



# SARDAR PATEL

## OTHER FACETS



परममयुता प्रज्ञा राष्ट्रभूयदयसाधिका  
Wisdom with valour brings glory to the nation  
Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation



**Editor**

**Dr. Anirban Ganguly**

**Director,**

**Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation**

**Editorial Assistance**

**Amarjeet Singh**

**Research Associate & Programme Co-ordinator**

**Devesh Kandelwal**

**Research Associate**

**Nandan Singh Bisht**

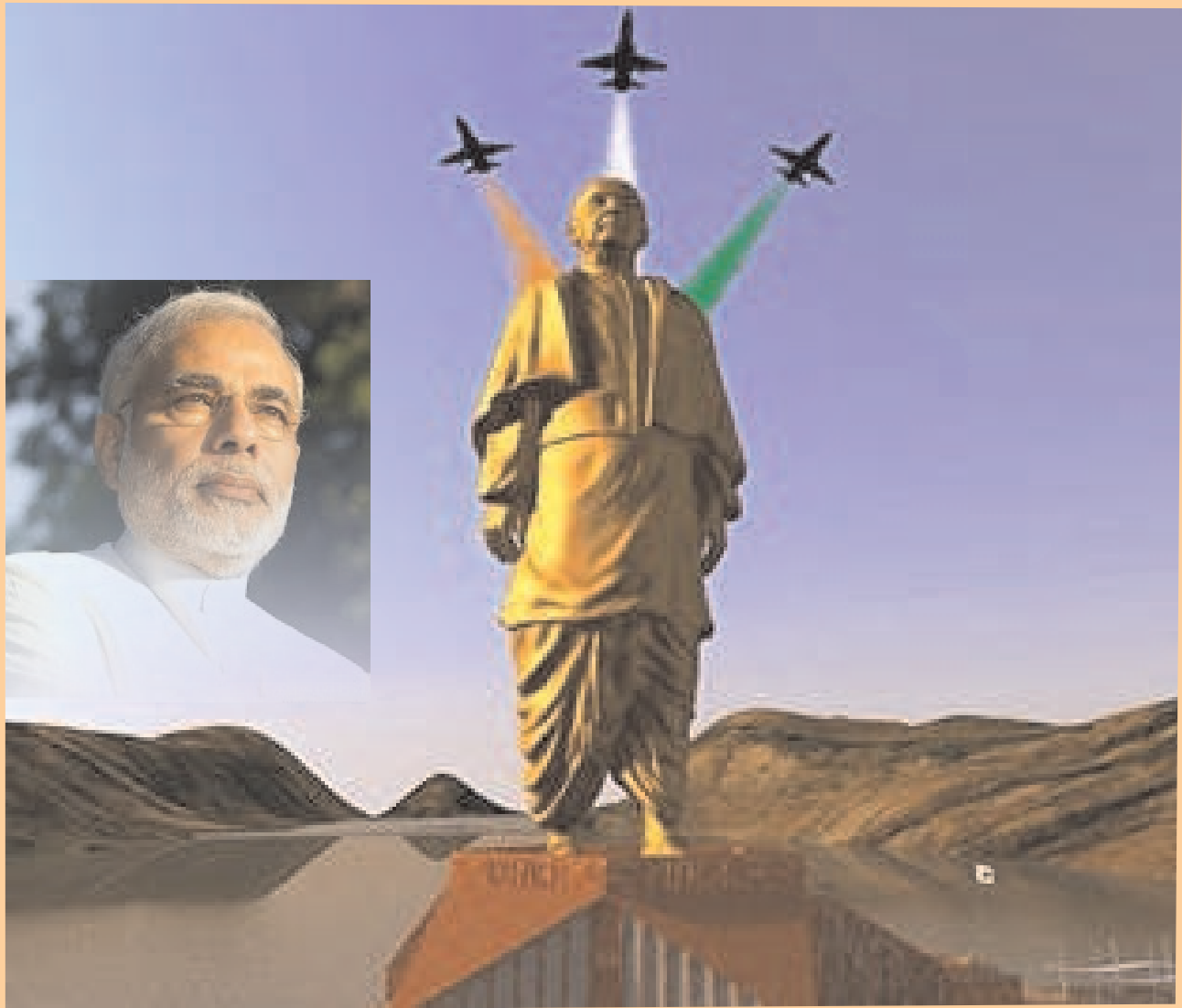
**Research Assistant**

**Published by : Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation, 2013**

**11, Ashok Road, New Delhi - 110001**

**E-mail : [spmrfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:spmrfoundation@gmail.com)**

**Telephone : 011 - 48005769**



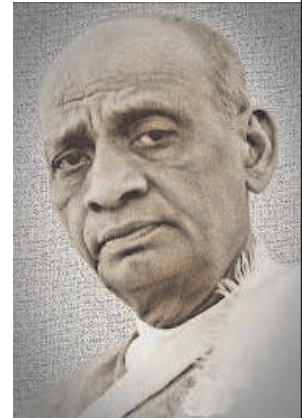
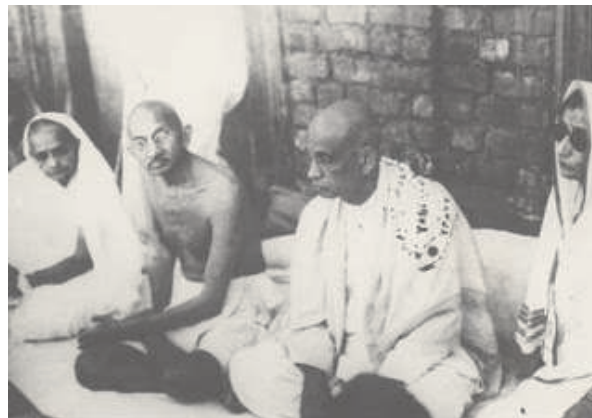
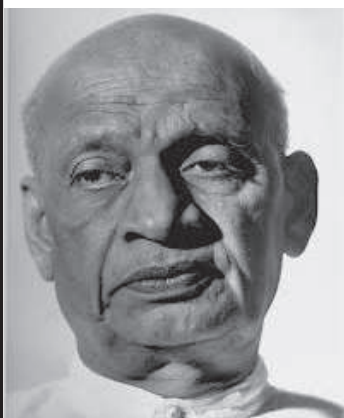
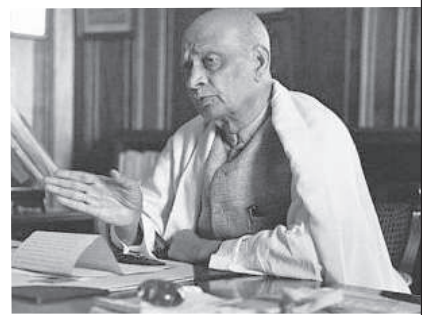
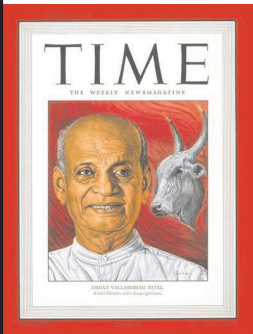
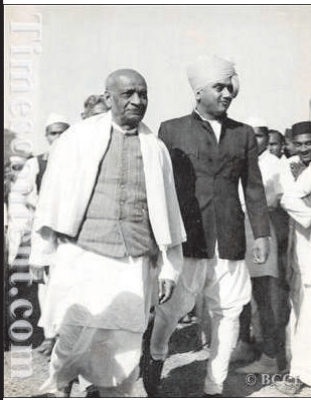
**“The Statue of Unity is not the Bhakti of a person but it is the Bhakti of a thought! Sardar Patel's message of unity must keep echoing in every part of the country & Statue of Unity will spread this message across India.”**

**Shri Narendra Modi**

# Sardar Patel: The Iron Man



सरदार वल्लभभाई पटेल  
Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel  
Iron Man of India  
(31 October 1875 – 15 December 1950)



## CONTENT

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| <b>INTRODUCTION</b>   | 1-2   |
| 1. DR. SYAMA PRASAD MOOKERJEE'S TRIBUTE TO SARDAR PATEL                       | 5     |
| 2. REMINISCENCES  | 6     |
| 3. RECONSTRUCTION OF SOMNATH: SARDAR'S PLEDGE                                 | 7-9   |
| 4. SARDAR PATEL, COMMUNISM & INDIA'S COMMUNISTS                               | 10-15 |
| 5. SARDAR PATEL & INDIAN MUSLIMS  | 16-20 |
| 6. SARDAR PATEL ALSO SPOKE FOR THE BELEAGUERED HINDUS                         | 21-22 |
| 7. SARDAR PATEL'S INSIGHT ON CHINA-TIBET-BORDER                               | 23-28 |
| 8. SARDAR PATEL & HYDERABAD ACTION  | 29-32 |
| 9. SARDAR PATEL, PAKISTAN & JAMMU & KASHMIR                                   | 33-36 |
| 10. SARDAR PATEL & JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: DIFFERENCES of<br>TEMPERAMENT & APPROACH | 37-44 |
| 11. ENDNOTES & REFERENCES   | 44-46 |



## INTRODUCTION

Sardar Patel and his mighty legacy of national service have, over the years, been blanketed over by the Congress Party with its penchant for dynastism and sensationalism! Dr. Rajendra Prasad, once movingly wrote about this lack of gratitude towards Sardar's great contribution as the architect of India's unity. "That there is today an India to think and talk about", wrote Prasad, "is very largely due to Sardar Patel's statesmanship and firm administration. Yet we are apt to ignore him."

One of Sardar Patel's leading biographers had this to say about the neglect and the contrast, "Falling in 1989, the centenary of Jawaharlal's birth found expression on a thousand billboards, in commemorative TV serials, in festivals and on numerous other platforms. Occurring on October 31, 1975 – four months after emergency had been declared – the Patel centenary was, by contrast, wholly neglected by official India and by the rest of the Establishment."<sup>1</sup>

The projection of Sardar Patel as the symbol of our national unity is therefore long overdue. Since his self-professed political heirs – the Congress Party – and its leaders, right from the days of Jawaharlal Nehru have failed to generate such a reverence and recognition towards the Sardar, it is left to others who are more in tune with the ethos and spirit of this sacred land of Bharat to create that awareness at a time when our national life is faced with various challenges.

The present monograph prepared by Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation (SPMRF) contains extracts from Sardar Patel's speeches, letters, and from memoirs of those who worked with him or saw him in action. It is an effort to highlight some of the major areas and issues on which Sardar Patel completely differed with the approach and reading of Jawaharlal Nehru. It brings out facets of Sardar Patel which the Congress Party, till date, has not discussed, debated or promoted. Nor has the Congress effectively answered the question as to whether, as claimants of Sardar's legacy, they differ with his essential approaches to the various issues highlighted in the monograph or are they in agreement with his stance and position which have mostly differed from those of Nehru and his political heirs?

While Nehru called the Somnath Temple reconstruction project, “Hindu revivalism”, Sardar saw it as a pledge to honour Hindu sentiments and to consolidate the sense of freedom. While Sardar wanted our border infrastructures to be rapidly developed and did all he could in his short tenure to create them, Nehru failed to act and we continue to pay a heavy price. While Sardar felt “we should have never gone to the UNO” over Kashmir, Nehru went ahead and did just that embroiling us in a crisis from which we have been unable to extricate ourselves till date. On China and Tibet too Sardar's insight was neglected resulting in our losing strategic space and depth.

Sardar abhorred minorityism and asked us all to “sail in the same boat” but the Congress, by keeping alive the politics of vote-bank has stoutly resisted all calls and efforts to eradicate that habit. Ironically the Communist and the Communist parties in India, who in the past have heaped calumny on the Sardar, have suddenly become vocal by trying to re-examine his legacy; we have thus thought it necessary to include a section to remind them of their past actions and of Sardar's perception of their politics.

In the end, the objective of this monograph is to generate a debate on the legacy of Sardar Patel. A reading of it will, we hope, amply demonstrate how the self-professed claimants of Sardar's legacy have repeatedly failed him over the years and who his actual political heirs are. It is necessary in the interest of Bharat, that Sardar so dearly loved, that this position be clarified once and for all.

We are grateful to Shri Shyam Jaju, National Secretary, BJP and Trustee SPMRF and Shri Arun Singh, Secretary, SPMRF for their unstinted support in this work.

Dr. Anirban Ganguly  
Director, SPMRF

### **I Wish to Remain a Loyal Soldier of India**

**“...I only know that I wish to remain a loyal soldier of India. May God end my life if I deviate a step from this loyalty. A man's life can be evaluated only after he is dead, for few men have reached a stage where they can be sure they will commit no mistakes till the end of their days. Whatever we manage to achieve in our lives is not much to boast about. Man is an instrument in the hands of divinity. For an awakened man it becomes his duty to pray and work in such a way as to avoid errors. Therefore, see that you do nothing which is a blot on the country's good name. Let every act of yours redound to India's credit. Let the world see that India's youth have changed with Independence and are inheritors of India's ancient culture...”<sup>2</sup>**

### **Sri Aurobindo on Sardar Patel**

**“...Out of all of them, Patel is the only strong man.”**

(22 December, 1946) <sup>3</sup>



## Dr. Rajendra Prasad on How Sardar Patel has Been Forgotten

“Mahatma Gandhi passed away a little over 11 years ago and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel less than 9 years ago. They were both held in highest esteem by large numbers of our people – masses as well as intellectuals. Yet, within this short period we have almost forgotten the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi in many matters and **almost completely forgotten Sardar Patel...Sardar Patel was not an ideologist or theoretician. He was above all a practical politician and a successful administrator. In these fields he has left landmarks in our history which should not be forgotten but which are even now apt to be slurred over.** Just imagine the most difficult and delicate situation in which we were placed at the time of attaining independence, with some 600 Indian States of all shapes and sizes and in different degrees of advancement and development, each free to join either India or Pakistan or to remain independent. Think of the problem which Kashmir had presented and which remains unresolved even after 12 years of independence. Think what would have happened if the problems of Baroda and Jodhpur, Indore and Hyderabad had remained unresolved. And then you will understand the significance of the integration of all the states with India...

**That there is today an India to think and talk about is very largely due to Sardar Patel's statesmanship and firm administration** which not only abolished all the States with the consent of the Rulers but also evoked patriotic sentiments in them to such an extent that they were grateful to him for all that he had done. **Yet we are apt to ignore him.** No attempt has been made in Delhi to erect a memorial. Even the portrait in the Parliament House is the gift of a ruling Prince (Gwalior). Let us not, therefore, run away with the thought that his services are any the less valuable because we choose not to recognise them.” (13<sup>th</sup> May, 1959)<sup>4</sup>

## 1. DR. SYAMA PRASAD MOOKERJEE'S TRIBUTE TO SARDAR PATEL

### A Leader & Statesman who had No Equal

**"He has been the most valiant champion of India's freedom and the strongest unifying force in our national life. In him was found a rare combination of idealism and realism, of strength and generosity which made him a leader and a statesman who had no equal"**<sup>5</sup>

### Great Architect of India's Freedom

"...When the British went away, they did two monstrous things. One was partition of the country, and the other was the sudden withdrawal of paramountcy from nearly 500 States covering about one third of Indian territory. No country was asked to face a situation such as we were in 1947. It was practically leading to chaos. Due to partition, various forces had come into play...but due to this latter act, the sudden lapse of paramountcy and making 500 units sovereign States throughout the length and breadth of the country, created such a state of affairs that one did not know how to proceed. And here one naturally recalls the name of **that great architect of India's freedom Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. On account of his statesmanlike policy – he was fearless, realistic, courteous, bold whenever case demanded as to how he should act – he succeeded by 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947 in getting 497 states of these States coming into the fold of free India.**"<sup>6</sup>

[**Note:** On the first Union Cabinet, Rajmohan Gandhi notes: "...In a politically significant selection of Ambedkar and Mookerjee, Patel's was undoubtedly the decisive role...Mookerjee, who represented the Hindu Mahasabha, had gained the Sardar's favour by demanding Bengal's partition in March 1947 and by refusing to join an abortive bid for a united and independent Bengal that Sarat Bose and [H.S.] Suhrawardy made in April and May [1947]."<sup>7</sup>



## **2. REMINISCENCES**

### **Sardar was not amenable to threats or blackmail**

“The Sardar took many unpopular decisions in party and Government matters, but his decisions were accepted because he had no axe to grind. He was not amenable to threats or blackmail. He had no property of his own and he was above extraneous considerations. He had nothing to lose, had no ambition and no desire to cling to office.”<sup>8</sup>

### **Slander Campaign in “Congress & Government Circles**

“It was agreed at the conversation on January 30<sup>th</sup> [1948] afternoon that Gandhiji, Nehru and Sardar should sit together and iron out their differences. But this meeting was never held. **The Sardar was greatly upset by the slander campaign against him at that time in certain Congress and Government circles.** He was worried at heart that Gandhiji had to defend him continually against these slanders.”<sup>9</sup>

### **Sardar had his Feet on the Ground while Nehru had his in the Clouds**

“I was the only other person present when the Sardar had a talk with Bapu between 4 and 5 p.m. on the day of his assassination. Bapu had decided to release the Sardar from the Ministry at the latter's instance, but Mountbatten strongly opposed this because he felt that the Sardar “had his feet on the ground while Nehru had his in the clouds.” He told Gandhiji that he could not release the Sardar. Gandhiji agreed and withdrew his decision.”<sup>10</sup>

### **A Truly National Leader**

“**Though a strong party man he Sardar could, in the wider interests of the country not only bend but also secure the co-operation of other elements in the national life. One outstanding example of it was the manner in which he advised Pandit Nehru to form his Government after Independence which not only had a truly national character but in support of which he had no compunction in securing the services of life-long opponents of the Congress such as Dr. B.R.Ambedkar and Shri Shyama Prasad Mookerji.** One of the greatest proof of his broadmindedness was the manner in which he could rise above party politics and implement policies which might mean a dilution of party commitment in the larger interests of the country. **I cannot think of any contemporary politician of those days or those who have risen to prominence ever since who could make such a deep impression even on those who were opposed to him.**”<sup>11</sup>



### **3. RECONSTRUCTION OF SOMNATH: SARDAR'S PLEDGE**

#### **Sardar Patel: Restoration of Idol Point of Honour with Hindu Public**

“The Hindu sentiment in regard to this temple is both strong and widespread. In the present conditions, it is unlikely that that sentiment will be satisfied by mere restoration of the temple or by prolonging its life. **The restoration of the idol would be a point of honour and sentiment with the Hindu public.**”<sup>12</sup>

#### **Sardar Patel Personally Raises Funds for Somnath**

Dear Shri Nanjibhai,

Manibehn has shown me your letter of the 17<sup>th</sup> instant. **I am so thankful to you for collecting donations amounting to 73,100-00 for the occasion of my Birthday in order to help me in fulfilling my pledge for the renovation of Somnath.**

Indeed practically the whole amount seems to have been donated by you from your own purse, as, besides your own donation of Rs.51,000/-, the rest of the donations have come from a few of your nearest persons.

I am glad to know that work of Kirti Mandir is progressing so well.

Hope you are well.

Yours sincerely

Vallabhbhai<sup>13</sup>

Shri Nanji Kalidas Mehta

Porbandar

[Original: Gujarati] (21, Nov. 1948)

## Recollections of Sardar Patel's Role in the Reconstruction of Somnath Temple

### Sardar was Moved to Tears at the Plight of the Temple

“From Junagadh Sardar went to Somnath. **On seeing the highly dilapidated state of Somnath temple, Sardar's heart was literally moved to tears.** ...After exchanging a private word or two with the Jam Saheb [Jam Saheb of Nawanagar who helped Sardar in the unification of Saurashtra & become the Rajpramukh of Saurashtra Union] Sardar went to the sea shore. He took a draughtful of sea-water in his hand and pouring it ceremonially on the earth, he spoke in low but firm voice that this temple would be renovated and would have its glory again. With lightning speed, this news reached far and wide in the country and gave ecstatic delight to the millions of countrymen.”<sup>14</sup>

### Sardar Approved of Rebuilding the Temple

N.V.Gadgil, then Union Minister for Public Works recollects:

“On November 1, 1947 Sardar and I went to Somnath... **There I thought of rebuilding it and mentioned it to the Sardar, who approved of it.** Standing at the main entrance of the temple I announced that Government of India's decision to rebuild the temple. I said our freedom was constructive and not destructive. ...Thousand of assembled devotees welcomed this announcement with acclamation. **An hour later Vallabhbhai made a similar announcement in the temple hall built by Devi Ahalyabhai Holkar. A million rupees was promised on the spot** and what is more significant, the idea of a federated Saurashtra State was born. The Jamsaheb of Navanagar negotiated with the Sardar and within two months the State of Saurashtra was constituted with the merger of 342 states of various sizes.”<sup>15</sup>

### Vallabhbhai & I Collected 5 million rupees for Rebuilding the Temple

“...Another important work I remember is the restoration of the Somnath Temple. Sardar Patel and I went to Junagarh after it had been liberated and saw the remains of the ancient temple. **One morning, while walking on the beach, the idea of the restoration occurred to me and I mentioned it to Vallabhbhai. He approved it and with his consent I made an announcement of the intention to restore the ancient glory that Somnath once was.** I prepared and recorded it in the proceedings of the Cabinet. The Maulana said that the site

should be preserved as it was. I said that the intention was to restore it to its original state and thus to destroy a sliver of distrust between Hindus and the Muslims. In Kathiawar we found artisans of the Sompura community able to recreate in stone the wealth of images and décor as it was in olden times and decided to restore the temple with their assistance. **Vallabhbai and I collected five million rupees for this purpose.** Earlier it had been decided to undertake the work through the Central Government. Nehru did not approve. On Gandhiji's advice, it was decided to entrust the work to a Trust which would have one representative of the Central Government.

The Government of India appointed a Committee of two engineers and one architect for the supervision of the work. By 1951, the whole of the base of the temple was ready as also the inner altar and we requested President Rajendra Prasad to be the chief participant in the installation of the *Lingum*. We gave him a note on the history and progress of the scheme and he agreed to participate in the sacred ceremonies.”<sup>16</sup>

“...At about the same time the Pakistani newspapers had started growling at the enterprise [of reconstructing the Somnath temple] and were telling us that they would produce another Mahmud Ghaznavi and again destroy the temple. **Nehru expressed the opinion that the President should not attend the ceremony. The Cabinet also discussed the matter. I told Munshi that if anyone was responsible for the affair it was I and Vallabhbai who supported me. I would therefore explain the affair to the Cabinet. I quoted from the Cabinet reports to prove that Nehru's charge that the thing was done without informing the Cabinet was not correct.** The Maulana and Jagjivan Ram said that the matter was discussed. Government of India had spent about hundred thousand rupees on the work. I pointed out that the Government gave subsidies and grants to thousands of mosques and tombs and there could be nothing objectionable if it spent a little money in restoring a Hindu temple. I understood secularism to mean the equality of all religions. The restoration of Somnath temple had earned for the Government the goodwill of millions of people and had made the creation of the Saurashtra State easy. Millions of Hindus are idol-worshippers and not intellectuals like Nehru. 'Some of us are subject to the weakness of a firm faith,' I said. The discussion ended there and President Rajendra Prasad did participate in the ceremonies. I understand that he was firm in his resolve to do so and told Nehru of his decision. He was ready even to resign his august office if need be.”<sup>17</sup>





## **4. SARDAR PATEL, COMMUNISM & INDIA'S COMMUNISTS**

### **Indian Communists accuse Sardar of colluding in the Mahatma's Assassination**

From our correspondent

Bezwada, 31 January 1948 – ...**Mr. P.Sundarayya, 18 a Communist leader, addressing a public meeting here, said that the Hindu Mahasabha, RSS and Sardar Patel planned to kill the Mahatma with a view to perpetuating fascist rule in India.** This allegation caused bitterness in a vast section of the people.

About 8,000 RSS volunteers from all over Andhra assembled in the town to have a rally, which was, however cancelled due to Gandhiji's death.

The Communist propaganda aggravated the situation and a clash broke out when a car carrying RSS volunteers was attacked, injuring some of them.

The Sub-Divisional Magistrate has promulgated an order under Sec.144 Cr. PC for a week. (*Madras Mail*, 1 February, 1948)

[**Note:** A deeply hurt Sardar Patel attached this news clip along with another from a reader of the Statesman asking for his resignation in the wake of the Mahatma's assassination and sent them to Nehru with the following letter]

My Dear Jawaharlal,

I enclose herewith two Press cuttings, one from the Statesman of today and another from a well-known Communist whose speech is reported in the Madras Mail. Of course they do not know that my resignation is already there. I had written again to Bapu when I left Bombay on the last occasion but his unexpected death has left the matter in the air.... (3<sup>rd</sup> February, 1948)<sup>19</sup>

### **I claim to be a friend of Labour & the poor as well**

“I have been blamed that I am a friend of Rajas, capitalists and zamindars, but I claim to be a friend of Labour and the poor as well. Since I have followed Gandhiji, I have resolved not to own any property and I have none. But like Gandhiji I want to make the capitalists also understand which way their true duty lies. I cannot succumb to the prevalent fashion to pose as leaders or to attempt to gain leadership by abusing Princes, capitalists etc., without rhyme or reason.”<sup>20</sup>

**Their Object has been to create Dislocation and Disruption – Sardar Patel answers**

**Q:** *What is its [Communism] strength in India? What is the Government doing about it?*

**Sardar Patel:** The strength of Communism is not so much in India...No doubt, it is a well-knit organisation with a devoted following of fanatically-inclined energetic young men. **During the War, Communists supported [alien] Government and it helped them. They built up their strength with the help of the Government.** Since our release [July 1945] and holding the reins of Government, they have received a set-back. The Razakars [in Hyderabad supported by the Nizam] gave them some arms, but I do not think they will be able to do much with them. They will not be able to stand long. **We are capable of handling them there.** ...We do not interfere as long as they are working for the uplift of labour or the peasant. But if they incite labour to violence, we have to deal with them firmly. *Their object has been to create dislocation and disruption.* We cannot allow the breakdown of Government or organised machinery by force or coercion.... **I do not think Communism has much chance in India. The reason is they did not help the Struggle for Freedom but took advantage of it to consolidate themselves.** They have thus created a considerable resentment against them. **The general tendency [in India] is against any foreign element in the body-politic of India.**"<sup>21</sup>

**The Communist Menace in Asia**

**"In East Asia, our main problem is still the developing Communist menace in Burma.** Despite the heroic resistance and even offensive on the part of Government forces, the insurgents still command a hold over a number of provinces. The economic life of the country has been thrown completely out of gear. The administration is on the verge of a breakdown and conditions of transport and communications are chaotic. In Indonesia, the Republican Government is faced with hostilities on two fronts: the Communists and the Dutch. There are, however, signs that Government forces are gaining some ascendancy over the Communist. ...In Malaya, the Communist forces seem to have suffered a reverse, but the country is still not free from their menace. In China, the National Government has suffered grievous blow in the loss of Tsinan, the Capital of Shanton province and the gateway to Central China. The critical situation in that country shows no signs of abatement. Indeed, **the only bastions of security and law and order are India and Japan** which General MacArthur seems to be converting into an anti-Communist fortress in the East."<sup>22</sup>

### **India is the only country which can withstand Communist expansion in Asia**

“As regards Attlee's letter to you, [Nehru] if I may suggest, you might send me before despatching it to London. It is possible I may be able to offer some useful suggestions which you could consider. The problem is difficult; on the one side, we have undoubtedly Hong Kong's imperialist history; on the other hand, we have to reckon with the growing Communist menace in China. If Hong Kong is to be a bastion against Communism, there is something to be said for reinforcing it, but if it is merely going to be an imperialist domain, then it is obvious we can have nothing to do with it. **We have also to realise that India is the only country which can withstand Communist expansion in Asia. At the same time, it is obvious that we cannot do it alone; if we have to safeguard our frontiers against Communist infiltration and encroachments, we shall have to depend on outside sympathy and support.** I should therefore not like to send a reply to Attlee which he might misconstrue or which might hurt his feelings. Howsoever much, therefore, we may abhor the past imperialist history of Hong Kong, we have to bear in mind the practical considerations of today and evolve a line of approach which, while not compromising our stand against imperialism, would do full justice to those practical considerations.” (4<sup>th</sup> June 1949)<sup>23</sup>

[**Note:** Nehru had written on 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 1949, : “...Archibald Nye, UK High Commissioner, came to see me yesterday immediately after his return from London. He conveyed a message from Attlee to me about Hong Kong. The UK Government are worried about this matter, as they think there might be a possibility of the Chinese Communists attacking Hong Kong. This, in any event, cannot take place for another three months. But they want to be ready for emergencies. They informed us that they propose sending reinforcements there and they wanted our moral support. I do not propose to get entangled in this business. No one knows what events will take place during the next three months. I shall send you a copy of my reply to Attlee.”]<sup>24</sup> [Sardar Patel's biographer, Rajmohan Gandhi, referring to this particular exchange of letters observes, “Though Vallabhbhai was eager to share in the shaping of India's China policy, Nehru did not think he needed help.”<sup>25</sup> On 5<sup>th</sup> June Nehru replied to the Sardar, thus, “The reply to Attlee about Hong Kong has already been sent...I shall make sure it is being sent to you...Meanwhile, the Communists in China are behaving very correctly towards foreigners and even business is continuing to some extent...”]<sup>26</sup>

### **Communist Menace Demands Constant Vigilance**

“**In the sphere of law and order, the Communist menace demands constant vigilance. It is clear that we cannot allow a situation to develop which would create in India conditions even remotely suggestive of Burma, Malaya, Indonesia and China.** It would never be allowed to deteriorate beyond a police problem and even there the less of a problem the better. A careful check of intelligence and co-ordination between all relevant sources of

information is a sine qua non of success in dealing with a subversive movement of this kind. We have also to keep a ceaseless watch for leaders and active workers who have gone underground. **And we have to beware of Communist cells inside Government itself, the increasing evidence of which is causing us serious concern.** We are proposing to set up a high-level committee of Secretariat officers which will constantly keep the problem under review, obtain decisions of Government on matters of policy and ensure that those decisions are promptly and effectively enforced. You might find a similar body useful in the provincial sphere.”<sup>27</sup>

### Communist Terrorism – Needs to Be Uprooted

“There is a party which had made Hyderabad notorious in the world. **They are Communists...they are nothing but murderers and dacoits.** They say they will create a China in India. But they forget that even in China, the methods which they are practicing here were not followed. The Chinese acted differently. They did not slaughter innocent women and children. If they think they can bring about a China in India by these methods, they are living in a fool's paradise. To shoot down or brutally hack to pieces innocent villagers including women and children is not Communism...**I should like to tell them that I shall do my best to uproot all those who are indulging in those brutalities.**”<sup>28</sup>

### Communist Challenge to Indian Democracy: some recollections

Dwarka Prasad Mishra<sup>29</sup> recollects:

“...When in the wake of independence, mass murders and migrations, and later the Kashmir problem, made the first government of independent India vulnerable, the Communists found their opportunity and by a series of bloody insurrections tried to smash and replace what they called bourgeois democracy by socialist democracy. In the Telengana region of Hyderabad they had successfully engineered peasant revolts and now wanted to extend them to other parts of India. In the urban areas they concentrated on mobilizing violence and bringing about a general strike. **They tried to form shock brigades and guerilla squads and train their workers to raid police stations and ambush police parties. They planned to develop a mass movement by their violent activities throughout the country,** hoping that these would culminate in people themselves taking up arms to throw out the government. But **Home Minister Patel acted swiftly and the Communist design was almost nipped in the bud.** Very soon their violence lost its fury and force and the planned mass insurrections degenerated into terrorist activities. In Telengana peasant revolts stopped and murders of individual zamindars began. In the cities bombs continued to be

thrown on trains and buses but terrorism on any large scale, which would lead to any kind of revolution, had vanished. Of course, their calling upon the Indian army to turn their guns and bayonets and fire upon the Congress fascists was an act of sheer desperation.”<sup>30</sup>

**K.M. Munshi recollects:**

[In May 1948] “...The Communist Party of Hyderabad issued a pamphlet reversing their earlier policy. **The accession of Hyderabad to the Union and responsible Government in the State were denounced on the ground that the Government of India was a capitalist government...**The reports indicated that **not only was there some understanding between the Nizam's Government and the Communists, but explosives were in process of being supplied to the Razakars by the Communists from West Bengal. ...The new attitude of the Communists was characteristic. Whatever was their view for the moment was the voice of the people; what suited them, was always in the people's interests. According to their new propaganda line the accession of the Indian States to the Union was a gross anti-democratic act calculated to crush the revolutionary consciousness and the democratic movement of the people. If the Indian Armies marched into Hyderabad, it would be to crush the people's movement. They exhorted their workers to resist the movement of the troops wherever the people's Government – that is, their little Soviets holding the villages by terror, murder and arson – was established.**

**The Communist Party now allied itself with the Nizam's Government on an anti-India front.** The Communists who had gone underground in India crossed over to Hyderabad. Absconders from the Indian territory took refuge in the State and some of the Communist leaders moved about freely in Hyderabad, established contact with some of the Ministers and high officers of the State, and tried to arrive at a pact with the Nizam. They also hoped that a representative of theirs might be taken in the Hyderabad Cabinet for that would be the thin end of infiltration into the Nizam's Government.”<sup>31</sup>

**High Loss Inflicted by the Communists on the Fledgling Indian State**

“The total loss inflicted by the Communist activities, which flared up from March, 1948, is difficult to assess. In 1950, Ravi Narayan Reddy, a leading Communist, submitted an estimate to his own party, in which he claimed that over 3,000 persons had been murdered and 3,800 dacoities committed in the two or three preceding years. Between February, 1948, and August of 1950, the well entrenched Communists who had gone underground in these districts were responsible for 223 murders, 24 kidnapping cases and burning 199 houses.

After the Police Action, the Hyderabad Government had to take drastic measures till

1952 when only the three Communist ridden districts were brought to normalcy. The Government of India contributed a sum of Rs. 60 lakhs to the expenses of this campaign. The Police Budget of the State which in 1948-49 was Rs.2,46,83,995 rose to Rs.5,64,30,083 in 1950-51, to Rs.6, 91,71,156 in 1951-52 and Rs. 4,72,22,000 in 1952-53. These figures do not include the expenditure on the military forces which were also employed in the State for restoring law and order.

In addition, **the removal of the Communist menace involved the State in a heavy expenditure for maintaining 9,000 home-guards; enrolling 553 village chaukidars...**To this must be added the cost of large scale ameliorative measures in Warangal and Nalgonda and of the six-hundred miles of the fair-weather road, that had to be constructed to open up the forests.

**The activities of the Communists and the Razakars between March and September also imposed a heavy burden on the people, through forcible collection of subscriptions; burning of villages and village records; looting of property; murder of suspects, hostiles and village officers; attack on police, home-guards and officers and men, and the destruction of police stations by the Communists and the reprisal atrocities of the Razakars."**<sup>32</sup>





## 5. SARDAR PATEL & INDIAN MUSLIMS

### Sardar Patel was against Minorityism

“...You all know that the question of safeguards for minorities has been discussed several times and considered in various committees, and there is no new point to be discussed. In one committee or other for several years past this question has been discussed, sometimes very minutely, sometimes generally. Sometimes its discussion has taken an acute form and sometimes it has resulted in a bitter controversy. But I am happy to say that this report [Report on Minority Rights] has been the result of a general consensus of opinion between the minorities themselves and the majority. Therefore, although it is not possible to satisfy all, you will see that this report has been the result of agreement on many points; and wherever there has been disagreement the recommendations have been carried by a very large majority, so that except perhaps on one point the report is practically an agreed report. It may be that there are some who are not satisfied on some points, but we have to take into consideration all points of view and feelings and sentiments of the minorities, big and small. We have tried as far as possible to meet the wishes of all the minorities. The minorities among themselves are also divided; there are conflicting interests among them. We have not tried to take advantage of these differences among the minorities themselves; we have tried to see that the minorities also instead of being divided among themselves try to present a united front in order-to safeguard their interests...”<sup>33</sup>

“...An attempt has been made in this report to enumerate those safeguards which are matters of common knowledge, such as representation in legislatures, that is, joint versus separate electorates. This is the question which has raised controversy for almost a decade and we have suffered and paid heavily for it. **But fortunately we have been able to deal with this question in such a manner that there has been unanimity on the point that there should be no more separate electorates and we should have joint electorates hereafter.** So that is a great gain...”<sup>34</sup>

“...My friends of the Muslim League here who moved this amendment and supported it took it for granted that they had a duty to perform in a sense. They had been pressing for separate electorates and enjoying it for a long time and felt that they should not leave it all of a sudden, but just move the motion and have the vote of the House. But when I heard the elaborate speeches I thought that I was living in the ages in which the communal question was first mooted. I had not the occasion to hear the speeches which were made in the initial stages

when this question of communal electorates was introduced in the Congress; but **there are many eminent Muslims who have recorded their views that the greatest evil in this country which has been brought to pass is the communal electorate. The introduction of the system of communal electorates is a poison which has entered into the body politic of our country.** Many Englishmen who were responsible for this also admitted that...Well, when Pakistan was conceded, at least it was assumed that there would be one nation in the rest of India the 80 per cent. India and there would be no attempt to talk of two nations here also. It is no use saying that we ask for separate electorates, because it is good for us. We have heard it long enough. We have heard it for years, and as a result of this agitation we are now a separate nation. **The agitation was that "we are a separate nation, we cannot have either separate electorates or weightage or any other concessions or consideration sufficient for our protection. Therefore, give us a separate State". We said, "All right, take your separate State". But in the rest of India, in the 80 per cent of India, do you agree that there shall be one nation? Or do you still want the two nations talk to be brought here also?** I am against separate electorates. Can you show me one free country where there are separate electorates? If so, I shall be prepared to accept it. But in this unfortunate country if this separate electorate is going to be persisted in, even after the division of the country, woe betide the country; it is not worth living in. Therefore, I say, **it is not for my good alone, it is for your own good that I say it, "forget the past..."** My friend the Mover of the amendment says the Muslim community today is a strong-knit community, **Very good; I am glad to hear that, and therefore I say you have no business to ask for any props, (Cheers).** Because there are other minorities who are not well organised, and deserve special consideration and some safeguards, we want to be generous to them. But at the same time, as you have enjoyed this to a certain extent for a long time and you may not feel that there is discrimination, we agree to reservation according to population basis. Where is that kind of reservation in any other free country in the world? Will you show me? I ask you. **You are a very well-organised community. Tell me, why do you behave like a lame man? Be a bold and a strong man, as you are well-organised and stand up. Think of the nation that is being built on this side. We have laid the foundation of a nation.** When the British introduced this element they had not expected that they will have to go so soon. They wanted it for their easy administration. That is all right. But they have left the legacy behind. Are we to get out of it or not? Therefore I say, and appeal to you. "What are you doing"? Think about it. Do you expect any one man in this country outside the Muslim League who will say 'Let us now also agree to separate electorates' Why do you do this? If you say "We want now to have loyalty" on this side to this nation", may I ask you "Is this loyalty?" Are you provoking response of loyalty from the other side? I have no intention

to speak on this, but when the Mover of this amendment talked such a long time and it was supported by the Leader, then I felt that there is something wrong again still in this land. **Therefore, my dear friends, I ask you "Do you want now peace in this land? If so do away with it...I appeal to you "Let us at least on this side show that everything is forgotten" and if we want to forget then let us forget what has been done in the past and also what is responsible for all that is happening today. Therefore, I once more appeal to you to withdraw the amendment and let us pass this unanimously so that the world outside will also understand that we are united."**<sup>35</sup>

[**Note:** Pocker Sahib Bahadur, Muslim member from Madras had moved the following amendment: "That on a consideration of the report of the Advisory Committee on minorities, fundamental right etc., on minority rights this meeting of the Constituent Assembly resolves that all elections to the Central and Provincial Legislatures should, as far as Muslims are concerned, be held on the basis of separate electorates," a detailed debate followed, where a number of members refused to accede to the need for separate electorates or separate treatment of minorities in a free India, or at least the remaining portion of India. Having listened to the debate, Sardar Patel gave the above reply.]

### **What is it that You Want – Let us Forget & Let us be One Nation**

**"...now the separation of the country is complete and you say, let us introduce it again and have another separation. I do not understand this method of affection. Therefore, although I would not have liked to say anything on this motion, I think it is better that we know our minds perfectly each other, so that we can understand where we stand. If the process that was adopted, which resulted in the separation of the country, is to be repeated, then I say: Those who want that kind of thing have a place in Pakistan, not here. (Applause.) Here, we are building a nation and we are laying the foundations of One Nation, and those who choose to divide again and sow the seeds of disruption will have no place, no quarter, here, and I must say that plainly enough. (Hear, Hear.) ... You cannot have it both ways. Therefore, my friends, you must change your attitude, adapt yourself to the changed conditions. And don't pretend to say "Oh, our affection is very great for you". We have seen your affection. Why talk of it? Let us forget the affection. Let us face the realities. Ask yourself whether you really want to stand here and cooperate with us or you want again to play disruptive tactics. Therefore when I appeal to you, I appeal to you to have a change in your heart, not a change in the tongue, because that won't pay here. Therefore, I still appeal to you: "Friends, reconsider your attitude and withdraw your amendment". Why go on**

saying "Oh, Muslims were not heard; Muslim amendment was not carried". If that is going to pay you, you are much mistaken, and I know how it cost me to protect the Muslim minorities here under the present condition and in the present atmosphere. Therefore, I suggest that you don't forget that the days in which the agitation of the type you carried on are closed and we begin a new chapter. Therefore, I once more appeal to you to forget the past. Forget what has happened. You have got what you wanted. You have got a separate State and remember, you are the people who were responsible for it, and not those who remain in Pakistan. You led the agitation. You got it. What is it that you want now? I don't understand. In the majority Hindu provinces you, the minorities, you led the agitation. You got the partition and now again you tell me and ask me to say for the purpose of Securing the affection of the younger brother that I must agree to the same thing again, to divide the country again in the divided part. For God's sake, understand that we have also got some sense. Let us understand the thing clearly. Therefore when I say we must forget the past, I say it sincerely. There will be no injustice done to you. There will be generosity towards you, but there must be reciprocity. If it is absent, then you take it from me that no soft words can conceal what is behind your words. Therefore, I plainly once more appeal to you strongly that let us forget and let us be one nation."<sup>36</sup>

[Note: In Contrast to Sardar Patel's Stand this is what was said:

**Muslims must have first claim on resources: PM**

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Saturday said plans for minorities, particularly Muslims, must have the first claim on resources so that benefits of development reach them equitably. "We will have to devise innovative plans to ensure that minorities, particularly the Muslim minority, are empowered to share equitably the fruits of development. These must have the first claim on resources," he said in his address at the 52nd meeting of the National Development Council here.

[Source: PTI Dec 9, 2006,] *The Times of India*, Dec, 9, 2006]

**Echoing Sardar Patel's Stand this is what was said**

**Poor have first right on nation's resources, not minorities: Modi**

NANA PONDA :Disputing Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's assertion that minorities had the first right over nation's resources, Chief Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said if it was question of rights on resources, then only the country's poor should have that. The CM was addressing tribals in Nana Pondha village in Kaparada taluka in Valsad district. Accusing Congress of playing vote bank politics, the chief minister said the tribals, Dalits

and others from poor economic background have the right over nation's resources and urged the tribals to vote for a change.

[Source : *The Times of India*, Apr 17, 2009]

### **I Cannot Forsake Truth**

"I am a frank man, I say bitter things to Hindus and Muslims alike, at the same time, I maintain, as I have said a number of times, that I am a friend of Muslims. If Muslims do not accept me as such they act as mad men. They do not seem to understand the right or wrong. But, for this attitude, I cannot forsake truth. I cannot descend from the pedestal of duty. Some of them went to Gandhiji and complained about my Lucknow speech in which I had criticised them for not condemning Pakistan's attitude to Kashmir. They went and told Gandhiji many things and Gandhiji felt compelled to defend me. That also pained me, for after all, I am not a weak person who should be defended by others."<sup>37</sup>

### **It is Now Your Duty to Sail in the Same Boat**

"... I want to say a word as a friend of Muslims and it is the duty of a good friend to speak frankly. It is your duty now to sail in the same boat and sink or swim together."<sup>38</sup>

### **He Could Not Appreciate Hesitation to Oppose Muslim Fanaticism**

"Sardar Patel was a much misunderstood man. His passion for order and discipline was often considered to be due to a desire for exercise of authority. He believed in protecting the rights of Muslims as much as those of the Hindus but he could not appreciate the hesitation of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and others to oppose Muslim fanaticism..."<sup>39</sup>



## **6. SARDAR PATEL ALSO SPOKE FOR BELEAGUERED HINDUS**

### **Sardar Patel Protests against Pamphlet Calling Hindus Kafirs**

“Some time ago a publication called Talim-ul-Islam was brought to my notice in which Hindus were referred to as Kafirs and it was mentioned that as such they would get permanent damnation and would go to hell. The publication was compiled by Mufti Kifait Ullah and was freely circulated among and read by boys in Muslim schools. When my attention was drawn to the passages I spoke to Maulana Hifzur Rehman and told him that in particular I was sorry that Mufti Sahib should have been associated with such a publication and that it should be in use even after independence. **I also pointed out that such indoctrination was bound to result in innocent children acquiring a different outlook right from the beginning and that it was particularly unfortunate that at such an impressionable age they should get the wrong type of religious education.** Maulana Hifzur Rehman at last wrote to me that he had had a talk with Mufti Sahib and that the offending passages would be corrected in subsequent publications. In the meantime, I had asked Shankar Prasada [ICS, Chief Commissioner, Delhi] to take up the matter. He had a discussion with Maulana Ahmed Saeed who was good enough to admit the force of the arguments especially as he knew that even in Moghul times Hindus were not referred to as Kafirs but only as Munkirs. Maulana Ahmed Saeed contacted Mufti Sahib who pleaded that the thing had not been objected to for the last 30 years and had been in use since then. For reasons of prestige he found it difficult to climb down, but the Maulana has been successful in persuading his son and publishers to delete the offending passages. Shankar Prasada tells me that there are certain other Muslim publications such as the Maulvi, the official organ of the Jamiat, which occasionally puts out the same kind of stuff. **The editor of this paper has been warned and has promised to be careful.**

I am glad that the matter has been so amicably settled. I thought I would let you [Nehru] know. It is rather unfortunate that some of our nationalist friends should get mixed up like this in religious fanaticism.<sup>40</sup>

[**Note:** On 15<sup>th</sup> October 1949, Sardar had written to Maulana Hifzur Rehman, Jamiat Ulema Hind, Gali Qasimjan, Delhi:

“The other day I had a talk with you about the publication Talim-ul-Islam among the compilers of which I regret to find Maulvi Mufti Mohammed Kifait Ullah. I have now looked into the publication and find that the latest copy was published in June 1949 and bears a preface by Mufti Kifait Ullah. **It is**



the sixteenth edition of that book, which would indicate its popularity. It also appears that the idea is to inculcate what is contained in the publication in simple language among children and the book seems to have been accepted for the curriculum of Islami and Qaumi schools.”<sup>41</sup>

### **Sardar Patel asks Pakistan to Part with Land for Hindu Refugees**

The problem of East Bengal is difficult. There are about 15 million Hindus there... The people of East Bengal are in a sad plight. Nobody wants to leave his own hearth and home without any reason... It is because conditions in which they live there are bad that they migrate to India... The issue is undoubtedly serious and its seriousness has been made clear to Pakistan. The Hindus, who had left East Bengal and were now in India as refugees, must return there... The Pakistan Government must create conditions for the peaceful stay of these persons in their own homes. They must protect them from harassment or persecution. They must be assured that their lives would not be in danger in Pakistan. I suggested some time ago that if the Hindus in very large numbers were made to leave East Bengal on account of unsatisfactory conditions created there, the Pakistan government must provide additional space for their settlement...”<sup>42</sup>

### **Sardar Patel & Nehru Differed over Treatment of Hindu Refugees from East Pakistan**

“The differences between Nehru and Patel, which had ended as a result of Gandhi's intervention on the eve of his death, and which had revived on the occasion of Rajendra Prasad's election as the first President of the Republic, became sharper when, with the beginning of the year 1950, Pakistan started persecuting the Hindu minority in East Bengal... reducing their population. Their flight which had begun as a trickle in January, developed into almost a flood by March. The burden on West Bengal, already heavy, became unbearable. Dissatisfaction among the members of the Congress parliamentary party increased day by day and the cabinet itself came to be divided into two groups on Nehru's Pakistan policy... What upset Nehru was Patel's attitude because he gave out that if Pakistan could not guarantee safe and honourable existence to the Hindus it must be made to yield a part of East Bengal to India for their rehabilitation. Finding the party at Patel's back, Nehru wrote to him offering to resign. Patel again persuaded him not to yield to emotion and promised to stand by him.”<sup>43</sup>



## 7. SARDAR PATEL'S INSIGHT ON CHINA-TIBET-BORDER

### The Farther We Keep Away the Communist Forces – the Better

We have to strengthen our position in Sikkim as well as in Tibet. The farther we keep away the Communist forces, the better. Tibet has long been detached from China. I anticipate that, as soon as Communists have established themselves in the rest of China, they will try to destroy its autonomous existence. You have to consider carefully your policy towards Tibet in such circumstances and prepare from now for that eventuality. (June 4<sup>th</sup>, 1949)<sup>44</sup>

### Sardar Patel Anticipates China's Designs over Tibet

“...There is no evidence yet that Communist victories in China are influencing the situation in the North of Burma. But such victories will undoubtedly encourage the forces of disorder in neighbouring countries and will encourage subversive elements in fomenting trouble which they can exploit to their political advantage. **We have to guard against these forces and have to be more vigilant as the Communist armies in China march down south. Our eyes must, therefore, inevitably rest on our eastern and north-eastern frontiers. We cannot afford to relax in our efforts to seal off those frontiers against suspects and ill-disposed foreigners.** Tibet is likely to be another source of anxiety in the coming months. China has never given up its claims of suzerainty over Tibet. Hitherto, however, the preoccupations of the Nationalist forces and the domestic quarrel between the Communists and the Nationalists have prevented any expansion south or westwards into Tibet. With the liquidation of the Nationalists, [in China] however, it is more than likely that the Communists will turn their eyes towards Tibet, and try to establish a regime, either Communistic or in sympathy with Communists. In either event, the situation cannot but be a matter of serious concern to us.” (3<sup>rd</sup> November 1949).<sup>45</sup>

### Sardar Patel on Recognising China

“I have seen your [Nehru] press statements as well as the telegrams exchanged on the question of recognition of China. It seems your intention is to recognise China soon after the UNO session ends, even if it means that others are not ready by then or are prepared to do so. My own feeling is that we do not stand to gain anything substantial by giving a lead in the matter and that, while recognition must come sooner or later, if we are somewhat late in the company of others, it would be worthwhile delaying it a bit. After all, whether as Members of the Commonwealth or as Members of the UNO, if we can act in mutual concert, it is better to do so than to act alone or even with one or two other powers...**In case, however, you feel that**

we must recognise China earlier than others, I feel that we might have a discussion in the Cabinet. After all, in such an important matter, it is only fair to our Cabinet colleagues that we take them into confidence." (November 13<sup>th</sup> 1949)<sup>46</sup>

#### Sardar Patel's Last Warning on China

"...The Chinese Government has tried to delude us by professions of peaceful intention. My own feeling is that at a crucial period they managed to instill into our Ambassador a false sense of confidence in their so-called desire to settle the Tibetan problem by peaceful means. There can be no doubt that during the period covered by this correspondence the Chinese must have been concentrating for an onslaught on Tibet. **The final action of the Chinese, in my judgement, is little short of perfidy. The tragedy of it is that the Tibetans put faith in us; they chose to be guided by us; and we have been unable to get them out of the meshes of Chinese diplomacy or Chinese malevolence.** From the latest position, it appears that we shall not be able to rescue the Dalai Lama...

... Even though we regard ourselves as the friends of China, the Chinese do not regard us as their friends. With the Communist mentality of "whoever is not with them being against them", this is a significant pointer, of which we have to take due note. During the last several months, outside the Russian camp, we have practically been alone in championing the cause of Chinese entry into UN and in securing from the Americans assurances on the question of Formosa [Taiwan]. **We have done everything we could to assuage Chinese feelings, to allay its apprehensions and to defend its legitimate claims in our discussions and correspondence with America and Britain and in the UN. In spite of this, China is not convinced about our disinterestedness; it continues to regard us with suspicion and the whole psychology is one, at least outwardly, of scepticism perhaps mixed with a little hostility.** I doubt if we can go any further than we have done already to convince China of our good intentions, friendliness and goodwill...

...Their last telegram to us is an act of gross discourtesy not only in the summary way it disposes of our protest against the entry of Chinese forces into Tibet but also in the wild insinuation that our attitude is determined by foreign influences. It looks as though it is not a friend speaking in that language but a potential enemy.

In the background of this, we have to consider what new situation now faces us as a result of the disappearance of Tibet, as we knew it, and the expansion of China almost up to our gates...

...The Chinese interpretation of suzerainty seems to be different. We can, therefore, safely assume that very soon they will disown all the stipulations which Tibet has entered into with us in the past. That throws into the melting pot all frontier and commercial settlements with Tibet on which we have been functioning and acting during the last half a century. **China is no longer divided. It is united and strong.** All along the Himalayas in the north and north-east, we have on our side of the frontier a population ethnologically and culturally not different from Tibetans and Mongoloids. The undefined state of the frontier and the existence on our side of a population with its affinities to the Tibetans or Chinese have all the elements of the potential trouble between China and ourselves. **Recent and bitter history also tells us that Communism is no shield against imperialism and that the communists are as good or as bad imperialists as any other. Chinese ambitions in this respect not only cover the Himalayan slopes on our side but also include the important part of Assam...**

... **Chinese irredentism and communist imperialism are different from the expansionism or imperialism of the western powers. The former has a cloak of ideology which makes it ten times more dangerous.** In the guise of ideological expansion lie concealed racial, national or historical claims. The danger from the north and north-east, therefore, becomes both communist and imperialist. While our western and north-western threat to security is still as prominent as before, a new threat has developed from the north and north-east. Thus, **for the first time, after centuries, India's defence has to concentrate itself on two fronts simultaneously. Our defence measures have so far been based on the calculations of superiority over Pakistan. In our calculations we shall now have to reckon with communist China in the north and in the north-east, a communist China which has definite ambitions and aims and which does not, in any way, seem friendly disposed towards us...**

... Let us also consider the political conditions on this potentially troublesome frontier. Our northern and north-eastern approaches consist of Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, Darjeeling and the tribal areas in Assam. From the point of view of communication, there are weak spots. **Continuous defensive lines do not exist. There is almost an unlimited scope for infiltration.** Police protection is limited to a very small number of passes. There, too, our outposts do not seem to be fully manned. The contact of these areas with us is by no means close and intimate... **In my judgement the situation is one which we cannot afford either to be complacent or to be vacillating.** We must have a clear idea of what we wish to achieve and also of the methods by which we should achieve it. Any faltering or lack of decisiveness in formulating our objectives or in pursuing our policies to attain those objectives is bound to weaken us and increase the threats which are so evident...

... Side by side with these external dangers, we shall now have to face serious internal problems as well...**Hitherto, the Communist Party of India has found some difficulty in contacting communists abroad, or in getting supplies of arms, literature, etc., from them. They had to contend with the difficult Burmese and Pakistan frontiers on the east or with the long seaboard. They shall now have a comparatively easy means of access to Chinese communists and through them to other foreign communists.** Infiltration of spies, fifth columnists and communists would now be easier. Instead of having to deal with isolated communist pockets in Telengana and Warrangal we may have to deal with communist threats to our security along our northern and north-eastern frontiers, where, for supplies of arms and ammunition, they can safely depend on communist arsenals in China...

...the action will have to be fairly comprehensive, involving not only our defence strategy and state of preparations but also problem of internal security to deal with which we have not a moment to lose. We shall also have to deal with administrative and political problems in the weak spots along the frontier to which I have already referred.

It is of course, impossible to be exhaustive in setting out all these problems. I am, however, giving below some of the problems which, in my opinion, require early solution and round which we have to build our administrative or military policies and measures to implement them:

- a) **A military and intelligence appreciation of the Chinese threat to India both on the frontier and to internal security.**
- b) **An examination of military position and such redistribution of our forces as might be necessary,** particularly with the idea of guarding important routes or areas which are likely to be the subject of dispute.
- c) **An appraisal of the strength of our forces and, if necessary, reconsideration of our retrenchment plans for the Army in the light of the new threat.**
- d) **A long-term consideration of our defence needs. My own feeling is that, unless we assure our supplies of arms, ammunition and armour, we would be making our defence perpetually weak and we would not be able to stand up to the double threat of difficulties both from the west and north-west and north and north-east.**
- e) There would probably be a threat in the UN virtually to outlaw China, in view of its active participation in the Korean war. We must determine our attitude on this question also.
- f) The political and administrative steps which we should take to strengthen our northern and north-eastern frontier. This would include the whole of the border, ie. Nepal, Bhutan,

Sikkim, Darjeeling and the tribal territory in Assam.

g) Measures of internal security in the border areas as well as the states flanking those areas such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal and Assam.

**h) Improvement of our communication, road, rail, air and wireless, in these areas and with the frontier outposts.**

i) The future of our mission at Lhasa and the trade posts at Gyantse and Yatung and the forces which we have in operation in Tibet to guard the trade routes.

**j) The policy in regard to the McMahon Line.**

... I suggest that we meet early to have a general discussion on these problems and decide on such steps as we might think to be immediately necessary and direct, quick examination of other problems with a view to taking early measures to deal with them..."<sup>47</sup>

#### **Discussion in the Cabinet on China, November 1950: Wishful Thinking Against Realism**

"...During the Cabinet discussion, which showed some cleavage...**Sardar instinctively realised the dangers inherent in the Chinese move...When he returned from the Cabinet meeting he seemed very agitated, anxious and thoughtful. He was entirely distrustful of the Chinese intentions or words and very suspicious of their designs...He had also a great deal of reverence for the spiritual head of Tibet, the Dalai Lama and reacted sensitively to his plea for help. His feelings of antipathy to Communism in its militant role were well-known; he thought that Chinese communism would prove more dangerous than Russian Communism** though both were not only burdened but deeply inspired by the imperialistic past...He told me that the problem was too important and serious to be left to the realm of discussions and must be dealt with on paper...**There was such a fundamental difference between approaches of the Prime Minister and his Deputy – trust against scepticism, assumption against facts, wishful thinking against realism** – that the letter was unlikely to change the Prime Minister's mind which had been made up...**Upto the end he [Patel] stuck to the line which he had taken in his letter of 7<sup>th</sup> November 1950, though as his energies flagged the vehemence of his opposition declined.**"<sup>48</sup>

#### **Sardar Patel: Nehru is being Mised**

"At the last talk I had with him, a few days before his death in Bombay on 15<sup>th</sup> December, 1950, Patel showed me a letter dated 7<sup>th</sup> November, 1950, he had written to Nehru...After I finished



reading it he said: "I have loved Nehru but he has not reciprocated. I have been eating my heart out because I have not been able to make him see the dangers ahead. China wants to establish its hegemony over South-East Asia. We cannot shut our eyes to this because imperialism is appearing in a new garb...He is being misled by his courtiers. I have grave apprehensions about the future."<sup>49</sup>

**N.V. Gadgil: Our Border Defences Were Neglected**

"...Our border defences were neglected because of the firm conviction of Nehru that since we had no quarrel with anyone, no one would attack us."<sup>50</sup>

**N.V. Gadgil: Plan to Build Border Roads - Pigeonholed**

"...The question of Tibet came up in 1950. Rajaji was then in the Cabinet and he opposed Nehru's Tibet policy. I said that the Chinese would not be satisfied with the occupation of Tibet...I do not contend that we could have taken military action when Tibet was swallowed and China arrived on the peaks of the Himalayas. But some firmness at the time might have avoided today's tragic situation, at least its acuteness to some extent. Similarly, we could have built roads in Ladakh in view of the Chinese moves. In fact, our military officers had submitted a plan to that effect in 1951-52, but it was pigeonholed. The reason for this was known only to God above and Nehru below."<sup>51</sup>



## **8. SARDAR PATEL & HYDERABAD ACTION**

### **Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee Supported Sardar Patel on Hyderabad Action**

New Delhi  
23<sup>rd</sup> September 1948

My Dear Sardarji,

I am going to Bombay today. As I told you the other day, **I would very much like to be present at the Cabinet meeting when a decision on Hyderabad is taken.** If the meeting takes place before Tuesday, I hope you will send me a telephone message so that I may come to Delhi at once.

...Dr. Ambedkar will also return to Delhi on Monday afternoon.

Yours sincerely  
Syama Prasad 52

### **Nehru Opposed Police Action & Confronted Dr. Mookerjee for His Support to Sardar Patel**

“How opposed Nehru was to the use of force against Hyderabad was revealed to me by Syama Prasad Mookerjee. **According to him, when the cabinet meeting had ended after deciding to resort to police action, Nehru sent for him and after expressing displeasure for his support to Patel in resorting to police action warned him that Pakistan would retaliate by invading West Bengal and that Calcutta might be bombed.** Mookerjee had then replied that the people of Bengal and Calcutta had enough patriotism to suffer and sacrifice and would rejoice to hear that J.N.Chaudhuri, <sup>53</sup> a Bengali, had conquered Hyderabad.”<sup>54</sup>

### **Nehru Flew into a Rage & Upbraided Sardar for Hyderabad**

“As the Hyderabad situation was inexorably moving towards a climax, due to the intransigence of the Nizam and his advisers, **Sardar considered it advisable to let the Nizam's Government know clearly that the patience of the Government of India was fast getting exhausted.** Accordingly a communication to that effect was sent from the States Ministry by V.P. Menon.

**When Jawaharlal Nehru came to hear of this, he was extremely upset. A day before our army was scheduled to march into Hyderabad he called a special meeting** of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet, excluding the three Chiefs of Staff. The meeting, held in the Prime Minister's room, was attended by Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar, Maulana Azad, the

then Defence and Finance Ministers, the State Secretary V.P.Menon and the Defence Secretary H.M.Patel.

**The discussion had scarcely begun when Nehru flew into a rage and upbraided Sardar for his action and attitude towards Hyderabad. He also directed his wrath against V.P.Menon. He concluded his outburst with the remark that in future he would himself attend to all matters relating to Hyderabad. The vehemence of his attack, as well as its timing, shocked everyone present. Throughout the outburst Sardar sat still without uttering a word. He then rose and left the meeting accompanied by V.P.Menon. The meeting dispersed without transacting any business...He [Nehru] never carried out his threat to take the Hyderabad portfolio out of Sardar's hands, and the latter adhered to his schedule regarding the police action. There was no further discussion between the two on the subject of Hyderabad. Both V.P.Menon and H.M.Patel have borne out the truth of the foregoing incident.”<sup>55</sup>**

#### **Sardar said It was Useless to Waste Anymore Time**

**“...I went to Dehra Dun to consult Sardar, who was extremely unhappy about the latest developments in regard to Hyderabad. He was deeply disappointed that even after so much profitless discussion with so many Hyderabad delegations we should still be thinking of producing formulas for their acceptance. He referred to the Razakars who had perpetrated crime upon crime in the villages in our territory. He felt most strongly that a stage had been reached when we should tell the Nizam quite frankly that nothing short of unqualified acceptance of accession and of the introduction of undiluted responsible government would be acceptable to the Government of India. Sardar said that it was useless to waste any more time. He wanted the delegation to be presented with a brief letter calling for accession and responsible government. He was quite definite that any delay would place the Government of India in a worse position both politically and militarily.”<sup>56</sup>**

#### **Sardar Patel: What Can We Do But Be Patient with Him [Nehru]**

[N.G.Ranga (1900-1995), freedom fighter, famer leader, one of the longest serving Parliamentarians recalls Sardar Patel & the Hyderabad Action]:

**“In one great affair did he [Sardar Patel] felt himself seriously and frequently thwarted by Jawaharlalji's willful assertion of his Prime Ministership...and that was the problem of Hyderabad integration. He was all in favour of early integration of Hyderabad. But Jawaharlalji would not agree; Lord Mountbatten's diplomacy only delayed the application**

of the needed Sardar's touch. The Army had complete confidence in the Sardar and assured him that if and when action became necessary all that façade of Razakar military might could be overcome within a week. But the Prime Minister exercised his genius for delaying such unpleasant decisions, without openly coming into conflict with the Sardar. **When he was pressed by so many of us who knew how the Razakar's violence was on the increase, the Sardar exclaimed: "What can we do but be patient with him? I was promised that urgent and effective steps would be taken by the Army and was therefore asked to come away from my perch for heart-rest. It is now weeks. Yet he does not make up his mind."** With great difficulty, after suffering much pressure on his heart, the Sardar had his way and Hyderabad State joined Indian Union after a travail of two days. Jawahar's lack of decision took much longer time to let Hyderabad integrate with India than the Sardar's diplomacy took to get more than six hundred States to join the Indian Union."<sup>57</sup>

#### **Nehru Rushed to Hyderabad as if Victory was His**

"...The news of the success of the Police Action in Hyderabad gladdened Sardar beyond measure. The country welcomed the news with unconcealed joy and Sardar's prestige rose sky-high. Even Pandit Nehru decided to partake of the general mood of triumph and announced his intention to go to Hyderabad forthwith as if victory was his."<sup>58</sup>

#### **Prime Minister Intervened in Favour of the Nizam**

"...the situation in Hyderabad was settling down. However, the Hyderabad lobby was still active in the Prime Minister's house and the Ministry of States on that account was quite frequently in his mind. The constant refrain was the position of the Muslims of Hyderabad in some matter or the other. Sometime it appears that there was more sympathy for the 'dethroned' Muslims than there was for the victims of *Razakars* and communal violence...**In fact it is strange but true that the Prime Minister sometimes intervened in favour of the Nizam and the ruling family.**"<sup>59</sup>

#### **Nehru Questions Expenses on Sardar's Security during Hyderabad Visit**

"**The administration had to make elaborate security arrangements for the visit. [Patel's to Hyderabad] The Hyderabad lobby in the Prime Minister's house made a point of it and the large expenses involved.** The Prime Minister was not slow to act on it wrote to Sardar. Sardar replied that this was the concern of the Hyderabad administration, he had nothing to do with it and that Pandit Nehru's visit to Hyderabad had cost more. This was indicative of nothing more than Pandit Nehru's emotional reaction to an alleged piece of extravagance without taking note of the practical consideration."<sup>60</sup>

**“Sardar's Warning Rejected”**

**If Jawaharlal had his way, Nizam's Hyderabad would have remained unintegrated and would have become a second Pakistan in the “belly” of India, an intensely hostile State separating the North from the South – although after the success of the police action Jawaharlal Nehru was the first to go to Hyderabad to receive an ovation as the liberator of Hyderabad!**

**But for Jawaharlal Nehru, who, under the influence of Sheikh Abdulla, took away the portfolio of Kashmir from Sardar's States Ministry, Kashmir would have never become the problem that it has been.**

**But for Jawarhalal Nehru's rejection of Sardar's advice on the Tibetan question, we would have had a buffer State between India and China. Sardar's uncanny vision enabled him to discern as far back as 1950 the portents across our north-eastern border and the dangerous implications of our foreign policy in that direction...”<sup>61</sup>**



## 9. SARDAR PATEL, PAKISTAN & J & K

### We Shall not Surrender an Inch of Kashmir

“...How can any plebiscite be held when fighting is going on? If we have ultimately to save Kashmir by the sword, where is the scope for plebiscite? I should like to make one thing clear, that we shall not surrender an inch of Kashmir territory to anybody.”<sup>62</sup>

### Sardar Patel: I Myself Felt that We should have Never Gone to the UNO

“...I myself felt that we should never have gone to the UNO, and if we had taken timely action when we went to the UNO, we could have settled the whole case much more quickly and satisfactorily from our point of view, whereas at the UNO not only has the dispute been prolonged, but the merits of our case have been completely lost in the interaction of power politics...”<sup>63</sup>

### Sardar Patel: We shall have to settle that problem in the same way as Hyderabad

“...The Kashmir question is now before the UNO. If Pakistan is not willing to accept the settlement which the United Nations suggest, they may do so. We do not mind it but then we shall have to settle that problem in the same way we have settled the Hyderabad problem. If in this way we have to fight with Pakistan, we shall consider it our misfortune, but we are not afraid.” [Speech in Nagpur, 4<sup>th</sup> November, 1948]<sup>64</sup>

[Note: *Manibehn Patel & G.M.Nandurkar's note*: “Sardar was averse to taking the Kashmir issue to UNO and to treat it as an external affair. But then Nehru was prevailed upon by Lord Mountbatten and a complainant – a victim of attack – became as though an accused – through the machinations of the Anglo-American bloc who were looking towards Pakistan as a new ally.”]<sup>65</sup>

### Sardar Patel was Strongly against Reference to the UNO

“As far as Kashmir was concerned, Jawaharlal agreed, on Mountbatten's persuasion, to refer the question to the United Nations. Negotiation and mediation had throughout been the Governor-General's prescriptions. Within days of the attack on Kashmir he had urged Nehru to join him in a visit to Lahore to talk with Jinnah and Liaquat. Patel had protested in the clearest terms: “For the Prime Minister to go crawling to Jinnah when we are the stronger side and in the right would never be forgiven by the people of India.” In the event Nehru did not go, though illness was as much a reason as Vallabhbai's opposition. Patel was strongly against the reference to the UN and preferred “timely action” on the ground, but



Kashmir was Jawaharlal's baby by now and Vallabhbhai did not insist on his prescriptions when...Nehru announced that he had decided to go to the UN. Jawaharlal obtained the Mahatma's reluctant consent but not before Gandhi had altered the wording of India's complaint to the UN. A reference to an independent Kashmir as a possible alternative to accession to either India or Pakistan was removed.

**Patels' misgivings were amply fulfilled after India invited the UN's assistance. A series of counter-charges was Pakistan's reply to India's complaint.** Junagadh and allegations of India's "genocide" against Muslims were introduced. Guided by the British delegate, the Security Council seemed to imply that Pakistan's case was stronger than India's. The question of vacating the aggression in Kashmir was turned into "the India-Pakistan dispute...The future would see conflict wane and wax in Kashmir..."<sup>66</sup>

#### **Nehru Favoured Special Provision- Sardar Patel Wanted the State to Be Fully Integrated**

"Nehru favoured incorporation of a section establishing a special relationship with the State of Jammu & Kashmir, thus inferentially recognising the State's right to frame its own constitution within the Indian Union. Patel wanted the State to be fully integrated with Union. **The Cabinet was divided on the issue and the trend of opinion in the Constituent Assembly favoured the Sardar's stand. But when the matter came before the Assembly, Patel put the unity and solidarity of the Government before everything else and backed the Nehru formula.**<sup>67</sup>

#### **Sardar Patel was against Special Provision in J & K**

"...the general placidity of the Constituent Assembly was threatened by the proposals for dealing with the peculiar situation of the Jammu and Kashmir State and that situation was the creation of no other person than the redoubtable Sheikh Abdullah...Gopaldaswamy Ayyangar who had discussed the position in detail with Pandit Nehru before his departure [a on foreign tour], had prepared some draft provisions which had been accepted by Sheikh Abdullah and which had now to be put to the Congress Party of the Constituent Assembly. **In the party there was a strong body of opinion which looked askance at any suggestion of discrimination between Jammu and Kashmir State and other States as members of the future Indian Union...Sardar was himself fully in accord with this opinion,** but due to his usual policy of not standing in the way of Pandit Nehru and Gopaldaswamy Ayyangar who sorted out problems in their own light, he had kept his own views in the background. In fact

he had not taken any part in framing the draft proposals with the result that he heard the proposals only when Gopaldaswamy Ayyangar announced them to the Congress Party. The announcement was followed by a storm of protests from all sides and Gopaldaswamy Ayyangar found himself a lone defender with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad an ineffective supporter...Later in the evening, Sardar received a telephone call from Gopaldaswamy Ayyangar explaining the genesis of the proposals he had put before the Party...He felt that only Sardar could intervene to save the situation and appealed to him to come to his rescue..." "Sheikh Abdullah himself kept out of the discussion. The meeting was one of the stormiest I have ever witnessed...The opinion in opposition to Gopaldaswamy's formula [special provision] was forcefully and even militantly expressed, and the issue even brought in the sovereignty of the Constituent Assembly to draw up the Constitution without being tied down to the apron-strings of the Kashmir State Constituent Assembly. In such a situation, even Maulana Azad was shouted down. It was left to Sardar to bring the discussion down to the practical plane and to plead that because of the international complications, a provisional approach alone could be made leaving the question of final relationship to be worked out according to the exigencies of the situation...Finally, this view prevailed and Gopaldaswamy Ayyangar's draft with necessary modifications was adopted..."<sup>68</sup>

#### **Sardar Patel Indicated the Temporary Nature of Article 370**

"He [Sardar Patel] said that after all, neither Sheikh Abdullah nor Gopaldaswamy was permanent. The future would depend on the strength and guts of the Indian Government and if 'we cannot have confidence in our own strength we do not deserve to exist as a nation.'<sup>69</sup>

#### **H.V.Kamath: Sardar Wanted to Purposefully Deal with Kashmir**

"Sardar Patel once told me, with a ring of sadness in his voice, that "if Jawaharlal & Gopaldaswami Ayyangar had not made Kashmir their close preserve, separating it from my portfolio of Home & States," he would have tackled the issue as purposefully as he had already done the Hyderabad problem. It is also a matter of regret that Nehru paid no heed to his warning on China..."<sup>70</sup>

#### **N.V.Gadgil: Nehru Failed to Take a Firm Stand on Kashmir**

"Today, Pakistan has become a powerful enemy on both out frontiers. The mistake in not taking over the whole of Kashmir has enabled Pakistan to meet China through the Gilgit corridor and conspire against our interests. I have to record with regret that whenever I made

proposals concerning Pakistan, Nehru reacted as if I were an enemy of Muslims. **I always pressed him to take a firm stand in regard to Kashmir at some point and said we were all behind him...Nehru used to say that politics should always be flexible. I used to tell him that if he did not take a firm stand somewhere, he would get no time to even admit his mistakes.**" <sup>71</sup>

#### **Sardar was Firm and Unyielding on Matters of Dispute with Pakistan**

"Temperamentally, on matters of dispute with Pakistan, Sardar was firm and unyielding...There is also no doubt that there was an undercurrent of militancy in Sardar's approach; militancy was, however, not synonymous with bellicosity or war-mongering but arose from a realisation that that was the only language which Pakistan understood. It was also partly affected by some disillusionment over Pakistan's policies."<sup>72</sup>



## 10. SARDAR PATEL & JAWAHARLAL NEHRU **Difference of Temperament & Approach**

### Sardar Patel: painful process of mental torture

“It is painful to prolong **this process of mental torture** and we must end it now as I see no hope [on differences with Nehru & Nehru's angry outbursts at him]...I **have gone to the farthest extent to smoothen his path** but I see that is all no good, and we can only leave it to God...” (Sardar Patel's letter to C.Rajagopalachari, 13.10.1950)<sup>73</sup>

### Sardar Patel: May be I have deteriorated with age and am no more any good

Poojya Bapu,

I have to leave for Kathiawad at seven this morning. It is agonizing beyond endurance to have to go away when you are fasting. But stern duty leaves no other course.

The sight of your anguish yesterday has made me disconsolate. It has set me furiously thinking.

**The burden of work has become so heavy that I feel crushed under it. I now see that it would do no good to the country or to myself to carry on like this any more. It might even do harm.**

Jawahar is even more burdened than I. His heart is heavy with grief. **May be I have deteriorated with age and am no more any good as a comrade to stand by him, and lighten his burden. The Maulana (Azad) too is displeased with what I am doing and you have again and again to take up cudgels on my behalf. This also is intolerable to me.**

In the circumstances, **it will perhaps be good for me and for the country if you now let me go.** I cannot do otherwise than I am doing. And if thereby I become burdensome to my lifelong colleagues and a source of distress to you and **still I stick to office, it would mean – at least that is how I would feel – that I let lust of power blind my eyes and so was unwilling to quit.** You should quickly deliver me from this intolerable situation.... (13 January, 1948)<sup>74</sup>

### Nehru Accepts Temperamental Differences, Differences on Economic & Communal Matters

“...It is true that there are not only temperamental differences between Sardar and me but also a difference in approach in regard to economic and communal matters. These differences have persisted for a large number of years, ever since we worked together in

**the Congress.** Nevertheless, in spite of these differences, there was obviously a great deal in common in addition to mutual respect and affection and, broadly speaking, the same national political aim of freedom. Because of this we functioned together during all these years and did our outmost to adapt ourselves to each other. If the Congress came to a decision, we accepted it, though there might have been a difference in implementing it..."<sup>75</sup>

### **Sardar Patel Accepts Differences on Crucial Issues**

"I have carefully read Jawaharlal's note sent to you, a copy of which was sent to me.

**There is no disagreement on the existence of temperamental differences and different outlook on economic matters and those affecting Hindu-Muslim relations.** Both of us, however, place the interests of the country above these personal differences and, aided by mutual regard, respect and love for each other, have co-operated in a common endeavour. Through our joint efforts we have weathered many a storm that beset us and despite such differences we have got over one of the most critical phases in the history of any country or any government. **It is painful and rather tragic to reflect that we cannot carry this any further...**"<sup>76</sup>

### **Nehru Pleads for Sardar's Help Fearing Public Outcry**

"...The triumphal return of [Syama Prasad] Mukherjee to Calcutta, the reactions in the Press and the adverse public outbursts against the Pact [Nehru-Liaquat Pact] and against Pandit Nehru unnerved the Government in Delhi. **It was feared that if Pandit Nehru went to 'sell' the Pact to West Bengal as was mooted, he would meet with a hostile reception and even violence against his person.** It was in this state of affairs that Gopaldaswami Ayyangar suggested that the Prime Minister should persuade Sardar to go to Calcutta. Accordingly, **one morning Pandit Nehru came to see Sardar. [Sardar's health had by now received another setback]...The strain of the crisis engendered by the exodus from East Bengal and the state of tension between him and Pandit Nehru worsened the state of his health;** not only was recovery delayed but it was even retarded. **The day Pandit Nehru came to see him [Patel] his pulse rate was still above 90 and he was feeling weak. Pandit Nehru hesitatingly mentioned the proposition. Sardar told him about his health and suggested that he should go himself. Pandit Nehru replied that the general feeling was that he would be stoned if he went there.** He said that he was very sorry to press the matter in his present state of health but he saw no alternative as Shyama Prasad Mukherjee was building up public opinion against the Pact and only Sardar could provide an effective counter. He also said that

he realised that April was not a good month to be in Calcutta but hoped that the weather would not be too unkind to him.

Despite his apprehensions about the effect on his own health, and his knowledge about the adverse nature of the Calcutta weather in mid-April, Sardar agreed to accept the tremendous responsibility of proceeding to Calcutta and trying to convert a hostile camp into a favourable ground for the reception of the pact.”<sup>77</sup>

### **Physical Deterioration of Sardar's Health Increased Due to Mental Anguish**

“**The relationship between Sardar and Pandit Nehru continued to be strained.** Sardar's declining health confined him more and more to his house. Medication did not prove effective; his pulse rate was going up and he was losing strength. **There was no doubt that the physical deterioration of his health was accelerated by his mental anguish.**”<sup>78</sup>

### **Nehru Divests Sardar of States Ministry towards the End**

“Sardar had received a letter from Pandit Nehru expressing concern about his health and hoping that the change [in Mumbai] would do him good. **In the letter he also conveyed to Sardar that he would not have to deal with his departmental affairs but that the States Ministry would be looked after by Gopalaswamy Ayyangar and Home Ministry by himself. Knowing full well that the arrangements would hurt Sardar in the current state of his health with a weakening heart and progressive failure of the kidneys, I decided in consultation with Maniben, not take the risk of showing him the letter.** I am convinced that thereby I prevented Sardar from harbouring the last feelings of anguish and distress at Pandit Nehru's attitude with the possibility of an aggravation of his condition.”<sup>79</sup>

### **Personal Likes and Dislikes Governed Nehru Much More**

“I make bold to say that personal likes and dislikes governed Panditji much more than they did Sardar and were more deep-seated with the former than with the latter.”<sup>80</sup>

### **Strange Attitude Displayed by Nehru on Sardar Patel's Death**

“When Sardar died in Bombay, Jawaharlal issued a direction to the Ministers and Secretaries not to go to Bombay to attend the funeral. Among the Ministers, I was at Matheran (near Bombay) at the time. Sri N.V.Gadgil, Sri Satyanarayan Sinha and Sri V.P.Menon disregarded the direction and attended the funeral. Jawaharlal also requested Dr. Rajendra Prasad not to go to Bombay; it was a strange request, to which Rajendra Prasad



**did not accede.** Among the important personages who attended the funeral were Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Rajaji and Pantji [Govind Bhallabh]. I was, of course, there.”<sup>81</sup>

### **Efforts made not to allow People to Attend Sardar's Funeral**

**“We were receiving messages from Delhi from time to time and we were particularly distressed to learn that efforts were being made not to allow people from coming to Bombay in order to be present at Sardar's funeral.** We were told that Ministers were being discouraged from coming and that the Governors who had made enquiries had been told to stick to their posts. Apparently this was in compliance with Pandit Nehru's exhortation in his speech in Parliament which was couched in the following words:

I can say little more on this occasion. My colleague, Mr. Rajagopalachari and I are going almost immediately, to pay our last tribute and homage to him in Bombay. I understand that the President has also decided to go to Bombay immediately, and the Speaker, Sir, went early this morning. I have no doubt that many of my colleagues and hon'ble members of this House occasion to pay this last tribute, but I feel that he, magnificent worker that he was, would not have liked us to leave our work and just go in large numbers to Bombay at this moment. So I have asked my colleagues to stay here, except for Mr. Rajagopalachari, who was perhaps amongst all of us here the oldest of Sardar Patel's colleagues and comrades.”<sup>82</sup>

### **Sardar Patel was Greatly Worried about the Health of & Trends in the Congress**

“...I am going to do a bit of plain-speaking...I have been pained to find that the spirit of service and sacrifice and the observance of high moral standards which were so marked among the people during the Struggle for Freedom have been given a go by with the achievement of Freedom and India is going towards a downward path. The people must realise that goal for which the people and the Congress were fighting for so long has not been achieved with the removal of foreign domination. Many things still remain to be achieved to make Freedom worthwhile. Immediately after the attainment of Freedom, the people have fallen a prey to power politics and scramble for leadership, not caring the incalculable harm they are doing to the country. Surely, freedom has not been achieved for this degradation! ... [referring to the Molasses scandal in Bihar]... people involved in the molasses scandal should be dealt with strongly if they are found guilty.(26<sup>th</sup> January, 1948, Patna)<sup>83</sup>

### **They have more Capacity to Talk than to Think said Sardar Patel**

“I referred to the fact that he [Sardar Patel] had built up and preserved a disciplined organization which on the whole had responded well to his demands on them. He said more

or less as follows, 'You do not know them [Congress men] as well as I do. I have seen them and studied them over the last thirty years. They will applaud you and follow you as long as it suits them. When you are no longer there or when you cease to occupy the chair they will turn their face on you. They have more capacity to talk than to think.' In this context he referred to how people had forgotten Gandhiji already and were using his name to serve their own ends." <sup>84</sup>

**V.P. Menon : He took to Heart the Differences of Opinion between Himself & the Prime Minister**

"Once I went to his house in Delhi. I saw him lying under an oxygen tent. I stood at the door smoking my cigarette. When the Sardar knew that I had come, he asked the doctors to remove the tent and asked me why I was standing at the corridor. I told him that I did not want to contaminate the air with my smoke. He replied in his characteristic style, **"Why do you bother about it, Menon? The whole of the Delhi air is contaminated."** **There was a certain amount of bitterness in his remark. He took very much to heart the differences of opinion between himself and the Prime Minister** and there were not wanting people who could carry tales...If the Sardar had been alive he would have steered us clear of many of the pitfalls we have fallen into since his death..."<sup>85</sup>

**Age has not diminished the Passion which  
I bear to see My Country Great!**

“Today...I have faith in the future, it is based on this spirit of self-reliance. Nevertheless, I would not be true to myself if I did not confess to a sense of apprehension and anxiety. Certain tendencies and developments in our administrative and public affairs fill me with some disquiet and sadness of heart. The country can realise the feelings of one who has spent the major part of his public life in witnessing epics of sacrifice and selfless endeavour and feats of discipline and unity and who now finds enacted before him scenes which mock the past.

Our public life seems to be degenerating into a fen of stagnant waters; our conscience is troubled with doubts and despair about the possibilities of improvement. We do not seem to be profiting either from history or experience. We appear helplessly to be watching the sickle of time taking away the rich corn in us, leaving behind the bare and withered stalks.

Yet the tasks that confront us are as complex and taxing as ever. They demand the best in us while we face them with indifferent resources. We seem to devote too much time to things that hardly matter and too little to these that count. We talk while the paramount need is that of action. We are critical of other people's exertions, but lack the will to contribute our own. We are trying to overtake others by giant strides while we have hardly learnt to walk.

On this, the third milestone of our career as a free country, I hope my countrymen will forgive me if I have tried to turn the searchlight inwards. In my life, I have now reached a stage when time is of the essence. Age has not diminished the passion which I bear to see my country great and to ensure that the foundations of our freedom are well and securely laid. Bodily infirmity has not dimmed my ardour to exert my utmost for peace, prosperity and advancement of the Motherland...”<sup>86</sup>  
(15<sup>th</sup> August, 1950)

**“How we wish the Sardar were alive today to lead us”**

“It has taken fifteen years of disappointing disputations in the United Nations over Kashmir for us to realise the wisdom in the Sardar's refusal to get embroiled in UNO over Kashmir. Why did we go to the United Nations as a petitioner, in spite of the Sardar's advice? Have we not gained much by being nationally self-reliant over Hyderabad? No wonder, both Rajaji, the greatest statesman of the Gandhian age and Radhakrishnan, the renowned philosopher ...have exclaimed in 1962, in the face of the threat of Chinese Communist imperialism. “How we wish the Sardar were alive today to lead us!”<sup>87</sup>

**-N.G.Ranga**

**No Memorial to Sardar Patel in the National Capital**

There is no memorial to Sardar Patel in the national capital. Sardar Patel occupied the house at 1, Aurangzeb Road in New Delhi while he worked as free India's first Home Minister and Deputy Prime Minister. It was in this house that all eminent personalities came to meet him. Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee and Dr. B.R.Ambedkar came to meet Sardar Patel at 1, Aurangzeb Road when they were invited by him to join free India's first Cabinet. It was while he stayed in this house that Sardar Patel planned and executed the entire operation of integrating the Indian States, in short, this house was witness to the forging of India's political unity. Maniben Patel, Sardar's daughter, recalled that the Congress “Working Committee met at Sardar's residence since there was no good AICC office building at that time in Delhi.” Regarding the house at 1, Aurangzeb Road, Sardar had once written, **“I have no intention of changing my residence. The present house suits me well and I like it for sentimental as well as practical reasons.”**<sup>88</sup> The lack of memorial to Sardar Patel is a reflection of the neglect and suppression that his legacy has faced at the hands of his self-professed political heirs – the Congress!

## Endnotes & References

1. Rajmohan Gandhi, *Patel: a Life*, Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1990, p.ix.
2. Extract from Sardar Patel's Convocation address at Osmania University, Hyderabad, on being conferred an honorary Doctorate vide. V.Shankar, *My Reminiscence of Sardar Patel*, vol.2, (Delhi: Macmillan & co., 1975), p.45.
3. *India's Rebirth*, Mysore: Mira Aditi Centre, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 2000.
4. Gyanvati Durbar, *Portrait of a President*, vol.2, New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1976, pp.59-60.
5. Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee's Tribute to Sardar Patel, *The Sunday Statesman*, December, 17<sup>th</sup>, 1950.
6. Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee participating in the debate on "General Budget –Demands for Grants, Lok Sabha, 26<sup>th</sup> June, 1952," vide, *The Parliamentary Debates – Part II – Proceedings other than Questions & Answers – Official Report*, pp.2573-2574.
7. Rajmohan Gandhi, *Patel: a Life*, op.cit., pp.417-418.
8. Mani Ben Patel, information and views given to Durga Das [veteran journalist, author, editor of Sardar Patel's correspondences] & Trevor Driberg [collaborated with Durga Das on editing Sardar Patel's correspondence & was a political commentator & feature writer, former News Editor, The Indian Express, New Delhi.]
9. Durga Das, *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-1950*, vol.2, Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1973, p.xxxi.
10. Ibid., p.xxxi.
11. V. Shankar, "Reflections on His Life and Achievements" in Manibehn Patel & G.M.Nandurkar ed., *This Was Sardar – the Commemorative Volume*, Ahmedabad: Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Smarak Bhavan, 1974, pp.284-85. V. Shankar was Sardar Patel's secretary from 1946-1950, Sardar specially selected Shankar for assisting him during these crucial post-independence years. Shankar rose to become Union Defence Secretary.
12. Written to K.M.Munshi, one of the chief proponent and executors of the Somnath reconstruction project. Note reproduced in K.M.Munshi, *Pilgrimage to Freedom*, Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1967, p.560.
13. Manibehn Patel & G.M.Nandurkar, ed., *Sardar's Letters – mostly unknown*, vol.1, Ahmedabad: Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Smarak Bhavan, 1980, p.259. Letter translated by the editors – Manibehn Patel & G.M.Nandurkar.
14. Jethalal Joshi, "Great Potter", in Manibehn Patel & G.M.Nandurkar ed., *This Was Sardar – the Commemorative Volume*, Ahmedabad: Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Smarak Bhavan, 1974, pp.195-196.
15. N.V.Gadgil, *Government from Inside*, Meerut: Meenakshi Prakashan, 1968, pp.59-60.
16. Ibid., pp.184-185.
17. Ibid., pp.185-186.
18. P. Sundaryya, (1913-1985) also known as Comrade P.S. was one of the founders of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and one of the leaders of the communist uprising in Hyderabad.
19. Durga Das, ed. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence: 1945-50*, vol.6, Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1973, pp.27-28.
20. Sardar Patel's speech delivered at Calcutta Maidan where more than half a million people had gathered to listen to him on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1948 vide, P.D.Saggi edited, *Life & Work of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*, Bombay: Overseas Publishing House, [Date not Stated], p.52.
21. India & Communism, excerpts from Sardar Patel's interview with Stephen David, 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1948, vide. Manibehn Patel & G.M.Nandurkar ed., *Sardar Patel – in Tune with Millions – I*, Ahmedabad: Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Smarak Bhavan, 1975, pp.182-183.
22. Extract from Sardar Patel's letter to all Premiers [Chief Ministers] on "Global Matters", New Delhi, 15<sup>th</sup> October, 1948 vide, Durga Das, ed. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence: 1945-50*, vol.6, Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1973, pp.440-41.
23. Durga Das, ed., *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-1950*, vol.8, Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1973, p.135.
24. Ibid., p.133.
25. Rajmohan Gandhi, *Patel: a Life*, op.cit., 509.
26. Ibid.
27. Extract from Sardar Patel's letter to all Premiers [Chief Ministers] on "Global Matters", 15<sup>th</sup> October, 1948, vide, Durga Das, *Sardar Patel's Correspondence 1945-1950*, vol.6, op.cit., pp.444-445.
28. V. Shankar, *My Reminiscences of Sardar Patel*, vol.2, Delhi: Macmillan & Co., 1975, p.132.
29. Dwarka Prasad Mishra (1901-1988), freedom fighter, twice Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. Mishra was a close participant in post independent India's politics till well into the 1970s.
30. D.P.Mishra, *The Nehru Epoch: from Democracy to Monocracy*, New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications, 2001,

- pp.109-110
31. K.M.Munshi, *The End of an Era*, Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, (1957), 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1990, pp.154-155.
  32. Ibid., p.164. K.M. Munshi was selected by Sardar Patel to be India's Agent-General in Hyderabad and worked closely in carrying out the Sardar's orders during this crucial period.
  33. Report on Minority Rights Debate, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 1947, vide: *Constituent Assembly Debates*, vol.5.
  34. Ibid.
  35. Ibid.
  36. Report on Minority Rights Debate, August 28<sup>th</sup> 1947, vide: *Constituent Assembly Debates*, vol.5.
  37. Extract from Reply to a Civic Address, Bombay, 16<sup>th</sup> January 1948, vide, P.D.Saggi edited, *Life & Work of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*, op.cit., pp.66-67.
  38. Extract from Reply to a Civic Address, Bombay, 16<sup>th</sup> January 1948, vide, P.D.Saggi edited, *Life & Work of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*, op.cit., p.62.
  39. K.Santhanam, "His Nationalism" in Manibehn Patel & G.M.Nandurkar ed., *This Was Sardar – The Commemorative Volume*, Ahmedabad: Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Smarak Bhavan, 1974, p. 324-325. (K.Santhanam (1895-1980), freedom fighter, Member of the Constituent Assembly, Union Minister of State for Railways and Transport in the Nehru cabinet in 1948. Santhanam also served as Governor and was one of the first editors of the Indian Express (1933-1940). A close associate of C.Rajagopalachari, K.Kamaraj and author of several books Santhanam was made Chairman of the first national committee on Corruption constituted in 1962.
  40. Letter to Nehru dated November 30<sup>th</sup>, 1949, Durga Das, edited, *Sardar Patel's Correspondence, 1945-1950*, vol.8, Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1973, pp.363-364.
  41. Ibid., p.362.
  42. Durga Das, *Sardar Patel's Correspondence*, vol.8, p.53.
  43. D.P.Mishra, *The Nehru Epoch: from Democracy to Monocracy*, op.cit., p.106.
  44. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence*, vol.8, p.136.
  45. Ibid., pp.388-389.
  46. Ibid., pp.86-87.
  47. Extracts from Sardar Patel's letter to Nehru on China, dated, 7<sup>th</sup> November, 1950, (D.O. No. 821-DPM/50, Strictly Personal) vide, K.M.Munshi, *Pilgrimage to Freedom*, op.cit., pp.175-181.
  48. V. Shankar, vol.2, op.cit., p.140.
  49. Conversation reported by Durga Das in his *India from Curzon to Nehru & After*, (1969), New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 4<sup>th</sup> imp., 2009, p.305.
  50. N.V.Gadgil, *Government from Inside*, op.cit., p.82.
  51. Ibid., p.84.
  52. Durga Das, *Sardar Patel's Correspondence*, vol.7, p.238.
  53. Jayanto Nath Chaudhuri, (1908-1983), directed the Hyderabad operation, was Military Governor of Hyderabad State, 1948-49, was Chief of Staff of the Indian Army between 1962 and 1966. As Chief of the Indian Army, General Chaudhuri steered India to a resounding victory in the 1965 war with Pakistan.
  54. D.P.Mishra, *The Nehru Epoch: from Democracy to Monocracy*, op.cit., p.168.
  55. K.M.Munshi, *Pilgrimage to Freedom*, op.cit., pp.170-171.
  56. V.P. Menon, *The Story of the Integration of the Indian States*, London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1955, p.246.
  57. N.G. Ranga, "Sardar and Manibehn" in Manibehn Patel & G.M.Nandurkar ed., *This was Sardar – the Commemorative Volume*, Ahmedabad: Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Smarak Bhavan, 1974, pp.421-422
  58. V.Shankar, vol.2, op.cit., p.37
  59. Ibid., p.38.
  60. Ibid., p.47.
  61. K.M.Munshi, *Pilgrimage to Freedom*, op.cit., p.175.
  62. *Life & Work of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*, op.cit., p.54
  63. Durga Das, ed. *Sardar Patel's Correspondence: 1945-50*, vol.6, Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1973, p.387.
  64. Manibehn Patel & G.M.Nandurkar ed., *Sardar Patel – in Tune with Millions – I*, Ahmedabad: Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Smarak Bhavan, 1975, p.49.
  65. Ibid.
  66. Rajmohan Gandhi, op.cit., p.448-449.
  67. Durga Das, *India from Curzon to Nehru and After*, (1969), New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 4<sup>th</sup> imp., 2009, p.272.
  68. V. Shankar, vol.2, op.cit., pp.61-62.
  69. Ibid., p.63.



- 70.H.V.Kamath, "His Variegated Role in the Constituent Assembly" in Manibehn Patel & G.M.Nandurkar ed., *This was Sardar – the Commemorative Volume*, Ahmedabad: Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Smarak Bhavan, 1974, p.335
- 71.N.V.Gadgil, *Government from Inside*, op.cit., p.86.
- 72.V. Shankar, *My Reminiscences of Sardar Patel*, vol. 1, Delhi: Macmillan & Co., 1975, p.158.
- 73.Rajmohan Gandhi, *Rajaji: a Life*, New Delhi: Penguin, 1997, p.320.
- 74.Sardar Patel's letter to Mahatma Gandhi asking to be relieved of his responsibilities vide, *Sardar Patel's Correspondence*, vol.6, op.cit., p.25.
- 75.Ibid., p.17.
- 76.Ibid., pp.21-22.
- 77.V. Shankar, vol.2, op.cit., pp.91-92.
- 78.Ibid., p.141.
- 79.Ibid., p.146.
- 80.V. Shankar, vol.1, op.cit., p.156.
- 81.K.M.Munshi, *Pilgrimage to Freedom*, pp.290-291.
- 82.V.Shankar, vol.2, op.cit., p.149.
- 83.Manibehn Patel & G.M.Nandurkar ed., *Sardar Patel – in Tune with Millions – I*, Ahmedabad: Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Smarak Bhavan, 1975, p.27. Manibehn Patel & G.M. Nandurkar's note: "The Molasses scandal in Bihar that had rocked the Bihar Legislative Assembly and had shaken the people's confidence in the Bihar Ministry had its genesis in the issue of recommendatory letters to molasses' factories to sell to bearers of these letters affixed quantity of molasses at a control rate of annas four per maund in North Bihar and annas eight per maund in South Bihar out of the 10 per cent quota allotted to factories for gate-sale. The permit holders thus received from Rs.4 to 10 per maund. People took it to be a sort of nice black-marketing. As Shri Shankar Rao Deo, Secretary of the Congress Parliamentary Board, on investigating the matter said: "It is no wonder that Congress and Congressmen lost all prestige in the eyes of the people who began to look upon Congressmen as ordinary black-marketeers. This conduct even on the part of a few Congressmen has brought the name of the Congress into mud and the Congress has never recovered from this blow in Bihar." (Ibid., p.27)
- 84.Extract for the last conversation that Sardar Patel had with V. Shankar, vide V.Shankar, vol.2, op.cit., p.147.
- 85.V.P. Menon, "If Sardar were Alive Today" in *This Was Sardar – The Commemorative Volume*, Ahmedabad: Ahmedabad: Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Smarak Bhavan, 1974,, pp.426-427.
- 86.V.Shankar, vol.2, op.cit., pp.135-136.
87. N.G.Ranga, "Sardar & Manibehn" in Manibehn Patel & G.M.Nandurkar ed., *This was Sardar – the Commemorative Volume*, Ahmedabad: Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Smarak Bhavan, 1974, p.421
- 88.Sardar Patel's letter to N.V.Gadgil, 21<sup>st</sup> June, 1948 vide, Durga Das, *Sardar Patel's Correspondence*, vol.7, p.218.





**“Sardar Patel is the architect of modern India. Overcoming various obstacles he integrated the entire nation and today, if we can celebrate our unity, it is due to the efforts of Sardar Patel. Yet, it is equally true that there are forces within our country that are threatened by this unity. They have used guns and bombs to scare and mislead the people. From the nation of Lord Buddha, Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Patel, let us send a strong message to these elements that their ways of violence will not work. They should alter their path, join the mainstream and work for the development of our nation so that the dreams of stalwarts like Sardar Patel are fulfilled.”**

**Shri Narendra Modi**