

## Dr.JP's Appeal to Friends and Concerned Citizens

Written by  
Thursday, 23 February 2012 05:06 -

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Dear friends and concerned citizens,

When we started Lok Satta many years ago, it was like many civil society movements today. However, it became apparent over time that in order to bring about the change all of us are fighting for in our different ways, we have to operate in the political spaces as well, or else we will not be effective.

This goes against a lot of our sentiments about politics, but it is the bitter truth.

In more recent times, the fight against corruption run by so many organisations and groups across India has seen such massive public support, especially from the middle class, that many a political observer was surprised. This in turn has galvanised many Citizen Candidates into joining electoral battle in the recently concluded municipal elections in Mumbai and elsewhere. This trend will endure.

But let us also do better. While the 5-7% vote share these candidates collected is impressive for a first attempt, it is also clear that this could have been higher. The public perception of a splintered 'front' kept many Citizen Candidates from making the full impact that the crowds in anti-corruption rallies indicated.

We've been fragmented by the multiplicity of platforms, causing some confusion and maybe even suspicion of the new 'brands' that have suddenly cropped up for elections.

We can and must overcome this. Lok Satta is not only a party created out of an Andolan, but it also has a constitution that is tailor-made for all those who are fighting for open, transparent, equitable and clean government at all levels. Lok Satta has been designed to be an inclusive platform for all Indians seeking political transformation. It has always been recognized and acknowledged that Lok Satta is not owned by current members; it belongs to all India. The members and leaders at any point of time are humble custodians of a national platform. 'Nation above party; and party above self' is the motto of Lok Satta. Membership has to be open, and leadership has to be by democratic choice at all levels. Each of us can proudly call this our own platform.

The next round is to be played out in Delhi a few weeks from now. The lessons of Mumbai should not be forgotten, nor the fragmentation repeated in Delhi and elsewhere. It's time to act as one force. I am therefore inviting all our friends fighting for the same ideals to unite in the Lok Satta family.

Our internal democracy is a functioning, thriving culture and is just the platform on which all of us in civil society can join hands in the political arena. Our blemish-free past combined with our growing brand recognition in several states will enable all of us to hit the road running in the next round of elections and beyond.

Come, join us. We welcome you with open arms, recognising ourselves in each of you. We

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welcome not merely your support, but equally your passion and leadership to augment ours. There is too much to do; and too few of us willing to do it on a sustained basis. Let's fight together and do justice to our noble cause: Clean, Transparent, Equitable and Participative democratic government, and the promise of building a great new India together.

With warm regards,

Dr Jayaprakash Narayan  
Lok Satta