoring baggage offloading for Flight No. 6E-76 was orally assigned to him.
- He did not know Abdul Nassir Thottathil personally, but knew him as the passenger whose seat number he came to know from the Botim app chat group.
- He stated that the parcels containing gold were used to bring by a passenger, and that Shri Sandeep Mstrao or some other person used to remove it from the flight and hand it over to him. Further, he used to hand over the parcels to a person instructed by Shri Sandeep Mstrao, usually near at Simran Hotel or Indira Bridge, through phone or Botim instructions.
- He agreed to the plan of gold smuggling wherein Shri Sandeep Mstrao used to call him or post in the group and hand over parcels at VIP Parking area outside Terminal 1, after which he used to deliver them in Shri Sandeep Mstrao's Hyundai Accent car to the designated place.

- He perused chat screenshots extracted from Botim app chat group “Restro” and stated that a message from him in the group read as “Through Checking of seat and panel” and “check if pax detained” on 14.11.2025, which he admitted he had posted. Screenshot placed as below:



- He stated that he knew Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal, who worked at a café in Gandhinagar, and that they became friends when he visited the café.
- The Botim app group was used for further work because messages would get deleted without hassle, and that his name in the group was “ALT Bro Go” with mobile number 7415295372.
- He received between Rs. 5,000 and Rs. 10,000 for each delivery of gold from outside the airport. He further stated that each time Shri Sandeep Mstrao handed over the parcel/package to him for the purpose of delivery outside the airport.
- He admitted that collecting parcels from international flights and clearing them without Customs knowledge amounted to smuggling and was punishable under the Customs Act, 1962.

6.3. Consequent to the above summons, statement of Shri Sandeep Mstrao, was recorded under Section 108 of the Customs Act, 1962 on 20.11.2025 (**RUD-8**) wherein he interalia stated that:

- He worked as Assistant Manager, Indigo at SVPI Airport, Ahmedabad, and that his role was to expedite the process and ensure staff alignment as per SOP.
- He met Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal 2-3 months earlier along with Shri Althaf Usman and had visited Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal's café at Gandhinagar for dinner.
- He did not personally know Shri Zaman, but Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal informed him that Zaman was in Dubai and dealing in gold business.
- He perused the statement of Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal dated 20.11.2025 and agreed with its contents.
- He admitted that, about 2-3 months earlier, Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal briefed him and Althaf Usman about the method of smuggling parcels by concealing them in the aircraft seat area and then collecting them after the passenger disembarked. He stated that he initially hesitated, but later agreed to the plan because of the monetary benefit offered by Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal.
- He admitted that he had the Botim application on his mobile phone but deleted it on 20.11.2025 when summoned by DRI officer. He perused Botim app chat screenshots retrieved from Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal's phone and admitted that the group named "Restro" contained his mobile number under the name "Sand Bro Go", and that he responded personally and acted as per the conversations.
- He stated that around 10 to 12 times he collected parcels from international flights and handed them over to Althaf Usman for further delivery, or sometimes delivered them himself.
- He stated that the parcels were delivered near Indra Bridge and that he did not know the names or personal details of the recipients. He further stated that he knew the parcels contained gold.
- He stated that the exact location of the parcel in the aircraft was communicated in the Botim group by Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal and Zaman, and that he collected the parcel in the guise of checking the aircraft.
- He stated that Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal paid Rs. 50,000 for every such delivery, and that this amount was divided equally between him and Althaf Usman.
- He perused the Panchnama dated 14.11.2025 and Abdul Nassir Thottathil's statement dated 14.11.2025 and signed them in token of perusal.

- He stated that on 14.11.2025 he and Althaf Usman were at the airport to collect the parcel brought by Abdul Nassir Thottathil, but DRI officers had already checked and recovered the parcel from the aircraft, so they remained silent and monitored Flight No. 6E-76.
- He admitted that he knew Abdul Nassir was bringing a gold parcel on Flight No. 6E-76 from Jeddah and that he and Althaf Usman were to collect and deliver it.
- He admitted that collecting and delivering parcels from international aircraft without declaration to Customs amounted to smuggling and was punishable under the Customs Act, 1962.

The statements of the above persons, read conjointly, establish that a deliberate, organized and continuing international smuggling syndicate existed and operated through coded communications on the Botim application using the group "Restro", with a clear chain of command involving Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal, Shri Althaf Usman, Shri Sandeep Mstrao and Shri Jaman/Zaman Sharif. The international syndicate used flight numbers, seat numbers and code words to conceal the smuggled goods in aircraft and retrieve them after landing. Shri Althaf Usman and Shri Sandeep Mstrao exploited their airport access and operational position to retrieve the contraband from the aircraft and deliver it to the recipients outside the airport. Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal coordinated and financed the operation and arranged the delivery chain within India. The goods so brought into India were foreign origin gold, brought without declaration and without any legitimate import documents.

7. Arrest of Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal, Shri Althaf Usman and Shri Sandeep Mstrao:

7.1. Based on the evidences gathered and the statements recorded as above, it appeared that the act of smuggling of gold was deliberately undertaken by Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal, Shri Althaf Usman and Shri Sandeep Mstrao, who attempted to smuggle the gold into India in violation of the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962 without any declaration and with intent to evade Customs duty. The offence committed by them were also been admitted in their statements recorded under Section 108 of the Customs Act, 1962. The market value of the seized gold is more than one crore. They had therefore committed an offence under Section 135(1)(a) & (b) of the Customs Act, 1962, and the same was punishable under Section 135(1)(i)(A).

Therefore, they were liable to be arrested under Section 104 of the Customs Act, 1962 read with Circular No. 28/2015-Customs dated 23.10.2015 and amended Circular No. 13/2022-Customs dated 16.08.2022. The offence was cognizable under Section 104(6)(c). Hence, (i) Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal, (ii) Shri Althaf Usman and (iii) Shri Sandeep Mstrao were arrested on 20.11.2025 at Ahmedabad under the provisions of Section 104 of the Customs Act, 1962 vide Arrest Memos dated 20.11.2025, after getting required authorization from the competent authority. They were further produced before the Hon'ble Court of ACMM, Ahmedabad on 21.11.2025, who ordered for their judicial custody.

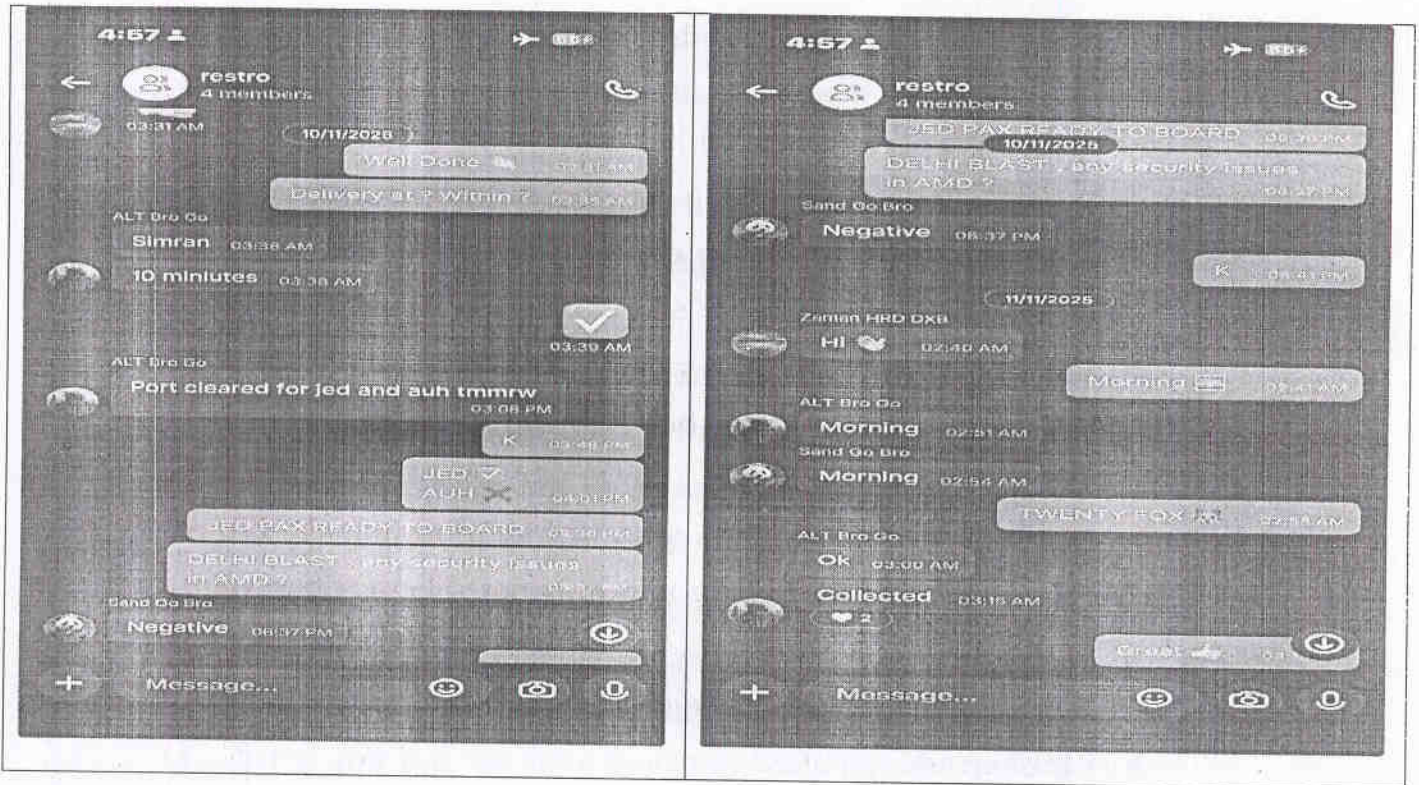
7.2. Further, a remand application was filed before the Hon'ble Court on 21.11.2025, setting out the role of the accused as an active member of the gold smuggling syndicate and requesting custodial interrogation to ascertain the detailed working of the syndicate, the identities of other associates, the manner of concealment and retrieval of the smuggled gold, and the complete operational chain involved in the said illegal activity. Upon consideration of the said application, the Hon'ble Court granted DRI custody of the accused up to 24.11.2025 vide remand warrant dated 21.11.2025. Upon completion of the DRI custody period, the accused was sent back to judicial custody.

7.3. During the remand period, statements of Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal, Shri Althaf Usman and Shri Sandeep Mstrao was recorded under Section 108 of the Customs Act, 1962 on 22.11.2025 (**Collective RUD-09**) wherein they interalia stated that: -

- They confirmed their earlier statements recorded on 20.11.2025 and stated that the same were true and correct.
- Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal stated that the gold smuggling operation involved repeated consignments through flights from Abu Dhabi and Jeddah between 16.10.2025 and 14.11.2025.
- Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal gave a date-wise flight chart, the details of these flights are corroborating with the chat retrieved from his mobile phone, (Screenshots of the chat are attached with statements as RUD-9 and also appearing at coming para 7.4) showing ten instances of smuggling, including flights 6E-1432 and 6E-76, and corresponding seat numbers such as 30F, 20E, 23F, 37F, 16A, 31F, 24A, 5A, 20F and 30F.
- Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal stated that the group members were himself, Althaf Usman, Sandeep Mstrao and Jaman/Zaman Sharif,

and that the group was used for coded communication regarding seat numbers, hiding places and delivery points.

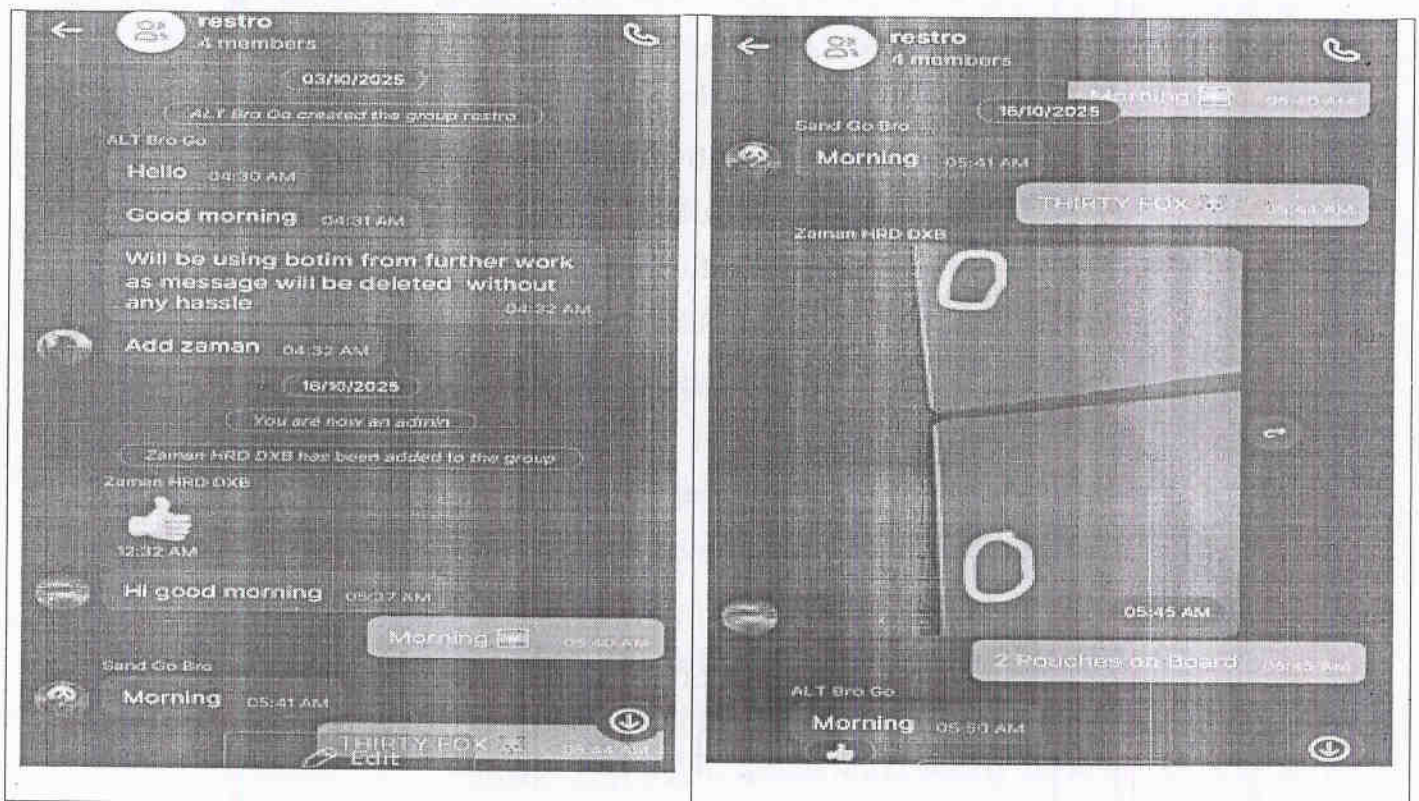
- Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal stated that the smuggled gold was delivered to Muhammed and Ashib near Simran Hotel or Bharat Petrol Pump near Indra Bridge, Ahmedabad, and he identified them from extracted images from his mobile phone.
- Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal stated that Muhammed and Ashib were his partners in Spoon Malabar Café, Khudasan, Gandhinagar, and provided their mobile numbers.
- Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal explained the code words used in the Restro group, such as “Thirty Fox” for seat no. 30F, “Twenty Elephants” for seat no. 20E, “Sixteen Apple” for seat no. 16A, “Twenty-Four Apple” for seat no. 24A and “Twenty Fox” for seat no. 20F.
- Althaf Usman admitted that he and Sandeep Mstrao were active participants in the Restro group and that the group was used for communication about boarding, arrival, seat numbers, concealment locations, delivery points.
- Althaf Usman confirmed that the group namely “Restro” was a closed group comprising four participants, namely Shri Sandeep Mstrao, Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal, Shri Jaman/Zaman Sharif and himself. Shri Jaman/Zaman Sharif first used to ask whether gold could be sent on a particular flight or at a particular time. Thereafter, either Shri Sandeep Mstrao or himself used to give him the indication “*port cleared for jed and auh tmmrw*”, meaning that gold could be sent on a particular day either from Jeddah or Abu Dhabi. Accordingly, Shri Jaman/Zaman Sharif used to communicate the place of boarding, i.e. whether Jeddah or Abu Dhabi, so as to identify the flight, and thereafter used to send the seat number in coded form, such as “**TWENTY FOX**” for seat No. 20F. For which ALT Bro Go (Altaf) replies in affirmation that he has collected, meaning smuggled gold was collected by him.



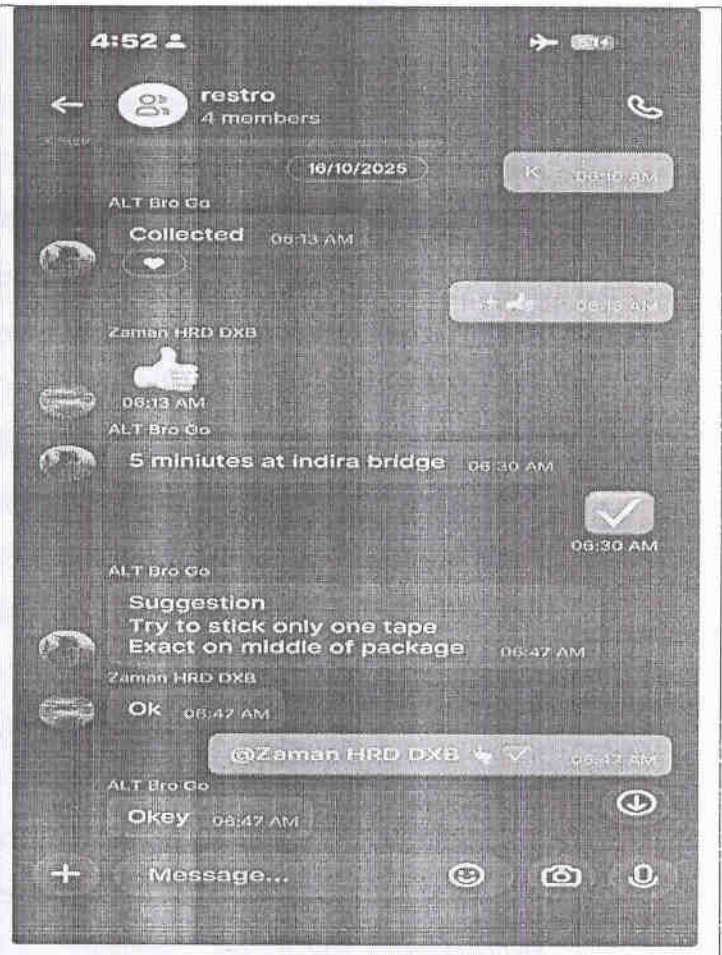
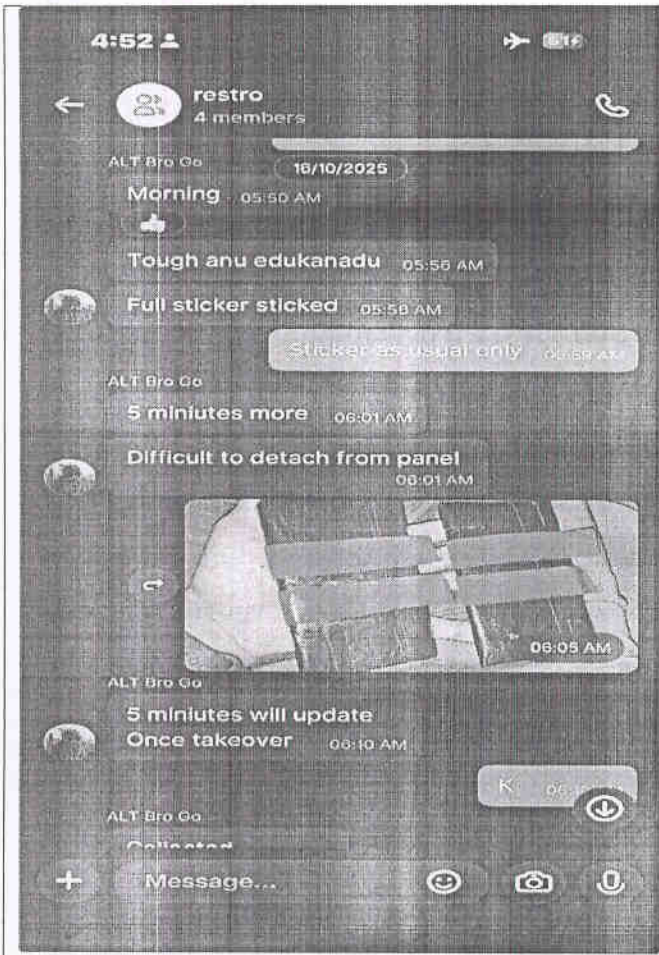
- Althaf Usman stated that his entry was through the Arrival Gate of Terminal 1, that he used the Indigo office on the first floor of the Arrival Hall, and that there was no body checking at the entry gate, while frisking happened only before entering the ramp area.
- Althaf Usman stated that there was no security checking on exit from the ramp/arrival side and that he used to exit through the same gate.
- Althaf Usman admitted that he and Sandeep Mstrao collected and delivered parcels from international flights 10 to 12 times during October-November 2025.
- Althaf Usman stated that in some instances he alone collected and delivered the parcel, in some cases Sandeep Mstrao did so, and in some cases both did it jointly.
- Althaf Usman also gave a flight-wise table of collection and delivery instances, matching the Abu Dhabi and Jeddah flights and seat numbers used in the smuggling operation.
- Althaf Usman stated that the exact concealment location was communicated on Botim app, usually under the seat in pouch wherein life jacket was placed or in the side panel near the legs for window seats.
- Althaf Usman stated that the parcel was carried from the aircraft to Terminal 1 using airline vehicles and then exited through Staff Gate or ATC Tower Gate without security check.

- Sandeep Mstrao also confirmed that he and Althaf Usman used the Botim group “Restro” to coordinate boarding, arrival, seat number, concealment, delivery.
- Sandeep Mstrao admitted that he received around Rs. 50,000 for every delivery and that the amount was shared equally with Althaf Usman.
- Sandeep Mstrao stated that he knew the parcel contained gold and that collecting and delivering such parcels from international flights without declaration amounted to smuggling.
- Sandeep Mstrao stated that he was aware of Abdul Nassir Thottathil’s gold-carrying flight on 14.11.2025 and that he and Althaf Usman were to collect the parcel, but DRI officers had already recovered it from the aircraft.
- Sandeep Mstrao also confirmed that he and Althaf Usman usually delivered the parcels near Indra Bridge Circle, near a petrol pump, or near Simran Hotel opposite the Cantonment Area.
- Sandeep Mstrao stated that the recipients were persons speaking Malayalam, and he confirmed from photographs extracted from Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal’s phone that the same persons were those to whom the parcels were delivered.

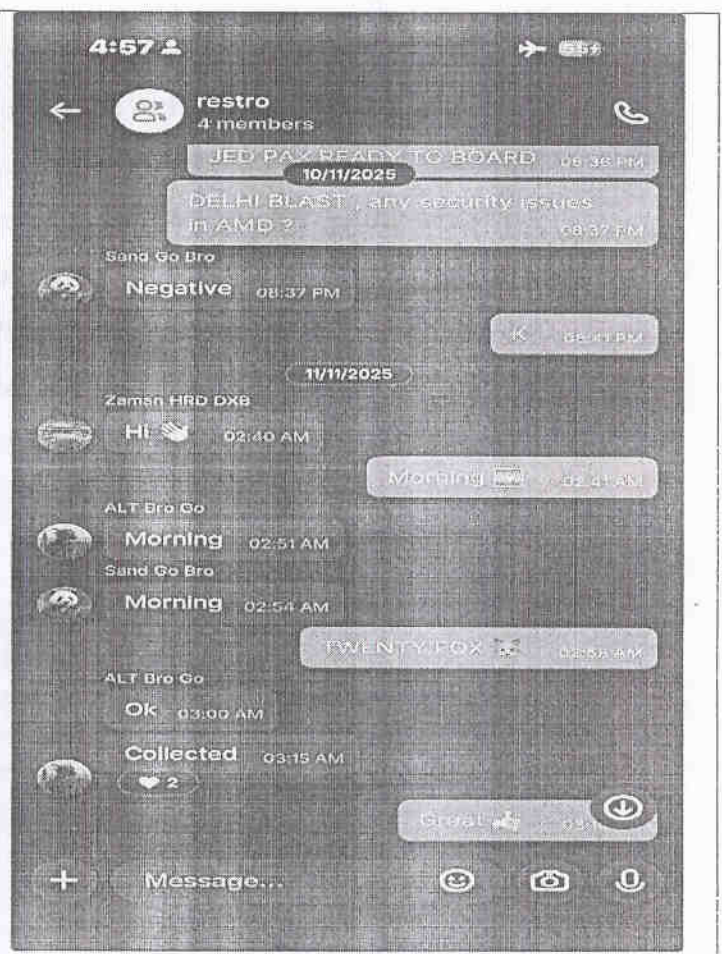
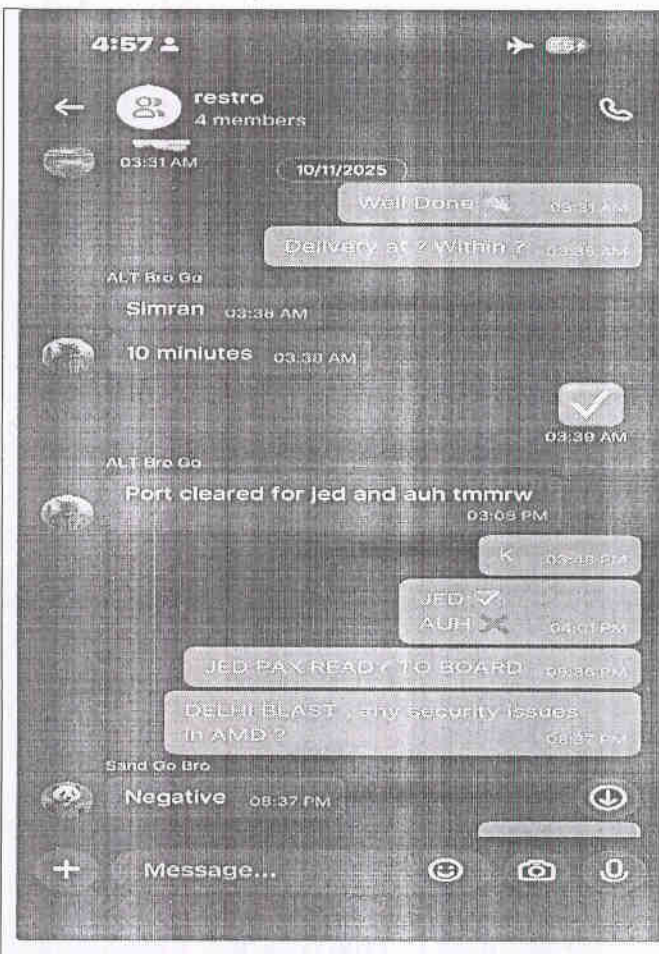
7.4. Relevant screenshot extracted from Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal’s phone of Botim app chat group “Restro” are produced as below:



Thirty Fox in the above picture represents seat number 30F and the images are parcels of contraband gold.



The images parcels wrapped in black colour with red plastic tapes are contraband gold in the above picture.



Twenty Fox represents seat details i.e. Seat No. 20F

From the above statements and relevant screenshots extracted from Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal's phone of Botim app chat group "Restro", it is evident that Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal, Shri Althaf Usman and Shri Sandeep Mstrao have admitted the existence of a coordinated and continuing gold smuggling syndicate operating through the Botim group "Restro", wherein coded communications were used for conveying flight numbers, seat numbers, concealment locations and delivery points for the illicit movement of foreign-origin gold from flights arriving from Abu Dhabi and Jeddah. They further admitted that the smuggled gold was collected from the aircraft by Shri Althaf Usman and/or Shri Sandeep Mstrao, sometimes jointly, taken out of the airport without declaration, and delivered at predetermined locations such as near Simran Hotel and Indra Bridge to identified recipients including Muhammed and Ashib, while Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal coordinated the operation and the said persons acted for monetary consideration. Thus, the statements mutually corroborated each other and established a deliberate, organized and repeated international smuggling operation involving airport access, coded digital communication, concealment near aircraft seats and life jacket pouches, retrieval after landing, and delivery outside the airport as part of a structured international syndicate.

8. On the basis of the statements recorded and the evidence collected during the course of investigation, it has emerged that the noticees/accused persons involved in previously undertook smuggling operations between Ahmedabad and Abu Dhabi/Jeddah on the dates and flight sectors indicated hereinbelow, during which quantities of gold about 700-1000 grams are stated to have been smuggled on each occasion (The below mentioned chart/table is prepared on the basis of chat, Screenshots of which are attached with statements as RUD-9): -

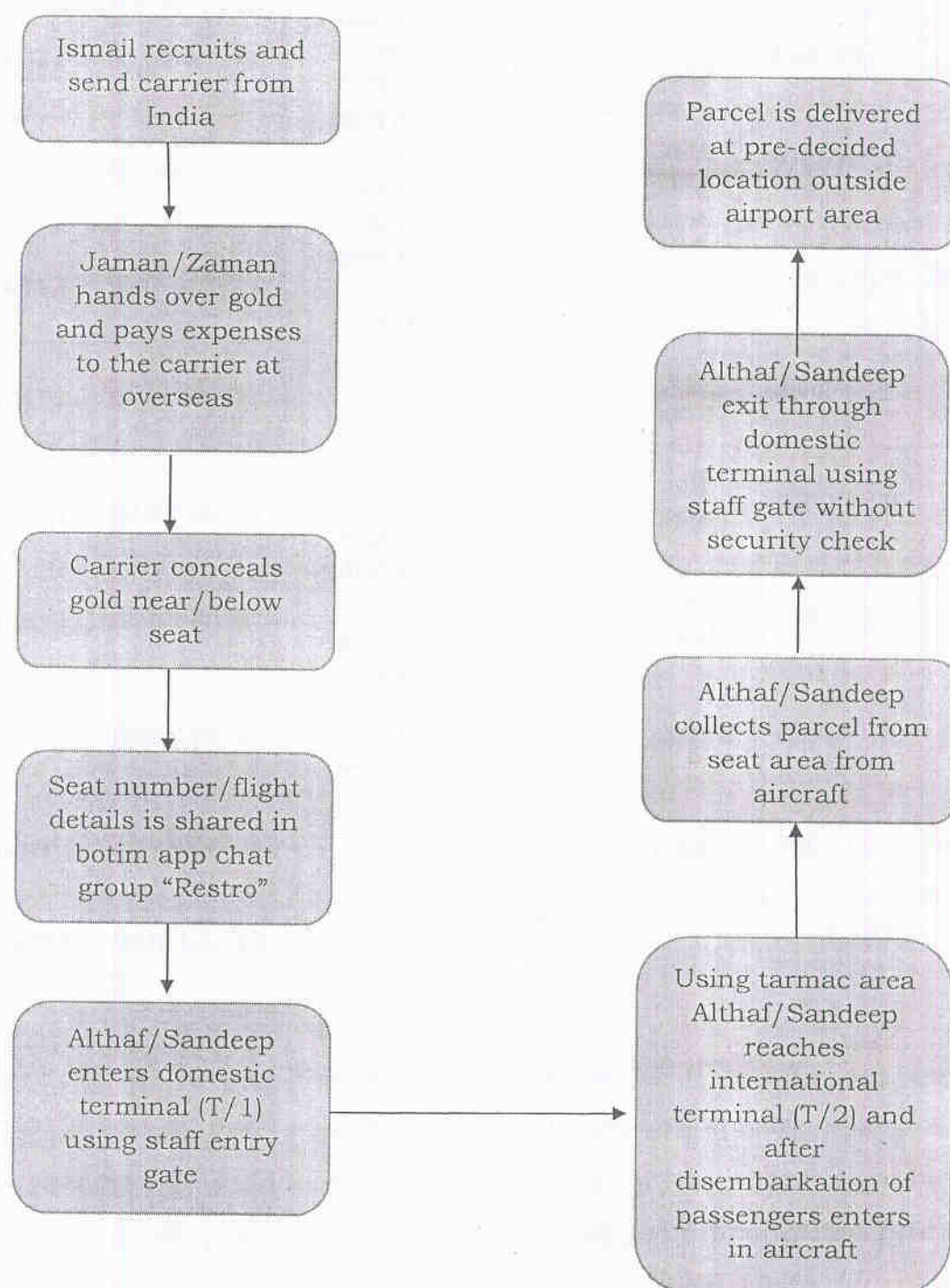
Sr. No.	Flight No.	Arrival Date	Arriving from	Quantity Involved (as per statement) (In Grams)	Notification No.	Tariff Value @1000 (In Rs.)	Market Value @1000 (In Rs.)
1	6E-1432	16.10.2025	Abu Dabhi	700 to 1000	Notification No. 65/2025-CUSTOMS (N.T.) / Exchange Rate	11903190.00	13050000.00

					Notification No.: 39/2025			
2	6E-1432	17.10.2025	Abu Dabhi	700 to 1000	Notification No. 65/2025-CUSTOMS (N.T.) / Exchange Rate	11770490.00	13100000.00	
3	6E-1432	19.10.2025	Abu Dabhi	700 to 1000		11770490.00	13100000.00	
4	6E-76	20.10.2025	Jeddah	700 to 1000		Notification No.: 40/2025	11770490.00	13050000.00
5	6E-1432	07.11.2025	Abu Dabhi	700 to 1000	Notification No. 72/2025-CUSTOMS (N.T.) / Exchange Rate	11500750.00	12210000.00	
6	6E-1432	08.11.2025	Abu Dabhi	700 to 1000		11500750.00	12250000.00	
7	6E-1432	09.11.2025	Abu Dabhi	700 to 1000		11500750.00	12210000.00	
8	6E-76	10.11.2025	Jeddah	700 to 1000		Notification No.: 41/2025	11500750.00	12310000.00
9	6E-76	11.11.2025	Jeddah	700 to 1000		11500750.00	12700000.00	
Total				6300 to 9000		104718410.00	113980000.00	

From the above, it is evident that the noticees/accused persons, collectively smuggled a total quantity of about 9 kilograms of gold during the aforesaid journeys, involving aggregate tariff value of about Rs. 10.472 crore rupees and corresponding aggregate market value of about Rs. 11.398 crore rupees.

9. On examination of the Subscriber Data records provided by the respective Telecom Services, mobile no. 9562208649 belongs to Muhammed T P and mobile no. 8160435985 belongs to Shri Muhammed Haseeb, as per the Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal's statement dated 22.11.2025, these belong to Muhammed and Ashib respectively. Accordingly, summons was issued to Muhammed T P and Muhammed Haseeb to present themselves before officer of DRI for recording their statements. However, Summons were returned undelivered with remarks of 'Insufficient Address' or 'Not Traceable,' indicating the individuals could not be served at their known addresses.

10. Modus Operandi:-



10.1. The modus operandi of the syndicate was that Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal had first identified and recruited the carrier for the purpose of smuggling foreign-origin gold into India. Shri Jaman/Zaman Sharif, arranged the carrier's travel expenses and handed over the gold to the carrier at Jeddah or Abu Dhabi, as the case may be. Thereafter, the carrier concealed the gold below or near the seat of the aircraft in the manner already decided and communicated to the syndicate members through the Botim app chat group "Restro". The seat number, flight number and the place of concealment were communicated in coded form to Shri Althaf Usman and Shri Sandeep

Mstrao through the said group, so that the parcel could be identified and retrieved after the flight arrived at Ahmedabad.

10.2. Thereafter, Shri Althaf Usman and/or Shri Sandeep Mstrao, by using their Airport Entry Permit access, used to enter through the domestic terminal staff entry and move through the tarmac area to reach international terminal where the concerned international flight arriving. After the passengers had disembarked, since they were authorized to enter into the aircraft, they used to collect the concealed parcel from the seat area or from the pouch/life jacket section, depending upon the flight and seat position. After collecting the parcel, they used to exit through domestic terminal using the staff gate without undergoing security check, as no effective checking was carried out at the exit point considering it as domestic movement. The recovered parcel was thereafter handed over at a pre-decided location such as Simran Hotel, Indra Bridge, Bharat Petrol Pump or any other place already communicated in advance through Botim app by Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal or Shri Jaman/Zaman Sharif.

10.3. The entire operation was conducted in a planned and coordinated manner, with each person having a well-defined role. Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal acted as the coordinator, recruiter and communication link within India and abroad. Shri Jaman/Zaman Sharif acted as the foreign-side supplier/arranger and source of the gold. The carrier acted as the person who physically brought the gold into India and concealed it in the aircraft. Shri Althaf Usman and Shri Sandeep Mstrao exploited their airport access and operational position to retrieve the gold from the aircraft and ensure its movement outside the airport. The use of Botim app chat group "Restro" and coded messages was intended to avoid detection by Customs and security agencies and to facilitate repeated smuggling of foreign-origin gold into India without declaration and without payment of Customs duty.

11. LEGAL PROVISIONS:

11.1. According to the Customs Baggage Declaration (Amendment) Regulations, 2016 issued vide Notification 31/2016 (NT) dated 01.03.2016, all passengers who come to India and have anything to declare or are carrying dutiable or prohibited goods shall declare their accompanied baggage under Section 77 of the Customs Act, 1962.

11.2. All the dutiable articles imported into India by a passenger in his baggage are classified under CTH 9803. As per Section 77 of the Customs Act, 1962, the owner of any baggage shall for the purpose of clearing it, make a declaration of its contents to the proper officer. As per Section 11(1) of the Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992, no export or import shall be made by any person except in accordance with the provisions of Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992, the Rules and Orders made there under and the Foreign Trade Policy for the time being in force.

11.3. In terms of Para 2.26 (a) of the Foreign Trade Policy 2015-2020, only bona fide household goods and personal effects are allowed to be imported as part of passenger baggage as per limits, terms and conditions thereof in Baggage Rules notified by the Ministry of Finance. The gold can be imported by the banks (authorized by RBI) and the agencies nominated for the said purpose under Para 4.41 of Chapter-4 of Foreign Trade Policy or by "Eligible Passenger" as per the provision of Notification No. 50/2017-Customs dated 30.06.2017 (Sr. No. 356). As per Notification No. 50/2017-Customs dated 30.06.2017, the 'eligible passenger' means passenger of Indian origin or a passenger holding valid passport issued under the Passport Act, 1967 who is coming to India after a period of not less than 6 months of stay abroad.

The above said legal provisions are reproduced below:

Para 2.26 (a) of the Foreign Trade Policy 2015-2020:

Bona-fide household goods and personal effects may be imported as part of passenger baggage as per limits, terms and conditions thereof in Baggage Rules notified by the Ministry of Finance.

Para 4.41 of the Foreign Trade Policy 2015-2020:

Nominated Agencies: -

- (i) *Exporters may obtain gold / silver / platinum from Nominated Agency. Exporter in EOU and units in SEZ would be governed by the respective provisions of Chapter-6 of FTP / SEZ Rules, respectively.*
- (ii) *Nominated Agencies are MMTC Ltd, The Handicraft and Handlooms Exports Corporation of India Ltd, The State Trading Corporation of India Ltd, PEC Ltd, STCL Ltd, MSTC Ltd, and Diamond India Limited.*

(iii) Notwithstanding any provision relating to import of gold by Nominated Agencies under Foreign Trade Policy (2015-2020), the import of gold by Four Star and Five Star Houses with Nominated Agency Certificate is subjected to

actual user condition and are permitted to import gold as input only for the purpose of manufacture and export by themselves during the remaining validity period of the Nominated Agency certificate.

(iv) Reserve Bank of India can authorize any bank as Nominated Agency.

(v) Procedure for import of precious metal by Nominated Agency (other than those authorized by Reserve Bank of India and the Gems & Jewellery units operating under EOU and SEZ schemes) and the monitoring mechanism thereof shall be as per the provisions laid down in Hand Book of Procedures.

(vi) A bank authorized by Reserve Bank of India is allowed export of gold scrap for refining and import standard gold strips as per Reserve Bank of India guidelines.

11.4. Condition 41 of Sl. No. 356 of CBIC Customs Notification No. 50/2017 dated 30.06.2017 where the condition regarding import of gold by passenger is regulated in the following manner:

If,

1. (a) the duty is paid in convertible foreign currency;

(b) the quantity of import does not exceed ten kilograms of gold and one hundred kilograms of silver per eligible passenger; and

2. the gold or silver is, -

(a) carried by the eligible passenger at the time of his arrival in India, or

(b) the total quantity of gold under items (i) and (ii) of Sr. No. 356 does not exceed one kilogram and the quantity of silver under Sr. No. 357 does not exceed ten kilograms per eligible passenger; and

(c) is taken delivery of from a customs bonded warehouse of the State Bank of India or the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation Ltd., subject to the conditions 1;

Provided that such eligible passenger files a declaration in the prescribed form before the proper officer of customs at the time of his arrival in India declaring his intention to take delivery of the gold or silver from such a customs bonded warehouse and pays the duty leviable thereon before his clearance from customs.

Explanation.- For the purposes of this notification, "eligible passenger" means a passenger of Indian origin or a passenger holding a valid passport, issued under the Passports Act, 1967 (15 of 1967), who is coming to India after a period of not less than six months of stay abroad; and short visits, if any, made by the eligible passenger during the aforesaid period of six months shall be ignored if the total duration of stay on such visits does not exceed thirty days and such passenger has not availed of the exemption under this notification or under the notification being superseded at any time of such short visits.

11.5. Baggage Rules, 2016 –

11.5.1. As per Rule 5 of the Baggage Rules, 2016, “a passenger residing abroad for more than one year, on return to India, shall be allowed clearance free of duty in his bona fide baggage of Jewellery up to a weight, of twenty grams with a value cap of fifty thousand rupees if brought by a gentleman passenger, or forty grams with a value cap of one lakh rupees, if brought by a lady passenger”.

11.5.2. A combined reading of the above-mentioned legal provisions under Foreign Trade Regulations, the Customs Act, 1962 and the notifications issued therein - clearly indicate that import of gold including gold Jewellery through Baggage is Restricted and conditions have been imposed on the said imports by a passenger such as he/she should be of Indian origin or an Indian passport holder with minimum six months stay abroad etc. Only passengers who satisfy those mandatory conditions can import gold as a part of their bona fide personal baggage and the same has to be declared to the Customs at the time of their arrival and applicable duty paid. These conditions are nothing but restrictions imposed on the import of gold through passenger baggage. Further, from the foregoing legal provisions of Foreign Trade Policy, 2015-2020 read with Reserve Bank of India circulars issued under Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), Notifications issued by the Government of India and Circular issued by CBIC, it is evident that no one can import gold in any other manner as not explicitly stated/permitted above.

11.6. In exercise of powers conferred by Section 3 read with Section 5 of FT (D&R) Act, 1962, read with paragraph 1.02 and 2.01 of the Foreign Trade Policy, 2015-2020, as amended from time to time, the Central Government vide DGFT's Notification No. 49/2015-2020 dated 5th January, 2022 made amendment in import policy conditions of gold in any form Chapter 71 of ITC (HS), 2017, Schedule-1 (Import Policy) as under:

ITC(HS) Code	Item Description	Policy	Existing Policy Condition	Revised Policy Condition
71061000	Powder	Restricted	Import is allowed only through nominated agencies as notified by RBI (in case of banks) and DGFT (for other agencies).	No change in existing Policy Condition
71069110	Unwrought: Grains	Restricted	Import is allowed only through nominated agencies as notified by RBI (in case of banks) and DGFT (for other agencies).	No change in existing Policy Condition
71069190	Unwrought: Others		Silver dore can be imported by refineries against a license with AU condition.	
71069210	Sheets, plates, strips, tubes and pipes	Restricted	Import is allowed only through nominated agencies as notified by RBI (in case of banks) and DGFT (for other agencies).	No change in existing Policy Condition
71069290	Other	Restricted	Import is allowed only through nominated agencies as notified by RBI (in case of banks) and DGFT (for other agencies).	No change in existing Policy Condition
71081100	Powder	Restricted	Import is allowed only through nominated agencies as notified by RBI (in case of banks) and DGFT (for other agencies).	No change in existing Policy Condition

71081200	Other unwrought forms	Restricted	Import is allowed only through nominated agencies as notified by RBI (in case of banks) and DGFT (for other agencies). Gold dore can be imported by refineries against a license with AU condition.	Import is allowed only through nominated agencies as notified by RBI (in case of banks), DGFT (for other agencies) and IFSCA (for qualified jewellers through India International Bullion Exchange) Gold Dore can be imported by refineries against an import license with AU condition.
71081300	Other semi-manufactured forms	Restricted	Import is allowed only through nominated agencies as notified by RBI (in case of banks) and DGFT (for other agencies).	No change in existing Policy Condition
71189000	Other	Restricted	Import is allowed only through nominated agencies as notified by RBI (in case of banks) and DGFT (for other agencies).	Import is allowed only through nominated agencies as notified by RBI (in case of banks), DGFT (for other agencies) and IFSCA (for qualified jewellers through India International Bullion Exchange).

11.6.1. As per the said Notification, the expression "Gold in any form" includes gold in any form above 22 carats under Chapter 71 of ITC (HS), 2017, Schedule-I (Import Policy).

11.7. Further, as per Section 2(33) of the Customs Act, 1962, 'prohibited goods' means any goods the import or export of which is subject to any prohibition under this Act or any other law for the time being in force but does not include any goods in respect of which the conditions subject to which the goods are permitted to be imported or exported have been complied with, implying that any goods imported in violation of the conditions subject to which the goods are permitted to be imported are nothing but prohibited goods. Hence, the smuggling of 1246.48 grams gold (extracted from the recovered capsules containing gold paste mixed with chemical substances in semi-solid form) having purity of 999.0/24 Ct recovered from Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil are in contravention of the Foreign Trade Policy 2015-20 read with the relevant notification issued under the Customs Act, 1962 & rules made thereunder, shall have to be treated as prohibited, by virtue of not being in conformity with the conditions imposed in the said Regulations. It is pertinent to note that any prohibition applies to every type of prohibition which may be complete or partial and even a restriction on import or export is to an extent a prohibition. Hence the restrictions imposed on the said imports are to an extent a prohibition and any violation of the said conditions/restrictions would make the impugned goods liable for confiscation under Section 111 of Customs Act, 1962.

11.8. Therefore, it appears that import of gold in contravention of the Foreign Trade Policy 2015-20 read with the Customs Act, 1962 and RBI circulars, as well as the Rules and regulations mentioned supra, shall have to be treated as prohibited, by virtue of not being in conformity with the conditions imposed in said Regulations.

Section 2(33) of the Customs Act, 1962 - "Prohibited Goods" means any goods the import or export of which is subject to any prohibition under this Act or any other law for the time being in force but does not include any such goods in respect of which the conditions subject to which the goods are permitted to be imported or exported have been complied with.

Section 2(39) of the Customs Act, 1962 - "Smuggling", in relation to any goods, means any act or omission which will render such goods liable to confiscation under section 111 or section 113.

11.9. Further, in terms of provisions under Section 123 of the Customs Act, 1962, it is the responsibility of the person who is in possession of the said gold / silver or the person claiming ownership of the same, to prove that the

same were not smuggled gold. Relevant provisions of Section 123 of the Customs Act, 1962 are as under:

Section 123: Burden of proof in certain cases. -

- (1) *Where any goods to which this section applies are seized under this act in the reasonable belief that they are smuggled goods, the burden of proving that they are not smuggled goods shall be -*
 - (a) *In a case where such seizure is made from the possession of any person, -*
 - (i) *on the person from whose possession the goods were seized; and*
 - (ii) *if any person, other than the person from whose possession the goods were seized, claims to be the owner thereof, also on such other person.*
 - (b) *In any other case, on the person, if any, who claims to be the owner of the goods so seized.*
- (2) *This section shall apply to gold and manufactures thereof, watches, and any other class of goods which the Central Government may by notification in the Official Gazette specify.*

11.10. Section 111 of the Customs Act, 1962 provides for the confiscation of the goods which are imported improperly.

Section 111. Confiscation of improperly imported goods, etc. -

The following goods brought from a place outside India shall be liable to confiscation: -

- (d) *any goods which are imported or attempted to be imported or are brought within the Indian customs waters for the purpose of being imported, contrary to any prohibition imposed by or under this Act or any other law for the time being in force;*
- (e) *any dutiable or prohibited goods found concealed in any manner in any conveyance;*
- (l) *any dutiable or prohibited goods which are not included or are in excess of those included in the entry made under this Act, or in the case of baggage in the declaration made under section 77;*
- (m) *any goods which do not correspond in respect of value or in any other particular] with the entry made under this Act or in the case of baggage with the declaration made under section 77 [in respect thereof, or in the case of goods under transshipment, with the declaration for transshipment referred to in the proviso to sub-section (1) of section 54;]*

11.11. Section 112 of the Customs Act, 1962 provides the penalty on the persons for the improper import of the goods.

Section 112. Penalty for improper importation of goods, etc. -

Any person, -

(a) who, in relation to any goods, does or omits to do any act which act or omission would render such goods liable to confiscation under section 111, or abets the doing or omission of such an act, or

(b) who acquires possession of or is in any way concerned in carrying, removing, depositing, harbouring, keeping, concealing, selling or purchasing, or in any other manner dealing with any goods which he knows or has reason to believe are liable to confiscation under section 111,

11.12. Section 119: Confiscation of goods used for concealing smuggled goods:

“Any goods used for concealing smuggled goods shall also be liable to confiscation”.

11.13. From all the above paras, it appears that during the period relevant to this case, import of gold in any form (gold having purity above 22 carat) was restricted as per DGFT Notification and import was permitted only by nominated agencies. It clearly appears that import of goods whereof is allowed subject to certain conditions are to be treated as prohibited goods under Section 2(33) of the Customs Act, 1962 in case such conditions are not fulfilled. Gold is not allowed to be imported freely in baggage and it is permitted to be imported subject to fulfilment of certain conditions.

12. VIOLATIONS & CONTRAVENTION OF VARIOUS PROVISIONS:

12.1. The seized goods, a gold bar having purity of 999.0/24 Carat, totally weighing of Net 1246.48 grams & having a market value of Rs. 1,62,04,240/- has been attempted to be illegally smuggled into India without declaring before the custom authority in violation of the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962 & FTP and Custom Baggage Rules and around 9 Kg of foreign origin Gold in paste form already smuggled into India in 9 past journeys as agreed by them in their respective statements. The said gold bar does not also appear to be allowed to be imported by (i) Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil, (ii) Shri Jaman/Zaman Sharif, (iii) Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal, (iv) Shri Althaf Usman and (v) Shri Sandeep Mstrao keeping the restrictions on such import under the provisions of FTP and Customs Act, 1962. Hence, it appears

that the said two gold bar was brought into India with a motive to smuggle into India by way of fraudulently circumventing the restrictions and prohibitions imposed under the Customs Act 1962 and other allied Acts, Rules and Regulations. Therefore, the same prohibited goods may be treated as imported illegally into India and liable to confiscation under the provisions of Section 111(d), (e) and (l) of the Customs Act, 1962.

Further, the packing materials used for concealing the above said gold bar of purity 995/24 Kt. (extracted from the 4 capsules covered with white tape), totally weighing net 1246.48 grams believed to be used for concealment is liable to confiscation under Section 119 of the Customs Act, 1962. Also, (i) Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil, (ii) Shri Jaman/Zaman Sharif, (iii) Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal, (iv) Shri Althaf Usman and (v) Shri Sandeep Mstrao have claimed the ownership of the said seized gold. However, they failed to discharge their onus in terms of the provisions of Section 123 of the Custom Act, 1962. These actions render the said gold quantity liable for confiscation and also render penal action under the Customs Act, 1962.

12.2. A total quantity of about 9 kilograms of gold, involving aggregate tariff value of about Rs. 10.472 crore rupees and corresponding aggregate market value of about Rs. 11.398 crore rupees had been illegally smuggled into India previously without declaring before the custom authority in violation of the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962 & FTP and Custom Baggage Rules. The said gold does not appear to be allowed to import by (i) Shri Jaman/Zaman Sharif, (ii) Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal, (iii) Shri Althaf Usman and (iv) Shri Sandeep Mstrao keeping the restrictions on such import under the provisions of FTP and Customs Act, 1962. Hence, it appears that the said gold had been brought into India with a motive to smuggle into India by way of fraudulently circumventing the restrictions and prohibitions imposed under the Customs Act 1962 and other allied Acts, Rules and Regulations. Therefore, the same prohibited goods may be treated as imported illegally into India and liable to confiscation under the provisions of Section 111(d), (e) and (l) of the Customs Act, 1962.

13. ROLE OF PERSONS IN THE ABOVE SMUGGLING OF GOLD:

13.1 Role of Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil:

13.1.1 From the oral and documentary evidence available on record, it stood established that Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil acted as the carrier of foreign-origin gold in the impugned trip. He travelled from Jeddah to Ahmedabad by

Indigo Flight No. 6E-76 on 14.11.2025 carrying four capsules wrapped in white tape, which he concealed inside the pouch containing the life-saving jacket below Seat No. 30F of the aircraft.

13.1.2 He admitted that the said capsules contained gold in paste form, that he had brought the same from Jeddah on the directions of Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal, and that he had no invoice, import document or other proof of lawful possession/import. He further admitted that he had concealed the gold with intent to smuggle it into India and had denied declaration of any dutiable item before Customs.

13.1.3 His statement, therefore, clearly reflected his active and knowing participation in the smuggling attempt and established that he knowingly attempted to evade Customs declaration and duty in respect of foreign-origin gold totally weighing 1392.05 grams, which on extraction yielded gold bar weighing 1246.48 grams of 999.0 purity.

13.2 Role of Shri Jaman/Zaman Sharif:

13.2.1 From the evidence gathered, it stood established that Shri Jaman/Zaman Sharif, also referred to as "Zaman HRD DXB" in the Botim App chat group "Restro", was one of the principal organizers and foreign-side handlers of the syndicate. He had handed over the four capsules of foreign-origin gold to Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil at Jeddah and was the person who initiated and controlled the movement of the contraband from abroad.

13.2.2 The statement of Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal revealed that Jaman/Zaman Sharif was the main investor in the syndicate and that he directed the smuggling activity, while the statement of Althaf Usman and Sandeep Mstrao established that Jaman/Zaman Sharif, through the Botim group "Restro," used to issue instructions regarding flights, seat numbers, concealment locations and timing of delivery.

13.2.3 Thus, Jaman/Zaman Sharif appeared to be the foreign-based mastermind who arranged the delivery of gold in Jeddah, coordinated with the Indian-side operatives through coded digital communication, and caused the contraband to be brought into India without declaration and without payment of Customs duty.

13.3 Role of Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal:

13.3.1 From the evidence on record, it stood established that Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal was the key coordinator, recruiter and financial manager of the syndicate operating through the Botim group "Restro". He admitted that the group was created for communication regarding gold smuggling and other activities and that he was also made admin of the group.

13.3.2 He further admitted that he had been in search of a job in Jeddah and he was present there when Jaman/Zaman Sharif handed over the gold capsules to Abdul Nassir Thottathil, and that he recruited delivery persons, managed the movement of contraband, and coordinated delivery to recipients in India. He also identified the recipients Muhammed and Ashib and stated that the gold was delivered near Simran Hotel and Indra Bridge.

13.3.3 The statements dated 22.11.2025 further established that Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal was the main communicator and controller on the Indian side, that he used coded terms for seat numbers and flight details, and that he was fully aware of repeated smuggling operations through Jeddah and Abu Dhabi flights. He thus acted as the operational link between the foreign supplier, the airport staff and the ultimate recipients.

13.4 Role of Shri Althaf Usman:

13.4.1 The evidence on record established that Shri Althaf Usman, being employed as Senior Executive Security with Indigo Airlines at SVPI Airport, Ahmedabad, had used his airport access and operational position to facilitate the retrieval of smuggled gold from the aircraft. He admitted that the Botim group "Restro" was created by him and that he was a member/admin in the said group.

13.4.2 He further admitted that the group was used for communication relating to boarding, arrival, seat number, concealment place and delivery point, and that he used to receive and respond to such coded messages. He stated that he collected parcels from the aircraft, knew that they contained gold, and handed them over to persons instructed by Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal at locations such as Simran Hotel and Indra Bridge.

13.4.3 The statement dated 22.11.2025 further revealed that Althaf Usman had access to Terminal 1 and Terminal 2, and he could board aircraft under his AEP, and used the absence of checking at exit gates to move the

contraband out of the airport. He thus knowingly and actively facilitated the smuggling operation by retrieving gold from the aircraft and ensuring its onward delivery.

13.5 Role of Shri Sandeep Mstrao:

13.5.1 From the evidence available on record, it stood established that Shri Sandeep Mstrao, working as Assistant Manager with Indigo Airlines at SVPI Airport, Ahmedabad, was also an active participant in the syndicate and used his airport access to assist in collection and movement of smuggled gold from the aircraft.

13.5.2 He admitted that he was a member of the Botim group “Restro” under the name “Sand Bro Go”, that the group was used to communicate seat numbers, concealment locations, delivery points and monetary consideration, and that he had personally participated in and responded to the said conversations.

13.5.3 He further admitted that he had collected parcels from international aircraft around 10 to 12 times, had delivered them at locations such as Simran Hotel and Indra Bridge, and had received monetary consideration for such deliveries. He also acknowledged that on 14.11.2025 he and Althaf Usman were present to collect Abdul Nassir’s parcel, but the same had already been recovered by DRI officers from the aircraft.

13.5.4 Thus, it appears that Sandeep Mstrao knowingly participated in the repeated retrieval and delivery of smuggled gold, assisted the syndicate by using his operational access at the airport, and acted in furtherance of the illegal plan devised by Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal and directed by Jaman/Zaman Sharif.

13.6 From the above, it was evident that Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil acted as the carrier of the contraband gold from Jeddah, Shri Jaman/Zaman Sharif operated as the foreign-based supplier and controller, Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal functioned as the coordinator and financial/communication link, and Shri Althaf Usman and Shri Sandeep Mstrao used their airport access to retrieve and move the gold out of the aircraft and deliver it to the identified recipients. Their statements mutually corroborated each other and established a deliberate, organized and repeated international smuggling syndicate operating through coded Botim communications, concealment

inside aircraft seat/life jacket compartments, retrieval after landing and delivery outside the airport for monetary gain.

14. Show Cause Notice:

14.1. Now therefore, **(i) Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil**, S/o Shri Imbichi Moyi Eranhona residing at Kunnummal House, Avilora PO, Kizhakkoth, Kozhikode, Kerala-673572 **(ii) Shri Jaman/Zaman Sharif**@ Dubai, **(iii) Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal** S/o Shri Kunhipocker, residing at Kacheri Kunnummal, Elettil Post, Thamarassery, Kozhikode, Kerala-673572 , **(iv) Shri Althaf Usman** S/o Shri Usman Kutty, residing at 376, Jawahar Nagar, Aradhya Apartment, Indore, Madhya Pradesh-452012 and **(v) Shri Sandeep Mstrao** S/o Shri Bhanwarlal Mstrao residing at G-904, Murlidhar Heights, Muthiya, Ahmedabad are hereby called upon to Show Cause to the **Additional Commissioner/Joint Commissioner of Customs, Ahmedabad**, having their office at Customs House, Navrangpura, Ahmedabad - 380009, as to why:

- (i)** A Gold bars weighing 1246.48 grams (4 capsules covered with white tape) having a market value of Rs. 1,62,04,240/- seized under Section 110 of the Customs Act, 1962 should not be confiscated under Section 111(d), (e) and (l) of the Customs Act, 1962 also read with Section 123 of the Custom Act,1962;
- (ii)** Packing materials believed to be used for concealing the above said gold bars of purity 995/24 Kt., totally weighing 1246.48 grams should not be confiscated under Section 119 of the Customs Act, 1962 also read with Section 123 of the Custom Act,1962;
- (iii)** Total quantity of about 9 kilograms of gold smuggled during the 9 previous journeys involving aggregate market value of about 11.398 crore rupees (as per para 8) notwithstanding their present unavailability as they were smuggled in violation of the various provisions of Customs Act, 1962 should not be held liable to confiscation under Section 111(d), (e) and (l) of the Customs Act, 1962 also read with Section 123 of the Custom Act, 1962;
- (iv)** Penalties should not be imposed upon them under Section 112(a) and (b) of the Customs Act, 1962.

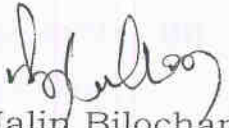
15. The noticees are further required to produce at the time of showing cause all evidences upon which they intend to rely in support of their

defense. They are further advised to indicate in their written submission as to whether they desire to be heard in person before the case is adjudicated. If no mention is made about this in their written submissions, it would be presumed that they do not desire to be heard in person. If no cause is shown by them against the action proposed to be taken within 30 days from the date of receipt of this Notice or if they do not appear before the adjudicating authority, as and when the case is posted for hearing, the case is liable to be decided Ex-Parte on the basis of material evidence available on record.

16. The relied upon documents for the purpose of this notice are listed in the Annexure 'R' and scanned copies thereof are provided in DVD/CD enclosed with this notice.

17. Department reserves its right to amend, modify or supplement this notice at any time prior to the adjudication of the case.

18. This show cause notice is being issued without prejudice to any other action that may be taken in respect of the above Services and / or the persons / firms mentioned in the notice under the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962, the Foreign Trade (Development & Regulation) Act, 1992 (as amended), Foreign Trade Policy 2015-20 or any provisions/law made thereof and / or any other law for the time being in force, in the Republic of India.


(Nalin Bilochan)
Additional Director
DRI, AZU, Ahmedabad

Encl: Annexure R & DVD containing scanned copies of RUDs.

F. No.: DRI/AZU/GI-02/ENQ-74/2025

Date: 08.05.2026

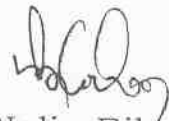
To

- (i) Shri Abdul Nassir Thottathil, S/o Shri Imbichi Moyi Eranhona residing at Kunnummal House, Avilora PO, Kizhakkoth, Kozhikode, Kerala-673572, email id-
- (ii) Shri Jaman/Zaman Sharif @ Dubai,
- (iii) Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal S/o Shri Kunhipocker, residing at Kacheri Kunnummal, Elettil Post, Thamarassery, Kozhikode, Kerala-673572, email id- ismayil2003@gmail.com

- (iv) Shri Althaf Usman S/o Shri Usman Kutty, residing at 376, Jawahar Nagar, Aradhya Apartment, Indore, Madhya Pradesh-452012, email id- althaf.usman@yahoo.com and
- (v) Shri Sandeep Mstrao S/o Shri Bhanwarlal Mstrao residing at G-904, Murlidhar Heights, Muthiya, Ahmedabad, email id- sandeeprao934@gmail.com

Copy to-

- (a) The Additional Commissioner/Joint Commissioner of Customs, Ahmedabad along with RUDs (DVD) as per Annexure R, for the purpose of adjudication please.
- (b) The Director General, Central Economic Intelligence Bureau, 6th & 8th floor, Janpath Bhawan, Janpath, New Delhi.
- (c) The Deputy/Assistant Commissioner of Customs (AIU), T-2 Terminal, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport, Ahmedabad-380003.
- (d) The System In charge, Customs HQ, Ahmedabad for uploading on official web-site i.e. <http://www.ahmedabadcustoms.gov.in>
- (e) The Assistant/Deputy Commissioner, Customs Ahmedabad, for affixing on the Notice Board for public interest.
- (f) Guard File.



(Nalin Bilochan)
Additional Director
DRI, AZU, Ahmedabad

ANNEXURE - "R"

LIST OF RELIED UPON DOCUMENTS OF SHOW CAUSE NOTICE ISSUED TO (I) SHRI ABDUL NASSIR THOTTATHIL, (II) SHRI JAMAN/ZAMAN SHARIF, (III) SHRI ISMAIL KACHERI KUNNUMMAL, (IV) SHRI ALTHAF USMAN AND (V) SHRI SANDEEP MSTRAO VIDE F.NO. DRI/AZU/GI-02/ENQ-74/2025 IN THE MATTER SMUGGLING OF FOREIGN ORIGIN GOLD THROUGH SVPI, AIRPORT, AHMEDABAD

S. No.	RUDs	Documents	Page No.
1.	RUD-1	Panchnama dated 14.11.2025 drawn at the Arrival Hall of Terminal-2 of SVPI Airport, Ahmedabad in respect of Smuggling of Gold in to India.	1 to 7
2.	RUD-2	Valuation Certificates & Reports dated 14.11.2025 of Gold submitted by Shri Kartikey Vasantraai Soni, a Govt. Approved Valuer in Annexure "A" & Annexure "B" iro passenger shri abdul nassir thottathil	1 to 2
3.	RUD-3	Seizure Memo issued under Section 110 of the Customs Act, 1962 from F. No. DRI/AZU/GI-02/Enq-74/2025 dated 14.11.2025 iro passenger shri abdul nassir thottathil	1
4.	Collective RUD-4	Ware House Entries Nos. 7806 and 7807, all dated 14.11.2025 handed over to the Ware House Incharge, SVPI, Airport, Ahmedabad recovered from the passengers shri abdul nassir thottathil	1
5.	RUD-5	Statement dated 14.11.2025 of Shri abdul nassir thottathil recorded under section 108 of the Customs Act, 1962.	1 to 4
6.	RUD-6	Statement dated 20.11.2025 of Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal recorded under section 108 of the Customs Act, 1962.	1 to 7
7.	RUD-7	Statement dated 20.11.2025 of Shri Althaf Usman recorded under section 108 of the Customs Act, 1962.	1 to 5
8.	RUD-8	Statement dated 20.11.2025 of Shri Sandeep Mstrao recorded under section 108 of the Customs Act, 1962.	1 to 4
9.	Collective RUD-9	Statement dated 22.11.2025 of Shri Ismail Kacheri Kunnummal, Shri Althaf Usman and Shri Sandeep Mstrao recorded under section 108 of the Customs Act, 1962.	1 to 31
10.	RUD-10	Certificate under section 63 (4) (C) of Bhartiya Sakshya Adhinyam(BSA), 2023 by ECS Infotech Pvt. Ltd.	1 to 12

