

Chapter-8

Sardar Patel's Dominant Role in Congress's Internal Power Conflicts

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Abstract

In this chapter the structural-revisionist outline is also followed on the leadership of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in the Indian national Congress, not just as a posture, but also as the architect of an internal power disposition in the party during the most specification decades of pre- and post-independent India. It asserts that a highly intricate deep state was planned and presided over by Patel within the Congress, a sophisticated web of clandestine control of organisations that determined the strategic direction of the party, not mentioning its resources and key leadership (*Kochanek, 1968; Noorani, 2014*). Despite the apparent influence of Gandhian moralism and Nehruvian idealism on the political environment, this paper reveals the undertones of realpolitik and where Patel had his way as far as absolute power was concerned (*Frankel, 2005; Panebianco, 1988*).

Going beyond a mere chronological record of his career, the chapter disaggregates the anatomy of the internal disputes of Congress the divisions between socialists and conservatives, between regional satraps and the centre, the strain between a mass mobilisation and state-formation (*Frankel, 2005; Chandra et al., 2008*). In this shaky ecology, Patel had to be an omitted regulator. His leadership is examined as a new compilation of Gujarati expedience, imperial administrative rigidity, cold-blooded political algebra, in which he had brought to bear, and often had made, consensus.

The analysis itself lies in the breaking down of the Nehru-Patel dyad and the re-imagining of the dyad not as a collaboration or competition, but as a duopoly of power, and negotiated (*Zachariah, 2005*). Patel had provided the much-needed backbone to the charismatic and ideological driving hand of

Nehru with its organisational backbone, its funds, distribution of tickets and regional bosses. This chapter enacts and appraises the most significant inflexion points: his codification of the marginalisation of the Congress Socialist Party, his control of the election to the Constituent Assembly and the Parliamentary Board and his political genius in his orchestration of the acculturation of princely states themselves that prolonged as well as solidified the power of his own faction (*Menon, 1956; Kochanek, 1968*).

It is lastly suggested, referring to the topic of the present work, that the internal dictum of Patel, was a Patelite School of Indian politics, and was far more centralising and disciplining and efficient in the executive than ideal of purity. His legacy is shown to be echoed in the genome itself of the subsequent work of the Congress Party and the centralised administration of the Indian state in general. The chapter concludes that to achieve crystallisation of political institutions in modern India, it cannot be complete without the fact that Sardar Patel had made a number of very decisive moves in the unseen systems of power in Congress to define its visible face.

Keywords: Sardar Patel's Dominance, Congress Equipment and Machinery, Power Duopoly, Inter-party politics.

Introduction

A political party was much less than what the Indian National Congress was in the period of its existence and until the fateful decades of the 20th century, the year when Indian independence was obtained. It was a complex of contradicting visions, ideologies, and personalities, and each of them was shaping up the direction of the fight of the freedom and the future of the country. This just served to further face up the ideological differences and power rivalry in the pre-independence Congress which was only worsened when it was utilised as the vehicle to governing absolute India. It is against this background that has risen a stout personality; a man of a winning political sense whose foresight, will and irony of the issue have worked together to give a powerful sword in the hands of the internal mobilisation in the Congress and the

marriage of like-mindedness in the party (*Frankeel, 2005; Chandra et al., 2008*).

Political Situation in Indian national Congress Before and after the independence

The early 20th century congress was a church with wide spectrum elements which included moderate elements which financed constitutional reforms, radical elements which demanded swaraj, social reformers who demanded social reforms and revolutionaries. This diversity was frequently embodied in the leadership of the party, yet this diversity was the source of strength of this party to organise large masses of masses in various regions and communities, and on the other hand, the reason of the fissures in the ideological and personal differences (*Sarkar, 1983*).

It was the 1920s and 1930s, when the leader of the Congress Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi managed to gain the unquestionable moral and political authority. The non-violence and civil disobedience philosophy was the approach of Gandhi that rallied millions of people and at the same time caused the new complications in the reconciliation of aspirations of the Congress leaders. This was the party that now became the home of different ideals of the Indian national destiny i.e. socialistic, secular, traditional and practical ideals that were competing to acquire domination (*Brown, 1972*).

Towards independence, the politics in the country radically changed. Congress was not just any movement to oppose the colonial rule but an organisation which became a government. How to bring the discrepant states together in India, how to control communal agitations in India, how to bring about a democratic system in India etc., was a question that required political sound judgement among the congress. It is here, where it was generally fractious that the position of Sardar Patel had to have a major role to play (*Guha, 2007*).

The Atman in the Congress Politics: Sardar Patel

One of such leaders was Vallabhbhai Patel or the Iron Man of India since he was never flamboyant but a hard pragmatist and an organisation genius. His prime resource was with him,

when compared with many of his contemporaries, who were either skilled speakers, or dreamers of ideological virtues where they could without difficulty enter the shadows of political reality with a kind of bold midcourse and precision in making a strategic decision (*Gandhi, 1991*).

His ascendancy to power was also marked by the Congress Party and his ability to manoeuvre support through the grassroots, particularly in Gujarat and negotiating and imposing party discipline; Patel was a negotiator and a discipliner. He achieved greatness as a lieutenant whose services could be trusted as he was beside him in the Non-Cooperation Movement and the civil disobedience Movement. However, Patel did not emerge in darkness, his political image had increased as he had demonstrated to be sheer skill in handling the insider unrest and group split (*Noorani, 2014*). India was on its way to achieving independence and so Patel played significant roles as he initially served the congress as the president in the year 1931 and subsequently the interim government as the deputy prime minister and the home minister. These positions put him in centre of congress power politics and his leadership was vital in seeing the party through the turbulent times (*Patel, 1971*).

The Majority of it is the Internal Power Dynamics

In this chapter the writer has gone as far as to have explored the role of authority played by Patel in the regulation of the power politics within the congress which required more than merely the politics but rather a spirit of country spirit as well as a sense of practicality (*Frankel, 2005*). The Congress turmoil was not a simple phenomenon- it contradicted both ideological differences and Lords of power and regional as well as communal interests (*Kochanek, 1968*).

He used a mix of a firm and a diplomatic style to respond to these challenges (*Gandhi, 1991*). He was able to devote no consensus-building, but he had a reputation as an iron-willed man. He also treated all the opposing sides in a manner that was marked with intelligent compromising without sacrificing major objectives (*Noorani, 2014*). He understood that the capacity to deal with the dissenting elements of the movement

would form the key to success of the Congress as a national movement and its prosperity.

This is among the key characteristic attributes of the leadership of Patel who was able to exercise authority and simultaneously respect the various leaders. However, it was distinctly the opposite of confrontational politics of power politics which is the hallmark of most political parties in India; the foundation of the Patel command was vision of a united congress which would lead to the promise of freedom and self-rule in India (*Patel, 1971*).

Political Acumen as a relation of Nehru-Patel

When talking about the inner processes of the Congress people, it is impossible not to mention relations between Sardar Patel and Jawaharlal Nehru who were the giants and whose cooperation and even autonomy were the factors of influence on the way the party moved. Unlike Nehru who was the visionary-internationalist, Patel was the realist-consolidator.

The role played by Patel in ensuring there was a balance between idealism and practical governance of Nehru was significant in making an attempt to ensure that there was the balancing act of Congress as an organisation. Their different opinions would normally lead to lively debates and not cut-throat fights with Patel as their opposite like that whenever the party happened to be straining, the party would not face the same fate (*Chandra et al., 2008*).

The collaboration of the two was necessary especially in terms of unifying the princely states to the new independent states as they sat down- this was a politically hot topic that required administrative acumen of Patel and the political sightedness of Nehru (*Menon, 1956*). These daring actions of Patel on this front consolidated his position on the congress and demonstrated that it was a significant burden to deal with the partisan politics within the congress (*Copland, 1997*).

Tradition of Command of Patel in the Congress Politics

This is because the influence of this legacy of Sardar Patel on the internal power politics in the Congress still exists. His

reign facilitated the Congress to become a freedom movement to a disciplined political outfit with sharp powers to govern a newly independent state (*Frankel, 2005*). His wholeness, order and practicality gave an exemplar of congress politics in the early Indian democracy.

It was politically brilliant of Patel not to splinter the movement at the time when he needed to put in-tra party divisions at bay. The Iron Man was not only an impressive personality but also got considerable amount of confidence and therefore he took Congress as the centre of interest in the Indian political system.

Congress Politics: Political Ascent to Power with Sardar Patel

The inclusion of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in Indian National Congress and his quick rise to the rank of a robust leader is an Indian folklore of persistence, practicality, and brilliance of organisation. Patel was born in the year 1875 and in the state of Gujarat and his childhood was simple by nature with the first occupation being law. But he took great interest in the liberation of India, and according to his instinctive ability of leadership he was soon to be plunged into the midst of the nationalist movement (*Gandhi, 1991*).

Entrants onto the Congressional Scene:

Patel also participated in politics since the dawn of the 20th century when the Congress was changing into a group of moderate reformists into a mass movement that required complete independence (*Sarkar, 1983*). His first interaction was informed by the local politics in Gujarat at which he emerged to be the champion aspect of peasants and farmers. The grassroot movements could be pushed in the same direction by him and he proved to be a headstrong leader as was the case with his leadership of the Bardoli Satyagraha in 1928, which was an organised resistance against the unfair taxation sentences by the British colonial government (*Patel, 1971*).

His organising reputation was established and his popularity was earned through the Sardar campaign which is the activity

that made him a Sardar translating to mean leader or chief (*Brown, 1972*). Patel focused on action, discipline and unity of his followers as compared to most leaders who used the factor of rhetoric to achieve. This success caught the attention of the high command of the Congress and he was another headliner of the national movement (*Nanda, 1958*).

Adultery with Leaders of Dominant Stand: Nehru and Gandhi

Patel personally associated his political career with the two titans in the Indian history, Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. He associated with Gandhi in terms of equality and similarity of both of them having common ideals of non-violence and civil disobedience. Gandhi was aware that Patel possessed an organisational ability and he would assign him sensitive assignments and more so the management of Congress activities and organisation of masses actions.

Even though Patel and Nehru shared the same goal, and that one was the independence of India, they differed on their manners and visions. Nehru was continuing to be an indefatigable optimistic and charismatic visionary, and thus would not be inclined to socialist thoughts and internationalism. Patel, on the other hand, was more realistic and cautious and had a concern with the facts of government and party solidarity. Their association was only a form of cooperation, although there were a few occasions that they disagreed, yet the collaboration between the two was more like a representative of a balance between Patel being an idealist and Nehru being a realist and the reality (*Zachariah, 2005*).

Organisation and Pragmatic Leader Reputation

This is the reason why the biography of Patel in the congress is more or less credited to the fact that he was a good organiser and a pragmatic leader. His abilities to work with different ultra-factions, discipline and creation of opinion were critical in a party, which was normally split at the ideological and regional front (*Kochanek, 1968*). The style of leadership used by Patel was no-nonsense style in which he

was firm but fair, and he would not command or demand respect but rather set an example (Noorani, 2014).

He was instrumental in restructuring the Congress to the point where the party could be effortlessly turned into a movement of freedom to a government agency (Frankel, 2005). The unity and discipline that Patel raised helped in releasing the inner struggle in the congress so that it could introduce one face in the battle of independence and the establishment of the fledgling national India (Chandra et al., 2008).

The Politics of Power Struggles Within Congress

The Indian National Congress of the epochal periods to the independence of India was an extremely lively, yet bloody area of activity of struggling parties and an immense rift of ideologies. Moderate reformists, radicals of the ardent form, socialists, and strong regional leaders, each had his or her vision of India as a land of the future and often clashed as to strategy, ideology and priorities (Sarkar, 1983). Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel: The extremes of idealism and realism diplomacy among Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel enthralled the greater causes of the party in which it always strives to be realistic and idealistic in its politics (Zachariah, 2005). Such complicated power politics required the leader of extraordinary abilities and balancing factors which would guarantee delicate and cumbersome coalition. However, Congress managed to retain its unity and guide its internal split into its power that finally led to the freedom of India and preconditioned its democratic growth (Frankel, 2005).

The Political Strategy and Leadership Style of Sardar Patel: The Strategy of Strictness, Practicality and Was a Politician

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was the most prominent among the freedom fighters in India, and it is not just due to his commitment towards achieving liberation to his country, but also due to his leadership style and his political philosophy (Gandhi, 1991). Combination of hardness, practicality and ability to negotiate may be Anchored on balance of the strategic dexterity, which Patel used to his management

advantage; a balance which served to their credit in dealing with the complicated Indian internal politics and then it was nation-building (Noorani, 2014). His politics style demonstrated so much knowledge of power, coalition and managing conflict that enabled him to so perfectly play rivalries and dissent (Kochanek, 1968).

Being tall and Realism: The Principles of Leadership of Patel

Immovable stupidity was the main pillar of the leadership style of Patel. His coarse nature, was allowed to be called Iron Man not only due to his coarse character but also because of his great will when it comes to handling some of the most significant political matters (Patel, 1971). The good leadership definition put forward by Patel was critical in ensuring that the order was upheld in the Congress itself, and the extremely divided and disjointed party stayed united (Chandra et al., 2008). The power of the pragmatist approach was the strong aspect of Patel against other leaders whose capacity to solve the problem and lead the state was quite reliant on idealism or oratory (Roy, 2016).

Some of these events that underlined his sturdiness include the completion of a tax resistance movement that he initiated in a tax resistance movement in Bardoli Satyagraha in the year 1928 against the British rulers (Brown, 1972). I found Patel rather pragmatic as a leader due to the organisational strengths, capacity to contain protestors, and bargaining well. He had the requirement that he always needed to have a strong decision, but be open to the means and this mover carried on to his political career in the congress (Gandhi, 1991).

The other element that Patel was a pragmatic person was his treatment of the princely states during the Indian independence (Menon, 1956). The practical mentality supplied the other diabolical in which Patel could utilise diplomacy and strategic coercion as he was forced to contemplate a titanic project of having added more than half-a-millennium states to the Indian Union. He could also argue that with negotiation, and I can say with reason, use of force was the

one that argues that it is the fruit of the deed that was important, not the rectitude of the thought (*Noorani, 2014*).

located the compromise between the Coalition-Building and the Assertiveness

Although this was powerful insistent, another important art of Indian national congress was that a coalition-builder was yet another type of art since the organisation was a coalition of ideological interests, regional interests and even social classes (*Kochanek, 1968*). Patel knew that the repressed power or the totalitarian domination would disintegrate the party and even dismantle the movement of freedom. Rather, he could have a compromise between his assertion and the style of the collaborative leadership that was consensus-based and cohesive.

A foundation on which Patel operated in the alliance he was in was not only mutual respect but also understanding of various opinions in the Congress. He was known to make opposing sides come together and in most occasions he did it by highlighting the advantages of the situation instead of highlighting the difference. His coalitions/alliances as well as associates achieved the row agenda of the party yet they did not shut out the essential leaders or constituencies that constituted the political spirit.

They involved his habitual working relationship with Jawaharlal Nehru. They remained to have contrasting views, whereby, Nehru was more idealist and socialist and Patel was more practical and conservative yet they would complement well since they would not disparage one another. The political qualification enabled Patel to compromise the vision of Nehru and come up with realistic decisions that made the policies more realistic (*Guha, 2007*). It was the compromising stance that enabled them to remain united to some extent even as the great gentlemen of the congress during the defining years of liberty wars and early American Independence (*Frankel, 2005*).

Contested Politics and Disagreement: Faces to Political Foresight

Political dexterity helped to deal with politics at the internal and resistance at the Congress (*Kochanek, 1968*). He knew that to be a leader was to apply power as it was to work under the mottled veil of personal ambitions, theories of politics and territorial beliefs, of which the party was a part (*Noorani, 2014*).

Some of the aspects under which Patel succeeded include being a master at discerning the possible conflict areas in their initial stages before they spiralled out of control (*Gandhi, 1991*). He was severe without being annoyance, and this was a part of his style, which was a part of mine, as I did not ever mean always to me to offer myself to every opposition (*Patel, 1971*). It is a two-sided approach that was successful in maintaining his power without creating resentment and divisiveness.

His position during the 1940s in the circumstance of suppressing factionalism was conditional since this necessitated the Congress to announce unity against the British rule which was statesman-needed. The inability to compromise the party discipline and intermediary the differences using Patel was the surety that the congress would never collapse the way the political scene was being ravaged and the obstacles facing the Congress. His politics were also extended to address the relationship between the rulers of different regions and their interests were incorporated in the national larger interest (*Menon, 1956*).

In addition to the Congress, the conflagration in the liaison of the royal states in the congress model of Patel was the model (*Copland, 1997*). Most of the rulers were not willing or were not interested to be part of the Indian Union, which in case, they would lose their power. The art of using the full dimension of the political instruments was manifested in the policy of the Patel who was able to combine the intermediation of diplomacy and the allusion to the military might (*Menon, 1956*). His success in that endeavour was not only due to the fact that he was able to get the territorial integrity of the

Indian state but also proved the fact that he was a master in the art of negotiating complex political deals (*Guha, 2007*).

Patel and Leadership Strategy of Patel

This type of political policy and the style of leadership followed by Sardar Patel left an unmatched mark in the Indian politics (*Frankel, 2005*). His focus on discipline, unity and pragmatism to govern the country made him make the difference by transforming the Congress, a previously existing movement portrayed as a diverse nationalist movement, to become a political organisation that could rule a newly born nation (*Kochanek, 1968*).

This was also the mode of the day with the future leaders in India as emphasised by Patel (*Guha, 2007*). Their capacity to balance between ideology and pragmatism, to be firm and employ negotiation and their capacity to mediate diversity in a coalition, although the coalition was a leader to a coalition, are the examples that will be more visible in the field of political leadership. His legacy is reflected in how the Indian political system was transformed into being united despite the diversity and how the regional aspirations were reined without a centralised system but through federalism (*Chandra et al., 2008*).

The Nehru-Patel Neo Dynamic: The Irreplaceable Mainspring of The Political Foundation of India

So, without omitting anything, when we start discussing the storey of the Indian independence and of the nation-building of the early years, we are bound to mention Jawaharlal Nehru in the spotlight as the vision-maker of the modern India as the cast-iron leader with his sweeping ideals and international views (*Gopal, 1975*). It was not however, too far below the towering

figure of Nehru, that there was one other man or leader, quiet yet ruthless in bringing the fortunes of this nation: Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (*Gandhi, 1991*). Nehru-Patel relationship was not an ancient alliance but a strong two was a combination that brought a balance between idealism and realism. In this case the crucible of collaboration and

resistance Patel emerged as the omnipotent force, the Iron Man whose political ability, not mentioning the correct resolve to be together, fulfilled the wobbly Indian independence (*Menon, 1956*).

The Work Relationship: Strengths Complimenting to make a Nation

Two imperative and though divergent systems of leadership were Patel and Nehru (*Roy, 2016*). Nehru was the idealist, the orator and speaker whose thoughts of progressive, secular and socialist India were projected in the global arena. Patel however was the realist, the dogged administrator who was aware that ideals needed to be pegged on the definitions of governance, community and political discipline (*Noorani, 2014*).

Their professional collaboration was an example of the way of how to reconcile the dream and the acting (*Frankel, 2005*). Since Nehru had created an illusion of his vision among millions of people, Patel had to maintain the machinery of the party and keep the disharmony within the party at control, to get the decisions working in the steel accuracy. The management of Patel was less brilliant, but it was equally significant; he was the one who kept Congress on its feet and provided it with unity on the political level but also.

There was no conflict in their cooperation. The two men were strong personalities with varied policy and strategy ideologies. They however appreciated each other when it came to their areas of strength and this was what helped them to collaborate. Patel understood who to issue his power and where to support the vision of Nehru and this created a synergy that translated the political system in India.

Convergences: The Organising Vision is founded on the National Unity

Their marriage was based on the idea of a single, independent Indian nation and patriotism of one towards another (*Chandra et al., 2008*). Both Patel and Nehru were as attached to secularism, democracy and the place of the Congress in the offices of the custodian of the national unity. Irrespective of

the variance between their ideology, they overlapped on a couple of values through which they both pulled the party and the nation through the tough times (*Frankel, 2005*).

That Patel had averted his head to the socialism tendencies of Nehru in the face of his scruples showed that he was a collective leader, and oriented towards the greater goal. Their combined movements in the communal tensions, the communal investigation scandals and the necessity to stable the reconciliation of the princely states had to garner the national unity as a whole and never on the ground of individual or partisan interests.

Contradictions: The Realism vs. Idealism

The greatest difference between Patel and Nehru was on the manner of governing and their policies. These were the spheres of the ideologically friendly approach of Nehru in the economic reconstruction, planned economy, and non-aligned foreign policy. The realism of Patel entitled to take pains, retardation of development and interior calm, and first of all, in advance of the deceptions of the great reforms.

Patel was worried that the socialist agendas by Nehru were going to drive the traditional power in circles and leave the nation without a stable state. He put an emphasis on law and order as a priori of progress and advocated brutal repression of communal riots and separatist uprisings (*Hasan, 2000*). The appeal to Partition demanded by Patel sometimes ran counter to the exposures of the dissent and pluralism which Nehru had been inclined to make.

This conflicting situation rather than wearing off their partnering emphasised the necessity of them cohabiting (*Roy, 2016*). The presence of the grounding that Patel took to power meant that there were solid grounds attached to the daring ideologies by Nehru so that ideology must not divide the fledgling nation (*Chandra et al., 2008*).

Patel as Arbiter and Political statesman

The role of Patel went beyond the ideological balancing to active mediating as well as power brokering in the congress. His handling of politics could not be compared and his

factional problems had been resolved and the opponents tamed which would have disintegrated the party.

He used his influences in a gentle manner, yet firm and with imposition of order without leaving a trace of disrespect. Patel was a reputable individual of listening and negotiating and at times made decisions at the greater good imposed. He had served his term as congress board member in the most tumultuous years of its history which made it a united battle front in the struggle against the colonial rule and a constant government component afterward.

The greatest political achievement that Patel could have achieved was the running of the princely states. Whereas Nehru provided the vision of a united India, Patel provided the useful tool that was a combination of diplomacy, political pressure and readiness to employ the use of force in associating more than 500 princely states triumphant. This was Herculean, and it would not need merely administrative ability, political roughness and cautiousness, in which Patel rule was its especial forte.

The Eternal Legacy of the Iron Man

Sardar Patel contribution to the whole freedom and nation making process of India is easily swept in brilliance of the image of Nehru and his world-wide popularity (*Gopal, 1975*). However, iron will, sheer determination of sticking to unity, and brilliant political reasoning would have helped Patel to lead to India to become a country that has weak independence and not permanent (*Zachariah, 2005*).

Patel was like the glue that bound the Congress party, and whose constituent India was an immature democracy, during its most trying moments (*Kochanek, 1968*). His is a heritage of solidarity and power, practicality of governance and style of leadership devoid of promise to himself but one to the country, held above self, of larger national interest (*Gandhi, 1991*).

The moral of coalition-building and balanced approach to assertiveness as exhibited by Patel can have far-reaching lessons on the political leadership that we may be well acquainted with throughout our lives. He showed that the idealistic ideations should be supported by punitive

implementation and that a leader must not only be courageous enough to fight the battle created by him, but wise enough to try to get an unanimity (Noorani, 2014).

A single Leading Opinion: Patel the mighty Colossus of Indian Democracy

One should know the significance of the Nehru Patel dynamic importing to the fact that Patel was not merely Nehru second-in-command or a marginal character. He was the impregnable tower to lean on the political stability of India (Roy, 2016). The authoritative group of Patel gave the answer to the fact that the realistic visions ingrained in the independence of India were nurtured by the political willingness and organising force to make it come to reality (Menon, 1956).

Patel made the bridges to connect with the future of India as Nehru was dreaming about it. It was not a name to him that he should have called himself the Iron Man, but an instinct of the unshakable force which he had pledged in the Indian pangs of birth (Gandhi, 1991). The exponentially significant role of Gandhi physically and tactically furnished by the genius of his intellect must be placed very high in any fair assessment of the political origins of India (Zachariah, 2005). Patel was an excellent politician and his politics expertise enabled India to survive and remain united after independence. His legacy is still living to encourage leaders to balance between the ideals and in the step, deal with complex realities. In India, Patel would never be forgotten since he keeps this nation on their feet and they do not forget that without a practical power such as the power possessed by the visionary power, there would be no leadership.

The Command and Leadership Learning Moments of Sardar Patel

The leviathan position of Sardar Patel in the Indian National congress and the new Indian state cannot be juxtaposed to anything and this is brought out clearly through a series of defining moments in his political acumen and his leadership capacity (Roy, 2016). The most major work in his legacy was the monumental work of uniting more than 500 princely

states into the Indian Union; a task that was in complex political talks and precarious diplomacy and a looming threat of distinction (*Menon, 1956*). The artful negotiation, sterner diplomacy mixed with Tact and the outstanding firmness simply to ensure the different regions of India came together in such a smooth style combined with the unheard-of action cemented Patel in the minds of the Congress that the man could do what was needed to pursue the creation of a nation behind closed doors. At the same time, the caution with which Patel had handled the faction matter in the congress was discovered to hold fast a re-inrod of party members and prevent the inner sects which otherwise would have pushed the party out of solid ground in important circumstances (*Kochanek, 1968*). His leadership could afford the distinctive wallet of tough command united with the incorporation of consensus-making and he could coordinate the differing viewpoints of opinion in order to secure the overall effectiveness of the party (*Frankel, 2005*). It goes without saying that Patel had pushed further by shaking up the structural and strategic evolution of the Congress into a lean and disciplined organisation that would be more of a governing rather than a mass organisation. All these epochal passages are the testimonies of the overwhelming force of leadership of Patel which was not only stabilising the politics within the framework of Congress, but one within the firm framework of the Indian democratic government and the political force in a solid form.

Sardar Patel: The Gluer of Congress and The Political Fabric of India

The input of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in the Indian National Congress and the world of Indian politics as a whole is a monumental pillar of modern India. His tenure was characterised by an unsurpassed ability to bring about a dislodged and ideologically divided Congress party to become a united and well organised power which could spearhead the fight to achieve independence in the nation. Patel was a strategist and determined person whose actions made internal divisions come together so that the Congress was able

to have a united front to rise against the British rule as well as execute its mass political mobilisation through the Congress.

In addition to making a critical contribution in Congress, Patel also had a revolutionary and nation-defining contribution to Indian politics. Being the architect of political integration, he planned the more complicated and unprecedented merging of more than 500 princely states to form the Indian Union which served not only in preserving the territorial integrity of the newly independent state but also prevented its disintegration, anarchy, and civil flame. It was through his uncompromising diplomacy coupled with an indomitable belief in the unity of the country that the proper foundation was laid to a great, independent, and politically stable India which established the super norm of efficient governance and federalism.

Patel has also left a legacy in the power system of congress. He created and defined a leadership spirit of discipline, pragmatism, and unbroken commitment to the national cause. His impact extended into the party organisational culture creating a culture of decisive leadership and group accountability that has been further carried through to the development of the Congress. And, after all, Sardar Patel was not only a leader but the key figure of the Indian political structure: his visionary governance and his indomitable spirit of solidarity and cohesion founded the way of the nation to successful coming out as a strong democratic republic. His work is an everlasting commemoration of the strength of leadership that is achieved through principles in influencing the fate of a nation (*Chandra et al., 2008*).

Conclusion

What Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel contributed to the congress was that he was able to overcome internal power games in the congress by increasing cohesion and discipline in the party that enabled the party to emerge as a single force of pressure in the freedom movement of India (*Kochanek, 1968*). His leadership not only terminated the factional issues but preconditioned the creation of the stable political system of the independent India (*Frankel, 2005*). The history of the

Indian political life can boast of Patel as a forceful, visionary leader, leaving a legacy behind as a unifier and pragmatic statesman, which has been a Democratic pillar that has been the defining pillar of democracy in this nation (Guha, 2007).

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