

Court allows framing of charges against DDA officer

Delhi High Court Thursday gave the green signal to the sessions court for framing charges against former Delhi Development Authority (DDA) vice-chairman Subhash Sharma, former Delhi High Court judge Shameet Mukherjee and three others accused of irregularities in property allotments.

Justice S. Murlidhar also asked Judge I.K. Kochar to pursue the case further.

The case took a turn when Mamta Sehgal, judge in-charge of the Patiala House court, was transferred as district judge May 1 and Kochar succeeded her. Special judge R.K. Yadav, in turn, replaced Kochar and started looking at the matters pending against the accused in what has come to be known as the DDA scam.

One of the accused, Dharamvir Khattar, an alleged middleman, moved the high court pleading that the case not be transferred to any other judge as it will not only take more time but also prove to be a costly affair.

The high court agreed and ordered that the same judge would continue to pursue the matter and directed the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to present all the accused in the court Friday. It further directed the judge to fix an early date to frame charges.

There are four cases of irregularities in which the five accused have been named. They deal with irregular possession of two DDA flats on the Aruna Asaf Ali Marg and illegal allotment of a plot of land at Shalimar Bagh on which a school building was constructed.

During arguments over the framing of charges, all the accused had claimed they had been implicated in the case. They also sought discharge before commencement of trial.

Opposing their plea, the CBI counsel told the court that the agency had submitted 19 CDs that contained alleged conversations between the accused pertaining to the land deal.

The CBI had termed the CDs as 'crucial evidence'.

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