

HC itself granted certificate of appeal in assets case: Attorney general

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New Delhi: Attorney general Goolam E Vahanvati today sought to dispel the impression that he was keen to challenge the Delhi High Court judgment on the judges' assets issue, saying that the full Bench itself was of the view that substantial questions of public importance have to be decided by the Supreme Court.

Vahanvati, who argued the matter in the high court for the apex court, has come under fire from a section of legal fraternity for reportedly suggesting that an appeal should be moved in the Supreme Court against the path-breaking High Court verdict holding that the office of chief justice of India came under the ambit of the RTI Act.

To allay such impression, the attorney general in an interaction with reporters, said the high court under Article 132 of the Constitution granted certificate to appeal against the verdict on the ground that important questions of law were involved.

"The judges of the high court themselves granted a certificate to appeal to the Supreme Court certifying that the case involves substantial questions of law and general importance and that in the opinion of the high court these questions need to be decided by the Supreme Court," he said.

However, he said notwithstanding the certificate, the decision whether an appeal will in fact be filed or not, is that of the judges of the Supreme Court.

The attorney general said he took up the case on behalf of the Supreme Court not just as a matter of legal duty, but on the basis of a firm conviction that "the independence of the judiciary cannot be compromised by exposing every aspect of the work of the courts to public scrutiny".

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