

Parties' support sought to impeach HC judge

Legal Correspondent (Hindu)

New Delhi: The Campaign for Judicial Accountability and Reforms (CJAR) has sought the support of political parties for the impeachment of Justice Soumitra Sen, judge of the Calcutta High Court, as recommended by the Chief Justice of India K.G. Balakrishnan, in his letter to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan of CJAR, addressing a press conference here, said: "The inaction of the government in Justice Sen's matter after the CJI sent his recommendation displays complete lack of seriousness on the part of the government in enforcing judicial accountability."

He said in these circumstances, the CJAR has prepared an impeachment motion against Justice Sen and is sending it to all the political parties with a request that they should have it signed by their MPs so that it could be presented to the chairman of the Rajya Sabha. He said signature of 50 MPs of the Rajya Sabha was necessary to proceed with the motion.

Mr. Bhushan said that when the CJAR came to know about the proposed appointment of advocate Ashwini Kumar Mata as a judge of the Delhi High Court, it had written to the High Court and Supreme Court collegium about his alleged involvement in a forgery case and to stop his appointment.

Citing the case of Justice Ashok Kumar, judge of the Andhra Pradesh, he said the CJAR wanted to prevent the appointment at the initial stage itself.

Admiral (retired) R.H. Tahilani, Chairman, Transparency International India, who too addressed the press meet, found fault with the Supreme Court for refusing to comply with the order passed by the Central Information Commission on disclosure of assets by the judges.

Pointing out that the CIC's order had been challenged in the Delhi High Court, he said: "All this could have been avoided if the CJI had chosen to disclose information about which judges were complying with their own Code of Conduct. It is inexplicable as to why the CJI or other judges of the Supreme Court are unwilling to disclose their assets, particularly when they had themselves directed even candidates contesting elections to publicly declare their assets."

