



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**10/08/2023**

Directorate of Enforcement (ED) has carried out search operations in Karur (Tamil Nadu) on 09.08.2023 in connection with the 'Cash for Jobs Scam' involving the Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporations. The primary accused, V Senthil Balaji, who formerly served as the transport minister, was earlier arrested on 14.06.2023 for his involvement in money laundering.

ED initiated investigation on the basis of three FIRs registered and chargesheets filed by the Central Crime Branch (CCB), Chennai, in the 'Cash for Jobs Scam' arraying V Senthil Balaji as the main accused. V Senthil Balaji in collaboration with his brother RV Ashok Kumar, and his Personal Assistants B Shanmugam & M Karthikeyan, gave jobs in lieu of cash. This led to jobs being awarded at the expense of deserving candidates.

During the investigation, it was revealed that a substantial parcel of land admeasuring 2.49 Acre located at Salem Bypass Road, Andankovil, Karur was acquired by Smt. P Lakshmi (Mother-in-Law of Shri. RV Ashok Balaji) from Smt. Anuradha Ramesh for a mere Rs. 10 lakhs, as against the land's true value amounting to more than 30 Crore. However, while scrutinizing the income source of Smt. P Lakshmi, it was revealed that she lacked any credible means of income. Her assertion of selling old jewellery to secure Rs. 10 lakhs for the land purchase were proven to be fictitious. Subsequently, this plot of land was gifted to her daughter Smt. Nirmala, wife of Ashok Kumar, the brother of Senthil Balaji. Upon further investigation, it was disclosed that the remaining sum required for the land acquisition was paid in cash to Smt. Anuradha Ramesh. This cash, in turn, was employed by Smt. Anuradha Ramesh to procure another piece of land in the same vicinity.

Considering these developments, the said property has been placed under a freeze order in accordance with section 17(1-A) of PMLA, 2002.

Despite multiple summons issued to Shri. RV Ashok Balaji, Smt. Nirmala, and Smt. P Lakshmi, they are yet to appear in person, demonstrating a lack of cooperation with the ongoing investigation.