

# CBI books CPSC, People's Watch over foreign funds

**CHENNAI:** The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has registered a case against the Centre for Promotion of Social Concerns (CPSC) and its programming unit People's Watch on the charges of misuse of foreign funds based on the Union Home ministry's complaint.

While the complaint was submitted to the CBI, Economic Offences Zone, in New Delhi, in 2014 by the then director of Union Home ministry's FCRA wing, AK Sinha, the

EOB of CBI registered a case against Madurai-based CPSC and People's Watch on Thursday under Sections 420 of IPC and Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, after the State gave its consent to probe the charges.

According to the FIR, a team of Home ministry's officials conducted inspections of accounts and records of CPSC in 2012 for a period between 2005 and 2011, and a follow-up inspection was done in 2014 for a period between 2011 to 2013, which reportedly unravelled the violations of

FCRA. The FIR states that CPSC withdrew Rs 28 lakh in 2012 after its FCRA registration was suspended and another Rs 44.50 lakh between 2011 and 2013. It also stated that Rs 1.70 cr it withdrew from 2008 to 2012 did not tally with the vouchers available.

The People's Watch has been accused in the FIR of having been direct receipts of foreign funds and that the association allegedly used the foreign funds for other reasons instead of what it was intended.

When contacted, Henri Tiphagne, executive director of People's Watch,

dismissed the development as nothing but a witch hunt stating that the matter has been pending before the Delhi HC from 2014 to 2016 and again from 2016 to date while our bank account was closed for more than 2,600 days. "We are cooperating with the CBI officials who have been formally searching the financial documents related to 2008-2014. All the transactions done during the said period were allowed as per FCRA, 2010, but CBI is trying to make it look like a crime as if we were involved in some conspiracy," said Henri Tiphagne.