



Press Release
13.07.2025

Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Jalandhar has carried out search operations at 7 locations across states of Punjab and Haryana in districts of Mansa; and Kurukshetra, and Karnal on 11.07.2025 under the provisions of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002 in connection with a money laundering investigation in 'Donkey Route Case' related to Indians deported from USA in Feb 2025. The searches were based on the findings and evidence gathered during the search conducted by ED on 09.07.2025.

ED initiated investigation on the basis of various FIRs registered by Punjab Police and Haryana Police under various sections of BNS 2023(erstwhile IPC 1860) and Immigration Act, 1983.

During the searches, forged emigration Stamp of various foreign countries, Visa Template, various incriminating documents, records and digital devices were recovered and seized. It was further revealed that forged emigration stamp and VISA Template stamps of foreign countries were used to manipulate the visa/records of migrants who intend to travel abroad. With such manipulated visa records, the migrants chose the risky 'donkey routes' to travel abroad and settle there. The forged emigration stamp were used to prepare fake visas and the same were used for journeys abroad for the donkers. Credible evidence has been gathered which indicates that the persons searched were involved in generation of POC out of illegal 'Donkey route' business. During search, it was revealed that such travel agents/middlemen who are involved in the above scam had accumulated movable and immovable properties obtained out of the proceeds of crime.

During our previous searches the extensive network of various middlemen, travel agents, Indian nationals and other foreign nationals were investigated and found that travel agents who are involved in regular business activities, indulges in such malpractices also. Some of the travel agents carry out their business activities without proper hoarding boards and they operate in a clandestine manner. This network also employs certain persons mostly they are Indian nationals who are residing in abroad, for their illegal business of sending persons abroad without proper documents. Primarily, these agents and middleman used to give false assurances to the deportees of sending them on legal routes. The agents were found to have international mobile numbers and used to communicate with their foreign counter parts through whatsapp chats and other encrypted modes. Incriminating evidence recovered during the search suggested that certain payments were routed illegally through hawala channels.

Further investigation is under progress.