

## **Government Action on violation of FCRA by Christian Organizations**

The Foreign Contribution (regulation) Act 2010 was enacted with the primary purpose of regulating the inflow of foreign contributions and ensuring that the received foreign contributions are not utilized for illegal purposes. The FCRA is applicable to all associations, groups and NGOs which intend to receive foreign donations in India.

Issue of free-flowing foreign funding from Missionaries for the conversion of Indian people to Christianity has come to the fore again. Revelations came out during the recent (Nov 2020) raids by the Income-tax Department on Kerala Church & its associated organizations have shaken the country.

This report is based on instances of FCRA violation by Christian organizations & actions taken by the government on it, which are reported by various news agencies.

While the Government is struggling to provide state of the art infrastructure in education, healthcare & other sectors, the Church is utilizing top facilities built from foreign funding for its purpose of evangelism. FCRA officials with other investigation agencies ripped apart the fancy packing of social work & exposed the content & intent behind the foreign funding.

It has proved again & again that foreign funding comes in for social work is actually intended & utilised for creating the massive infrastructure for Church, paying to pastors so that they can smoothly convert Indian people to Christianity & sabotage various development projects through campaigns run by funded NGOs.

The then Prime Minister of India Dr Manmohan Singh in February 2012 has spoken about FCRA violations & external interventions through foreign funding to NGOs. He has said that "There are NGOs, often funded from the United States and the Scandinavian countries, which are not fully appreciative of the development challenges that our country faces." Referring to the protests at Kudankulam, he said, "the atomic energy program has got into difficulties because these NGOs, mostly I think based in the United States, don't appreciate need for our country to increase the energy supply."

Following his remarks, The Home Ministry has cancelled foreign funding of 4,141 out of total 39,236 NGOs registered under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 in 2012. Accounts of 20 NGOs were frozen, 60 NGOs

prohibited from applying for foreign funds under the FCRA. The largest block of NGOs whose FCRA has been cancelled are based in Tamil Nadu. 794 NGOs from Tamil Nadu are about 19 per cent of the total FCRA cancelled NGOs. The basis for cancellation is termed as- 'On Violation', but it is fairly understandable that the NGO-led protests were triggered against the Kudankulam atomic power plant which is based in Tamil Nadu has prompted Government to wake up and act so heavily on foreign findings of NGOs. In March 2012, the Government cracked down on four NGOs for allegedly funding the massive protests that had paralyzed work at the Kudankulam plant site in Tamil Nadu's Tirunelveli district for weeks, and ordered a freeze on the bank accounts of some other NGOs. (Source – [News Link](#))

One of the biggest action taken on FCRA violation of Christian organization is given below.

### **Income Tax Dept. Raid on K P Yohanan's Believers Church in Nov 2020**

On 7<sup>th</sup> Nov 2020 Hindustan Times reported that “The Income Tax (IT) sleuths raided offices and institutions associated with evangelist K P Yohanan's Believers' Church in central Kerala and other places and seized Rs. Five crore currency and other valuables, a senior official who is part of the investigation said. The officer said the raid which started on Thursday was continuing at many places and serious violations of Foreign Contributions Regulation Act and (FCRA) Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) were detected. An independent denomination, the indigenous church has witnessed massive growth in the last one and a half decade and its head KP Yohanan is known for his religious discourses. The 70-year-old priest is the founder and president of Gospel of Asia, a large non-profit evangelist organisation with main focus on India and Asia. He has also authored more than 100 books on Christian living and mission. A controversial religious head, he was in news when the church brought Chreuvally Estate, a rubber and tea plantation spread over 10 kms radius, from plantation group Harisons Malayalam Limited. In July, the Kerala High Court had directed the state government not to acquire the land for the airport by force after KP Yohanan moved the court”. ([News Link](#))

PGurus in their article dated 7<sup>th</sup> November has said that “Christian denomination head K P Yohannan, who operates about 30 trusts registered across the country, most of them exist only on paper. K P Yohannan, who is running Believers Church and Gospel Asia. These organizations for the past few decades routing millions of dollars to India for religious conversion,

basically Hindus from lower castes and facing a lot of allegations. This Kerala based evangelist had raised his own denomination and self-appointed as Metropolitan. Income Tax department from 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020 conducting raids at his offices in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Karnataka, Chandigarh, Punjab, and Telangana. Department found that he floated more than 30 trusts and even deposited money in Kolkata based shell firms for money swindling. ([News Link](#))

A YouTube channel 'Kaumudy English' on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020 reported that "Father Sijo Panthappallil who is the spokesperson & manager of the medical college of the church, tried to destroy the i-phone during the raid however officials managed to recover the same. Parallel raids were also conducted in the office of the television channel linked to the Church, its former head & a businessman at Thiruvananthapuram." ([Video Link](#))

Times Now in its report dated 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020, said "I-T officials revealed that they are looking into transactions over the last ten years. The church had got around Rs 4,000 crore over the years and a chunk of it had gone into the construction of institutions and real estate dealings. 'The raid began on October 6th and is still on in Kerala and elsewhere in the country. So far, we have recovered Rs 8 crore in cash from various premises. Our action is still going on,' said an IT official. We, prima facie, assume that the church had invested around Rs 1,000 crore in real estate development. The funds for charity have been used for running churches, which is a religious purpose. Related documents such as sale agreements have been seized. The group has also inflated the price in real estate transactions to make it appear as though the money received in donations is being spent on the activities of the trusts". ([News Link](#), [Video Link](#))

Some other news agencies also reported about the raids. (Links - [Matters India](#), [The Hindu](#), [Mathrubhumi](#))

A blog India Happenings has published details of FCRA violation by Gospel For Asia of K P Yohanan. It states that "The Grand Total of foreign funds 'donated' by entities related to Gospel For Asia (worldwide) into Indian FCRA-NGOs from April 2006 until June 2020 is Rs. 48288405792 (Rs. 4829 Crore), of which the four erstwhile FCRA-NGOs in Tiruvalla received Rs. 4251 Crore, while the remaining Rs. 578 Crore was received by the ten 'activated' FCRA-NGOs spread in Coimbatore, Kanchipuram, Bengaluru, Chandigarh, New Delhi and Rayagada." ([Blog Link](#))

On 11<sup>th</sup> December 2019, TFI Post has published an article wherein they wrote that “Believers Church shady land deals in Jharkhand, to be slapped FCRA violation notices - As per a report by Dainik Jagran, the ‘Believers Church of India’, based in Kerala, has purchased land in the state of Jharkhand, with the foreign contributions received under Foreign Contributions Regulations Act-2010. The land has been purchased in the district Ranchi, Khunti, Latehar and many other districts of the state by the Church. The Home Ministry informed the Jharkhand government about the illegal use of funds and the Jharkhand CID has been asked to investigate the matter.” ([Article Link](#))

In July 2019, Goa Chronicle also wrote an article about Gospel for Asia (GFA) & their modus operandi. The report exposes how GFA misappropriate funds through the net of various entities, like non-profit entities, LLCs & various trusts, NGOs in India & abroad. As per the report “Prior to the cancellation of the FCRA registrations the foreign donations in the Financial Year 2015-16 on FCRA Online Ayana Charitable Trust (Gospel for Asia) received over Rs 826 crores. Believers Church India received over Rs 342 crores. Last Hour Ministry received Rs 103 crores and Love India Ministries received over Rs 76 crores”. ([Article Link](#))

Links of the viral videos related to action on Believers Church – [Nationalist Hub](#), [Times Now](#), [Times Now1](#), [Capital TV](#), [India TV](#), [Marunadan TV](#), [Mathrubhumi News](#), [CNN-News18](#)

The whopping foreign funds came in for Believers Church & its misappropriation by the Church is a recent example. It is happening for years & gone unchecked. This mischievous foreign funding poses a terrible threat to the National Security, Sovereignty & Unity.

Further in this short report few news related to FCRA violations by Christian organizations & actions taken by agencies against it are given.

## **My Nation – 22<sup>nd</sup> Oct 2020**

### FCRA violation by Jharkhand's Christian NGOs

Home ministry orders probe - The Union home ministry has ordered a probe by several security agencies into alleged misuse and embezzlement of Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) funds by NGOs associated with the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI). “We can sense the quantum of the gross irregularities, corruption, embezzlement of funds, money

laundering and misuse of funds within by The Catholic Bishop's Conference of India's pan-India apparatus. The CBCI siphoned funds received through FCRA and state and Central government's social development departments," – Vinay Joshi, LRO. ([News Link](#))

### **Economic Times – 29th Sept 2020**

#### International NGO Amnesty shuts operations in India, alleges “witch-hunt” by Govt

“To circumvent the FCRA regulations, Amnesty UK remitted large amounts of money to four entities registered in India, by classifying it as Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). A significant amount of foreign money was also remitted to Amnesty (India) without MHA’s approval under FCRA. This mala fide rerouting of money was in contravention of extant legal provisions...Previous government had also rejected the repeated applications of Amnesty to receive funds from overseas,” an official said, adding, “India, by settled law, does not allow interference in domestic political debates by entities funded by foreign donations. This law applies equally to all and it shall apply to Amnesty International as well”. ([News Link](#))

### **The New Indian Express – 25<sup>th</sup> Sept 2020**

#### CBI registers FCRA violation case in Kerala govt's Life Mission project, conducts searches

CBI conducted searches at two locations in Kochi after registering a case of alleged violation of the Foreign Contribution (Regulations) Act in the Kerala government's Life Mission project for providing houses for the poor. Red Crescent, an international humanitarian movement, had agreed to provide Rs 20 crore funds towards the Life Mission project. ([News Link](#))

### **Trunicle – 17<sup>th</sup> Sept 2020**

#### LRO exposes huge funding between the churches abroad and activists like Colin Gonsalves, who supports anti National element to create unrest in India

Vinay Joshi, National convener of LRO explains, “providing legal help to any accused be it murderer, rioter, or arsonist is not illegal act. However, using money received under FCRA from foreign countries to defend anti

establishment forces are violation of FCRA.” Hence LRO has demanded legal action against Colin Gonsalves and HRLN by invoking UAPA against them. HRLN website openly declares that its lawyers defended stone pelters, rioters, arsonist n criminal elements involved in anti CAA riots across the country including riot accused Safoora Zargar, does it leave any scope for doubt how anti CAA protest was orchestrated by anti India forces like Colin Gonsalves. ([News Link](#))

## **Times of India – 8<sup>th</sup> Sept 2020**

### 13 NGOs lose FCRA licence over ‘religious conversions’

The FCRA licences of the 13 NGOs, granted registration to receive foreign donations for “religious” purposes, were suspended and their bank accounts frozen after intelligence reports pointed to their activities in tribal areas of some states, particularly Jharkhand, aimed at conversion of the locals to Christianity. In the past few years, some of the biggest foreign evangelical NGOs have seen action under FCRA. Compassion International was put on prior permission list, effectively freezing its donations to Indian NGOs. Its annual contributions in India at the time totalled several hundred crores. ([News Link](#))

## **The Hindu – 6<sup>th</sup> Sept 2020**

### Government suspends FCRA clearance of 4 Christian groups

The four Christian groups whose FCRA was suspended are Ecreosoculis North Western Gossner Evangelical in Jharkhand, the Evangelical Churches Association (ECA) in Manipur, Northern Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jharkhand and New Life Fellowship Association (NLFA) in Mumbai. The two other organisations whose license was suspended are the Rajnandgaon Leprosy Hospital and Clinics, and the Don Bosco Tribal Development Society. The FCRA license of NLFA was suspended on February 10, according to Home Ministry data. According to the NLFA’s website, the group began operations in India in the mid-sixties after the arrival of missionaries from the New Life Churches of New Zealand in 1964. The Evangelical Churches Association (ECA) was founded in 1952 in Manipur. Its origins can be traced to a Welsh Presbyterian missionary who visited in 1910. According to the website of Ecreosoculis North-Western Gossner Evangelical, its origin is rooted in the development of the Gossner mission of Germany in Chhotanagpur region. The Northern Evangelical Lutheran Church was

established in 1987 and is part of a global communion of 148 churches in the Lutheran tradition, representing over 77 million Christians in 99 countries, its website says. ([News Link](#))

### **OPIndia – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

#### Hyderabad: Legal organisation writes to Union Home Ministry, alerts about Christian NGO's alleged FCRA violations and evangelist activities

The Legal Rights Protection Forum(LRPF) has alleged that Harvest India that is known as a charitable NGO has received funds from abroad and utilized them to train Christian religious preachers, as per a report in Swarajya. A huge church was constructed by the Christian NGO and has questioned about the source of funding. The complaint alleged that the Andhra based NGO Harvest India claims to be a charitable organization but seeks funds for missionary activities including 'crusades, pastors-support, Bible college support', and church planting support. ([News Link](#))

### **The Hindu – 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2020**

#### CBI books Tamil Nadu-based NGO and others for FCRA violation

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has booked Tamil Nadu-based Caruna Bal Vikas (CBV), Adhane Management Consultants, Bentinck Higher Secondary School and others for alleged violations of the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA). CBV, a non-government organisation, used a part of its foreign receipts for religious activities. It had received funds from Compassion International, United States. The I-T Department report "also mentions diversion of funds for conversion activities to NGOs owing allegiance to the Methodist Church, Baptist Church, Salvation Army, Christian Missionary Society and Indian Pentecostal Church, which is in violation of its charter of service to children". "Further, CBV has, inter alia, declared its long-term objective of 'converting poor children into fulfilled Christian adults', and thus engaged in religious activities, including conversions to Christianity. Such activities have potential to disturb communal harmony and, therefore, are in violation of the Section 12(4)(f)(vi) of the FCRA, 2010," the First Information Report (FIR) alleged. ([News Link](#), [FIR Copy](#))

### **Vishwa Samvad Kendra (Telangana) – 14<sup>th</sup> Nov 2019**

## MHA cancels FCRA registrations of 1,807 NGOs and Institutions in 2019; NGOs did not comply with FCRA rules

The central government has cancelled FCRA registration of 1807 NGOs and educational institutions across the country in 2019. A Home Ministry release said that NGOs and educational institutions registered under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) have been barred from receiving funds from abroad. These organizations are accused of violating the FCRA norms or not complying with the rules. Some of the prominent NGOs and institutions whose FCRA licences have been cancelled in various states include - Salvation Ministries - Salvation Ministries, Darul Uloom Imdadia Educational Society of Andhra Pradesh, World Peace Mission Trust of Chandigarh, The Wesleyan Methodist Mission, Notre Dame Sisters Society of Chhattisgarh, Young Men's Christian Association of Gujarat, Shalomlife Ministries Trust of Goa, The Catholic Christian Minority Board of Education of Jharkhand, St. Sebastian Church, St. Pauls Education Trust, St Joseph's Carmelite Convent of Karnataka, Worshipers Ministries Charitable Trust, St. Marys Charitable Complex of Kerala, M P Christian Assembly, Diocese of Bhopal of Madhya Pradesh, World Islamic Network, The Savion Trust of Maharashtra, Catholic Mission, Catholic Church of Meghalaya, Torch Bearer Ministries, The Fundamental Baptist Churches Association of Mizoram, The Light Of Asia Mobilization of Orissa- St. Joseph's Convent, Institute of the Foreign Mission Sisters of Puducherry, Christian Primary School, Methodist Primary School of Punjab, Zion Full Gospel Church Trust, Young Men s Christian Association, Trinity Full Gospel Church of Tamil Nadu, Vision To Serve Ministries, United Grace Ministries, The Living God Baptist Church of Telangana, Christian Social Service Society of Uttar Pradesh, The Roman Catholic Church. ([News Link](#))

### **Deccan Chronicle – 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2017**

#### Kerala: Council for probe on Church funds

According to V.K. Joy, general secretary of The Joint Christian Council (JCC), the FCRA wing of the ministry has found serious discrepancies in the details submitted by Ernakulam-Angamally, Kanjirappally, Kochi, Thrissur dioceses and Varapuzha Archdiocese. The amount mentioned as carry forward from the previous year is not having any correlation with opening and closing balance of the year as per information gathered under the RTI Act. The discrepancies running into rupees worth several crores are from the year 2009 onwards, Mr. Joy said. ([News Link](#))

### **Reuters – 15<sup>th</sup> March 2017**

## India's NGO crackdown forces U.S. Christian charity out after half a century

A Colorado-based Christian charity Compassion International (CI) said on Friday it was ending its almost half-a-century-long operations in India after authorities restricted its funding channels over suspicions it supported religious conversions in the Hindu-majority country. CI's Media Relations Officer Becca Bishop said "We do believe that Compassion and other Christian charities are being singled out because of our faith, and that the Indian government is trying to limit the expansion of Christianity in India," ([News Link](#))

## **Zee News - 27<sup>th</sup> December 2016**

### Govt cancels FCRA licences of 20,000 NGOs for violation of laws

The government has cancelled the FCRA licences of 20,000 NGOs out of 33,000 such organisations for violation of laws, thus barring them from receiving foreign funds. On November 11, a Home Ministry official had said that as many as 1,736 NGOs, including Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Mata Amritnandmayi Math and Church of South India Diocese of Madras, would no longer be able to receive foreign funds as they had failed to renew their FCRA registration. ([News Link](#))

## **Live Mint – 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov 2016**

### Govt asks 1,736 non-profits to submit documents for FCRA licence renewal

The government has released a list of more than 1,700 not-for-profit organizations that it said have not yet been given permission to receive foreign funding under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA). These organizations can now either call or mail the home ministry to complete the process for the renewal of their licences under the FCRA. Government order says "While processing the renewal of online applications received on or before 30 June, 1,736 cases were closed due to non-submission of documents or deficient documents or other statutory short coming..." ([News Link](#))

## **DNA India – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept 2015**

## Govt cancels Greenpeace India's FCRA licence, NGO says determined to fight order

The cancellation of FCRA licence came months after the Home Ministry suspended operations of Greenpeace and blocked foreign funding alleging that the NGO had been involved in activities contrary to country's economic progress like organising protests against coal mining, anti-government propaganda in abroad. ([News Link](#))

### **Kashmir Observer – 13<sup>th</sup> June 2015**

#### Delhi Cracks Whip on 36 NGOs in JK

Central government has cracked a whip on 36 NGOs active in Jammu and Kashmir by cancelling their registration over non-filing of annual returns and other anomalies, reports. Among the NGOs active in Kashmir facing license cancellation including Prefecture Apostolic of J&K Catholic Church, Maulana Azad Road, Srinagar; J&K Darul Fazal Home for the Zoram Evangelical Fellowship, Shivpora, Srinagar; Madrasa Taleemul Quran, Sazgari Porah, Srinagar; Kashmir Rural uplift, P O Latti Bandokh, Tehsil Ramnagar, Udhampur; Cancer Society of Kashmir, Lal Mandi Chowk, Srinagar; J&K Khatoon Welfare Society, Near Star Clinic Regal Lane, Municipal Complex Srinagar; All Jammu and Kashmir Saffron Grower' s and Dealers Association, Ladhu Road, Namblabal, Pampore, Pulwama; The Tibetan Muslim Refugee Welfare Association, Badam Wari, Srinagar; Kashmir Dastakar Anjuman, opposite Pratap Park, Residency Road, Srinagar and Rattan Rani Hospital, Sathoo Barbar Shah, Srinagar. ([News Link](#))

### **Business Standard - 28<sup>th</sup> April 2015**

#### Govt's move triggers fear among NGOs

The Narendra Modi government's move to cancel the licences of about 9,000 non-governmental organisations (NGOs), receiving foreign funding, for violation of the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) has sent shock waves among the voluntary sector. In an order, the home ministry said notices were issued to 10,343 NGOs for not filing annual returns for financial years 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12. In January this year, the home ministry placed 10 foreign donor agencies under “prior permission category”, under Section 46 of the FCRA. In a letter to the Reserve Bank of India, the ministry asked banks “to ensure that any fund flows from these donor agencies (see list) to any individual/NGO/organisation, should be brought to the notice of the

ministry of home affairs. so that funds are allowed to be credited to the accounts of the recipient individual/ NGOs/association only after clearance from the Foreigners' Division, FCRA wing". A majority of these organisations are evangelical organisations, funding NGOs mostly in south India. Those donor agencies are - Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), Danish Institute of Human Rights (DIHR), Catholic Organization for Relief and Development Aid (CORDAID), Dan Church Aid (DCA), Mercy Corps - USA, Inter Church Peace Council \_ Pax Christi (IKV- PC) – Netherlands, HIVOS – Netherlands, ICCO Streegische Samenwerking (ICCO) – Netherlands, Green Peace International, Climate Work Foundation (CWF) – US. ([News Link](#))

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