



**Press Release**  
**26.02.2024**

Directorate of Enforcement (ED) filed a Supplementary Prosecution Complaint (PC) under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002 on 14.02.2024 against accused Simpy Bhardwaj @ Simpy Gaur, Nitin Gaur, Nikhil Mahajan and Sandeep Kumar before the Hon'ble Special Court (PMLA), Mumbai. The Hon'ble PMLA Special Court, Mumbai has taken cognizance of the same on 23.02.2024.

ED initiated investigation on the basis of multiple FIRs registered by Maharashtra Police and Delhi Police against M/s Variable Tech Pte Ltd, Late Amit Bhardwaj, Ajay Bhardwaj, Vivek Bhardwaj, Simpy Bhardwaj, Mahender Bhardwaj and number of Multi-Level-Marketing (MLM) agents, wherein it has been alleged that they had collected huge amount of funds in the form of Bitcoins (worth Rs 6600 Crore in 2017 itself) from gullible public with false promises of 10% per month return in the form of Bitcoins. The collected Bitcoins were supposed to be utilized for Bitcoin mining and investors were supposed to get huge returns in Crypto assets. But the promoters cheated the investors and concealed the ill-gotten Bitcoins in obscure online wallets.

During the course of the investigation, multiple searches under PMLA, 2002 were conducted at various premises of entities/ persons. During the searches, documents/ records (including digital records)/ properties were recovered and seized which includes high end cars including Mercedes GLS350D & Audi Q3. The key persons in the scam namely Ajay Bhardwaj and Mahender Bhardwaj managed to escape from their residence during the search operations due to active help provided by Simpy Bhardwaj, wife of Ajay Bhardwaj. Consequently, an FIR was filed u/s 181,186,187,189,353,506 and 34 of IPC, 1860 in Maidan Garhi Police Station, Delhi against them. Simpy Bhardwaj was arrested on 17.12.2023, Nitin Gaur was arrested on 29.12.2023 and Nikhil Mahajan was arrested on 16.01.2023. All of them are in judicial custody as on date.

ED investigation revealed that Simpy Bhardwaj @ Simpy Gaur along with her husband Ajay Bhardwaj and other MLM agents played an active role in luring the innocent and gullible investors by promising huge returns on the investment & cheated the public by way of committing fraud. Even, promotional events were conducted in Dubai and Macau during 2017 and 2018 for Gainbitcoin ponzi scheme for luring innocent investors. Further, it was revealed in ED investigation that Nitin Gaur received proceeds of crime in his cryptocurrency account opened on Binance exchange from the

wallet operated by his brother-in-law and prime accused Ajay Bhardwaj, thereby helping Ajay Bhardwaj in concealing and layering of the proceeds of crime generated out of this scam.

During the course of investigation, cryptocurrency specific search actions were also carried out at the premises of various hawala operators closely associated with the promoters of the GainBitcoin scam. ED investigation revealed that these hawala operators were using crypto currency including Bitcoin, Ethereum, USDT, Tron etc. for carrying out hawala operations. ED investigation revealed complex crypto hawala transactions of both national and international nature, intricately linked to the GainBitcoin promoters wherein accused had liquidated large amount of cryptocurrency to INR.

The main accused Ajay Bhardwaj and Mahender Bhardwaj are still absconding. Earlier, ED had attached properties worth Rs 69 Crore and has also sought assistance from foreign countries to trace the proceeds of crime.

Further investigation is under progress.

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