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## ROLE OF SARDAR VALABHAI PATEL IN UNIFICATION OF INDIA

#### **DR.C.CHANDRAPPA\***

\*Associate professor & HOD, Department of History, Government First Grade College. Varthur, Bangalore-560087 Karnataka state.

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

India is a land of diverse communities. The diversity of this land has existed since time immemorial. Travelers from different parts of the world had set foot in India and left their mark on its land. The exchange of culture and tradition can be accounted for India's rich diversity. Many kings and emperors had invaded this land and left their imprints on the people. In the pre-independence era, India did not exist as a country like it is now. It was just a congregation of different states, each with their own rulers, internal affairs and indigenous people. The independent princely states had their own rules and code for law andorder. When Gandhi Ji started the freedom movement and gradually, India was approaching to earn its independence, a major problem was faced by our freedom fighters. The problem was the integration of 500+ independent princely states into one nation as a whole. But this herculean task was handled swiftly by one person – Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

#### **EARLY LIFE OF PATEL**

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was born on 31<sup>st</sup> October, 1875, in Gujarat. He was a renowned barrister and statesman. Initially, he was not into politics or freedom struggle. His qualities of leadership and diplomacy were observed by his friends who urged him to contest elections in 1917. So, upon strong urging by his friends, he contested the elections and was elected as the Sanitation Commissioner of Ahmedabad in 1917. He was impressed by Gandhi Ji's concept of 'Swaraj' and soon, he began to develop a keen interest on it. He started urging people ti rise and fight for India's freedom. He played an active role when Satyagraha was organised in Gujarat. He was also an active member of the Quit India Movement.

# INTEGRATE THE PRINCELY STATES

Sardar Patel had a strong vision to integrate the princely states and make India a united nation. As India neared Independence, Sardar Patel started showing his diplomatic skills. He was assigned the task of integrating India by Gandhi Ji. Sardar Patel had the herculean task of convincing independent states to shed off their defence, foreign affairs and communication to join hands in forming an independent, united nation called INDIA. He formulated an effective plan and started working with utmost dedication. He offered an ultimatum to all the 565 independent states to be a part of India. He clearly stated the benefits of being one nation. There were instances of some states showing reluctance but he was successful in persuading and convincing them too. He carried out the task of integrating Junagadh (in Gujarat) as a skilled statesman, without which, Junagadh would have been a part of Pakistan today. He also subdued the Nizam of Hyderabad tactfully. Finally, he succeeded in integrating the independent states into one India. For this reason, he is often compared to Otto von Bismark of Germany, who did the same thing in his country in the 1860s. Sardar Patel is also known as the "Bismark of India" and "Iron Man of India" (for following his policies and strategies with an iron hand).

#### NATIONAL INTEGRATION, SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

When it comes to national integration, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel is a name which cannot be ignored and clearly stands out high amidst the rest. For the cause of national unity, he had an action plan which he executed as a seasoned statesman. His leadership qualities and diplomatic skills empowered him to persuade independent states to stand united and save India from Balkanisation after the British crown started to collapse. Even after independence, he had taken a calculative decision of introducing the All India Services which would ensure that India always stays as an independent and united nation.

It is because of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel that we can be proud of being the citizens of such a diverse and culture-rich country. Picture the situation today if there was no one called Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and all the 562 states were still independent today. How fragmented and powerless each state would have been, often prone to wars and invasion even now. We Indians need to be proud of leaders like Sarder Vallabhbhai Patel. Such leaders are wanted even today – leaders who can lead with a vision which can actually be converted into reality. It is indeed a praiseworthy step by the Government of India that it has urged the citizens to commemorate and celebrate Sarder Patel's birthday as "Rashtriya Ekta Diwas" (National Unity Day), for Sarder Vallabhbhai Patel was a man who not only integrated and united the nation, but also secured solidarity of the nation without a civil war.



#### **CONCLUSION:**

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel tackled the question of 550 and principalities and odd State territories in a great manner which left his wildest critics. Within a year Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel redrew the Indian map with every princely State merging the union of India and thereby, making part of the political stream of life that was prosperous with harmony and cultural unity. Within a few months Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel dismantled without shedding any blood. Since the dawn of its history, the monarchies which managed over to Nehru a unified India on which to develop a democratic edifice and therefore Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel enabled Nehru to become the builder of India modern democratic.

For the first time in Indian history stretched over ages, India became united and one. In order to add plume, this achievement occurred without shedding a drop of blood. So, that was the miracle of his personality. The amazing qualities of leadership Sardar Patel. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel had shown as Satyagraha leader, flowered in best way in the management of the country, administration of order and law and making sure the stability of the country and making it impenetrable. After completed his task of weaving unity, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel visited Kanyakumari.

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