

## Now, Jaspal Bhatti demands drug-deal with US

Satirist Jaspal Bhatti has pulled a new one - this time he wants India to 'sign' a drugs deal with the US and has demanded 'subsidy' for drug peddlers and growers.

Putting up his short skit with his band of 'Nonsense Club' members at the busy Sector 17 plaza here Monday, Bhatti demanded that drug peddlers should be provided red beacons atop their vehicles and be given security cover since they are involved in a risky business.

The satire was clearly aimed at red beacons and security recently announced by Punjab Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal for members of the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) to appease them.

'Prime Minister Manmohan Singh should shift his focus from the nuclear deal with the US to a long-term drug deal,' Bhatti said as shoppers and others laughed.

Punjab has emerged as a major transit point in north India for drugs being smuggled from Afghanistan via Pakistan. Chandigarh has emerged as a major buying market for drugs.

Punjab is reported to have a high number of people hooked to drugs.

Bhatti even suggested that organic farming of drugs should be encouraged so that youngsters could get the quality product.

'It would be more profitable for the government to subsidise the drug trade instead of giving free water and electricity to farmers,' Bhatti said.

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