



PRESS RELEASE

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- **Provisional Attachment of Properties of Celebrities- Rs. 11.14 crores.**
- **Searches Conducted at Four Payment Gateways.**
- **More than 4 Crores funds frozen**
- **₹1,000+ Crore Laundering Trail Uncovered**

Directorate of Enforcement, Headquarters office has provisionally attached movable and immovable assets valued at Rs. 11.14 Crore belonging to former Indian Cricketers Suresh Raina and Shikhar Dhawan under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002. The attachment includes mutual fund investments worth Rs. 6.64 Crore held in the name of Suresh Raina and an immovable property valued at Rs. 4.5 Crore held in the name of Shikhar Dhawan.

ED initiated investigation on the basis of multiple FIRs registered by various State Police agencies against the operators of the illegal offshore betting platform *1xBet*. The investigation has revealed that 1xBet and its surrogate brand 1xBat, 1xbat Sporting lines were engaged in promoting and facilitating illegal online betting and gambling operations across India.

ED investigation revealed that both Suresh Raina and Shikhar Dhawan knowingly entered into endorsement agreements with foreign entities for the promotion of *1xBet* through its surrogates. These endorsements were made in return for payments routed through foreign entities to conceal the illicit origin of the funds, which are linked to Proceeds of Crime (POC) generated from illegal betting activities.

ED investigation has further revealed that 1xBet operated in India without authorization and used surrogate branding and advertisements to target Indian users through social media, online videos, and print media. Payments for endorsements were structured through layered transactions using foreign intermediaries to disguise the illegal source of funds.

The attachment follows ED's search operations under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA).

The investigation revealed that 1xbet was facilitating betting and gambling for Indian users by collecting money through various mule accounts. Investigation so far has revealed over 6000 mule accounts used for deposits. Amounts collected from users in these mule accounts were routed through multiple payment gateways to disguise their origin. Investigation revealed that merchants were on boarded on these gateways without any KYC verifications. On verification of profile of these merchants, it is seen that the entities' declared business activities did not match their transaction patterns, indicating laundering of funds exceeding Rs. 1000 Crore.

Based on these findings, searches were conducted, resulting in seizure of incriminating evidence. Over 60 bank accounts linked to these payment gateways have been frozen. Amount of over 4 crores have been frozen so far. Further investigation is in progress

ED advises the general public to exercise utmost caution and refrain from engaging in, promoting, or investing money through online betting or gambling platforms. The public is therefore cautioned:

1. Do not open, share, or allow your personal or business bank accounts, debit cards, UPI IDs, or payment wallets to be used by others for receiving or transferring funds of unknown origin.
2. Do not click on advertisements or links on social media promising high returns, betting offers, or "passive income" schemes. Such links often lead to illegal gambling sites or financial fraud.
3. Avoid downloading mobile applications or joining Telegram/WhatsApp channels that promote online betting or gambling.
4. Any person knowingly assisting or allowing their account to be used for such activities may be prosecuted under the PMLA, 2002, which provides for imprisonment up to 7 years and attachment of assets derived from such illegal transactions.
5. If you suspect that your account has been misused, immediately inform your bank and local police authorities.

ED reiterates that illegal betting and gambling not only cause economic harm but also facilitate money laundering and financing of unlawful activities. Members of the public are urged to remain vigilant and report any suspicious transactions or advertisements promoting such platforms to local law enforcement agencies or the ED.