

Drug disposal panels fail to hold timely meetings

High Court asks Principal Secy to file affidavit

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Taking cognisance of drug disposal committees' failure to meet at least once in two months for the disposal of drugs no more required as case property, the Punjab and Haryana High Court has asked Punjab Additional Chief Secretary/Principal Secretary (Home) to file his personal affidavit on the issue.

Justice Amol Rattan Singh asked the officer to specify the status of drugs required to be disposed of, but not done so, till November 15.

The directions came during an appeal by Balbir Singh against the judgment of Nawanshahr Special Court Judge. Convicting him under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, the Judge had sentenced him to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment and slapped a fine of Rs 1,00,000.

Allowing the appeal, Justice Amol Rattan Singh



police stations' 'malkhanas' as these are not disposed of in a timely manner by these committees. "The chances of misuse of such contraband can obviously not be ruled out," he said.

asserted that reports received in the High Court on administrative side from Sessions Divisions showed the presence of contraband in police stations' "malkhanas" due to its non-disposal in a timely manner by committees to be constituted vide standing order notified on June 13, 1989. "Hence, the chances of misuse of such contraband can obviously not be ruled out," he said.

Justice Amol Rattan Singh also observed poppy straw and other narcotic substances were to be disposed of under the supervi-

sion of Drug Disposal Committees to be constituted by the state governments, as per the notification. The committees were required to meet as frequently as possible, at least once in two months.

It was to examine the list of drugs to be disposed of. "After satisfying themselves that they are no longer required for legal proceedings and the approval of the court has been obtained for the purpose, necessary certificates are to be endorsed by the committees for disposal of such drugs..."

Justice Amol Rattan Singh added Additional Chief Secretary/Principal Secretary, Home, would file his personal affidavit after obtaining information on affidavit from the chairmen/presiding officers of the committees concerned on the current status of drugs.

The affidavit by the chairmen/presiding authorities is also required to spell out the reasons behind delay.

Regulatory

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Amol (RATT)

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