

Man arrested for trying to bribe Sars customs officers

A passenger, who was traveling to Dubai, was arrested on Tuesday at the OR Tambo International Airport for offering the South African Revenue Services (Sars) customs officials a bribe.



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The three Sars customs officers turned down a bribe of \$30,000 (close to R390,000) by the passenger.

The passenger was removed from his flight before take-off for questioning after he was flagged by the Sars' Risk unit.

The passenger had no checked in luggage and only one backpack, which was extremely heavy.

On the way to the customs search area, he repeatedly offered the two Customs officers “bundles of currency” in return for allowing him to leave with his backpack. Both refused this request.

They were then joined by a customs manager in the interview room and the passenger again offered them all “bundles of currency” in order to secure his release.

The offer was increased to \$30,000 and was consistently refused by the customs officials in the interview room. The entire

interaction including searching of his bag which contained \$334,895 (over R4 million) was captured on CCTV cameras in the customs control room.

A criminal case was registered with the SAPS for attempted bribery, false declaration and failure to declare. The passenger was remanded into custody.

In a second incident on the same day, two passengers bound for Dubai were intercepted at ORTIA for being in possession of undeclared currency.

The male passenger was taken to the Customs search area and three of his bags were searched.

Customs officers found the equivalent of more than R600,000 in US dollars and Pakistani Rupees hidden in his laptop bag.

A criminal case of contravention of the Customs Act was registered at the ORTIA Police Station (failure to declare) and the passenger was remanded into custody.

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