

**THE RELATIONS OF SARDAR PATEL AND MAULANA AZAD
WITH REFERENCE TO THE COMMUNAL UNITY**

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Every Country has its own tale of pride. The stories of sacrifice and inspiration are there. In our country, the Indians had contributed the great role in creating convenient circumstances for the British empowerment. Its consequences are known to us. Our freedom had got crushed under the feet the British power. And due to this, we had to suffer a lot of slavery for a long time.¹

The poet Umashankar Joshi has said, “Our country got independence, is that enough?” Such question arises in our mind while reading the life sketch of great personalities.²

Today, the great freedom fighters are not forgotten, we still remember the three warriors lovingly. Mahatma Gandhi is one of them. After him, the two who people still remember with great honour are Javaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel. They had merely followed the same slogan of brotherhood which Gandhiji had believed in. Sardar Patel was quick and firm implementing plans. He had a great love for the Hindus of India. And such Muslim leader was there, he was Abul Kalam Azad.³

The Muslim leaders had great love and trust in Hindu leader which is shown by entitling Vallabhbhai Patel as ‘Sardar’ by the Muslims. As a part of non-cooperation movement, Gandhiji decided to implement Savinay Kanunbhang in Bardoli of Surat district and Vallabhbhai became Sardar Patel. During Bardoli Satyagrah, the unity of Hindu and Muslim had been a great base of movement. The Muslim leader, Imam Saheb had played a great role in bringing awakening and enthusiasm in the Muslims. Imam Saheb never failed in observing fasts since he was 12 years old. During this movement, though Imam Saheb had to visit different places, he observed fast for the whole Ramzan month and delivered speeches in mosques of Valod of Bardoli tehsil. Impressed by the lectures of Imam Saheb, the Muslims took a great interest in this movement.⁴

Sardar Patel's entry in politics had been too late and at an old age as compared to Javaharlal Nehru and Maulan Azad. And after the Bardoli satyagrah, Sardar Patel stepped ahead at national lever.⁵

Sardar Patel had maintained the relational ship, faith and intimacy with the muslim people and leaders. In 1938, Subhashchandra Bose had declared himself to be a leader of the Congress Party upto the next year. Sardar Patel was pained at this decision of Subhashchandra Bose. There were many reasons of unhappiness. Gandhiji had been thinking to appoint Maulana Azad in place of Subhashchandra Bose and Sardar Patel had supported Gandhiji in this decision. Initially, Mauland Azad had been unwilling to be the president of Congress but in 1939, at Bardoli, he had affirmed after having discussion with Gandhiji.⁶

The election was to be held in 1939 and Maulana Azad must have been elected as president but returning to Mumbai after Bardoli meeting, Azad had changed his mind and informed Gandhiji about his opinion to cancel his appointment as president.⁷

After 1939, there was a question of presidentship of congress and Gandhiji still insisted Maulana Azad to be the president which was accepted with honour by Sardar Patel. During this time, Muslims had remained away from the congress due to the propoganda of muslim league. On 22nd and 24th of March, 1940, the resolution of Pakistan had been passed in Lahor conference. Due to this resolution, the orthodox muslims were attracted to newly formed nation Pakistan. To avoid these circumstances, get the muslim leaders be with the congress it was essential to elect muslim leader as the president of congress. It was the wish of Mahadevbhai that Sardar Patel becomes the president of congress. But keeping in mind the prevailing situation in our country, it was in the country's sake that Maulad Azad becomes the president of congress. To sustain Indian integrity, Sardar Patel himself appointed Maulana Azad as the president of Congress on 19th March, 1940 and understanding the feelings of Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad spoke on stage that the muslims are inevitable part of Indian integrity.⁸

Gandhiji had established peace checking the riots occurred on 17th January. Hence in Delhi and everywhere, people recited 'Gandhiji, live long' there were

many processions demonstrating communal unity. Maulana put some conditions when Gandhiji released fasts and with the agreement, there held a meeting in the evening that day. Three representatives from different regions were present because of in this three regions, there had been many communal riots. These representatives signed with assurance that they might take every step not to occur such riots again.⁹

Nagindas Sanghavi has written ‘There are two known accuse on Sardar Patel which has been described by Maulana Azad. May it be true or false? To what extent? During the partition of the country, Sardar Patel was the home minister and communal riots were occurred which could not be suppressed. Hence we can say he was communal. Secondly, at the time Gandhiji’s killing, Nehru and sardar were occupying power. The questions arise whether they let the killing be? Due to such questions, Sardar could be said communal. In short, there were many questions point towards Sardar Patel being communal but they could not ever prove him to be so.¹⁰

Sardar Patel’s statement proved best when Khan Abdul Gafar Khan, as Frontier’s Gandhi who was associated with an institution Khudai Khidmatdar and other Pathan brothers fought with the British violently. Sardar Patel had honoured Khan Abdul calling him on the stage publicly. In this meeting, the hall was echoed with the loud applaud of hindu and muslims. Their voice and applaud shows their love, integrity and feeling of unity. He proved to be soft and open minded.¹¹

Sardar Patel always gave priority to the nation. He had never inferred in the matter of hindu or muslim, concerning only the nation. Mohmad Ali Jhina had created communal differences with the help of the Britishers which Sardar knew well. Hence whenever Sardar got a chance to speech to the public, he exposed the policies of the Britishers knowing that the Britishers wanted to rule over India dividing the hindus and the muslims. He was expert in spoiling the plan of Britishers. He never had bitterness or partiality with the muslims in his speech or behaviour. In Navsari at Dudhiya Pond, Sardar gave a lecture and said that all hindus, muslims, shikhs and Christians have all been united at Allahabad and decided not to have communal voters bank. To this reaction, the Britishers sent message to the muslims to provide them better share than

the hindus and urged the muslims not to heed to the hindus. In short, it has been shown that Sardar Patel worked for the unity of hindu and muslims.¹²

Maulana Azad has cleared many things to sardar Patel in his letter of resignation from Cabinet on 17th Junr,1950. Sardar Patel was one of the three closest friend of Maulana. In a period of 30 years, there were many differences in opinion but never in tussle. This letter was the proof of the relationship of both. This was Azad's letter to Sardar asking for pardon which contained the feelings between the both.¹³

Raffiq Zakariya has written in his book that the non-cooperation movement has been stopped by Gandhiji because of the Chauri chaura incident. Here a mob had forcefully entered the police station and burnt alive the policemen. As a result, the movement was stopped. Simultaneously, the no tax movement of Bardoli was also left over. This struggle was revived under the leadership of Sardar patel. This was so successful fight that it became an important one in India's freedom struggles. This brought hindus and muslims closer. Maulana Shaukat Ali and Maulavi Mohmad Baloch were impressed with environment of brotherhood and unity when they went to meet sardar Patel at Bardoli. Only due to being impartial, Sardar was favourite among the hindus and the muslims. Sardar has worked in one movement with the muslims and always took great care in maintaining the intimacy between the hindus and muslims.¹⁴

Dr. Vishwambhar Nath Pandey says that there were national who accused Sardar Patel of creating communal riots. The rigid muslim leaders declared him to be communal and defiled him with the support of other such leaders. So whenever Vallabhbhai was highlighted as a great leader, he was also looked as communal.

The differences between Sardar Patel and Azad are known but they were never anti to each other. Mauland Azad has written in a letter that Sardar Patel is his one of the closest old friend and never willing to discontinue this relationship. These three people are Javaharlal Nehru, Sardar and Rajendra Prasad.¹⁵

In short we can say they were good friends though they had differences in their opinions. They were all close to one another in spite of internal differences. Though there were different in some matter, they were all national leaders and patriots.

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