

CBI registers case against CPSC; NGO alleges ‘witch-hunt’

The complaint also alleged that the association used foreign contributions for a purpose other than “for which it was received”

ETB Sivapriyan, DHNS, Chennai, JAN 09 2022, 19:27 IST
UPDATED: JAN 09 2022, 19:27 IST



The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has registered a case against Madurai-based Centre for Promotion of Social Concerns (CPSC) and its unit People’s Watch for allegedly violating the provisions of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 1976

A First Information Report (FIR) was registered by EOB, Chennai on January 6, 2022, based on a complaint filed by A K Sinha, Director (MU&I), Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi in 2014.

The complaint said during inspections conducted by the MHA officials on CPSC led by human rights activist Henri Tiphagne, it was found that after the suspension of FCRA registration, the organisation had withdrawn Rs 28 lakhs in July 2012 and the association withdrew Rs 1.69 crore cash from 2008 to 2012 which did not tally with the available vouchers.

The FIR also quotes the complaint to say People's Watch, the programme unit of the CPSC was functioning as a separate entity and communicating directly with the Foreign Contribution grantee organisations and that most of the bills or receipts are in the name of People's Watch and not in the name of CPSC.

The complaint also alleged that the association used foreign contributions for a purpose other than "for which it was received".

"The allegations mentioned in the complaint prima facie discloses that CPSC represented by its Trustees and its Program Unit represented by its Executive Director and other unknown persons have committed offences punishable under section 120-B r/w, . 420 IPC, section 33,35 39, r/w 7, 8 and 13 of FCRA 2010," the FIR said.

It also added that the Tamil Nadu government on February 2, 2020, conveyed its consent for investigation of the matter by the CBI.

However, Henri Tiphagne termed the filing of the FIR by CBI as a "witch-hunt", saying the Delhi High Court had opening of the FCRA account of People's Watch in 2014 following three successive suspensions each lasting 180 days.

"CPSC received funds in 2015 & 2016 till October. FCRA suspension orders issued by the MHA in 2017 (was) withdrawn. FCRA Account frozen now for more than 2,500 days. If this is not vindictiveness, what is it? We are willing to still cooperate because. of our trust in the rule of law. But can anyone explain why an FIR u/s 120B & 420 IPC? What is the conspiracy? Cheating?" he wrote on Twitter.

<https://www.deccanherald.com/national/south/cbi-registers-case-against-cpsc-ngo-alleges-witch-hunt-1069542.html>