

Sardar Vallabhai Patel: strategic vision for a united and prosperous India.

“Manpower without unity is not a strength unless it is harmonized and United properly, then it becomes I spiritual Power” by SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL.

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INTRODUCTION

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was an Indian independence nationalist and barrister. He was the first deputy prime minister and home minister of independent India since 1950. He was a senior leader of the Indian National Congress who played a significant role in the country's struggle for independence and its political integration. He was the brave leader of the Indian freedom struggle. He worked with full dedication to unite India after freedom which led to the birth of a new nation. He was recognized as the architect of United India. He faced many challenges in the way of tying the country to the thread of unity. He is compared to Otto Von Bismarck of Germany. He is referred to as the Iron Man of India. His vision and leadership played a crucial role in the integration of princely states in the newly independent India and in laying the foundation for United and Strong Nation.

Gandhi had said to Patel, “the problem of the state is so difficult that only you can solve it”

The Indian Independence Act of 1947 provided the lapse of paramountcy of the British crown over the Indian states. It also gave each of these rulers the option to accede to the newly born Dominions India or Pakistan or continue as an independent sovereign state. Patel's vision can be summarized in the following key points.

- National unity and integration: out of Patel's small significant achievements was the integration of over 560 princely states into the newly formed Indian Union after Independence in 1947. He believed in the importance of a United India free from fragmentation along princely state lines. His skillful negotiation and diplomacy helped bring together these diverse States under the Indian flag.
- Strengthening governance: Patel understood the importance of a strong and efficient government in building a stable nation. He played the central role in shaping the administrative and political structure of India during its early years. Helping to establish the all India service and other key institutions.
- Economic development: Patel recognized the need for economic development and welfare of the masses. He believes that a self-reliant and prosperous India.
- The Nizam claiming that he feared the imminent invasion attempted to approach the UN Security Council and the International Court of Justice. On 13th September 1948 the Indian Army was sent into Hyderabad under Operation Polo on the grounds that the law and order order. The troops met little resistance by the Razakars and between 13th and 18th September to complete control of the state. The operation led to massive communal violence essential for the well being of its citizens.
- Secularism and social harmony: Patel was a staunch advocate of caste race and believed in the equal treatment of all religions and communities. He worked towards building a society where people of different faith could go exist in harmony.
- Commitment to democracy: Patel was committed to democratic principles and believed in the power of the People's voice. He supported the idea of a democratic form of Government and worked to ensure that the newly independent India upheld these values.

As for an address to the nation one of Patel's notable speeches was his address to the constituent assembly on 25 December 1947. In this speech he emphasized the importance of Unity democracy and the rule of law. You should

not come to it the error of placing your country above your own honor and above your own life . He thinks that a Nations strength is derived from the collective will and commitment of its citizens. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's vision and efforts lead the foundation for modern India's unity and governance. His contribution in celebrated for their role in saving the Nations early years and influence it's trajectory in the decades that followed. They including the use of both force and friendly advised to achieve their integration with the Indian Dominion. If Sardar Patel, the first Home Minister of independent India, had not taken a firm stand at that time, there would have been several Pakistans within India today. It was due to his tough decisions that princely states like Bhopal, Hyderabad, Junagadh, Jodhpur, and Travancore became part of India.

Jawaharlal Nehru asked him to integrate the princely states then Patel created an instrument of accession with the help of V P Menon. In exchange for their land each ruler was offered a privy purse, its size determined by the revenue earned by the state. The bigger states had to be given better deals. Apart from an annual allowance the rulers were allowed to retain their palaces and other personal properties and their titles could pass on the title to his son as well. He set a deadline for them to sign the instrument of accession document till 15th August 1947. Most of the states joint the India by signing the instrument. But some rulers of the princely states were not uniformly enthusiastic about integrating their domains into independent India. Some such as the rulers of Bikaner and Jawar were motivated to join India but Bhopal, Travancore and Hyderabad announced that they did not intend to join either dominion.

Key words:- Nationalist, Integration, Princely States, Independent, secularism, instrument of accession, contribution, harmony, paramountcy.

DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS OF PATEL

Patel and V P Menon made their diplomatic efforts by producing treaties that were designed to be attractive to rulers or princely states.

Two key documents were produced -

1. The first was the standstill agreement which can found the continuous of the pre existing agreements and administrative practices.
2. The second was the instrument of accession by which the ruler of the princely state is agreed to give the access to independent India granting the letter control over specified subject matters.

Some challenging princely states who did not want to join India.

- **Travancore:** It was the first state to question the right of the Congress to succeed the British as the Paramount power. The state was strategically placed at the extreme Southern tip of the subcontinent. It had the highly educated population, achieving Maritime trade and newly discovered reserves of monazite from which is extracted Thorium used in the production of atomic energy and atomic bombs. The Deewan of Travancore was Sir CP Ramaswamy Aiyer, a brilliant and ambitious law who had been in his post for 16 years. It was commonly believed that he was the real ruler of the state whose Maharaja and Maharani were like putty in his hands. In February 1946 he made clear his believe that when the British left Travancore would become a perfectly independent unit as he had been before 1795 when it first signed treaty with the East India Company. But finally on 30 July 1947 the Maharaja wired the viceroy of his decision to essay to the Indian Union
- **Hyderabad:** Mir Usman Ali was the nizam of Hyderabad who want to become independent or join Pakistan. Even during the British days, Hyderabad had its own army, railway service and doctor's department. At that time, Hyderabad was the largest royal house of India in terms of population and total national product. Its area was 82698 square meters, which was more than the total area of England and Scotland. Hindus constituted 80% of Hyderabad's population, while Muslims, despite being a minority, held important positions in the administration and army. Rajakar, under the leadership of Qasim, was organizing public meetings in support of the independence of Hyderabad and was harassing the non-Muslim people living in the area by stopping the train passing through our area. The Nizam of Hyderabad was opposed to merger

with India. He claiming that he feared the imminent invasion attempted to approach the UN Security Council and the International Court of Justice. On 13th September 1948 the Indian Army was sent into Hyderabad under Operation Polo on the grounds that the law and order order. The troops math little resistance by the Razakars and between 13th and 18th September to complete control of the state. The operation lead to massive communal violence. Nehru was in favor that this entire issue should be resolved peacefully. Sardar Patel did not agree with Nehru's compilation. He believed that the Hyderabad was like cancer on the back of India which could not be tolerated. Situation in Hyderabad became very crucial when extremists attacked on Hindu citizens. In order to protect them , Indian soldiers were sent there under the Operation Polo on 13 September 1948. Within 4 days of struggle, Hyderabad was annexed to India. On September 23, the Nizam announced the merger of Hyderabad with India.

- **JODHPUR:** Before his death in 1947, Maharaja Umaid Singh of Jodhpur wanted to merge Jodhpur with India. However, after his death, his son Hanwant Singh became the ruler and considered joining Jodhpur with Pakistan. Influenced by Pakistan's founder, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, he had made complete preparations to merge his state with Pakistan. However, Sardar Patel learned about Hanwant Singh's intentions through Jodhpur's Diwan. Referring to his friendship with Hanwant Singh's father, Patel persuaded him against joining Pakistan and proposed merging with India. He also warned that if Hanwant Singh did not make the right decision, disciplinary action would be taken against him as a friend of his father. With Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's intelligence, strict approach, and experience, along with the patience of his secretary V.P. Menon, the Maharaja changed his mind, and on August 11, 1947, Jodhpur officially joined India.
- **BHOPAL:** The Nawab of Bhopal was the head of the Chamber of Princes, an association of princely states. Nawab Hamidullah Khan of Bhopal wanted to create a federation of princely states separate from both India and Pakistan, which would emerge as a third power. Jinnah even offered him the position of Secretary-General in Pakistan. However, the Nawab of Bhopal aimed to unite his state with other princely states that did not wish to join either India or Pakistan, forming an independent nation. Although the ruler of Bhopal was Muslim, the majority of the state's population was Hindu. In December 1948, a mass movement against Nawab Hamidullah began in the state. He tried to suppress it with force, brutally killing many protesters. Eventually, Sardar Patel had to intervene and sent V.P. Menon as an envoy to Bhopal. Finally, on June 1, 1949, Bhopal merged with India.
- **Junagadh:** Muhabbat Mahabat Khan was the nawab of Junagadh who had accepted the offer to join the Pakistan but the people of Junagadh started the revolt against him. Junagarh was very important to Patel since it was his home state of Gujarat. Junagarh a princely state located on the south-western end of Gujarat and having common border with Pakistan. The government pointed out that the state was 80% Hindu and called for a referendum to decide the question of accession. The Government of India agreed plebiscite was conducted in February 1948, which went almost unanimously in favor of accession to India. He sent Indian force to annexation it's principalities. A referendum was held in Junagadh in February 1948 where 91% population voted to join in India. This Junagadh was included in the union of India.
- **Kashmir:** Kashmir was a princely state where the majority population was Muslim and the king was Hindu. Raja Hari Singh did not take any decision related to merge with Pakistan or India. When armed tribals from Pakistan attacked Kashmir, then Maharaja requested India for help. In return for this Patel and Nehru put the condition of signing the Instrument of Accession. The Indian Army began driving out tribal fighters and the Pakistani army from Jammu and Kashmir. However, in the midst of this, India announced a ceasefire at the United Nations, which resulted in a large part of Jammu and Kashmir falling under Pakistan's illegal occupation. Thus Kashmir was added to the union of India on 27th October 1947.

- **Manipur:** Manipur was ruled by the maharaja Bodhchandra. In 1948 it became a constitutional monarchy. The Maharaja Bhodhchandra was pressurized by Government of India to merge Manipur in India. Finally, on 21 September 1949, Bodhchandra Singh signed the instrument of accession and Manipur became the part of India.

At Independence the region of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Yanam, Mahe and Chandernagor were still colonies of France and Daman and Diu Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Goa remained colonies of Portugal. A plebiscite held in Chandernagore on 19th June 1949 resulted in a vote of 7463 to 114 in favour of being integrated with India. In July 1954 an uprising in Dadra and Nagar Haveli threw off Portuguese rule. The Portuguese attempted to send forces from Daman to re-occupy the enclaves, but were prevented from doing so by Indian Troops and in 1961 Goa by military operation.

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