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Bill on judges' assets soon

Vibha Sharma
Tribune News Service

New Delhi, June 26

The UPA government is planning to make it mandatory for judges to declare their assets and liabilities. Law Minister M Veerappa Moily today said a legislation would soon be introduced in Parliament, making it essential for judges to declare their assets and liabilities.

Moily said the file to study the draft had been sent to the Law Secretary and discussions were also going on with the judiciary. "The matter will be taken to the Cabinet," the Law Minister said, refusing to divulge any further details about the draft.

He, however, asserted that it would be wrong to assume that judges were against any such legislation. "We are not on a confrontational line with the judiciary," Moily asserted, adding that the draft legislation would be introduced in the Budget session beginning July 2.

It has always been a matter of debate in the country whether judges of the Supreme Court, high courts and city courts should disclose assets and liabilities. While the apex court judges voluntarily file a statement about their assets and liabilities with the Chief Justice of India, statements are not made public.

Meanwhile, the minister also said attempts were being made to ensure that time taken for decision in a case was reduced from 15 years to three years. Moily said 50,613 cases were pending in the Supreme Court, 38 lakh in the different high courts and nearly 2.64 crore in the district courts

In terms of pending cases, the Allahabad High Court was leading followed by Patna and Madras high courts, he added.

