PRESS RELEASE
30.11.2025

Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Chandigarh Zonal Office has arrested Mahesh Chandrashekhar Shetye, owner of M/s Certiszep Innovations (OPC) Pvt. Ltd., a fake call center situated at 2nd Floor, Plot No. 7, Sector-22, IT Park, Panchkula on 29.11.2025, under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, for his alleged involvement in the offence of money laundering arising from the operation of fake technical-support call centres and the generation and laundering of Proceeds of Crime (POC) through hawala channels.

Following the arrest, the matter was presented before the Hon'ble Special Court, Panchkula on 29.11.2025. The Hon'ble Special Court, Panchkula, has granted ED Custody of Mahesh Chandrashekhar Shetye for a period of 7 days (till 06.12.2025) for further investigation.

ED initiated investigation on the basis of three FIRs registered by Cyber Crime Police Stations, Panchkula (FIR No. 100/2025 and FIR No. 101/2025) and Chandimandir Police Station (FIR No. 344/2025), wherein it was alleged that the accused persons were operating illegal call centres at IT Park, Panchkula, impersonating representatives of various U.S.-based companies such as Netflix, Amazon, Spectrum, AT&T, and others. Using VoIP dialers and remote-access tools, the accused induced U.S. citizens into believing false technical issues and cheated them of amounts ranging from USD 100 to USD 5,000 per victim. Payments were fraudulently extracted through Zelle, Remitly, Bitcoin, and CashApp gift cards, and transferred to India through a hawala network.

ED investigation revealed that Mahesh Chandrashekhar Shetye, who is main accused in FIR No. 100/2025, along with his associates—including Ms. Surbhi Duhan, Rishabh Duhan and Rahul Chookar—was actively operating the fake call centre under the name M/s Certiszep Innovations (OPC) Private Limited, without any mandatory DoT licences, client agreements, or regulatory compliances. Employees of the call centre have identified Mahesh Chandrashekhar Shetye as one of the key operators.

ED investigation further revealed that the POC generated abroad were routed into India in cash through hawala channels and deposited into his personal accounts, into the bank accounts of Mack & Kris Enterprises (Prop. firm of Mahesh), which were subsequently layered through the bank account of his mother Smt. Shalini Shetye, and eventually used for investments, property purchases, car purchases and other personal uses.

ED has also identified multiple layering transactions involving third-party firms used to disguise the illicit origin of funds. The investigation has so far established that POC in crores of rupess were generated through the fake call centre operations and laundered through the banking channels of entities and individuals connected to the accused.

Further investigation is under progress.