



Press Release
21/5/2026

Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Mumbai Zonal Office has arrested Ashokkumar Eknath Kharat alias “Captain”, a self-proclaimed godman, on 19.05.2026 under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002. The Hon’ble PMLA Court, Mumbai, has remanded the accused to ED custody for 7 days i.e. till 26.05.2026.

ED initiated investigation on the basis of FIR registered at Sarkarwada Police Station, Nashik City against Ashokkumar Eknath Kharat and others under various Sections of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, the Maharashtra Prevention and Eradication of Human Sacrifice and Other Inhuman, Evil and Aghori Practices and Black Magic Act. Subsequently, FIR registered at Shirdi Police Station, Ahilyanagar and Rahata Police Station, Ahilyanagar were also added to the existing ECIR for conducting investigation under PMLA, 2002.

Investigation under PMLA, 2002 revealed that Ashokkumar Eknath Kharat alias “Captain” allegedly operated a systematic extortion racket under the guise of religious and spiritual practices. The accused allegedly portrayed himself as an incarnation of Lord Shiva, claiming possession of supernatural powers and divine knowledge, and created fear of death and black magic amongst victims through staged rituals, deceptive practices, and emotional manipulation. By adopting such modus operandi, the accused allegedly extorted substantial amounts of money and valuable assets from victims under the guise of “Avatar Pooja”, religious remedies, and spiritual guidance. In one such instance, investigation revealed extortion of approximately Rs. 5.62 Crore from a complainant in the form of expenditure incurred towards purchase of a luxury Mercedes vehicle, foreign trips, medical treatment in the United States of America, and development of farmhouse properties at the instance of the Ashok Kharat.

Investigation under PMLA further revealed that the Proceeds of Crime obtained through extortion and cheating were allegedly layered and laundered through multiple bank accounts, cooperative credit societies (Pat Sansthas), movable and immovable properties, and proxy accounts opened in the names of various individuals without their knowledge or consent. Investigation further revealed that the accused allegedly operated several benami accounts



and fixed deposits through two cooperative credit societies, wherein large amounts of cash were deposited, converted into fixed deposits, and subsequently withdrawn in cash. Investigation also revealed that the accused exercised control over such accounts through the use of his own mobile number and nominee details and allegedly utilized the Proceeds of Crime for acquisition of movable and immovable properties.

Search operations under Section 17 of the PMLA, 2002 were conducted on 13/14.04.2026, 17.04.2026, 23.04.2026, 05.05.2026, and 18.05.2026 at multiple residential and commercial premises, bank lockers, and vehicle connected with the accused and his associates. The search operations resulted in seizure of cash amounting to Rs. 13.92 Crore, foreign currency amounting to USD 5,500 equivalent to approximately Rs. 5.11 Lakh, and gold and silver jewellery valued at approximately Rs. 1.12 Crore. Further, bank balances amounting to Rs. 2.25 Crore were frozen and one high-end Mercedes vehicle bearing Registration No. MH15GL8181 was freezed. Various incriminating documents, digital devices, and property-related records were also recovered and seized during the search operations.

Further investigation is under progress.