

Lok Satta names an anti liquor activist and a Leader of farmers' satyagraha as candidates

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The Lok Satta Party today named candidates for two more seats in the by-elections to the Assembly on June 12, taking the total number of seats it is contesting to six.

Mrs. Jonnalagadda Jaya Bhagyam, a 57-year-old Dalit agricultural laborer from Pedagottipadu village, will contest from Pattipadu in Guntur district and Mr. Karanam Vasanta Kumar, a 37-year-old lawyer, from Yemmiganur in Kurnool district.

Mrs. Jaya Bhagyam was instrumental in getting the license of a liquor shop in the village's dalitwada cancelled by launching a movement for a year and half with Lok Satta Party support. In the process, she went on fast, courted jail and suffered lathi blows. In 2007, Lok Satta workers led by its President Dr. Jayaprakash Narayan launched a 70-km padayatra from Pedagottipadu to Guntur on the liquor issue.

Mr. Vasanta Kumar played a prominent part in making Lok Satta Party's defiance of the ban on movement of rice outside the State a success when Dr. Jayaprakash Narayan led a padayatra from Yemmiganur to Gilkasugur in Karnataka.

Introducing the candidates at a media conference, Dr. JP said that the Lok Satta has chosen genuine leaders known for their sincerity and commitment, unlike other parties which field candidates with financial and dynastic credentials.

The party would be focusing on three issues primarily in the ensuing by-elections. It will be seeking a thorough overhaul of the liquor policy under which the Government alone will run liquor shops, an end to corruption through constitution of a powerful and independent Lokayukta and fair prices for agricultural produce through liberalization of the farm sector.

Dr. JP said that the Lok Satta Party and the CPI(M) would support each other in constituencies where they are not fielding candidates. He said the Lok Satta party looked forward to working with the Left parties on a long-term basis since they are on the same wavelength on many issues. The Lok Satta Party believes that all forces dedicated to clean politics, power to people and control of the liquor menace should come together and provide a viable alternative to politics of power brokers, corruption, casteism and cronyism.

He appealed to voters to realize that their future is in their hands in that they have the freedom to elect either competent and sincere people or corrupt and dishonest people as their representatives.

Party General Secretary Katari Srinivasa Rao announced that Dr. JP will be inaugurating the party's election office and interacting with youth in Ongole tomorrow (April 28).

Party General Secretary V. Laxman Balaji, State Working Committee member J. Iramamurthy and the candidates from Pattipadu and Yemmiganur addressed the media.