

# CCI FINDS SEVEN ENTITIES GUILTY OF BID RIGGING IN SBI TENDER

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**NEW DELHI** : Competition Commission of India (CCI) said on Friday it has found seven entities guilty of bid rigging in case of a tender floated by an arm of SBI and ordered them to desist from such anti-competitive practice.

Given that one of these entities was a lesser penalty applicant before the regulator by reporting about the cartel and most of the parties were micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and some of which acknowledged their conduct during the enquiry, CCI took a lenient view on the penalty, said the statement.

The tender was for supplying signages for branches, offices or automated teller machines of State Bank of India (SBI).

CCI started the probe on the complaint received in 2018 alleging bid-rigging and cartelisation in the tender floated by SBI Infra Management Solutions Pvt. Ltd. The investigation found e-mails exchanged between the parties which formed the basis for manipulation of the bidding process.

CCI found that there was an agreement among the parties which resulted in geographical market allocation as well as bid-rigging in the tender. All the parties were held to be guilty of the legal provision dealing with anti-competitive agreements including cartels. Also, nine individuals of these parties were held liable for the anti-competitive conduct of their entities.

CCI decided to impose a penalty upon the parties at the rate of 1% of their respective average turnover. The individuals found guilty were also imposed penalty at the rate of 1% of their respective average incomes, said the statement.

"Considering the stage at which the lesser penalty applicant approached the CCI and in light of the co-operation extended by it thereafter, CCI granted a reduction in penalty by 90% to it and its individuals. Apart from the above, CCI also directed the parties and their respective officials to cease and desist from indulging in anti-competitive conduct," the statement said.

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