

Spirituality is country's strength: PM

NEW DELHI, Mar 7 (PTI)

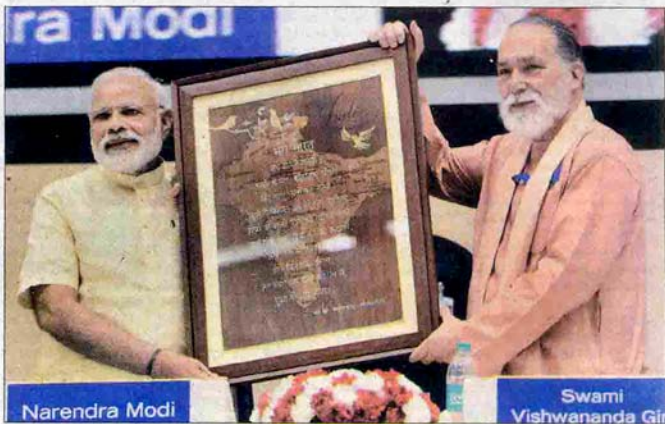
INDIA'S spirituality is its strength but unfortunately some people link it to religion, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday.

Addressing a function here to commemorate the centenary celebrations of the Yogoda Satsanga Society of India (YSS), he said Yoga is the first step towards the journey of spirituality.

Modi said that the world compares India on the basis of its population, GDP or employment rate, but the world has neither known nor recognised India for its spirituality.

"India's spirituality is its strength. But, it is unfortunate that some people link spirituality to religion. But both spirituality and religion are different," he said. The Prime Minister also hailed Yogi Paramahansa who left the shores of India to spread his message but remained connected to India all the time. The YSS was founded in 1917 by Paramahansa. A special postage stamp to commemorate the occasion was also released by Modi.

Recalling the words of former President APJ Abdul Kalam who felt that India's spiritualness is its strength and this process should continue, he said that the spiri-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi receives a memento from Swami Vishwananda giri at the release of Special Commemorative Postage Stamp on 100 years of Yogoda Satsang Math, at Vigyan Bhawan, in New Delhi, on Tuesday. (PTI)

tuallity of the country has been strengthened by India's sages and saints. Modi's remarks come against the backdrop of a debate over the attempts by political parties to polarise society on the lines of religion especially during elec-

tions. Talking about Yoga, he said that it is the simple entry point to a spiritual world.

"Yoga is the entry point to spirituality. Yoga is the entrance point to one's spiritual journey. One should not consider it as the last

point, as it is simply the entry gate to the spiritual world," he said.

"Once an individual develops an interest in Yoga and starts diligently practicing it, it will always remain a part of his or her life," he added.