

Three arrested on suspicion of burglary

Police urge people travelling for long vacations to sign up for residence protection programme

- By Siham Al Najami, Staff Reporter
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Dubai: Three burglary suspects were arrested while attempting to flee the country after goods worth more than Dh2 million were reported missing.

The three suspects, two Mexicans and a Colombian, were arrested this month at Dubai International Airport while attempting to leave the country with jewellery hidden in children's laptops, said Lieutenant Colonel Ahmad Humaid Al Merri, Director of the Criminal Investigations Division of Dubai Police.

At least five reports had been filed to Dubai Police from residents and citizens who had returned after their summer vacations to find numerous valuables missing from their homes.

A major breakthrough for investigators was one of the victims' timing in reporting a burglary to the police. His house was burgled just a day before he was due to come back to the country, said Lt Col Al Merri.

"They would break into the villa past sunset after ensuring there was no one in the villa. Many indications such as a pile-up of newspapers and ads, lights off all day and night, and dust accumulated on cars could attract such criminals to carry out their crimes," he said.

The victim's neighbour told investigators that he spotted a person in the area who looked "very suspicious," and that he wanted to contact the police but he told police that he feared he would be involved in the investigations...", said Lt Col Al Merri.

"I assure the public that we absolutely don't involve them in any case and that we welcome their cooperation. The public are our partners in fighting crimes," he said.

From their descriptions and the style of crime, police investigators had an idea of the nationality and appearance of the suspects. Their details were distributed throughout the country and to every entry and exit point, he said.

The Colombian suspect was the first to be arrested. A scanned image of the children's laptop showed dark areas. The contents of the laptop had been removed and jewellery covered in plastic bags placed there instead, said Lt Col Al Merri.

According to him, none of the victims had signed-up for the free 'protect your residence' service offered by Dubai Police. The service, accessible online, requests the public to enter their details when they leave their residence on vacation or for shorter trips.

Police patrol units then monitor the area while the residents are out of town.

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