



Press Release
28.09.2022

Directorate of Enforcement (ED) has arrested Lakhwinder Singh on 26.09.2022 in illegal mining case under the Prevention of Money-laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.

Earlier, ED had initiated money laundering investigation on the basis of FIRs registered by PS Sadar, Una, Himachal Pradesh for illegal mining and criminal conspiracy against various persons and entities.

ED investigation has revealed that rampant illegal mining was being carried out at various locations in Una district of Himachal Pradesh. Consequently, ED conducted searches at various premises belonging to Lakhwinder Singh and others on 19.09.2022 and various incriminating documents, digital devices, property documents and unaccounted cash of Rs. 15.37 lakh were seized. The modus operandi adopted by the persons includes excess mining beyond permissible limits through excavation of sand and gravel beyond the leased area and overshooting permissible depth of mining. Further, massive Environmental damage has been caused due to non-adherence to Environment norms. Also, no royalty/duty/tax was being paid on this excess mining.

To physically ascertain the extent of illegal mining, a joint digital survey along with state mining officials has been carried out at the mining sites owned and controlled by the persons involved which revealed about 4.8 lakh cubic meter of excess mining had been carried out. The value of illegally mined material has been clandestinely sold (out of books of account) is to the tune of Rs. 35 Crore.

It thus emerged from the investigation that Lakhwinder Singh is the key person who owns and controls several mining leases/sites and stone crushers in Una district of Himachal Pradesh and is the master mind and prime beneficiary of POC generated from illegal mining. Lakhwinder Singh had resorted to withholding of relevant information and was misleading the investigation. After the arrest, he was produced before the Hon'ble Special Court, Dharamsala, and HP on 27.09.2022 and has been remanded to ED custody for 5 days.

Further investigation is in progress.