Press Release
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ED Uncovers Massive Rs 2883 Crore Liquor Scam in Chhattisgarh; Bureaucrats, Political Executives, and Private Syndicate Members Arraigned

Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Raipur has filed another Supplementary Prosecution Complaint on 26.12.2025 detailing a massive corruption scheme executed within the Excise Department of State of Chhattisgarh between 2019 and 2023, resulting in the generation of Proceeds of Crime (POC) worth approximately Rs 2883 Crore. The investigation has revealed a well-organized criminal syndicate that subverted the state's liquor policy for personal gain through a multi-layered mechanism involving illegal commissions and the sale of unaccounted liquor.

The syndicate generated illegal earnings through four distinct channels:

PART-A (Illegal Commissions): Bribes were charged from liquor suppliers on official sales, facilitated by artificially increasing the "landing price" paid by the state, effectively financing the bribes through the state exchequer.

PART-B (Unaccounted Sales): A parallel system sold "off-the-books" country liquor through government shops using duplicate holograms and bottles procured in cash, bypassing all excise duties and taxes.

PART-C (Cartel Commission): Annual bribes were paid by distillers to maintain market share and secure operational licenses in the state.

FL-10A Licenses: A new license category was introduced to extort commissions from foreign liquor manufacturers, with 60% of profits diverted to the syndicate.

The Prosecution Complaint filed by ED has revealed a deep-rooted conspiracy across the then state's administrative and political hierarchy for illegal financial gains. In the latest prosecution complaint filed by ED, 59 new accused persons have been arraigned as accused, this makes the total number of accused to 81 so far. The accused can be categorized as follows: -

- **Bureaucrats:** Senior officials like **Anil Tuteja (Retd. I.A.S.)**, then Joint Secretary, and **Niranjan Das (I.A.S.)**, then Excise Commissioner, were central to manipulating policy and ensuring the syndicate's unhindered operation. **Arun Pati Tripathi (I.T.S.)**, Managing Director of CSMCL, was tasked with maximizing illegal collections and coordinating Part-B operations. Additionally, **30 field-level excise officers**, including Janardan Kaurav and Iqbal Ahmad Khan, were arraigned as accused for facilitating the sale of unaccounted liquor in exchange for "fixed per-case commissions".

- **Political Executives:** High-ranking political figures, including then Excise Minister **Kawasi Lakhma** and **Chaitanya Baghel** (son of the then Chief Minister), have been arraigned for their roles in giving policy assent and acquiring/utilizing POC in their business/real estate projects, **Saumya Chaurasia**, then Deputy Secretary in the Chief Minister's Office, was identified as a key coordinator for handling illicit cash and managing appointments of compliant officers.
- **Private Persons and Entities:** The syndicate was spearheaded by **Anwar Dhebar** and his associate **Arvind Singh**,. Private manufacturers, including **M/s Chhattisgarh Distilleries Limited**, **M/s Bhatia Wine Merchants**, and **M/s Welcome Distilleries**, knowingly participated in the Part-B illegal manufacturing of liquor and also paying Part-A and Part-B Commission,. Facilitators such as **Siddharth Singhania** (cash collection) and **Vidhu Gupta** (duplicate hologram supply) were also found to be key private actors in the said fraud.

Arrests and Enforcement Actions: A total of **nine major individuals** have been arrested under Section 19 of the PMLA, 2002, including Anil Tuteja (Ex-IAS); Arvind Singh; Trilok Singh Dhillon; Anwar Dhebar; Arun Pati Tripathi (ITS); Kawasi Lakhma (MLA and then Excise Minister of Chhattisgarh); Chaitanya Baghel (son of Ex-CM) ; Mrs. Soumya Chaurasia (Deputy secretary in CM office) and Niranjan Das (IAS). While some are currently on bail, others remain in judicial custody.

Total Attachment of Properties The ED has issued multiple Provisional Attachment Orders, seizing movable and immovable properties totaling **Rs 382.32 Crore**. These attachments include 1,041 properties linked to bureaucrats, politicians, and private entities, such as the **Hotel Vennington Court** in Raipur and hundreds of assets belonging to the Dhebar and Baghel families.