



PRESS RELEASE

24-02-2025

Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Headquarters office has conducted search operations on 20.02.2025 under the provisions of Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999 at various premises in Delhi, Jaipur and Mumbai. The case pertains to conversion of Crypto worth around Rs. 600 Crore at various Indian Crypto Exchanges and subsequent transfer of the funds to the beneficiaries.

ED investigation was initiated basis a newspaper report that an Indian national named Chirag Tomar was undergoing prison sentence in USA for stealing more than \$20 million from hundreds of victims through the use of fake or spoofed websites mimicking the cryptocurrency exchange website Coinbase.

ED investigation revealed that the trusted websites were spoofed in such a way by search engine optimization that when the website would be searched, the spoofed website would appear at the top. The spoofed website appeared exactly similar to the trusted website except the contact details. When the users would enter the login credentials, the spoofed website would show it wrong. Therefore, the users would contact the number given in the spoofed website which would eventually connect them to the designated call centre managed by Chirag Tomar. Once the fraudsters gained access to the victims accounts, the fraudsters quickly transferred the victims cryptocurrency holdings to crypto currency wallets under their control. The stolen crypto currency would then be sold on website localbitcoins.com and converted to INR at Indian Crypto Exchanges. Subsequently the money was transferred in the bank accounts of Chirag Tomar and his family members. The identified amount received by Tomar family in the case so far through this scheme is Rs.15 Crore. Several bank accounts pertaining to the Tomar family were freezed during the course of search operation. The amount freezed so far stands at Rs. 2.18 Crore.

Similar modus of selling doubtful crypto on local bitcoins and its conversion to INR on Indian Crypto Exchanges was unearthed during the search operation.

Further investigation is under progress.