



**Press Note**  
**29/08/2025**

### **ED Secures INTERPOL Purple Notice on Trade-Based Money Laundering Modus Operandi**

In an attempt to stay ahead in the dynamic criminal landscape, the Directorate of Enforcement (ED) has successfully published its first ever **Purple Notice through INTERPOL on 21st August, 2025**. During its investigations into a case, ED's investigating team unearthed a unique modus operandi of the nature of trade based money laundering, which it alerted its counterpart global law enforcement agencies across INTERPOL's 196 member countries through this notice. The Purple Notice is one of eight types published by Interpol, providing member countries with "information on modus operandi, objects, devices and concealment methods used by criminals." The publishing of the Purple Notice is an attempt of Enforcement Directorate at generating awareness and sensitizing its global counterparts to these new emerging money laundering trends.

In this case, ED's probe revealed an organised network of domestic and foreign shell entities engaged in large-scale laundering of funds under the guise of international trade. The conspirators exploited trade mechanisms and banking channels by under-invoicing imports, using sham duty-free imports (such as semiconductors), forging compliance documents, and carrying out circular re-exports through third-country entities to disguise illicit remittances.

The circular trading created a false narrative of international commerce, masking large-scale laundering of funds. The scheme exhibited hawala-like features but operated through formal banking systems, shell companies, and forged trade documentation to evade regulatory detection.

Publishing of the Purple Notice underscores ED's proactive role in exposing sophisticated money laundering methodologies and contributing to the global fight against financial crime.

Money Laundering is a complex process that usually involves trans-border elements and effects. Thus, any legal strategy that is to deal with this common and global problem needs to have a significant international dimension and coordination. Informal cooperation, i.e., cooperation through informal channels is a key area to trace/identify the assets and gathering the information for the ongoing investigations. Timely & precise gathering of information through informal cooperation is vital to effective domestic investigation. Accordingly, it has been main area of focus for the ED for quite some time and the agency has been diligently identifying expert groups & organisations active at international level which may be instrumental in facilitating informal cooperation between jurisdictions.

The publishing of this Purple Notice also serves as a testimony to the leadership role being assumed by India, through Enforcement Directorate on various international platforms. India through Enforcement Directorate is utilising platforms like Globe Network and Asset Recovery Interagency Network- Asia Pacific to shape global policies for combatting money laundering and preventing safe havens for the proceeds of crime.