CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

(1) The Task and The Man:

Indian society, during the British period, was exposed to a succession of tension due to the ever enhancing consciousness in the minds of the people regarding their political status. The freedom struggle, launched by the Indian National Congress in course of time, aroused political awareness and shaped the destiny of the country. The process of nation building, which was set forth through the freedom struggle, could be put into action in full swing after the attainment of independence.

With the partition of the country, Indian leaders had to face numerous problems and new challenges. Due to the outburst of communal riots, disturbances on a large scale, influx of thousands of refugees from Punjab and Bengal, pressure was created on the internal law and order situation. In order to steer through such difficulties, it was necessary for the administration to gain support and confidence of the civil servants and armed forces, left behind by the British Government. The leaders of the country had a crucial time in dealing with the process of integration of princely states in the Union of India. The independent India, after the departure of British Government, was full of problems and it was a difficult task to keep the country united in the face of many disparities and external threat from various corners. The period after the end
of the second world war, saw emergence of a series of new nation states in Asia and Africa due to withdrawal of European colonial power and such emergence of new nations was in keeping with the evolution of nationalism in India also.¹

In such a period of crises, India was not devoid of brilliant political leaders to hold the hull of the countries boat. The Indian polity was full of brilliant nationalist political leaders. These leaders, due to their many sided qualities, were certainly capable of keeping the country free from any kind of deterioration. At the same time, they were specialists in setting the nation on the path of progress. Sardar Patel was one of those brilliant leaders. He came, he got involved and became the most respected among Indian leaders. He had an inborn quality of a statesman. Experiences contributed to his becoming the sage of his time. Being entrusted with the responsibility of dealing with the various princely states and the Home Ministership of the country, he, with his ingenuity, could achieve the accession of princely states without shedding a drop of blood and their subsequent merger has no equal in the world history. He used every method in his uphill task and his success must inspire generations to come. His remarkable success was in gaining control over law and order situation and creating a sense of loyalty among the civil servants, armies, minorities and the ocean of refugees from Pakistan, at the most difficult hour.

¹. Kothari Rajni - Politics in India, Orient Longmans Ltd., Delhi 1970 p.4. According to Prof. Kothari, "Politics in India is predominantly the politics of integration."
In the subsequent chapters, an attempt has been made to study and analyse the contributions of such a stalwart, Sardar Patel, to the process of nation building in India, at different phases of Indian politics.

(2) The Study of Nation Building:

No one, among contemporary politicians, it seems, was eager to study the context of nation building as a social and political process. Though, now-a-days, modern politicians show keen interest in the dynamics of nation building, the situation was far from satisfactory then, due, probably, to the dominating influence of Western theoreticians, who showed no interest in the political environment and theoretical aspects of the third world. As Prof. Rajni Kothari has pointed out:

"According to the dominant paradigm that has informed the social sciences since 1945, the political problems of state and nation-building either have received far less attention than other intellectual concerns or have been perceived as subsidiary to those concerns."

It is alleged that far greater attention is being given to the problem of economic development, population growth, family planning, spread of literacy, development of mass media and defusion of modern science and technology - in sum, the problem of modernisation of traditional society. Scant attention has been paid to the typical political problem and political issues involved in building new states and nations.

of new nation-states in the third world, has not been properly analysed by the contemporary politician to ascertain the mechanics of political revolution. A study in this regard, in a systematic way, will reveal the socio-political considerations leading to the growth of a new nation-state with the change in international political atmosphere. Clifford Geertz had conceived nation-building as follows:

"It is a demand to progress, for a rising standard of living, for a more effective political order, for greater social justice and beyond all that for playing a part in the large arena of world politics and for exercising influence among the nation." 3

Thus nation building has come to be a focal point in the social and political atmosphere of a country. Yet another definition of nation building is:

"It may be defined as the summation of ethnic consciousness for status and recognition as a distinct social unity. In the process it becomes a device as well as a focus for mobilising the members of the group into social action." 4

Thus we find that nation building is a broad term, and when put in the proper perspective, it provides a clue to the prosperity of the country, as well as to its identity as an independent nation.

arena. This has created some methodological problems for the student who takes up nation building, as a subject of investigation and analysis. On the one hand, scholars insist on a vigorous historical enquiry into the phenomenon, whereas, on the other hand a good number of scholars have put in considerable efforts of formulating general theories and models as guidelines for the purpose of understanding such phenomena.

It has been found that various scholars have used different terms and phrases for the concept of nation building. We come across the concepts of world economic development, political development, modernisation etc., and all these are taken to stand for nation building.

Indeed, there does exist a tendency to use such terms as synonyms of nation building, but, it should be realised that the word nation building has a broader implication than any of the terms mentioned. Nation building is a complex phenomenon and there are many things that contribute to it.

There are various approaches and models used for the purpose of studying the problem of nation building. These include linkages model, the structural-functional model, the input-output model, the crisis model, the capability model, the communication model and the centre-periphery model. But, somehow, these models have proved themselves inadequate in explaining the phenomenon.

of nation building. These models and approaches do explain some aspects of the problem, but fail to analyse exhaustively the total phenomenon of nation building. There is, therefore, an extensive search for a general theory which can properly explain the phenomenon of nation building. But, we feel that it will take some time before it becomes available to the researchers. The research therefore cannot be restricted to any specific model or approach. Historical as well as analytical methods are useful in understanding the phenomenon of nation building.

India now had to face some special problems too. The chapter of independence led to the complete emancipation of the princely states and left to themselves, would have made a nonsense of it. But Sardar Patel directed all his efforts at the problem of integration, which, when achieved, the primary task of nation building also was completed. The approach to the problem of nation building in India must, therefore, take into account such special factors also.

(4) Some Conceptual Aspects of the Problem:

The problems of nation building are so wide and complex that many political leaders of the newly developed states have taken shelter under the unreality of the doctrine of supranationalism. The protagonists of this doctrine believe that when the search is made for regional and continent-wide

personalities, the national identity is bound to disappear. Such, they feel, is the dynamics of supernationalism in the underdeveloped areas of the world to-day.

Another problem lies in defining the structure of the state in which a nation is to be built, once the geographical limits are frozen. The problem fails to find a solution when looked into with respect to a strong centralised military state vis-a-vis, a weak and decentralised federal state.

The third problem in formulating the programme for nation building, is the approach and technique to be adopted in constituting the nation. It is not clear whether the submerging of disparate groups within the state with a sense of national identity (in making Indians out of Punjabis, Bengalees, Tamilians, Gujaratis) in forging the national consciousness will be effective.

Regarded thus, the task of nation building in an undeveloped country, having diversities of geographical, social and cultural heritage, becomes extremely difficult. Moreover, in the present day technological and scientific progress in the developed countries, the underdeveloped countries are exposed to the criticality of a situation created due to economic growth and technological transformation available with them for modernisation. It is to be realised that nation building and development are complementary processes and they support and sustain each other and overemphasis on either of these two factors will invariably prove counterproductive. Hence a thoughtful
consideration is absolutely necessary to maintain a balance between the two and the weightage on nation building is to be proportionately distributed.7

If we look into the various other problems of nation building in a developing country, having an oppressive spell of colonial rule for a considerable period, the problems of nation building assume yet another dimension.

The nature of the problem depends on geographical, social and political structure of the country. The leaders, no doubt, have to face discouraging difficulties, coming in the way of efforts in reshaping the country's destiny. When a country remains under colonial government, its common people are kept away from any kind of constructive national activity. The colonial government is not at all interested in developing political consciousness among the people, lest it should become detrimental to its interests. The external rulers always try to keep the people subdued, never providing an atmosphere for developing any mass consciousness. Educational facilities rendered to the people are far from satisfactory, except that they try to build up a group of intellectuals, who are helpful to them in running the administration smoothly, highlighting their so called noble deeds, and rationalising their pressure. Thus a superficial atmosphere of peace and harmony is created among the people, which if kindled by an able leader can develop into a national consciousness. The experience of the

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colonies of Asia and Africa under the British government shows that the external rulers were not at all interested in framing a constitution for the citizens; they were governing the colonies according to the constitution of their country. The only marked difference in the British colonies over other colonies was that the government was imparting education to some extent, and thus a group of intellectuals was created, which ultimately united against the colonial power to win freedom for their country. But the complete control of military, external affairs and internal economy by the foreign ruler kept the population fully isolated politically from the external world. There was lack of leadership to fight out the causes for the welfare of the country. As Edward Shils observes:

"There was practically no one else. In so many of the colonial countries, the princely dynasties were on the decay, their powers and their capacities withered even before the foreigners appeared. Moreover, there was generally no military force either to fight against the foreign ruler once he was established or to supply the educated personnel for a modern political movement." 8

Such a state of affairs came in the way of the process of nation building. Eventually, complete responsibility was taken over by the educated groups forming the elite or intellectuals in the country. 9 The administration in colonial governments in the British colonies suffered a set-back due to the mass movement organised by the intellectuals, whereas in the


9. Op.cit. p.329 - Edward Shils said "It was the intellectuals on whom, in the first instance, developed the task of contending for their nation's right to exist, even to the extent of promulgating the very idea of a nation."
other colonies freedom movement could not gain a rapid momentum due to the lack of intellectuals. Shlomo Avineri says:

"...Countries which did not educate their colonial people—like the Portuguese—did not supply them with the weapon against colonialism itself, and subsequently those territories were late in making their claim for independence. No other reason can explain how the mighty British and French empires collapsed, whereas Lisbon still holds its possession."  

Though there existed some difference between British colony in India and elsewhere, in general the atmosphere and the nature of intellectuals in India under the British rule, were not different from their counterparts in other colonial settlements.

(5) **Historical context:**

The study of the conditions prevailing in the societies of primordial states reveals that the concept of nation building there did not exist. The people residing in a nation-state, did not have enough political consciousness, leading to the concept of nation building. The structure of the society was responsible for the maintenance of unity and the solidarity.

The social system prevailing in India was also not an exception. Looking back into the social system depicted in

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Manu,\textsuperscript{11} we find that the ruler or the king held the supreme power, and the people used to do their duties as per the desire of the king.

During the period of subsequent Hindu rulers, the country was divided into a number of small states. Infighting among them was the order of the day. The people of those states could not attain any political consciousness. Ashoka and Chandragupta, of course, ruled over a larger part of the country. Though, during the Mughal rule, the entire country came under a single ruler, nationalism yet could not find roots in the minds of the people. This was because of the peculiar character of the Indian society, where, in spite of cultural accomplishments, channels of trade and commerce, the political consciousness was poor. As Rajni Kothari observes:

"This political weakness of India in the past, despite the great power of its cultural heroes and intellectual elite, accounts for a continuous undermining of its fabric over the past thousand years."\textsuperscript{12}

Karl Deutsch has defined that any sizeable population can be called a nation if:

\begin{enumerate}
\item they are independent and not ruled from outside,
\item they are cohesive by virtue of markedly more effective habits,
\end{enumerate}

\textsuperscript{11} In the article "Traditional Concepts of Indian Leadership" D. Mackenzie Brown stated: "The Manusamhita is of course, the classic statement of kingly power. It pictures royal leadership not only as a lordship but as an office with clear responsibilities" - Leadership and Political Institutions in India, by Richard Park and Irene Tinker (Ed.) Oxford University Press, 1960.

\textsuperscript{12} Kothari Rajni - "Integration and Performance : Two Pivots of India's Model of Nationbuilding" in State and Nation Building (ed.) op.cit.p.194.
c. they are politically organized so as to be ruled by a constitutional government.

d. they are autonomous in the sense that they give support to the government to make the rule effective.

e. they are internally legitimate in the sense that their habits are towards support of the government and towards political co-operation.13

Hardly any of these conditions were present anywhere in the country in the past. The country consisted of a number of small states. Though these states were ruled by a ruler from inside, and though the states were cohesive and autonomous, they were neither politically organised nor ruled by a democratic government. As a result, the concept of nationalism did not exist in those ancient states. The rulers also could not think of fostering nationalism in the true sense, though the people were kept united against any external threat.

In the beginning of the British regime, both the Hindus and Muslims were subdued, but the country was divided into a number of princely states and British provinces. Cohesion between these states to realise the need for a common nationhood, was not possible. Each individual state was looking for its own gain without caring for others. Differences also existed between the Hindu and the Muslim states, but there was no unusual hatred between the people of the two religions. The British government through its policy of divide and rule, could manage to govern the country without much trouble.

For a country like India, having a pluralistic society, the development of the idea of national integration was more of a governing factor for nation building. As a colony of the British empire, there was no attempt from within or outside to develop nationhood. The British government also did not develop a national character; the colonial government rather concentrated on creating a loyal intelligentsia, which would be helpful for the country's administration. In the words of Myron Weiner:

"... colonial governments were not concerned with national loyalties but with creating classes who would be loyal to them as a colonial power. Colonial government, therefore, paid little or no attention to the teaching of a national language and culture." 14

Jayprakash Narayan in his book Nation Building in India has also said:

"It was only when British rule was established over the entire length and breadth of the country that India was united politically under one government. That political unity was imposed from above and did not itself constitute nationhood." 15

(6) Indian Political System:

The framework of administration and social structure created in the country throughout the long period of Hindu, Muslim and the British rule, had a far-ranging effect in


shaping the destiny of the country as a nation. The experience of constant subjugation decided the political structure of the country. However, the educated intellectuals who were exposed to English, succeeded in awakening national consciousness of the people; as a result, the process of nation building started in full swing and attained momentum at the dawn of independence.

During the period of more than sixty years after the birth of Indian National Congress, the country was engaged in a movement for self-determination and ultimately for complete independence, which, during its gradual development led by outstanding personalities like Gokhale, Tilak, Naoroji and others, also provided a forum and training ground for social and economic reform, organisational refinement and better understanding of ideological behaviour of the population. In the early stage of political movement, the Congress passed through a long period of agitation by intellectuals. The movement was basically confined to urban middle class and was spread over the country. The fabric of India's political structure was woven by Gandhiji when the freedom movement could penetrate throughout the length and breadth of the country at levels close to the grass root of Indian society. It is remarkable that during the period of freedom struggle, the country was full of outstanding leaders at all levels throughout the country.16

The political atmosphere in the 'Forties was such that a confrontation with the British government and independence as the ultimate result thereof seemed to be on the cards; but the nature and the content of political manoeuvring was a matter of detail. The possibility of a division of the country and the lingering of conflict between the Hindus and the Muslims caused a set-back in the advancement of political movement in the country. The intellectuals in the Congress party leadership steered through this very critical situation. Leaders like Nehru, Patel got inspired by the spirit of nationalism and resolved to rouse national consciousness among the masses and unite both the Hindus, the Muslims as well as many others under the banner of Indian Nation. In spite of their best efforts, the leaders could not keep the country united and there emerged two nations - India and Pakistan.

On achieving independence, India had to face a two-pronged attack in the process of consolidation of national unity. Indian leaders had to proceed cautiously towards nation building. They had to follow a humanitarian approach, a compromise between extremism and liberalism to avoid an impending civil war. This was unparallel in the history of the world. Rajni Kothari has commented:

"India, latecomer, had to pursue both nationhood and economic development simultaneously. And what had come only in the last leg of the historical journey of other states, was here given the first place.... India's attempt was to put history in upside down." 17

Sardar's views on Nation Building:

Sardar's political career bears a full testimony to what he did for the betterment of the Indian people, development of the better living conditions and the moulding of the country's politics for a promising future.

The task of nation building was conceived by him even at the early stage of his association with public affairs. In 1919, Sardar was not associated with any party affairs; but with his leadership qualities, he could tackle the problems of Ahmedabad Municipality. He directed his efforts towards providing better living amenities to the people of the city of Ahmedabad, inspired confidence in them and the citizens too, wholeheartedly supported him in his task of growth and prosperity. His remarkable task for the welfare of the citizens of Ahmedabad lies in the steps he took during heavy rains and devastating flood in the city. The positive steps towards civic amenities did contribute to the process of the nation building. The importance of civic institutions in national solidarity can not be ignored in the overall context of political destiny of the country. A great leader and nation builder claimed the first success in his leadership in Gujarat. When the municipality resumed its function, Vallabhbhai was its president in charge of the administration of the city at a crucial period for hardly four years. He proved to be an outstanding and capable administrator. He made the Ahmedabad municipality a model of municipalities. Many years later, in 1948 Vallabhbhai himself mentioned the "unalloyed happiness" he had had in the task which he
performed during that period in the municipality. It proved for him a training in which he gained invaluable experience. By rousing political consciousness among the citizens, arranging better civic amenities, objecting to the style of working of British municipal officers, Sardar directed the municipal demand to national platform for the freedom of the country and unification thereafter. Whenever he was engaged in any activity of the municipality, he aimed at the ultimate goal of nation building. He concentrated on the municipal affairs solely and emerged as a national leader from the plane of civic leadership.

In the subsequent years of his political career, Sardar pursued the same policy towards nation building. Whatever task he had taken in his hand, he was determined to see it through and directed the activities towards national solidarity. The colourful part of his career started with satyagraha in various places like Borsad, Bardoli and Nagpur, through which he could kindle the light of national consciousness in the minds of the peasants through mass participation against the atrocities of the British rule. He realised that under the bondage of the British Crown, the progress of the country and national growth were poor and for the purpose of prosperity and identity, the country should come out of the shackles of slavery.

His sincere efforts and active involvement in the struggle for freedom, speak for themselves and reveal his views on nation building through popular movement from grass roots level.
In the process of rousing the mass consciousness, Sardar realised that the freedom of the country would not be achieved without its partition into India and Pakistan. Despite his reluctance for the division of the country, he accepted it with the idea that he would be able to build it up as a single united nation. The partition of the country was a fait accompli and Sardar accepted it from a realistic consideration. He made it a point to develop the divided part into a distinct identity.

For the development of the country and directing it towards national solidarity, Sardar realised the necessity of a strong impartial and loyal army of civil servants who could maintain peace and order on the domestic front. As regards the minorities in India, he was convinced that they should be assured of their rights and security. He believed that certain basic fundamental rights were a must for the citizens of a democratic nation. He also realised that before the divided India could dream of further growth, the uprooted refugees were to be settled. In short, Sardar was perhaps planning of a contented civil service and a strong national party as the two instruments which would help him to go ahead confidently in his task of nation building.

Sardar's speedy and tactful handling of the princely states has left a deep impression in Indian history. His views with regard to Indian native states, were very clear. He worked hard to get these states merged in the Indian Union and contribute towards overall national progress. Historians have ranked him as a great politician, specially devoted to national unity
A critic has observed:

"If Sardar Patel diagnosed the disease in India's body politic, he prescribed the remedy as well. This is only one way how India can overcome the perils confronting her. It is this India's millions must be united and stand solidly by the National Government." 18

Even Sardar himself pointed out the importance of the task of nation building. In his words:

"Sink all your petty personal interests in the larger interests of the country and recapture for India the glory which was hers in the past." 19

In the course of his political career at every level, he attempted to see the nation being built up on strong base. In whatever field he worked, he put all his energies and skills to achieve the ultimate goal of national prosperity.

He viewed every task from the viewpoint of national development and did not attempt anything piece-meal but in totality.

His activities were also concentrated in partition and other allied matters as detailed in subsequent chapters. Though he was not officially responsible for foreign relations, economic and industrial growth, his speeches had been directed towards these aspects of nation building. Sardar's speech of July, 1947 speaks of his great confidence in the task the Congress leaders had undertaken. He said:

"We are at a momentous stage in the history of India. By common endeavour, we can raise the country to a new greatness while lack of unity will expose us to fresh calamities." 20

His conviction has further been demonstrated in the following words:

"We must build up our resources in those foreign currencies which we solely need for our industrial effort... We must create a sense of confidence both in the investor and in those on whom will fall the great national duty of utilising investments...."21

Though Sardar was not directly connected with social and economic aspects of nation building, he was fully aware of the importance of such social and economic aspects which played a vital role in the growth and uplift of the country. His speeches reported in the press from time to time revealed his convictions. As Home Minister, these aspects were not part of Sardar's responsibility; but with his foresight, he brought the country towards a greater unity in the following years. He was, however, mainly engaged in the political integration of the country. By adopting such steps necessary for administrative stability of the country, Sardar directed the new born nation towards greater progress. He could achieve much, even in a short period after independence. His speech in Madras on February 23, 1949 reflects his mind. He said:

"Free India is only a child of a year and a half.... We have to feed, clothe and strengthen it properly. It is our great good fortune that we have here a rare opportunity to build our country in our own fashion. History will record whatever we are doing today."22

Partition of India and Rehabilitation of Refugees:

The progress of nation building which started with mass participation in the Congress movement and ended eventually with the establishment of a strong constitution, suffered a set back on account of an abnormal situation, arising out of violence and the influx of refugees from the Punjab and East Bengal. Unless the situation was brought under control and peace was established, the country would have been threatened with a civil war, leading to disintegration of the country and invasion by third world super power. The situation became worse due to violent conditions prevailing in Delhi, the capital of country. The stability of the new-born free India was completely shaken and it was absolutely necessary to take a serious stock of the situation, contain the violence, establish peace and ensure security of the citizens. Sardar did not like partition, but he had to accept it ultimately. Even he failed to understand why Muslim League wanted a partition of the country. At last when there was no alternative, he had to accept it with reluctance. But he pointed out that the political integrity of the newly born India had to be defended even with last drop of blood.

Sardar, with his long experience, could realise the importance of immediate administrative action required to come out of the dangerous conditions, so as to establish stability.

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and integrity of the country. Riots were rampant in East Punjab, West Bengal and Delhi and the long queue of refugees with tearful eyes, posed a big threat to the economy of the country. Sardar's opinion was that the Muslims who had no allegiance to Indian union and wanted to go to Pakistan, should be allowed free and peaceful passage in order to avoid any further trouble and chaos in the country. For the incoming refugees from Pakistan, he arranged for establishment of camps, security and sanitation, food and clothing. He thus could bring back the confidence in their minds and those refugees also ultimately merged into the Indian nation. Though the Hindus in India wanted to retaliate against the arson, looting and murder of Hindus in Pakistan, Sardar stopped them from violent action as he knew that counter action would not help in consolidation of the country; on the contrary, it would rather aggravate the violence and the situation would be out of control. He warned:

"Violence must be given up. In unity there is strength and prosperity. There must be total elimination of violence, for the forces of law and order are there to deal with any antisocial elements..." 24

The conditions in Delhi were very critical and at that juncture, Sardar with his wit and efficient tackling could save Delhi from the hands of hooligans. In fact, Delhi turned out to a battleground between the Hindus and the Muslims. On the other hand, the refugees coming from West Punjab were

narrating the inhuman torture made on them which infuriated the Hindus and situation became more violent. The Muslims in Delhi gathered arms and weapons and created a number of pockets and formed strategic defence camps. Nehru got very much moved in such a situation and informed Sardar about it, but Sardar, in a cool manner, formed his strategy and controlled the situation nicely and conditions became normal in a short while. Arrangements were also made to rehabilitate the refugees by giving land in East Punjab. Thus, by saving the capital of the country from a breakdown, Sardar made his greatest feat in country's consolidation. A critical situation tackled judiciously led the country towards nation building.

Sardar and Party Building

For the purpose of developing a country as a nation, there must be a strong central government with firm determination. The political party should be strong enough and dedicated to the cause of the country. Sardar realised that as a first step towards developing his country, it should be his duty to strengthen the party machinery. He was an able administrator and from the time he joined the Congress party, he showed promises. Ultimately, through his own skill and sincerity, he could rise to the topmost position in the Congress party.

During the freedom struggle, the Congress party acted as the instrument of the freedom movement and was organising the masses against the British government. But, after the partition,

25. Nehru's letter to Sardar dated 9-10-47 - Courtesy to Maniben Patel,
The complete administration of the country fell upon the Congress party. It was very much important that to maintain the national unity and security, the party should be made disciplined and should be protected from disintegration. From the task of freedom fighting, the party's responsibility was transferred to administration and consolidation of the country's resources towards development. It was a critical stage of transition and Sardar, with his wide experience in administration, could keep the party together. Wherever there was a problem, he could solve the same, either through an amicable settlement or through his strong action. It was indeed a great task and Sardar did this successfully. His action helped the country to march towards prosperity. V.D. Mahajan observes:

"He had also full control over the Congress party machine and its volunteer organisations. Through them he kept a careful eye on and personal touch with the state ministries as also party activities in the states." 26

Sardar was undoubtedly a rare character, without whom the building up of an Indian nation would have been impossible. Leaders of the various political groups in the country have openly accepted this. After Sardar's death, Nehru said in the parliament in his tribute to him:

"It is a great story as all of us know, as the whole country knows, and history will record it in many pages, call him the builder and consolidator of the new India and say many things about him..." 27

G.S. Bajpai described Sardar as a great patriot, a great administrator and a great man. His personality, more than anyone else, constituted the sheet-anchor of the country's internal and external security. Through his statesmanship and leadership, Sardar could sail the country's boat out of stormy winds. The Manchester Guardian wrote:

"...Patel was not only the organizer for the fight for freedom, but also architect of the new state when the fight was over...."28

Reorganisation of Civil Service:

Whether in peace or in war, the administrative machinery of a country should be disciplined and well organised, to avoid any calamity or disintegration. The administrators are controlled by the party leaders and the political objectives are attained through the actions taken by those administrators as per the instructions of party leaders. Through an efficient administrative service, the government can lead the country to prosperity.

The situation prevailing in India during post independence period, needed a strong administrative machinery for controlling riots and other allied problems, due to influx of refugees. The country had to prepare for any attack from the neighbouring countries. Sardar realised the importance of administrative machinery for country's unity and attempted to retain the old civil servants into the country's administration by guaranteeing

them certain special privileges. The country was in need of able administrators at all levels but suitable cadres were not available. Unless the country is controlled by efficient and systematic administration, the progress is bound to be halted. Though his attempt in retaining the civil servants was strongly criticized and opposed, Sardar proceeded with his own plan and advocated for the privileges for the civil servants. He pointed out that civil servants formed the basic structure of the administration and to have a united India and to lead the country to prosperity, a strong and efficient administration could be built up only through the faithful contribution of the civil servants. Sardar's attempt to protect the interests of civil servants and to create an all-Indian administrative and allied services was a successful step towards nationbuilding.

As C.P. Bhambri said:

"Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel has defended the idea of services for it provided unity to the country, efficiency in administration.... He said: Many of them with whom I have worked I have no hesitation in saying that they are as patriotic as loyal and as sincere as myself." 30

**Sardar's Ideas on Fundamental Rights:**

The citizens of a country constitute the basic structure of a nation. The inhabitants of any state, irrespective of caste, creed or religion, should feel themselves as an inseparable constituent of the country and such a feeling, when comes

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spontaneously, leads the country towards consolidation of masses. In order to develop confidence in the minds of the citizens, the government should guarantee certain rights called fundamental rights, through which the citizens combine under the banner of democracy, equality and fraternity.

Sardar knew that to gain confidence of the Indian masses, he should look after the interest of the masses and guarantee certain fundamental rights. He felt it necessary to arrange for a constitutional guarantee of fundamental rights. Sardar made his base work for modernisation of the country, by unifying the people as a nation.

The root of fundamental rights for the citizens of India was planted as early as 1931 in Karachi Congress where Sardar was the President. Through the various stages of freedom struggle, the demand for a constitution to be framed by the Indians, was voiced by the Congress and Sardar was one of the leaders fighting for such rights.

With the dawn of freedom, when the country was to be built with political stability, economic growth and social integration, into a nation, Sardar, as the Chairman of the committee for fundamental rights of the Constituent Assembly, framed, with the consent of other members, the various clauses on fundamental rights, thereafter included in the constitution. With the guarantee of freedom of speech, right to property, freedom of religion and other clauses on fundamental rights, the complete population of the country came under one umbrella, in spite of
difference in caste, creed and religion, as all of them obtained the right to exercise these fundamental rights equally. Secularism was thus established in Indian society which formed a covalent bond among the masses.

Thus advocating for fundamental rights for the citizens of India, Sardar led the country towards nation building. Democratic countries like America, England have guaranteed certain fundamental rights written or unwritten to their citizens by virtue of which those countries have gained prosperity and international recognition. A step in such direction, was also taken in India through Sardar's efforts.

Sardar's Concern for Minorities:

India is a country comprising people of different religions namely Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians. While the Hindus constitute the majority of the population, the other communities are minorities. To bring all the citizens into one main stream, protecting at the same time minorities from extinction was a difficult task. The situation prevailing at the time of independence was one of violence. There were riots between Hindus and Muslims. The minority communities did not feel safe because of the violence committed by the majority community and so there was political instability in the country.

At such a critical juncture, when the country passed through a period of instability, Sardar realised that the interests of the minorities need to be protected so that they feel secured. He considered Hindus, Muslims and others as brethren and made them sink their differences so that they
could cooperate with the government in its difficult task of strengthening the unity of the country. The constitutional guarantees for the minorities, however, were not made permanent but for a period till those minorities could come up to the level of the majority communities in education, cultural and social status and the period was fixed as ten years initially, after which the situation would be further reviewed. Sardar thus tried to bring back confidence in the mind of the minorities so that they could forget the differences and feel well protected and accordingly could work for the growth of the country. Guarantee to the minorities was a step towards nation building. What a conviction Sardar had in this regard has been evident from his words:

"For unity, we must forget differences of caste and creed and remember that we all are Indians and all equal. There can be no distinction between man and man in a free country. All must have equal opportunities, equal right and equal responsibilities." 31

Integration of Princely States and Political Consolidation in India:

On the eve of freedom, India was full of five hundred and odd princely States and unless those states were merged into the Union of India, the dream of the political leaders would not have come true. The princely states were powerful enough to pose a threat to the integrity of the country. A large area of the country was occupied by the princely states and the princes were let loose by the British Government. They were

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free to join either India or Pakistan with the lapse of paramountcy. The princes, tried to maintain their sovereignty and depending on the situation, they thought of getting themselves aligned with either of the unions. Though most of these states were not so vulnerable, greatest threat came from Hyderabad, Kashmir and Junagadh.

Sardar took a stock of the situation dealt with those princely states wisely and made them join the Union of India. It is unimaginable how without having even the least of bloodshed, complete integration of the princely States could be achieved. It is needless to mention that unless the native states were integrated into the dominion of India, the country could not have thought of working forward to build up a strong Indian nation. Sardar's action, through which all the princely states, except a few, fell in line and responded to his magic call, will remain as a remarkable event in the history of the world. The step was essential for the unity of the country and the biggest problem in the process of nation building was solved. Unity of a country is a primary requirement for its marching towards nation building and Sardar's contribution, in this regard, cannot be compared with that of any other contemporary politician of the world at that time. In the forties, various European colonies started getting freedom and consequently there emerged a number of new Afro-Asian nations. The process of integration of the Indian states was smooth and without any interference from any outside power except in case of Kashmir.
where Sardar was not responsible. Unity was Sardar's motto as a part of nation building. He has rightly observed:

"Now for the first time India is integrated and bigger than even before in history. This we have to consolidate and our freedom must be made so deep-rooted as to be unshakable...."32

The role of Sardar in dealing with princely states was so remarkable that even Mahatma Gandhi wrote:

"The task of dealing with the princes was truly formidable, but I am convinced that Sardar was the only man who could have coped with it."33

J.N. Sahani has compared Sardar with Bismarck of Germany and contended that Sardar could integrate all the princely states in India within two or three years, whereas, Bismarck took a decade to consolidate Germany. The unity of India and the political map, as on today, is due to the nation building activity of Sardar.

(9) Importance of The Study:

The steps taken by Sardar for the consolidation of the country helped in nation building in India. Through his activities in various spheres, whether in tackling the party problems, integration of states, establishing confidence in the minds of citizens or in the basic problem of administration, he came out with definite and remarkable results and avoided any pitfalls.

32. Ibid - Speech at the inauguration of the Rajasthan Union at Jaipur on March, 30, 1949, Opp. Cit. P. 44.

The pace of nation building, which started from the time of struggle for independence, is still in motion in our country.

Nation building has by now assumed much bigger dimensions in India, as in any other developing country. With the establishment of a democratic government and economic growth, the country has to face a different situation in maintaining the growth of the nation. The process of nation building in the newly emerging nation - states of Asia and Africa has assumed a different dimension than the European and American countries. Those new born states require more attention in internal consolidation, economic and social growth and thus the nation building in those countries assumes the role of an internal development and has no serious impact in international politics till such time those states attain the status of full fledged nation of the world. The nation building in India also assumed the role of domestic political affair.

The present day politics of the country has directed the nation building activity towards the different strata of the society in performing the tasks intended to be done by them. The different socio-economic groups in the country consist of modern elites, working classes and the backward classes. The interaction among these classes, leading to national development, results in efficient performance of nation building. In addition to that the political system is aimed at creating a well organised pressure groups in the society. The political party in power can play the role of nation building, when it can
dominate over the pressure group. The success of Congress led by Mrs. Indira Gandhi is due to her ability to manoeuvre over the pressure group. With her able leadership country is poised for further advancement towards national consolidation.  

The new born states in the Afro-Asian countries have assumed a new dimension and are trying to consolidate and develop their economic, social and political position in the arena of world politics. The growth in India after the attainment of the independence is the result of a process set forth by able leaders like Sardar Patel and others in the prepartition period. Sardar, during his political career took various steps for the consolidation of the country which subsequently led to the nation building. His activities in different spheres like party problems, integration of states, homogenisation of the population, streamlining the administration have a far fetched impact on the growth and development of the country. The pace of nation building set forth by him has become a spontaneous process in the country's growth and stability. 

A number of studies have been done on Sardar's contribution to the Indian politics. His political activity and its impact on the country's prosperity have been studied by various political scholars and they projected him as an important personality of our country. His contribution to the field of nation building is one more attempt to visualise his importance in

34. Phagmbri C.P. - "Indian Political System - legitimacy depends on performance" - The Times of India, June 2, 1980, p.8. (Ahmedabad)
Indian polity. The importance of studying the dynamics of nation building is gaining ground very fast. Hence, Sardar's contribution to the nation building process in India should be considered in a totality taking into account the implications of the various steps he had undertaken and analysing those eventualities in an integrated manner. It is to be realised that Sardar's activities and achievement as viewed from the point of nation building process has not been sufficiently projected and appreciated and therefore it is necessary to undertake such study which is of crucial importance in the political field.