



Govt decides judges needn't make wealth info public

CNN-IBN



LEGAL REASON: Law Minister Veerappa Moily says judges need to be protected.

New Delhi: The Government has decided judges need not make public information about their wealth and a Bill on judicial reforms is likely to be diluted.

The Government will introduce the Judges Assets Bill, which will make it compulsory for judges to declare their assets, but that information will remain only with the Chief Justice of India. The Government seems to have watered down the crucial part of the Bill that said information has to be made public.

Law Minister Veerappa Moily on Friday said the Government had decided to protect judges from "vexatious petitions" that could arise if they are asked to make public details about assets .

"Judges themselves decided sometime back to declare it (their assets) and we are only institutionalising it. We have discussed this with the

judiciary and it is not correct to say that they are against declaration. They are for the declaration but they cannot be treated as another class of people because if vexatious petitions are filed they need to be protected," said Moily.

Chief Justice of India K G Balakrishnan, in an interview to CNN-IBN early this month, had said judges "feared frivolous complaints and litigation" if they made information about their wealth public.

"We are disclosing assets--all the judges of the Supreme Court have done that. But we are not giving (the details) to the public...let judges be protected from frivolous complaints and litigation," Balakrishnan had said.