



Press Release

04.01.2024

Directorate of Enforcement (ED) has conducted searches under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, on 03.01.2024, at 12 premises located in the States of Jharkhand, West Bengal, Rajasthan, and Bihar. The premises include the residences of Abhishek Prasad "Pintu" (Press Advisor to Hon'ble CM of Jharkhand State), Ram Niwas Yadav (DC of Sahibganj District) and Rajendra Dubey (DSP of Sahibganj). This action is related to a case of illegal stone mining prevalent in Sahibganj, Jharkhand, having proceeds of crime of more than Rs 1000 Crore.

ED initiated investigation on the basis of FIR registered at SC/ST P.S, Sahibganj, under various sections of IPC, Arms Act and JMMC Rules, 2004 against Bishnu Yadav, Pavitra Yadav, Pankaj Mishra and others regarding illegal stone mining. Later on, the subject case was taken over by CBI as per the direction of Hon'ble Jharkhand High Court.

ED investigation revealed that rampant illegal mining activities were being done in Sahibganj area. In order to ascertain the extent of illegal mining, twenty joint inspections of illegal mining activities were carried out by the Officers of the ED along with Administrative, Forest, Mining, Pollution Control Officers of State Government of Jharkhand in different area of Sahibganj District. The joint inspection has confirmed the instance of huge illegal mining as well as denudation of land and forest area leading to other environmental hazards. During the joint inspection, the quantum of illegal mining of more than 23.26 Crore cubic feet having approximate market value of Rs. 1250 Crore has been detected and determined. ED investigation also revealed that the kingpin of illegal mining activities was Pankaj Mishra who was arrested by ED on 19.07.2022 and currently he is in judicial custody.

During the search operations, various incriminating digital devices, documents/records and cash amounting to Rs. 36.99 lakhs including Rs 7.25 lakh from the camp office of Ram Niwas Yadav, DC of Sahibganj. Additionally, 19 cartridges of 9 mm bore, 2 cartiridges of .380 mm and 5 empty cases of .45 pistol were also recovered from the residential premises of Ram Niwas Yadav, DC Sahibganj. During the searches, 30 benami bank accounts were also unearthed and the same have been freezed. The searches conducted on 03.01.2024 are in continuation of earlier 51 searches and 08 arrests conducted/made by the ED in cases under investigation against rampant illegal stone mining in the state of Jharkhand.

Further investigation is under progress.