



Press Release
08.08.2025

Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Kolkata Zonal Office has provisionally attached movable assets worth Rs. 14.29 Crore lying in 80 mule bank accounts relating to investigation of illegal online betting panels case under the provisions of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002. Investigation revealed multiple mule accounts were used for collection of illegal betting proceeds online and the illegal betting proceeds were routed through multiple shell entities.

ED initiated investigation on the basis of an FIR registered by Siliguri Police Commissionerate, West Bengal under various sections of Indian Penal Code, 1860 and West Bengal Gambling and Prize Competitions Act, 1957.

ED investigation revealed that illegal online betting apps were operating in a formal corporate structure and giving panels / franchise to suspect individuals on rent basis for operating illegal betting apps. The betting apps had various departments such as customer acquisition groups, proper call centres, account departments, customer winnings settlement department, etc. operating through Whatsapp Groups / Telegram Channels in a clandestine manner. Aforesaid Betting panels (smaller units on field level, which run the illegal betting operations) were procured on illegal betting platforms. Investigation further revealed that payments to procure the betting panel were done by payment in crypto currency such as USDT.

Earlier, ED had conducted search operations under the provisions of PMLA, 2002 on 03.06.2025 at various premises spread across West Bengal, Delhi, Bihar, UP and Assam linked to a racket operating Mule Accounts and illegal betting & gambling. During the search operations, various incriminating documents including digital devices were found & seized. Vishal Bhardwaj alias Badal Bhardwaj, and Sonu Kumar Thakur were arrested under PMLA, 2002 on 03.06.2025. Another individual named Abhishek Bansal, was also taken into custody for investigation in this matter. All the three accused are presently under Judicial Custody.

In the instant case, ED has earlier frozen around 1130 mule bank accounts holding balances upto Rs. 10.20 Crore, unearthed during various searches conducted under PMLA, 2002.

Further, a Prosecution Complaint has been filed in the instant case on 01.08.2025 arraigning 10 accused persons and pre-cognizance order has been issued by the Ld. Special Court, PMLA, 2002 in the said matter.

Further investigation is under progress.