HC wants Pakistani law implemented in India

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Bathinda:

In a major faux pas, the Punjab and Haryana high court has issued a directive to the state government to implement the provisions of the ‘Punjab Prohibition of Private Money Lending Act, 2007’, completely oblivious to the fact that this law is valid in Pakistan and not India.

The direction came as the HC bench was disposing of a bunch of petitions on July 29 and made a score of recommendations and directions to redress grievances of farmers in Punjab.

The law quoted by the bench has been enacted by the Punjab province of Pakistan. Even the words used in the act, such as ‘federal’ and ‘provincial government’, are not used in India to describe the form of governments. When the issue was brought to the notice of Punjab advocate-general Atul Nanda, he told TOI: “Though I am not aware of the issue, I will take up matter with the concerned bench to check about the oversight.”

Interestingly, the Pakistani law has also been mentioned in a judgment (Prem Lal vs Naresh Kumar Narula case) regarding a suit of recovery of money on the basis of promissory note by a judge in Delhi’s Saket on November 18, 2014.

In the Indian state of Punjab, the ‘Punjab Settlement of Agricultural Indebtedness Bill, 2016, was passed on March 22, 2016 to provide relief to agriculturists, labourers and others dependent on agriculture to provide fair settlement of debt-related disputes. It was amended on September 28, 2018 as ‘The Punjab Settlement of Agricultural Indebtedness (Amendment) Act, 2018.’ Social activists, however, are keen that the Pakistan law regulating the money lending business should also be enacted in Punjab as small and marginal farmers struggle to repay their exorbitant interest rates.

Advocate Narinder Kumar Jeet, who said the Pakistan law has stringent punishment for any offence committed under this Act, wants a similar or even harsh law to be enacted in India to regulate money lending.