Press Release
09.02.2026

Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Hyderabad Zonal Office, has conducted search operations on 04.02.2026 under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, at six premises in Ahmedabad in connection with an investigation into large-scale illegal call centre operations involved in cheating foreign nationals, mainly citizens of the United States of America.

ED initiated PMLA investigation on the basis of FIRs registered by Cyberabad Police as well as CBI, IOD, New Delhi, relating to organised cyber fraud and impersonation.

ED investigation revealed illegal call centres were established and operated by several accused persons viz. Mohammed Ansari @ Mohd Irfan Ansari, Akib Gulamrasul Ghanchi, Vikas K Nimar, Divyang Raval, Pradip V Rathod along with their associates. Call centres operating from different locations were controlled by the same group using a common technical infrastructure, trained manpower, call scripts, and a centralised money-handling mechanism.

Investigation also revealed that the call centre operators impersonated officials of U.S. Government agencies or representatives of private companies and intimidated victims by falsely alleging non-payment of loan dues, tax liabilities or legal action, thereby coercing them into purchasing gift cards or making digital payments. The Proceeds of Crime generated in this manner were primarily received through Amazon gift cards and were subsequently redeemed and converted into cryptocurrency, including Bitcoin, through online platforms such as Paxful and other illegal channels, with the involvement of foreign nationals in facilitating the conversion and liquidation of the cryptocurrency. A small fraction of the Proceeds of Crime was found to have passed through Indian banking channels, while the majority was handled through cash & cryptocurrency and encashed through informal channels including hawala operators and local black markets.

During search, cryptocurrency equivalent to USD 12,000 approx. was found in the possession of one of the key accused, Akib Ghanchi, and the same was seized and transferred to ED's crypto wallet. Further, unaccounted cash amounting to Rs. 13.5 Lakh was also found and seized. Searches also led to the recovery & seizure of incriminating documents and digital devices containing crucial data. Additionally, 31 bank accounts and a bank locker belonging to the accused persons and their entities were frozen. The search operations also revealed that the accused have been engaged in such criminal activities for a considerable period of time and have accumulated substantial assets in their own names as well as in the names of their family members and proxies by utilising the Proceeds of Crime. It was also revealed that the cartel is still actively involved in similar fraudulent activities by adopting the same *modus operandi*. Further investigation is under progress.