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Cong not opposed to quota, says Khurshid

LUCKNOW: External affairs minister Salman Khurshid on Sunday said the Congress was not opposed to the idea of reservation for backward Muslims, but those jittery about letting the party get the credit for implementing it were creating hurdles.



DEEPAK/HT

External affairs minister Salman Khurshid along with panel members at the conference held in Lucknow on Sunday.

"They do not want anyone else to get the credit," he said, without specifying who these insiders were. "They have failed to understand that it is not about who gets the credit."

Addressing a conference titled 'Unpacking the 12th Plan (Minorities Chapter)' as chief guest here, Khurshid said, "Given the levels of backwardness, Muslims deserve help more than any other community."

He said it was time for Muslims to decide whether to pursue overall development on their own or seek the support of secular well-wishers among the majority community and other minorities.

Union human resource development minister MM Pallam Raju, the guest of honour at the conference organised by non-government organisation Strive for Eminence and Empowerment, said efforts were on to reverse the rise in school dropout rates among Muslims.

Planning Commission member Syeda Hameed said, "For the first time ever, the commission, led by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, has acknowledged the perception of alienation among Muslims, which needs to be addressed."

Maulana Mohammad Fazlur Rahim Mujaddidi, the chairman of the NGO, said the 12th Five Year Plan

(2012-17) had effective schemes on educational infrastructure for minorities. "It is up to the community to force the system and the government for its holistic implementation."

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