

'Sara' parties indulging in dramas: Lok Satta

Written by

Monday, 23 April 2012 13:59 -

The Lok Satta Party today charged the 'sara' (traditional) political parties like the Congress and the Telugu Desam with resorting to street fights over the liquor scandal instead of seeking an overhaul of the policy which has ruined the common man and enriched politicians, bureaucrats and media.

In a media statement, Lok Satta Party General Secretary Katari Srinivasa Rao referred to the dharna drama staged by TDP President N. Chandrababu Naidu on the one hand and Congress leaders on the other in Vizianagaram today and said that both parties are equally guilty of giving rise to the liquor mafia in Andhra Pradesh. The rich and the influential belonging to both parties formed into syndicates and cornered liquor shops by bidding them for exorbitant rates mostly in benami names. In a bid to recoup investments, the syndicates promoted as many as 1.5 lakh belt shops or unauthorized outlets in every nook and corner of the State and indulged in sale of liquor including non-duty paid stuff way above the stipulated maximum retail prices. They bought silence of politicians, bureaucrats and media with huge bribes, as is evident from the findings of the State's Anti Corruption Bureau.

Mr. Srinivasa Rao said that instead of diagnosing the malady correctly and suggesting a remedy, the two traditional parties have been indulging in mud-slinging at each other. This is nothing but an attempt at deflecting public attention from the main issue.

The Lok Satta leader said that a solution to the problem lies in the Government abandoning the auction system and running the liquor outlets officially. It should limit the number of such outlets and the days and timing of their operations. Panchayats should be tasked with the responsibility of controlling illicit distillation.

Mr. Srinivasa Rao said that the Government should not view liquor as a cash cow. Andhra Pradesh Government's claims to be a leader in initiating umpteen welfare schemes like supply of rice at one rupee a kilo and Indiramma housing sound hollow because its liquor policy has been ruining the health and finances of millions of the poor.