

Akhilesh hits back at detractors

LUCKNOW: Chief minister Akhilesh Yadav on Monday launched a counter-attack on political bigwigs for not offering any suggestions but instead raking up the issues concerning riot-victims in Muzaffarnagar and Shamli relief camps.

In an obvious reference to the recent visits of Congress vice president Rahul Gandhi, Rashtriya Janata Dal chief Lalu Prasad Yadav and other leaders to the two riot-affected districts, the chief minister said none of these leaders had come forward with any suggestion to help the riot victims better.

The chief minister was speaking to media persons on the occasion of handing over of the Letter of Intent to the HCL for the development of the R 1,500 crore IT City in Lucknow that would provide nearly 25,000 jobs. HCL founder Shiv Nadar was also present on the occasion.

"Big leaders have been visiting Muzaffarnagar. We did request them for suggestions. But these leaders remained silent. I spoke



■ Chief minister Akhilesh Yadav addressing a press meet. HT PHOTO

to Lalu Prasad Yadav also on phone and requested him for suggestions," said the chief minister.

He said representatives of some big business houses had also visited the riot-affected areas and appeals for collection of blankets were made on FM channels. The blankets were being collected in a mall, he said.

Akhilesh said he would also urge the people to come forward to help the riot victims and the state government would ensure that such relief reached the affected people. "If people want

to help the riot victims, they can contribute to the chief minister's relief fund. We will ensure that whatever the people give is distributed among the riot victims," he said.

Replying to a question on the law and order situation in the state, Shiv Nadar said he did not ever face any problem on this front. Certain things may have been exaggerated, he said. Nadar said he had been moving around in Lucknow and got a sense of safety here. "It's a peace-loving state," he said. **HTC**