

## Court asked to decide on land allotment to Prakash Jha

The Supreme Court Thursday set aside a [Patna](#) High Court judgement cancelling the allotment of land in Bihar to noted Bollywood director Prakash Jha to set up a film institute and studio.

A bench of Justices Arijit Pasayat and P. Sathasivam also asked the Patna High Court to adjudicate the matter afresh and reach a decision on the legality of the land allotment within four months.

Jha was allotted prime land in Patna and other places very cheap to set up multiplexes, ultra-modern medical colleges and hospitals.

On Dec 19, 2006, the high court had scrapped the allotment saying proper protocols were not followed.

The high court however, had given freedom to Jha to re-apply so long as he backed his business plans with supporting and required documents.

A high court bench of Justice Aftab Alam, who is now a Supreme Court judge, and Justice Rekha Kumari, in its judgement had said that standard protocol had been ignored as Jha failed to provide needed documents with his application.

The court ruling was on a public interest lawsuit filed by Congress state spokesperson Prem Chandra Mishra.

The high court, however, had rejected Mishra's claims that the land granted to Jha was motivated by any 'political intentions'.

'It does not appear the allotment of land to Jha was motivated by some political reasons. This is a clear case of government officials not doing their job in a diligent and professional manner and therefore, Jha is free to get back his deposit or re-apply for the land with proper documents, if he desires to,' the court had ruled.

Mishra had alleged that the Bihar government allotted lands in prime areas to Jha at dirt-cheap prices because of the filmmaker's close personal relationship with Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.

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