



Press Release
17.09.2021

Enforcement Directorate has attached assets worth Rs. 31.16 Crore of M/s Popular Finance group, Kerala and its promoters under Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 in a cheating case which includes 23 immovable properties consisting of land and building in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, 32 kg of depositors` re-pledged gold in 1132 accounts of banks, 18 High end luxury vehicles like Mercedes Benz, Toyota etc., 12 saving bank accounts, 23 Fixed Deposits of promoters and 732 current accounts of Popular group companies.

ED initiated money laundering investigation on the basis of FIR registered by Kerala Police under the sections of IPC, 1860. Kerala Police has registered more than 1300 FIR in various districts and as per the FIRs about 3,000 depositors have been cheated to the tune of around Rs. 1,000 Crore.

The money laundering investigation carried out so far has revealed that M/s Popular Finance and allied entities are family controlled business and Thomas Daniel and Rinu Mariam Thomas were controlling the entire business, spread across 270 branches in Kerala and other states of India.

The deposits taken from general public were illegal and without any statutory permission from any regulatory agencies like RBI etc. The hard-earned money of general public, mobilized as deposits by luring them of high interest rates, have been illegally utilized for purchase of properties and high end cars, parked as fixed deposits in the name of family members and also got remitted abroad for non-viable and sham business enterprises. The company had no viable business to sustain the promise of higher interest to depositors. They were paying interests and matured amount out of deposits taken from general public only. The gold pledged by the general public were re-pledged for availing loans and the loan proceeds got routed to personal accounts of the family.

Earlier, on 09.08.2021, ED had arrested Thomas Daniel and Rinu Mariam Thomas for playing active role in disposing of proceeds of crime. Presently they are under Judicial Custody.

Further investigation is under progress.