Press Release
21.02.2025

Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Shimla has provisionally attached five immovable properties having value of **Rs. 18.27 Crore** on 20/02/2025 under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002 in the case of **Himachal Pradesh Scholarship Scam**. These properties include three pieces of land measuring to 125 bighas approx. registered in the name of Maa Saraswati Educational Trust which are located in Nahan, District Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh and two flats located in Panchkula, Haryana registered in the name of Preeti Bansal and Richa Bansal, who are trustees in the Maa Saraswati Educational Trust.

Maa Saraswati Educational Trust runs the **Himalayan Group of Professional Institutions**, Kala Amb, Distt. Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh and the attached assets being 125 bighas of land registered in the name of Maa Saraswati Educational Trust include the land on which Himalayan Group of Professional Institutions is currently situated in Kala Amb, Distt. Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh.

ED initiated investigation on the basis of FIR registered by CBI, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh regarding the irregularity in disbursement of scholarship by the Directorate of Higher Education (DoHE), Shimla, Himachal Pradesh under Post Metric Scholarship Scheme for OBC/SC/ST students of Himachal Pradesh.

ED investigation revealed that these institutes had fraudulently received scholarship funds by verifying the details of those students:

(i) who were not enrolled in any course with these institutes;
(ii) who left the institute without completing their studies.

Further, in order to fraudulently obtain more amount of scholarship funds, false details of students were uploaded on the HP-e Pass portal (scholarship portal of DoHE, Shimla) by:

(i) changing course of students in subsequent years;
(ii) changing the caste category of students in subsequent years;
(iii) showing students as hosteller instead of day scholars and
(iv) claiming bogus course fee structure for distance education courses.

The Proceeds of Crime, so obtained, by various persons involved in the offence were used to acquire movable and immovable properties in their names and in the name of their family members.

Earlier, searches were conducted which resulted in seizure of incriminating material, cash to the tune of Rs. 80 Lakh approx. and freezing to the tune of Rs. 2.80 Crore lying in various bank accounts. Further, Provisional Attachment Orders for attachment of movable and immovable assets to the tune of Rs 10.67 Crore had also been issued. Subsequently, this provisional attachment of assets, seizure of cash and freezing of bank accounts had been confirmed by the Adjudicating Authority, PMLA. Hence, the total provisional attachment of movable and immovable properties in this case stands at **Rs. 29 Crore (approx**.).

Further, two persons being guilty of offence of money laundering have also been arrested in this case on 30.01.2025. Both of them are in Judicial custody at present. Earlier in this case, four persons had also been arrested on 30.08.2023.

Further investigation is under progress.

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Himalayan Group of Professional Institutions, Kala Amb, Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh





