

# Police warn gold buyers of fraud

**Crime.** Police say the gold scam racket targets foreigners whom they lure from other countries to come to Uganda and sell to them fake gold.

BY ANDREW BAGALA  
 abagala@ug.nationmedia.com

**KAMPALA.** The Directorate of Criminal Investigations has told foreigners, who travel to Uganda to buy gold to be cautious following an increase of gold scams reported to the police.

In the latest case, detectives arrested two Ugandans and four Congolese on allegation that they conned an Iranian national of Shs350m in a fake gold deal.

Mr Vincent Ssekate, the spokesman of the Directorate of Criminal Investigations, said the gold scam racket is targeting foreigners whom they lure from other countries to come to Uganda and sell to them fake gold.

"In the case of an Iran national, the suspect found him in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. He lured him to Uganda where he was conned \$97,000 (Shs348m) in a licensed gold company at Lower Konge in Kampala City," Mr Ssekate said yesterday.

Police have not recovered the stolen money yet. The detectives impounded all the tools the suspects were using in their business.

The suspects are being held on charges of obtaining money by false pretence and theft.

Mr Ssekate said half a dozen cases have been reported to police since the year started and each involves not less than Shs300m.

Recently, a Canadian was defrauded of Shs330m in a fake gold deal.

"The racket operates around Makindye, Kabalagala, Konge and Buziga areas. They have



**Impounded.** CID spokesman Vincent Ssekate shows equipment confiscated from people suspected of involvement in gold scams recently. MONITOR PHOTO

both genuine gold and fake one. So when a genuine gold dealer comes to make a transaction, they swap genuine gold with the fake," Mr Ssekate said.

He said what is worrying them is the deep links the rackets have in foreign countries.

Last year, the police Flying Squad Unit arrested a UPDF captain and two civilians on allegations that they robbed gold worth Shs3.3 billion from a Congolese national. Some of the arrested people were also involved in defraud-

ing of Shs300m from UPDF representative in Parliament, Col Felix Kulayigye.

## GOLD TRADE

There is a rise in gold business in the country. At the end of 2016 gold exports rose to \$336m (Shs1.2 trillion), rivaling coffee and it was the reason Uganda's exports rose by one per cent. This is the closest any single export has come close to coffee in many years.

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