

TRIBALS' TRIUMPH

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The tribals of Kakkinada village in the East Godavari agency area who put up a valiant fight against opening of an arrack shop at the village have won the battle.

The fight put up by the tribals, has ultimately forced the Excise Department officials to direct the arrack contractors to close down the shop and leave the village.

The curtain was rung down on the drama, subsequent to the opening of the "unauthorised" arrack shop when the Excise officials visited the village a few days ago and ordered the contractors not to make any more efforts to carry out their trade there.

Much to the elation of the villagers, Mr. M. Sivaramaiah, Assistant Excise Superintendent, Kakkinada, who visited the village accompanied by Mr K G Krishna Murthy, Excise Circle Inspector, Rajahmundry, asked the villagers to bring to his notice if attempts were made by the contractors to sell arrack in the village in future.

It may be recalled that some of the educated tribals, helped by some social workers, have launched an agitation against the location to the "unauthorised" arrack shop in the village, and demanded its closure.

As part of the agitation, the tribals seized cans of arrack from the shop, which triggered off arrest of four persons including Dr. P. Sivaramakrishna, on a complaint to the police by the arrack shop owners.

Dr. Sivaramakrishna, who is the director of Search for Action and

Knowledge of Tribal Initiative (SAKTI), a voluntary organisation working for the uplift of tribals, has been doing yeoman service in the tribal areas and had riched out a place for himself in the hearts of the tribals. His arrest, along with three others, had wounded the feeling of the tribals. The tribals had intensified the agitation following this.

Now with the forcing of closure of the arrack shop in the village, it is hoped that the cases registered against the arrested persons will also be withdrawn.