

Mine is a vote against Congress and TDP, asserts Dr.JP

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Lok Satta Party President Dr. Jayaprakash Narayan today clarified that he had exercised the vote to reject both the ruling party and the Opposition in the no-confidence motion against the Kiran Kumar Reddy Government in the Assembly.

Addressing media on the occasion of the party headquarters moving to Banajara Hills from Adarsh Nagar, Dr.JP said that although many appreciated the stand he took in the Assembly, a few raised certain doubts.

"I am not an Independent candidate in the Assembly but represent the Lok Satta Party. Our party ideology is totally different from that of the ruling party and the Opposition. We believe that both of them are power-oriented and steeped in corruption. Both of them have emasculated local governments and centralized power. Both of them treat the poor as vote banks and are not serious about poverty eradication. Both of them are guilty of ruining agriculture and the rural economy, despite their claim to speak on behalf of farmers. They have not focused on either quality health care or education. Both are guilty of cynical opportunism in that they have stoked regional fires for temporary political gains. You do not expect the Lok Satta Party, which has a clear cut ideology and program, to connive with them by joining either combine.

"When a party obtained a clear mandate to govern, it should ordinarily serve the full term. A no-confidence motion should be a serious step, based on sound reasoning and aimed at protecting overwhelming public interest. It cannot be a tactical numbers game to merely change the players. If the elected Government were to be brought down, there should be a coherent and viable alternative with majority support which has the ability to govern. These conditions of constructive no-confidence are not fulfilled in the present case.

"After deep thinking, the party has decided to utilize the opportunity provided by the no-trust motion to explain its policies without getting entangled in the numbers game of the ruling and Opposition parties. The Lok Satta movement had proposed almost 14 years ago that the people should be given the right to reject all the candidates in the field in an election. I exercised such a rejection vote in the Assembly."

In reply to questions, Dr.JP said that going by media reports the Parliamentary Standing Committee recommendations on the Lok Pal Bill are in tune with the Lok Satta Party stand to the extent of 90 percent.

He wanted the Government to execute the Polavaram project without further delay. Diversion of the Godavari water to the Krishna basin will facilitate utilization of the Nagarjunasagar water for irrigating lands in Telangana and Rayalaseema. He also demanded that the Hyderabad's drinking water needs be met from Nagarjunasagar. There is no justification for drawing Godavari water from Yellmapalli since it is costly and time consuming, and deprives Telangana districts of water for irrigation.

He said that the Lok Satta Party totally supported the emergence of retail chains in the interests of farmers and consumers since they eliminate intermediaries. The color of the cat

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does not matter so long as it catches mice, he said to underline that it does not matter whether the chains are floated by foreigners or Indians.

He said that the move to reduce the number of tiers from five to three in panchayat raj is welcome but what is more important is devolution of powers and resources on local governments.

On the proposed communal violence Bill, he said the Government has to protect minorities irrespective of their religion and caste, region and language. In the process, care must be taken to ensure that the federal system in the country is not harmed.

Cutting of a ribbon, hoisting of the national and party flags, garlanding of he portraits of Ambedkar and Gandhi and blessings by priests belonging to Hindu, Christian and Muslim religions marked the inauguration of the party headquarters.