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No plan to shift official accused in vigilance case: Minister

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Thiruvananthapuram: Dismissing media reports that senior IAS officer Paul Antony, who was named as third accused in a Vigilance case, would be removed from the post, Industries Minister A C Moideen today said government has not taken any such decision and the official can not be seen as guilty till the charges against him were proved.

 "The government has not taken any decision to remove Additional Chief Secretary (Industries) Paul Antony," Industries Minister A C Moideen told reporters in Thrissur.

"The government has not taken any decision to remove Additional Chief Secretary (Industries) Paul Antony," Industries Minister A C Moideen told reporters in Thrissur.

Moideen said he had not received any letter from the official requesting for his removal from the present post of Additional Chief Secretary (Industries) in the wake of the case, registered by the Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau.

Antony had been named as the third accused by the anti-corruption agency in the case related to alleged nepotism in the appointment of a relative by former Industries Minister E P Jayarajan, the first accused in the case.

"The government has not taken any decision to remove him. There has been no such allegations against the official, except in this case. What is going on now is only an inquiry. He has not been proved as guilty," he told reporters in Thrissur.

"There is no need to resign only because a person is named as accused in a vigilance case," the minister said, adding, he has complete satisfaction in the work of the senior officer.

Naming Paul Antony as accused in the case had irked a section of top bureaucrats in the state and they decided to proceed on mass casual leave earlier this week as a mark of protest over VACB Chief's alleged "vindictive attitude and way of functioning".

But they called it off at the last moment after Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan came out tough against them.

Paul Antony was the fourth IAS officer to come under the scanner of Vigilance after K M Abraham and Tom Jose, both facing charges of having assets disproportionate to known sources of income and S Padmakumar, former Managing Director of state-run Malabar Cements, who was arrested for alleged irregularities in the company.

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