



PRESS RELEASE
05-01-2023

ED initiated investigation in the PDS Scam on the basis of various FIRs registered by West Bengal Police wherein various private persons were allegedly found in unauthorized possession of PDS ration and involved in bogus procurement of paddy. During ED investigation, three important modus operandi were detected in respect of alleged generation of Proceeds of Crime related to PDS scam which are as under:

- Various Rice Mills had allegedly siphoned off the PDS atta/wheat flour in collusion with PDS distributors, PDS Dealers and other persons thereby causing huge gain to themselves and corresponding loss to the Government funds and intended beneficiaries of PDS Scheme. As per the evidence collected, approx. 25.55 % quantity of total atta required to be delivered to the PDS Distributors was siphoned off.
 - It was also found that Rice Mills were buying back the atta delivered to various dealers through various middlemen/agents and was mixing the same with fresh PDS atta and accordingly corresponding quantity of wheat was being allegedly siphoned off thereby generating proceeds of Crime. This modus-operandi not only generated proceeds of crime but also affected the quality of atta delivered.
 - In another modus operandi, it was found that Proceeds of Crime were generated under the garb of paddy procurement in the name of fake farmers. It was found that various Millers were controlling or were hand in glove with many cooperative societies and by using the names of their employees and relatives as “fake farmers” in the muster rolls, they received payments at MSP in the bank accounts of their employees and relatives.
2. During the investigation, it was revealed that persons laundered the PoC through various companies, invested in acquisition of various immovable properties and also transferred part of PoC to certain companies allegedly under the control and beneficial ownership of Jyoti Priya Mallick.
3. During the investigation, proceeds of crime allegedly derived from predicate offences in the form of 101 immovable properties and Rs. 2.89 Crore (balance in the bank accounts) were provisionally attached on 11.12.2023. Earlier, Rs. 16.87 Crore in certain bank accounts were also frozen. Jyoti Priya Mallick, presently Minister-In-Charge of Forest Affairs and Non-Conventional and Renewable Energy Sources of Government of West Bengal (earlier, Minister-In-Charge of Food and Supply Department. Govt. of West Bengal) and Bakibur Rahaman were arrested u/s 19 of PMLA, 2002 and at present, both are under judicial custody.



4. ED has also filed first Prosecution Compliant (PC) against Bakibur Rahaman, NPG Rice Mill Pvt. Ltd., Jyoti Priya Mallick, and others on 12.12.2023 in this PMLA case related to alleged siphoning of PDS ration to open market, mixing of wheat flour in fresh flour and bogus paddy procurement. The Prosecution complaint was filed before the Ld. Special PMLA Court, Kolkata. The Hon'ble Court has taken cognizance of the PC on 12/12/2023.

Incident on 5th Jan 2024:-

5. During further investigation it has been found that PoC was laundered by Mallick through his various close associates including some persons who are primarily engaged in business of FFMC.

6. In respect of three premises, pertaining to Sahajahan Sheikh Convenor of TMC Sandesh Khali, North 24 Parganas, as soon as search team arrived in two premises, in respect of one premises i.e residence of Sahajahan Sheikh, door was locked from inside and he refused to open the door. As officers with the assistance of CRPF Personnel were trying to pursue to get door opened even by trying to contact the concerned person. His mobile location at that time indicated that he was inside this house. Thereafter, ED team was taken by surprise that within half an hour, crowd /mob of around 800-1000 persons marching towards them with weapons in their hands such as lathis, stones, bricks etc. and gheraoed the ED officials and CRPF personnel. Suddenly, they started attacking the ED officials and CRPF personnel and started pelting stones and brick at them and attacked the officers as well as CRPF personnels (27 in Nos in two premises) with stones / lathis / hands (using physical force) and also raising/shouting slogans against the ED officers and the Central Government. Further, they also attacked the ED vehicles which are badly damaged.

7. ED officials while discharging their duties were badly attacked by crowds (suspected to be instigated by Sahajahan Sheikh and his associates). Three officers have suffered grievous injuries as the mob has marched towards the ED officials with an intention to cause death. They are being treated at the hospital. Other officers had to escape from the place of the incident without conducting search to save their lives as the mob became very violent and even chased the officials so as to deter the officials from performing their official duty. The Mob also snatched/robbed/stole the personal/official belongings of the ED officials such as their mobile phones, laptop, cash, wallets, etc.

8. Accordingly, requisite complaint has been made to jurisdictional Police for registration of FIR and necessary action against culprits.