

'Praising Modi is like putting Godse on Gandhiji's pedestal'

LUCKNOW: In yet another reaction to the recent praise showered by industrialists on Gujarat chief minister Narendra Modi, union coal minister Sriprakash Jaiswal on Sunday said it was akin to comparing Nathuram Godse with Mahatma Gandhi.

"I am told that recently some industrialist praised Modi in Ahmedabad and compared him to Gandhi. It is like putting Nathuram Godse on Gandhiji's pedestal," said Jaiswal.

"It reminds me of the famous phrase Mathura mein rehna hai to Radhe Radhe Kehna hai," he added, trying to explain how industrialists were seeking benefits from the Gujarat government.

The senior Congress leader was addressing the national seminar on the 12th Five-Year Plan and minorities at Ganna Sansthan auditorium in Lucknow. He was the chief guest at the event. The programme was organised by Strive for Eminence and Empowerment (SEE), a New Delhi-based organisation working for educational uplift of Muslims.

ADAG chairman Anil Ambani had put Modi in the same league as Mahatma Gandhi in a speech during the Vibrant Gujarat Summit



■ Sriprakash Jaiswal addressing the gathering at Ganna Sansthan.

on Friday. Jaiswal also criticised the UP government for labelling the NRHM-funded ambulances as 'Samajwadi ambulances'. He even sought a confirmation from former UPCC president.

"It is unfortunate that a service started by the Union government is being projected as a state's initiative," he added. Jaiswal said India as a nation cannot even dream of becoming a super power unless Muslims, constituting 15% of the population, are not given their due share. "It is not that there are no welfare schemes for the uplift of Muslims by the Union government. But the benefits do not reach the common man. The regional governments are equally responsible for this," he added.

UPCC president Nirmal Khatri and Maulana M Fazlur Rahim Mujaddidi, the brain behind the seminar, were also present on the occasion. **HTC**