

'Present political setup needs through change'

From Chander Suta Dogra

KARNAL: From a Satyagrahi freedom fighter to an ardent advocate of the Presidential form of democracy, life has been a long painful haul for Mool Chand Jain, one of the most respected figures in the freedom movement from Haryana.

He, who at one time braved bullets and beatings to see India free, is today making an anguished appeal to the people to ask for a change in the form of democracy that the country has seen for the last 50 years.

"The Parliamentary system of Government that we adopted has exhausted itself. It had been chosen for the accountability that it bears in its structure, but the experience in India has shown that such an accountability is worth nothing," he says.

The questions and answers in the legislatures, committees of Parliament and various mechanisms such as adjournment motions have all failed to serve the purpose for which they are provided.

"This is why" after having spent a lifetime in the service of the nation, I am now mobilising opinion for a change in the system

of democratic governance in the country," said Mr Jain.

He went to the US just to study the system of governance there, and is now engaged in his new passion just as ardently as he

• I REMEMBER •



YEARS OF FREEDOM

jumped into the freedom struggle in 1936 after reading an autobiography of Jawahar Lal Nehru.

"I became sentimental after reading that book and could not think of doing anything else after that even though I was a gold medallist in Law." He has vivid

memories of his stay in Gujarat jail now in Pakistan where he was lodged along with Avtar Narain Gujral, father of Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral.

Having served as a Minister in the joint Punjab Government as well as in Haryana, besides being a member of the Lok Sabha, Mr Jain has "seen a steady decline of the democratic institution from close quarters" and is frustrated at the futility of invoking various mechanisms meant to prevent abuse of power.

Mool Chand Jain, also resigned in protest from the office of the deputy chairman of the Planning Board in Haryana in the Devi Lal Government. These days he spends most of his time giving lectures on the virtues of the Presidential system.

"Political parties now a days do not have any internal democracy. Their leaders are above the parties. I feel that some difference may be made if elections within the parties are conducted by the Government," says Mr Jain.

Mr Mool Chand Jain has over the years maintained a spartan lifestyle even though he had occupied ministerial positions for several years.

"Of course it is sad that

governance in our country has reached such a sorry state, but I feel there is hope in change. Fortunately the judiciary is still



Mr Mool Chand Jain

independent of the legislature and the executive, and that is a saving grace. As for the letter two, the problem I feel is because, the "executive is borne out of legislature which has led to absolute power. Absolute power naturally corrupts," he observes.