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Higher judiciary must not be under Lokpal: Sorabjee

Special Correspondent



Legal talk: Constitutional Review Commission Chairman M.N. Venkatachaliah (left) with the former Attorney-General Soli J. Sorabjee at a lecture in Bangalore on Sunday. — Photo: V. Sreenivasa Murthy

The former Attorney-General, Soli J. Sorabjee, has opposed Team Anna's demand for bringing the higher judiciary under the proposed Lokpal Bill.

Addressing presspersons after delivering the third commemorative lecture on the 'Sanctity of the Law in Letter and Spirit' organised by the R. Venkataraman Memorial Committee here on Sunday, he said it was unwise to bring the Supreme Court and High Court judges within the Lokpal ambit.

"Judges cannot come under the scrutiny of a body that consists of lawyers who slam the judiciary whenever they lose a case. Decisions such as the removal of a judge can only be taken by a body that consists of judges and chief justices of the present and the past," he said.

Citing Constitutional Review Commission Chairman M.N. Venkatachaliah, Mr. Sorabjee said there must be a body, but it should be a comprehensive one. "They should bring up the Judicial Accountability Bill if people wanted to reign in the higher judiciary," he added.

On Anna Hazare

On the anti-corruption movement launched by Anna Hazare, Mr. Sorabjee said the activist was a good man and a non-political one, but it was unfortunate that the movement lost its direction. Instead of concentrating on corruption, the team was indulging in unnecessary acts and gimmicks, he said. He wanted to know why Mr. Hazare went to Hisar in Haryana and campaigned against the Congress. He may defend his action, but what will the people who supported him think, he asked.

He was also critical of Team Anna members, disapproving with Arvind Kejriwal's statement that he would send a cheque to the President towards the payment of his dues to the Government, Kiran Bedi doing a mimicry, and Prashant Bhushan calling for a plebiscite in Kashmir.

Earlier, Mr. Venkatachaliah and Mr. Sorabjee paid tributes to the former President R. Venkataraman.

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