

Salman Khurshid hits out at Muslim appeasement policy of Akhilesh govt

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Lucknow: External affairs minister Salman Khurshid and human resource development minister Pallam Raju on Sunday hit out at the appeasement of Muslims by the Samajwadi Party. Emphasising that Muslims must unite and not fall prey to parties who claim to be their "well-wisher", the Union ministers also mentioned the big plans the UPA government has for the uplift of minority communities in the 12th Five Year plan.

Addressing a convention on Provisions for Muslims in the 12th Five Year Plan here, Khurshid said it is was time Muslims stopped being used as puppets by their so called well-wishers, in a remark aimed at the Samajwadi Party. "Many of those who claim to be your well-wishers are actually using you all to serve their political needs. They give a call that the religion is in danger and our youth hit the street to launch a protest march. But believe me, Muslims must stop reacting to such calls as it works to sustain the gap between developmental goals and the community," external affairs minister said. He added that such calls (read statements) are common around the election time. "The intention is to confuse the ordinary Muslim mind. And if the well-wishers do not do that, they will not be left with any tool to use the Muslims as a tool to achieve their political ambitions," Khurshid said. He stated that had it not been for the confusion, UPA government would have been successful in giving 4.5% reservation to Muslims. He claimed that the UPA government had made many provisions for Muslims in the 12th plan.

Elaborating more, Syeda Hameed, member, Planning Commission said, "For the first time, it has been acknowledged that Muslims lag behind on all human development indices," she said and added that 15% of funds proposed to be given in the 12th plan across sectors are for minority development.

HRD minister Pallam Raju, however, said though welfare schemes are available, many people do not benefit from them due to lack of awareness. "There is need to create awareness about these schemes particularly on the technical part such as how to apply, where to get the forms and so on," he said,

Congress leader Rita Bahuguna Joshi flayed Samajwadi Party for making statements on implementation of Sachar Committee recommendations. "About 75% of the recommendations made by Sachar Committee are to be implemented by the states; the Centre has only 25% of the work to do. I just wonder why the state governments make a noise about it," she said.

Maulana Mohammad Fazlurrahim Mujaddidi, chairman of Strive for eminence and empowerment (SEE), that organised the convocation, stressed on the urgent need to make Muslims realise that development and nothing else can change their fate. Education, he said, was the most important issue related to development of Muslims. "Low enrolment rate of Muslims at secondary and higher education levels curtails their representation at different levels of society including government jobs. Therefore, they are not a part of the decision making process."

Principal, Maulana Saeedur Rahman Azmi Nadvi, who presided over the event, also urged Muslims to exercise wisdom before getting influenced by politicians.

'Will consult DMK on Lankan Tamils'

Lucknow: External affairs minister Salman Khurshid said no decision on Sri Lankan Tamils would be taken without consulting UPA alliance partner DMK. He said "DMK is our ally. We will take their opinion into consideration before taking the final decision." India has asked Sri Lanka to investigate allegations of human rights violations and incidents involving loss of human life during final stages of conflict with LTTE but does not favour the international probe which the DMK wants.

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