PRESS RELEASE

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ED Provisionally Attaches Proceeds of Crime Worth Rs. 136.44 Crore in Illegal Coal Mining Case

Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Headquarters Office, has provisionally attached Proceeds of Crime amounting to **Rs. 136.44 Crore** under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, in connection with its ongoing investigation into large-scale illegal coal mining and pilferage in the leasehold areas of Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL). The illegal activities were allegedly carried out by a syndicate led by Anup Majee @ Lala.

ED investigation has revealed that the syndicate was involved in the illegal excavation and large-scale pilferage of coal, which was subsequently sold for cash to various factories in West Bengal, allegedly with the active assistance of local administration officials. To conceal and layer the Proceeds of Crime generated through these activities, the syndicate allegedly acquired and operated several shell/jamakharchi companies beneficially owned and controlled by Anup Majee, but held in the names of his relatives, employees and key associate Gurupada Majee. Cash generated from the illegal sale of coal was routed through these entities by way of accommodation entries and deposited in their bank accounts to obscure the origin and ownership of the funds.

Further investigation has established that Proceeds of Crime were also invested in resorts beneficially owned by Anup Majee. The assets attached under the present Provisional Attachment Order include two hotel-cum-resorts, namely “Garh Panchakot Eco Tourism” in Purulia and “Biharinath Eco Tourism” in Bankura; two properties in Kolkata; balances maintained in bank accounts of the shell companies; and shares and mutual fund investments held by members of the Majee family.

Prior to the present attachment, the ED had attached Proceeds of Crime amounting to Rs. 678.64 Crore through earlier attachment orders in the same case. With the present attachment of Rs. 136.44 Crore, the total attachment in the case has reached Rs. 815.08 Crore.

The ED is continuing its investigation to unravel the various layers of the money-laundering network, trace the ultimate beneficiaries of the proceeds of crime, and identify other persons and entities involved in laundering funds generated through illegal coal mining and pilferage.

The Directorate of Enforcement reiterates its commitment to taking stringent action against economic offenders involved in illegal mining and money laundering, particularly where public natural resources are unlawfully exploited for private gain.

Further investigation is under progress.