Foreign Currency Worth Rs. 3.51 Crore Seized at Kolkata Airport and Seven Arrested, Money could be Payment for Hydroponic Marijuana Smuggling

- *Major Seizure: DRI seized foreign currency worth approximately Rs. 3.12 crore from seven passengers attempting to smuggle it to Bangkok through Kolkata Airport on 6 November 2026.*
- *Additional Recovery: Foreign currency worth another Rs. 39 lakh was recovered from other intercepted passengers, taking the total seizure to approximately Rs. 3.51 crore.*
- *Concealment Modus Operandi: Currency in USD and GBP was concealed inside notebooks, hidden compartments in trolley bags, shoes, clothes and checked-in and hand baggage.*
- *Arrests: Seven members of the smuggling syndicate were arrested for attempting to illegally export foreign currency.*
- *Legal Action: The accused were charged under the Customs Act read with FEMA Regulations for contravention of foreign currency export provisions.*
- *DRI Enforcement: The operation was based on specific intelligence and targeted an organised network involved in the illicit outflow of foreign currency.*

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In a major strike against the cross-border smuggling of foreign currency, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), intercepted several passengers going abroad at Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International (NSCBI) Airport, Kolkata, who were attempting to carry foreign currency out of the country.



Acting on specific intelligence, DRI officers intercepted 7 passengers in the early hours of 06.11.2026 on their journey to Bangkok. A thorough personal search of the passengers, including their hand baggage and checked-in baggage, led to the recovery and seizure of assorted foreign currency in USD, GBP collectively valued at **valued at Rs. 3.12 crore**.

The syndicate carriers used a sophisticated modus operandi and the currency was ingeniously concealed inside notebooks, in two-layered hidden compartments in trolley bags and in shoes. Some of it was hidden in the pockets of clothes packed in checked-in baggage, and in other cases deep inside both checked-in and hand baggage. On enquiry, the passengers could not produce any documents to establish ownership or lawful possession of the currency.

In total 7 members of the syndicate were arrested and charged with smuggling out the foreign currency in contravention of Customs Act read with FEMA Regulations.

In addition, few other passengers were also intercepted and search of their baggage led to recovery of foreign currency equivalent to **Rs. 0.39 crore.** The passengers were handed to Customs formation for further proceedings.

DRI remains determined to dismantle organised networks that facilitate the illicit outflow of foreign currency and undermine the country’s economic and fiscal stability. Through sustained, intelligence-led enforcement, DRI continues to safeguard India’s economic frontiers.