

## Candidate may have to disclose health condition to contest poll

The Centre on Tuesday informed the Madras High Court that the Law Commission was considering the possibility of making it a statutory obligation for those wanting to contest in elections to disclose full particulars regarding their health condition at the time of filing nominations.

Justice N. Kirubakaran was also told by Additional Solicitor General (ASG) G. Rajagopal that the efficacy of imposing such a statutory obligation was questionable because a majority of voters cast their votes on the basis of political parties and their symbols rather than by weighing the credentials of individual candidates.

Disagreeing with the submission, the judge said, voters must have a right to know the health condition of elected representatives. "You see, within a year of election, we lost a Chief Minister," he said, referring to the death of Jayalalitha on December 5, 2016 about six months after getting elected for the second term.

He made the observations during the hearing of a writ petition which had sought for a direction to make disclosure of health condition mandatory for those contesting in local body polls. Passing interim orders in the case last month, the judge wanted to know why shouldn't it be made mandatory for Parliamentary and Assembly polls too.

In reply, the ASG told the judge that he had obtained written instructions from the Centre and required about 10 days' time to file them in the form of an affidavit. Accepting the request, the judge adjourned further hearing on the case to July 6. Before parting with the case, he stressed the need to bring in large scale electoral reforms.

"Someone must put a full stop to dynasty politics in this country. Otherwise, it would remain a fiefdom of select families. Why don't you introduce a Bill to end dynasty politics?" the judge asked raising many eyebrows in the court hall.

**END**

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