

Remove cell towers from schools: Supreme Court

Abhinav Sharma, TNN Sep 8, 2012, 06.20AM IST

JAIPUR: The Supreme Court has come down heavily on the installation of overhead mobile towers on schools buildings.

Dismissing a special leave petition filed by Cellular Operator Association of India (COAI), the division bench of Justice H L Dattu and Justice Chandramauli Prasad upheld the interim order by Rajasthan high court asking mobile companies to remove towers installed over schools and near hospitals.

"Let the children be safe. Radiation does affect them. Let the towers be removed," observed Justice Dattu.

"India is the only country where schools have overhead mobile towers. This can't be permitted," said Justice Prasad.

Senior advocate Mukul Rohtagi said the Central government is seized of the matters and therefore, the interim order prejudices the issue. "There is no question of prejudice. We can see the seriousness of the central government with the matter being considered since 2010 and no outcome so far. But we can not allow children to suffer," the court observed.

COAI said if HC was permitted to pass such orders arbitrarily asking cellular companies to remove towers from schools and near hospitals, it will hit connectivity and consumers will be adversely affected.

Rohtagi contended that the towers have also been installed in colonies where the number of residents is much more than a few hundred students in a school and unless a uniform policy of installation is not framed by government the HC order passed last month needed to be stayed.