

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

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Manifest Pedagogy

Alternative Thinking

UPSC is interested in those areas where the market is not. "Vallabhai Patel" as a personality may not be asked directly (That does not mean you should not prepare). The alternative perspectives on the same topic like, National Development or Nationalism vs Tribal Development (as tribal protested against the statue of unity) or issue of use of public money on such areas when it should be done in developmental sectors could be asked. What if these alternative perspectives also get publicized- no need to worry! Solution is to develop multidimensional cognitive abilities to handle any question on the spot.

In news

Inauguration of the statue of Unity of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Narmada district

In syllabus

- Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present- significant events, personalities, issues.
- Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country.

Dimensions

1. His role during the national movement.
2. His role post-independence.

3. His political ideology and economic vision.
4. Patel Nehru differences in vision for an independent India.

Content

Pre-independence Role

In 1918, Vallabhbhai took the responsibility of leading the farmers of Gujarat. He started the Kheda/ Kaira satyagraha that demanded the suspension of the revenue collection from farmers as there was a drought.

In 1920, the Congress started the non-cooperation struggle and Vallabhbhai gave up his practice. He setup the Gujarat Vidyapeeth where children could study instead of attending Government schools.

In 1928 he successfully organized the landowners of Bardoli against British tax increases. It was after this that Vallabhbhai was given the title of Sardar (Leader).

In 1931 he served as President of the Indian National Congress in its Karachi session which changed the nature of movement from a political struggle and added to it new socio-economic dimensions.

He was the chief organizer of the congress party and had complete control over its organizational structure. He was the chief proponent of the congress right wing and an important influence over the congress working committee.

As part of congress right he is part of the No changers faction and emphasized on the crucial role of constructive work in village regeneration and carrying the message of nationalism to the masses.

He was also the chairman of the congress parliamentary sub-committee which had complete control over congress ministries

during 28 months of their rule under 1935 act.

He played a crucial role in the torturous negotiations with the British for freedom and Partition of the country.

Post-independence Role

In 1947 when India got freedom, Sardar Patel became the Deputy Prime Minister. He was in charge of Home Affairs, Information and Broadcasting and the Ministry of States.

He was given the task of integrating the 562 Princely States into the union. He skilfully used patriotism, concessions in the form of privy purses and popular movement's and military pressure to achieve this. He took strong steps like sending the army to Junagadh and Hyderabad to force them to align with free India. It is because of these strong steps he is called Iron Man of India

He played an active role as the Chairman of the Committees for Fundamental Rights, Minorities and Provincial Constitution and provisions like the Right to Private Property, Privy purses for Princes and Constitutional guarantees for the Civil Services were incorporated.

As a member of the Partition committee, he helped the allocation of the liabilities and dividends between India and Pakistan.

It was Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's vision that the Civil Service should strengthen cohesion and national unity. He wanted a strong and vibrant federal administrative system in which the All India Services would play an important role. Sardar Patel viewed the All India Services as a group of professionals who would take a long-term view of the nation's needs and priorities. While the state and local administration would focus on day-to-day issues of governance, the All India Services were charged with the responsibility of thinking ahead and into the future.

Political and Economic Ideology

His political value system was a fine synthesis of liberalism, conservatism and welfarism.

He was a staunch follower of Gandhi ji and his vision was in sync with Gandhian ideology of non-violence, spirituality, discipline, moral strength. He also belonged to the congress right which had alternative approaches to national movement and alternative visions for post independent India.

1. His political vision is driven by the Gandhian ideal of Ram Rajya. He envisaged a democratic state which will lead India on path of progress. He had a deep respect for individual rights and liberty which made him think in the line of a liberal economic model. He considered nationalism and patriotism to be two important binders of society.
2. His Economic vision is driven by ideas of national self-sufficiency. For this he proposed the path of higher production, savings and investment cycle based production. He did not agree with the nationalized industrial model as the state administration did not have enough capacity to manage them. He visualized an industrial growth lead by private players in a liberalized economic setting.
3. Sardar Patel advocated for education of farmer and better management of farming sector. Patel was very much concerned about the small farmer and their economic plight. He said that the income of small farmers can increase by increasing the productivity and organizing market. He was against the concept of middlemen in commodity sale.
4. He advocated formation of cooperatives to increase the income of peasants and milk producers. He provided the vision for creation of Kheda district co-operative milk producers union which went on to become India's most successful experiment in co-operatives i.e., Amul.

5. He not only criticized the arbitrary policies of confiscation of movable and immovable properties, but also insisted on guarded regulations on land reforms and nationalization of key industries. Which clearly shows his political leaning to maintenance of private property which is a liberal ideal.
6. His vision of State was in tune with the pattern of his political values. In his concept, the State was founded and held together by a high sense of nationalism and patriotism.
7. His efforts to reform the Hindu religion and protect the people of other faiths reflected his longing for the right to religion. His active participation in the reconstruction of the Somnath temple makes him a conservative in his outlook.
8. He pressed for the emancipation of backward communities and women and bring about Hindu-Muslim unity through the Gandhian constructive program which makes him a welfarist.
9. Liberal-democratic ideology with due emphasis upon conservatism, pragmatism, welfarism and nationalism seems to characterize the mindset of Vallabhbhai Patel.

Test Yourself: Mould Your Thoughts

1. Write a short note on politico-economic vision of Vallabhai Patel for India. How relevant is it today? Explain.