

## Lok Satta welcomes probe into Chandrababu's assets

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The Lok Satta Party today welcomed the Andhra Pradesh High Court ordering an investigation into the assets of Telugu Desam Party President and former Chief Minister by the Central Bureau of Investigation and the Enforcement Directorate.

Lok Satta Party State Working President D. V. V. S. Varma and Secretary P. Bhaskara Rao recalled that the Lok Satta Party had sought constitution of a special court to inquire into corruption allegations the then Chief Minister Dr. Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy and Opposition leader Chandrababu Naidu hurled against each other. At the party's annual conference at Ongole in October 2011, Lok Satta Party President Dr. Jayaprakash Narayan wanted the CBI to inquire into the assets of Mr. Chandrababu Naidu along with those of Mr. Y. S. Jaganmohana Reddy, son of Dr. YSR and Member of Parliament.

The Lok Satta Party said that Mr. Chandrababu Naidu, who denied allegations of any wrong-doing, should cooperate with the inquiry agencies. The inquiry provides a good opportunity for Mr. Chandrababu Naidu to prove his innocence.

Mr. Varma and Mr. Bhaskara Rao pointed out that although traditional political parties had been facing allegations of corruption for a long time, no inquiry has been initiated without courts' intervention. They said that strong institutional mechanisms are required to eradicate corruption. "At the heart of the anti-corruption struggle is the need for independent and impartial crime investigation. If CBI and ACBs had real autonomy and are seen to be effective, the courts would not have had to intervene" Lok Satta leaders said.

They recalled that Dr. JP had introduced a Bill to amend the Prevention of Corruption Act in 2009. It provided for strengthening of the Lokayukta, granting of autonomy to the Anti Corruption Bureau, and attachment of properties of the guilty. Although Dr. JP sent the copies to all political leaders, none chose to follow it up.

The Lok Satta has sought constitution of strong Lokayuktas in States and ombudsmen at the local level as part of the Lokpal Bill now pending before the Parliamentary Standing Committee.