

## Delhi High Court reserves order on whether CJI's office comes under RTI

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NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court reserved its verdict on an appeal filed by the Supreme Court challenging its order which had held that office of Chief Justice of India comes within the purview of Right to Information Act and details of judges' assets should be revealed.

A full bench comprising Chief Justice A P Shah and Justices S Muralidhar and Vikramjeet Sen reserved its order after two days of arguments.

Appearing for the Supreme Court registry, Attorney General Goolam E Vahanvati contended the resolution regarding assets declaration by judges was non-statutory, non-binding and it could not force a judge to declare assets to the Chief Justice.

The Attorney General said the High Court single judge had erred in declaring that the office of CJI comes within the ambit of the RTI Act and had interpreted the provisions of the Act too broadly which was "unnecessary" and "illogical".

"The resolution was meant for self-regulatory purposes and it cannot be binding," he said.

The High Court had in its September 2 verdict on the controversial issue held that the CJI was a public authority and his office came within the purview of the transparency law.

The judgement was contrary to the stand taken by CJI K G Balakrishnan who had consistently been maintaining that his office is beyond the purview of the RTI.