

# Chhattisgarh liquor 'scam': PMLA court extends Chaitanya Baghel's judicial custody till Aug 18 now

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Raipur:** A special PMLA court in Raipur on Monday extended the judicial custody of Chaitanya Baghel, son of senior Congress leader and former Chhattisgarh chief minister Bhupesh Baghel, until August 18, 2025, in connection with a money laundering case linked to the alleged multi-crore liquor scam in the state.

Chaitanya Baghel was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on July 18, 2025, following a search operation at his residence in Bhillai, which he shares with his father.

His initial 14-day judicial remand ended on Monday. His lawyer Faisal Rizvi told reporters that the ED had sought an extension of judicial custody, which was granted by the court under the Pre-

## SC agrees to tag Ex-CM's petition for hearing on Aug 6

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The Justice Kant-led bench asked, "Why can't you challenge these issues before the high court? This

abnormality of rushing directly to the Supreme Court is becoming chronic, especially when

cases involve affluent and influential people. If you are seeking quashing of the FIRs or chargesheets on grounds of irregularity on part of the agency, then you must move the HC." Singhvi and Rohatgi agreed and withdrew their petitions

vention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

from the SC.

In another petition by Baghel, senior advocate Kapil Sibal told the bench that the former CM was challenging the constitutional validity of Sections 50 and 63 of PMLA.

"The framework u/s 50(2) and 50(3) of the PMLA infringes upon the fundamental rights against self incrimination guaranteed under Article 20(3) of the Constitution. The aforesaid provisions permit the ED to summon any person and compel answers and production of documents under a threat of penalty u/s 63 of the Act and arrest under Section 19 of the Act," Sibal said. Appearing for ED, additional solicitor general S

V Raju told the court that these petitions were not maintainable as the former CM has not been named in any of the ECIRs. Sibal said the entire process was vitiated by illegality due to the fact that the agency was continuing to probe further without valid permission from the magistrate.

However, he said the top court was hearing on Aug 6 the petition seeking review of the SC judgment in Vijay Madanlal Choudhary case, which had upheld various provisions of PMLA, and Baghel's petition could be tagged with it. The SC agreed and posted the petition for hearing on Aug 6 without issuing notice to ED. **TNN**

According to the ED, Chaitanya was involved in "hand-

ling" over Rs 1,000 crore worth of proceeds of crime

generated from the illegal liquor trade. The agency also alleged that he diverted Rs 16.7 crore to finance a personal real estate project.

The agency has claimed that the liquor scam operated between 2019 and 2022, during the Congress govt's tenure in state, caused an alleged loss of more than Rs 2,100 crore to the state exchequer, while benefiting a liquor syndicate.

Bhupesh Baghel, reacting to his son's arrest, had accused central agencies of being used to target the opposition leaders and using it to deflect people's attention.

The ED's investigation stems from an FIR filed by the state's Economic Offences Wing (EOW)/Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on January 17, 2024, following the BJP's return to power in the Dec 2023 assembly polls.

