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Modi to visit Amrita ashram in Kerala on Sept 26

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Gujarat chief minister and BJP's prime ministerial candidate Narendra Modi is expected to take part in the 60th birthday celebrations of spiritual leader Mata Amritanandamayi, known as 'Amma', at her ashram in the district on September 26.

Modi will be addressing a gathering of Amma's devotees drawn from different parts of the country and outside at the Amritpuri Ashram in Vallikkavu on September 26 on the eve of her birthday as part of the celebrations, for which various other leaders have also been invited, ashram sources said.

Asked about the propriety of a leader of a political party being invited to the ashram, a spokesperson said "we have often invited leaders of various parties to the ashram in the past."

"There is no need to read political meaning into this. We have invited leaders of various parties and religious heads to the ashram and those who share the views and concerns of Amma on issues faced by humanity have never hesitated to accept our invitation," the spokesperson said.

Former president APJ Abdul Kalam will be the chief guest at the inaugural of the celebrations on September 25. Modi is scheduled to address the devotees and guests on the morning of September 26.

The same day in the afternoon, Kerala chief minister Oommen Chandy will address a session.

Some central ministers are also expected to address the meetings at the ashram on September 27, the birthday of Amma.

A few months ago, Modi had visited the Sree Narayana Mutt at Sivagiri near here, the seat of the spiritual order founded by 20th century saint-reformer Sree Narayana Guru, who preached the message "one caste, one religion and one God for human beings."

The Left parties and the Congress had at the time expressed reservations over the invitation extended by the sanyasins of the Mutt to Modi, arguing the ideology for which he stood was at variance with the message of universal love and fraternity propagated by the Guru as the panacea for social reform and progress.

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