

THE HINDU

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Supreme Court notice to Solicitor-General

J. Venkatesan

CBI probe sought into scam allegedly involving 26 judges

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday issued notice to Solicitor-General G.E. Vahanvati to render assistance in a petition seeking a CBI probe into what is called the “Ghaziabad judges’ scam” allegedly involving 26 judges (one apex court judge, seven High Court judges, six retired High Court judges, 10 serving district judges and two retired district judges).

A Bench consisting of Chief Justice K.G. Balakrishnan, Justices P. Sathasivam and J.M. Panchal, after hearing senior counsel Fali Nariman and M.N. Krishnamani, appearing for petitioners, issued notice to Mr. Vahanvati and said the hearing would be held in the chambers of the Chief Justice on July 14.

Letter from U.P.

Meanwhile, responding to a letter from Uttar Pradesh seeking permission to interrogate the judges, the Supreme Court is understood to have sent a reply asking the police to send a questionnaire which would be forwarded to the judges concerned for their response.

The letter said if the police were not satisfied with the answers then permitting personal interrogation could be considered.

Mr. Nariman placed the names of the judicial officials allegedly involved in the scam in a sealed cover for the perusal of the Bench and said the allegations were scandalous and serious as the main accused, in his statement before the court, had named people who were holding important positions in judiciary.

The petitioners — Nahar Singh Yadav, advocate and Chairman of Adhivakta Kalyan Trust; and the Bar Association of Ghaziabad, through its Chairman Devendra Sharma — said the case related to alleged misappropriation of Rs. 23 crore of Provident Fund of Class-IV employees with the “connivance” of officials and judges.

They said certain allegations had been made against judicial officers and other high-ranking officials of the Ghaziabad court, which had the propensity of tainting the image of the judiciary. They had approached the Allahabad High Court for a CBI probe which would be in the interest of justice.

The High Court rejected the petition and the present appeal was directed against that order.

The petitioners said it was apparent from the first information report that swindling of crores of rupees would not be possible without the “collusion” of high-ranking judicial officers. Some of district judges had been subsequently elevated as judges of the Allahabad High Court. Impartial and credible investigation might not be possible by the police and only a CBI probe would bring out the truth, they said.

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/07/08/stories/2008070859281100.htm>