

## Bal Thackeray a coward, says Ashok Singhal

Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) leader Ashok Singhal Sunday accused Shiv Sena chief Bal Thackeray of lacking courage and said Hindi can never be banished by anyone.

Commenting on Thackeray's claim that it were Shiv Sainiks who demolished the Babri mosque in Ayodhya in December 1992, the VHP leader told reporters here that Thackeray never went to Ayodhya. 'He has no courage.'

When pointed out that a recent editorial in Shiv Sena mouthpiece Saamana had claimed that VHP leaders sat with their hands crossed when the Babri mosque was being brought down, Singhal exploded.

'Balasaheb Thackeray never went to Ayodhya, he does not have that courage. But Manohar Joshi had come and introduced himself as 'a kar sevak bhai' ,' Singhal said.

He added that about 400,000 people 'accomplished the task of demolishing the Babri Masjid' and refuted Thackeray's claim that Shiv Sainiks did it.

On the assault on Samajwadi Party's Abu Azmi in the Maharashtra assembly when he took oath in Hindi, the VHP leader said Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) leader Raj Thackeray had 'gone wayward and strayed from his path'.

Singhal added that nobody in the country would be able to remove Hindi.

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