



## Press Release

**01/05/2024**

Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Raipur has arrested Manoj Soni, one of the prime accused in the **Custom Rice Milling Scam of Chhattisgarh** on 30/04/2024. He was on deputation to the Government of Chhattisgarh and was posted as Managing Director, The Chhattisgarh State Cooperative Marketing Federation (MARKFED) from Oct, 2022 to Oct, 2023.

During his tenure as MD, MARKFED, an organised system of collection of illegal kickbacks from the rice millers was being operated.

ED initiated investigation on the basis of disclosure of Prosecution Complaint filed by IT Investigation Wing, Raipur wherein it was alleged that the office bearers of Chhattisgarh State Rice Millers Association colluded with officers of Chhattisgarh State Marketing Federation Ltd (MARKFED) and hatched a conspiracy to misuse the special incentive and earn kickback as in crore of rupees. Till Kharif year 2021-22, a special incentive of Rs. 40/- per quintal of paddy was paid by the Govt. of Chhattisgarh to the rice millers for custom milling of paddy and subsequently, it was exorbitantly increased to Rs. 120/- per quintal of paddy later which was paid in two instalments of Rs. 60/- each. The office bearers of Chhattisgarh State Rice Millers Association in connivance with Manoj Soni, MD, MARKFED started collecting kickbacks amount of Rs. 20/- per instalment for each quintal of paddy milled from the rice millers. The details of rice millers who have paid the cash amounts were sent by the district rice millers association to the concerned District Marketing Officer (DMO). The DMOs, upon receiving the bills of rice millers, cross checked with the details received from concerned district rice millers association; this information was then passed on to the head office of MARKFED. The bills of only those rice millers who have paid cash amount to the association were cleared by MD, MARKFED for payment.

ED investigation revealed that after the increase in the special incentive from Rs 40/- to Rs 120/- per quintal, kickbacks in excess of Rs.100 Crore were generated which was made possible with active assistance of Manoj Soni, the then MD MARKFED.

Further investigation is under progress.