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37

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I'm proud to be a
 Hindustani Muslim:
 Azad in last RS speech

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

AN emotional Prime Minister Narendra Modi bade a tearful farewell to Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad, whose current tenure ends on February 15. Azad signed off with a poignant speech that drew a parallel between the lives of Muslims in India and Pakistan, and said he prided himself in being a Hindustani Muslim.

Asserting that India was untainted by the evil practices prevalent in countries like Pakistan, Azad said, "If any Muslim in the world should be proud, it should be the Hindustani Muslims. I am among those who have never been to Pakistan, but when I read about the evils that exist in Pakistani society, I think Hindustani Muslims should be proud."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi
wipes a tear as he bids farewell
to Ghulam Nabi Azad | PTI

Modi's speech was interspersed with many long pauses as he broke down while recalling his long association with Azad Describing him as his true

friend, Modi said: "his work will inspire generations of MPs to come. Posts come, high offices come, power comes, but one must learn from Ghulam Nabi Azadji how to handle them."

Recalling the 2007 terror attack in Kashmir, where a grenade was lobbed at a bus carrying Gujarat pilgrims, Modi said, "Nabiji was as concerned as he would have been if his family members were victims. He was the first person to call me. During that call, he continuously wept," Modi said, adding that he would always expect Azad to share his inputs with him.

I worry that after Azad, whomever will take over from him, will have to fill very big boots because he carried not only about his party but about the country as well as the House. This is not a small thing, this is big thing.

Principles of Hazardous Waste Remediation Technology

Proud to be Muslim in India: Azad in last speech

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

@ New Delhi

AS Prime Minister Narendra Modi got emotional during the farewell speech of Rajya Sabha's Leader of Opposition Ghulam Nabi Azad, the latter praised former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. He said the late Vajpayee maintained a good relationship with opposition MPs. Azad added that he is proud to be a Muslim in India.

Azad's com-

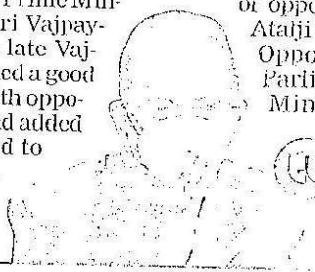
ments come at a time when the opposition has accused the treasury benches of violating parliamentary procedures to get legislations passed. "I have fond memories of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee who always took care of opposition MPs. When Atalji was the Leader of Opposition, I was the Parliamentary Affairs Minister and we did

not have a majority. However, as far as running the House is concerned, those were the five easiest years. I learnt from Atalji how to be an efficient Leader of Opposition," Azad told the House in his farewell speech. Interestingly, Home Minister Amit Shah was present during his speech.

"If any Muslim in the world should be proud, it should be the Muslims of India. I am

among those who have never been to Pakistan, but when I study the kind of circumstances, there are evils that exist in the society of Pakistan. Although we should not say such things about other countries, we can say proudly say that such evils are not part of Muslims of India."

Dedicating a couplet to all those displaced from the valley, he said: "*Us ashiyana jo ki is waqt ujda hua hai, uske liye hum sabko prayas karna hai* (all of us have to make efforts to restore the nest, which is devastated now)."



I am among those who have never been to Pakistan, but when I study the kind of circumstances, there are evils that exist in the society of Pakistan

Ghulam Nabi Azad, outgoing Leader of Opposition, RS