

BEFORE THE ADJUDICATING OFFICER
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE BOARD OF INDIA
ADJUDICATION ORDER NO: Order/SBM/VS/2022-23/16656

UNDER SECTION 15-I OF THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE BOARD OF INDIA ACT, 1992 READ WITH RULE 5 OF THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE BOARD OF INDIA (PROCEDURE FOR HOLDING INQUIRY AND IMPOSING PENALTIES) RULES, 1995.

In respect of:

Mr. K. Ramaswamy

(PAN: ATLPK1495P)

96, I Main, Versova Layout,

CV Raman Nagar,

Bangalore, Karnataka--560093

In the matter of

M/s. Camson Bio Technologies Ltd.

FACTS OF THE CASE

1. Securities and Exchange Board of India ('**SEBI**') had conducted an investigation in the scrip of M/s. Camson Bio Technologies Limited (hereinafter referred to as '**Camson**') in connection with the funding by Camson in connivance with its promoter entities for conversion of warrants (allotted on July 25, 2007) to shares (which were allotted to eighteen entities on January 24, 2009). A shareholder resolution was passed at the Extra Ordinary General Meeting ('EGM') of the shareholders of Camson held on July 13, 2007, authorizing the Board of Directors of Camson to issue warrants convertible to equity shares within a period of eighteen months from the date of allotment of such warrants. Accordingly, the Board of Directors of Camson had allotted convertible warrants on July 25, 2007. Thereafter, on January 24, 2009, the Board of Directors of Camson had approved the preferential allotment of 39,00,000 equity shares (through the conversion of the aforementioned convertible warrants), to eighteen entities/preferential allottees. It was observed that out of the above shares, 32,16,370 shares were allotted to non-promoters and 6,83,630 shares were allotted to entities belonging to the promoter category of Camson. Pursuant to the conversion of the warrants, the equity shares were listed on the Bangalore Stock Exchange ('**BGSE**') and was permitted to trade on the Bombay Stock Exchange ('**BSE**') w.e.f. March 25, 2009.

2. The investigation was conducted by SEBI based on an anonymous complaint dated January 12, 2011 that was received by SEBI in which the complainant *inter-alia* alleged that Camson allotted shares on January 24, 2009 on conversion of the warrants mostly to employees and persons who were not having the Permanent Account Number (PAN), bank account details or any address proof. It was further alleged in the complaint that the funding in respect of the equity shares upon the conversion of warrants to equity shares was made from the account of Camson and its promoter entities.
3. Pursuant to the investigation, it was observed that the consideration for the above issue of shares and the allotment of shares by Camson of 38.13 lakh equity shares (out of 39 lakh equity shares) on January 24, 2009, was paid through rotation of funds amongst Camson and the promoter connected companies. In this context, it is alleged that Camson, its directors who were the signatories to the Annual Report of Camson along with the preferential allottees of Camson had connived with each other and adopted a fraudulent device and artifice to defraud other shareholders of Camson. It is alleged that the allotment of shares pursuant to the conversion of the warrants was made by Camson along with other promoter entities without any infusion of funds/consideration from the preferential allottees. It is further alleged that the preferential allottees were also the persons/entities connected to Camson.
4. It is alleged that Mr. K Ramaswamy (hereinafter referred to as '**Noticee**'), who was one of the preferential allottees and also an independent director of Camson had connived with Camson and its promoters and other entities, including the preferential allottees in the alleged rotation of funds and adopted a fraudulent device /artifice in respect of the above mentioned preferential allotment of Camson and in the process, the shareholders of Camson were defrauded.
5. In view of the above observations/ findings brought out during the course of investigations, SEBI initiated adjudication proceedings against the Noticee under the provisions of section 15HA of the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992 (hereinafter referred to as '**SEBI Act**') for his alleged violation of the provisions of sections 12A(a), (b) and (c) of the SEBI Act read with regulations 3(a), (b), (c), (d) and 4 (1) of the SEBI (Prohibition of Fraudulent and Unfair Trade Practices relating to Securities Market) Regulations, 2003 (hereinafter referred to as '**PFUTP Regulations**').

APPOINTMENT OF ADJUDICATING OFFICER

6. The undersigned was initially appointed as the Adjudicating Officer ('**AO**') in the matter vide *communiqué* dated August 31, 2017 to conduct the adjudication proceedings in the manner specified

under rule 4 of SEBI (Procedure for Holding Inquiry and Imposing Penalties by Adjudicating Officer) Rules, 1995 (hereinafter referred to as ‘**Adjudication Rules**’) and impose such penalty, as deemed fit, upon the Noticee, in terms of rule 5 of the Adjudication Rules and section 15HA of the SEBI Act. Pursuant to the transfer of the undersigned to another department of SEBI, Dr. Anitha Anoop was appointed as the AO in the matter, vide order dated March 25, 2019. Subsequently, due to the transfer of Dr. Anitha Anoop, the undersigned was appointed as the AO in the matter vide *communique* dated November 3, 2020.

SHOW CAUSE NOTICE, REPLY AND HEARING

7. Show Cause Notice ref. SEBI/HO/EAD/2544/2018 dated January 24, 2018 (hereinafter referred to as ‘**SCN**’) was issued to the Noticee under the provisions of rule 4(1) of the Adjudication Rules to show-cause as to why an inquiry should not be initiated against the Noticee and penalty be not imposed on him under the provisions of section 15HA of the SEBI Act for his alleged violation of the provisions of sections 12A(a), (b) and (c) of the SEBI Act read with regulations 3(a), (b), (c), (d) and 4 (1) of the PFUTP Regulations. The details in respect of the violation committed/ non-compliance by the Noticee in the aforesaid matter and as observed from the SCN are as under:

- a. *It is observed that a shareholders resolution was passed at Extra Ordinary General Meeting (**EGM**) of Camson held on July 13, 2007 authorizing the Board of Directors (herein after referred to as '**Board**') of Camson for issue of warrants convertible to equity shares within a period of 18 months form the date of allotment of warrants. Pursuant to shareholders resolution at EGM held on July 13, 2007, Board of Camson had allotted warrants on July 25, 2007. Further, on January 24, 2009, the Board had approved allotment of 39 lakhs shares on conversion of warrants to 18 entities.*
- b. *Thereafter, on January 24, 2009, 39 Lakhs shares were allotted to 18 entities on conversion of warrants and these shares were listed at BGSE on May 25, 2009. It is observed that, of the 39 lakh allotted shares to 18 entities, 32,16,370 shares were allotted to non-promoters and 6,83,630 shares allotted in the promoter category. Details, as submitted by Camson vide its letter dated July 30, 2013, with regard to issue of warrants in the year 2007 and amount received on conversion of warrants on January 24, 2009 is tabulated as under-*

S. No.	Name of the entity	PAN No.	Shares allotted	Amount received on subscription of warrants	Amount received on conversion of warrants
1.	Mr. Karan Singh	AMKPK4001D	6,83,630	19,96,000	1,16,76,600
2.	Mr. Shivanand Singh	BLQPS8451M	6,83,630	19,00,000	1,17,72,600
3.	Ms. Sangeeta K Shetry	AJAPK9355M	6,69,600	19,00,000	1,14,92,000
4.	Mr. Ram Yadav	ACBPY5998A	6,00,000	19,00,000	1,01,00,000
5.	Ms. Sudha K	AHOPK1Q18K	5,00,000	10,00,000	90,00,000
6.	Mr. Veerendra Kumar Singh	AODPS6092K	3,35,200	19,20,000	47,84,000
7.	Mr. Jamuna Prasad	NA	2,40,940	19,60,000	28,58,800
8.	Mr. K Ramaswamy	ATLPK1495D	1,00,000	2,00,000	18,00,000

S. No.	Name of the entity	PAN No.	Shares allotted	Amount received on subscription of warrants	Amount received on conversion of warrants
9.	Mr. Veerendra Kumar Singh	AAQPS9639F	20,000	40,000	3,60,000
10.	Ms. Sheela VK	AEBPK3874M	15,000	50,000	2,50,000
11.	Mr. S R Mate	ABEPM6502C	10,000	20,000	1,80,000
12.	Mr. Riayz Ahmed	ACFPR1981C	10,000	50,000	1,50,000
13.	Mr. Nelson James	ADOPJ0654N	10,000	20,000	1,80,000
14.	Mr. Yogesh Singh	BILPS3255B	5,000	10,000	90,000
15.	Mr. Pavan Kumar Rana	AHFPR0959R	5,000	10,000	90,000
16.	Mr. Sandhya Madapa	AHEPM4334J	5,000	1,00,000	0
17.	Mr. Sanjay Gorb	AJRPG9522H	5,000	10,000	90,000
18.	Mr. Sudhanshu Pandey	BACPP8375C	2,000	4,000	36,000
Total			39,00,000	1,30,90,000	6,49,10,000

- c. Camson was advised to provide the details of consideration received upon issue of warrants and allotment of shares along with copy of bank account statements to which the amount was received on allotment of warrants/conversion of warrants to shares was credited. Camson, in its reply dated July 30, 2013, provided the amount of consideration received on conversion of warrants but failed to provide evidence of receipt of consideration stating that a fire at their registered office in the year 2012 had caused destruction of various old files, records, stored data etc., and hence it was not in a position to provide the old bank statements as sought.
- d. Further, Camson vide letter dated November 25, 2013, informed that the amount received upon conversion of warrants to shares were credited to the following bank accounts namely:
- A/c No: CBCA/01/930052, Corporation Bank.
 - A/c No: 114010200007047, Axis Bank.
- e. Thereafter, SEBI sought the details of the receipt of consideration on conversion of warrants from BgSE. BgSE, vide its letter dated January 08, 2016, had provided the bank accounts statements submitted by Camson at the time of application for listing of 39 lakhs equity shares. It was observed from BgSE reply that amount received on conversion of warrants was also credited to Camson's bank account with Bank of Baroda.
- f. It is observed that Ms. Geeta Singh (wife of Mr. Dharendra Kumar, Director of Camson) and Mr. Karan Singh (son of Mr. Dharendra Kumar) were holding 99.93% and 0.07% stake in M/s. Camson Farm Produce Pvt. Ltd. ('Camson Farm') for the financial year ending 2008-09. It was further observed that Ms. Geeta Singh and Mr. Karan Singh were also holding 98% and 2% stake in M/s. Sanatan Herbs and Naturals Ltd. ('Sanatan') for the financial year ending 2008-09. Hence, it was concluded that Camson Farm and Noticee were connected to Mr. Dharendra Kumar.
- g. On perusal of information received from BGSE and banks, it is observed that –
- M/s. Camson Farm Produce Pvt. Ltd. ('**Camson Farm**'), through its bank account no: CBCA/01/990012 maintained with Corporation bank, had transferred a total amount of

₹2.50 crore on January 28, 2009 to bank account no: CBCA/01/930052 of Camson, maintained with Corporation Bank, towards consideration of conversion on warrants in the names of Mr. Karan Singh, Mr. Shivanand Singh and Mr. Ram Yadav for amounts of ₹28.86 lakhs, ₹1.23 crore and ₹98 lakhs respectively.

- ii. On the same day i.e. January 28, 2009, Camson transferred the amount of ₹2.5 crore from its Corporation bank account to bank account no: 06650200000181 of Sanatan, maintained with Bank of Baroda.
 - iii. Out of ₹2.5 crore received from Camson Farm, Sanatan purchased demand drafts aggregating to total amount of ₹2.47 crore on January 28, 2009 itself, from its Bank of Baroda account. The said demand drafts were deposited with Camson's bank account with Bank of Baroda, a/c no: 06650200000342, which was shown to have received as allotment amount in the names of Ms. Sangeeta Ksbetry, Ms. Sudha K, Mr. Veerendra Kumar Singh (Director), Mr. K Ramaswamy ('Noticee') and Mr. Jamuna Prasad for amounts ₹100.92 lakhs, ₹74 lakhs, ₹44.84 lakhs, ₹18 lakhs and ₹9.4 lakhs respectively. Further, Sanatan had paid an amount of ₹5.19 lakhs from its Bank of Baroda account to Camson on January 30, 2009 through demand draft towards allotment amount in the name of the Mr. Jamuna Prasad.
 - iv. Out of ₹2.47 crore received by Camson, on January 29 & 30, 2009, had transferred to Sanatan (Bank of Baroda a/c 06650200000181) amounting to ₹2.47 crore and ₹5.19 lakhs to Camson Farm's corporation bank account on February 05, 2009.
 - v. Thereafter, Sanatan had transferred total amount of ₹2.41 crore to Camson Farm's Corporation bank account on February 02, 03 & 05, 2009.
- b. With regard to source of ₹2.5 crore paid by Camson Farm to Camson on January 28, 2009, it is observed that the said amount was out of liquidation of fixed deposits of Camson Farm for ₹1 crore and ₹1.5 crore which were created on May 30, 2008 and June 03, 2008 respectively.
- i. From the above, it is alleged that Camson Farm had transferred an amount of ₹2.5 crore to Sanatan, which were in turn used by Sanatan to fund the preferential allottees. The funds were ultimately transferred back by Camson to Camson Farm through Sanatan. It is further alleged that by virtue of such transactions, ₹2.50 crore was round tripped twice through Camson Farm and Sanatan to show that an amount of ₹5.03 crore was received towards conversion of warrants to shares to the extent of 38,13,000 shares out of 39 lakhs shares allotted. Thus, it is alleged that there was no genuine infusion of funds and the money, to the extent of ₹2.5 Crore, was shown as received against the shares allotted by way of round tripping transactions.

Allegations regarding Fraudulent and Unfair Trade Practices

- j. It is further alleged that Camson, 2 of its directors, 8 preferential allottees including the Noticee and the promoter connected entities had connived with each other by showing to have received proper consideration from the allottees to defraud the genuine shareholders of Camson. In light of this, it is alleged that Noticee has violated the provisions of sections 12A (a), (b) and (c) of the SEBI Act read with regulations 3(a), (b), (c), (d) & 4(1) of PFUTP Regulations.

SEBI Act, 1992

Prohibition of manipulative and deceptive devices, insider trading and substantial acquisition of securities or control

12A No person shall directly or indirectly—

- (a) use or employ, in connection with the issue, purchase or sale of any securities listed or proposed to be listed on a recognized stock exchange, any manipulative or deceptive device or contrivance in contravention of the provisions of this Act or the rules or the regulations made thereunder;*
- (b) employ any device, scheme or artifice to defraud in connection with issue or dealing in securities which are listed or proposed to be listed on a recognized stock exchange;*
- (c) engage in any act, practice, course of business which operates or would operate as fraud or deceit upon any person, in connection with the issue, dealing in securities which are listed or proposed to be listed on a recognised stock exchange, in contravention of the provisions of this Act or the rules or the regulations made thereunder;*

PFUTP Regulations, 2003

Prohibition of certain dealings in securities

3. No person shall directly or indirectly—

- (a) buy, sell or otherwise deal in securities in a fraudulent manner;*
- (b) use or employ, in connection with issue, purchase or sale of any security listed or proposed to be listed in a recognized stock exchange, any manipulative or deceptive device or contrivance in contravention of the provisions of the Act or the rules or the regulations made there under;*
- (c) employ any device, scheme or artifice to defraud in connection with dealing in or issue of securities which are listed or proposed to be listed on a recognized stock exchange;*
- (d) engage in any act, practice, course of business which operates or would operate as fraud or deceit upon any person in connection with any dealing in or issue of securities which are listed or proposed to be listed on a recognized stock exchange in contravention of the provisions of the Act or the rules and the regulations made there under.*

Prohibition of manipulative, fraudulent and unfair trade practices

4. (1) Without prejudice to the provisions of regulation 3, no person shall indulge in a fraudulent or an unfair trade practice in securities.

8. The Noticee, vide his reply dated February 23, 2011¹⁸, *inter alia*, submitted the following:

- a. The details of the bank transactions between Camson, Camson Farm and Sanatan are matters connected with the management of these companies, which are related and interested parties in the aforesaid companies. The Noticee have no interest, control or say in the management of these companies and he was not in any way, part of the transactions, as detailed in the report of SEBI.*
- b. The Noticee have not made any statement, declaration or report about the payments in respect of the allotment of the preferential shares to the shareholders, except in the case of allotment in his own name to concerned authorities, as required under law.*
- c. The Noticee submitted that he is an ex-DGM from State Bank of India and was invited and appointed as an Independent Director on Camson due to his vast knowledge and expertise in the field of banking and finance.*
- d. Considering his association and contribution in resolving quite a few complex issues with respect to business operations and administration of Camson, he was made an offer to subscribe for preferential shares of Camson to the extent of 5 lakh warrants.*
- e. After evaluating his resources, ability to pay, income and potential, he subscribed for 1 lakh warrant.*
- f. The Noticee submits that Sanatan owed to him, in aggregate, over ₹25 lakh for the advisory services rendered, over the past few years. Despite his best efforts, the amounts could not get released when it was due.*
- g. The Noticee submits that in my constant efforts to recover the amount, taking advantage of the situation that there was urgent need for funds to effect payment towards the issue of shares of Camson, wherein the due date for payment was fast approaching, failing which the transaction would stand forfeited, the situation was explained to the management of Sanatan and urgent release of money was pleaded. After much persuasion, Sanatan Herbals agreed to release the amount due to me and to cut short the delays, paid the amount of ₹18 Lakhs against the dues owed by him to Camson.*
- h. The Noticee also submits that IT Returns have been filed showing the payments made for the aforementioned transaction. This transaction in the said shares was further investigated by the Deputy Director of Income Tax (Inv.), Unit – II (10, Bangalore vide summons bearing no. DDIT Inv./V – II(1)/2012/13 dated April 24, 2012. Pursuant to scrutiny of the transaction in detail, the Investigating Authority was satisfied that the matter be closed without any further action.*

9. Pursuant to the transfer of the undersigned to another department of SEBI, Dr. Anitha Anoop (AO) provided the Noticee with an opportunity of personal hearing on July 04, 2019. On scheduled date of hearing i.e July 04, 2019, Mr. Omkar Sanjay Kelkar, Authorized Representative (**‘AR’**) appeared on

behalf of the Noticee and requested for the adjournment of the hearing. Accordingly, the hearing was rescheduled to another date i.e on July 15, 2019. Thereafter, vide letter dated July 11, 2019, the Noticee *inter alia*, reiterated his earlier submission dated February 23, 2018 as follows:

- a. The Noticee submits that he was appointed as an Independent Director on the Board of Directors of Camson.*
- b. Being an Independent Director, he had nothing to do with day to day business operations of Camson. He was offered an Advisory retainership in respect of issues in connection with business operations and administration of Sanatan and group companies.*
- c. This was an oral understanding and hteb Noticee rendered his advisory services to them for a period of about 9 years. There was an oral understanding that Sanatan would pay him a fixed retainership of ₹50,000/- per month.*

10. On July 15, 2019, the AR of the Noticee appeared before the erstwhile AO and submitted the written submission of the Noticee dated July 11, 2019. Subsequently, pursuant to my appointment as the AO in the matter, an opportunity of hearing was provided to the Noticee on October 05, 2021. Authorized representative (AR) i.e. Mr. H. R. Katti, Advocate, attended the hearing on behalf of the Noticee on October 05, 2021 and specifically requested that hearing may be postponed to another date, preferably after Diwali, as he was not conversant with the facts of the case. The request of the AR was acceded to and another opportunity of personal hearing was granted to the Noticee on May 05, 2022. On May 05, 2022, AR attended the hearing on behalf of the Noticee and again requested for adjournment of the hearing to another date. The AR also made a request for filing written submission in the matter, in this context, the AR was advised to file the written submission by May 26, 2022. However, no reply/ written submissions were filed by the Noticee/AR, in this regard.

CONSIDERATION OF ISSUES AND FINDINGS

11. I have carefully perused the SCN, the submissions of the Noticee and also the documents on record. It is alleged in the SCN that the Noticee has connived with Camson, two of its directors, seven other preferential allottees and two promoter connected entities in the preferential allotment of Camson by falsely showing to have received proper consideration from the allottees, which has defrauded the genuine shareholders of Camson. It is therefore alleged that Noticee has violated the provisions of sections 12A (a), (b) and (c) of the SEBI Act read with regulations 3(a), (b), (c), (d) & 4(1) of the PFUTP Regulations.
12. From the SCN, I find that the Noticee was allotted 1,00,000 shares on January 24, 2009 on conversion of the warrants. I further note from the reply of the Noticee that he had provided the Income Tax Returns (**IT Returns**) and bank statements, from wherein, I observe that the amount paid as

consideration for the shares allotted on January 24, 2009 (pursuant to the conversion of warrants) had admittedly been transferred to Camson by Sanatan for settling the outstanding debt owed by him to Camson, which transaction was also disclosed in the income tax filings made by the Noticee for the assessment year 2010–11 before Income Tax Department.

13. Further, in the context of the present proceeding against the Noticee, I note that an Order dated June 22, 2021 was also passed by WTM- SEBI under sections 11(1), 11(4), 11A and section 11B of the SEBI Act against Camson and various persons/entities, including the Noticee for their violation of the provisions of SEBI Act and PFUTP Regulations in the matter of the alleged irregularities in the preferential allotment of Camson. In the said order, I find that WTM-SEBI had disposed of the allegations levelled against the Noticee. On the issue of the violation of PFUTP Regulations and SEBI Act by the Noticee, which is also the alleged violation against the Noticee in the context of the present proceeding, the relevant observation/findings of WTM-SEBI in his Order dated June 22, 2021 are as follows:

“... 1.3 Pursuant to completion of investigation, a Show Cause Notice dated February 9, 2017 (and a Supplementary SCN dated April 10, 2017) (Collectively referred to as “SCN”), was issued to the following entities/Noticees:

i. to ix

x. K. Ramaswamy (“Noticee no. 10”);

...

3.12 As regards Noticee no. 10, on a perusal of the IT Returns and bank statements submitted by him, I note that the amount paid as consideration for the shares allotted on January 24, 2009 (pursuant to the conversion of warrants) had admittedly been transferred to Camson Bio by Sanatan Herbals for settling the outstanding debt owed by him to Camson, which transaction was also disclosed in his income tax filings for the assessment year 2010–11.

...

3.14 Having regard to the aforementioned, I am inclined to extend the benefit of doubt to Noticee nos. 9, 10 and 11, in respect of the alleged violations of the SEBI Act and PFUTP Regulations, 2003.

...

ORDER:

10. I, in exercise of the powers conferred on me under Sections 11(1), 11(4), 11A and Section 11B of the SEBI Act and in the interest of investors, hereby direct as under:

I to iv ...

v. I hereby also dispose of the SCN dated February 9, 2017, against Sudha K., K. Ramaswamy, Jamuna Prasad and Sanatan Herbs and Naturals Limited without any further directions...”

14. I note that Noticee No. 10, which has been mentioned in the aforementioned Order of WTM-SEBI dated June 22, 2021 is also the Noticee in the context of the present proceeding. Therefore, on the basis of independent assessment of the facts and circumstances of the case, the material on record, and the allegations levelled against the Noticee in the SCN dated January 24, 2018, I am also in agreement with the conclusions/findings drawn by WTM-SEBI against the Noticee as brought out in the aforesaid order of WTM-SEBI dated June 22, 2021. In view of the same, I am inclined to extend the benefit of doubt to the Noticee in respect of his alleged violation of the provisions of SEBI Act and PFUTP Regulations. Therefore, the adjudication proceedings initiated against the Noticee vide SCN dated January 24, 2018 is disposed of without any penalty.

ORDER

15. In view of the above observations/findings against the Noticee and in exercise of the powers conferred upon me under section 15I of the SEBI Act read with rule 5 of the Adjudication Rules, I hereby dispose of the Adjudication Proceedings initiated against the Noticee viz. Mr. K. Ramaswamy vide SCN dated January 24, 2018.

16. In terms of rule 6 of the Adjudication Rules, copies of this order are sent to the Noticee viz, Mr. K. Ramaswamy and also to Securities and Exchange Board of India.

Date: May 31, 2022
Place: Mumbai

SURESH B MENON
ADJUDICATING OFFICER