

NATIONAL

## Swami Agnivesh: Modi govt. fostering climate of hate and fear

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Accusing the Narendra Modi-led NDA of fostering a climate of hate and fear in the country, social activist Swami Agnivesh on Sunday said that any person questioning the workings of the government or the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was liable to be branded a ‘traitor’.

The process of resolving issues through debate and discussion seems to have disappeared under the present [BJP-led NDA govt.]. ‘Sedition’ is a term applied casually to any person seen to be opposing the policies of this government even slightly,” said the noted activist, who was speaking at an event against ‘cultural terrorism’ organized by the Maharashtra Andhashraddha Nirmoolan Samiti (ANIS) founded by late Dr. Narendra Dabholkar.

“Dr. Dabholkar had never harmed anyone in his life. Yet, he was gunned down in cold-blood for questioning certain aspects of our religion. What has happened to the great Indian tradition of tolerance and debate?” he said.

Stating that the Modi government was actively propagating hate and aggravating social tensions, he called upon the people to democratically vote out the BJP in the forthcoming Lok Sabha election for spreading social disharmony.

“This government is acting like the British Raj and is only interested in quelling dissent. It is my prediction that the BJP will win less than 150 seats in the next Parliamentary election,” he remarked.

In July, Swami Agnivesh was beaten up by a mob in Jharkhand’s Pakur district. The activist had alleged that the attack was been carried out by members of the BJP Yuva Morcha and the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad - the student wing of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).