
Judges' assets: Moily says will talk to Oppn, not the CJI

Maneesh Chhibber Posted online: Sunday , Aug 09, 2009 at 0434 hrs

New Delhi : Forced by the Opposition to shelve the judges' assets Bill, Union Minister for Law and Justice M Veerappa Moily has ruled out fresh deliberations with the Chief Justice of India on the issue.

Speaking to The Sunday Express at the sidelines of a seminar organised by the Bar Association of India yesterday evening, Moily said: "We will hold discussions with the entire Opposition as well as our alliance partners to find a solution." And that the CJI's "apprehensions" would be shared with the leaders.

Asked when he would bring the Bill back, Moily said: "Definitely in the next session."

On August 3, the Opposition — supported by some Congress MPs too — forced the Law Minister to defer the introduction of the Judges (Declaration of Assets & Liabilities) Bill, 2009, in the Rajya Sabha. The MPs were critical of the clause that said that the details of assets submitted by the CJI, Judges of the Supreme Court and the High Courts would not be in the public domain.

Chief Justice K G Balakrishnan had told The Indian Express that judges had no objection to a law making it mandatory for members of the higher judiciary to declare their assets but only if there were adequate safeguards to ensure that it didn't lead to their "harassment" by "disgruntled" litigants.

"It is not as if judges are not providing details of their properties or filing Income Tax returns. But people will start asking questions about value of properties," the CJI had said.

<http://www.indianexpress.com/story-print/499850/>