



Patel: A Life

Rajmohan Gandhi

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Patel: A Life tells, for the first time, the full story of the life of Vallabhbhai, the ploughboy who helped liberate India and then, in 1947-9, weld her into one nation.

Built from correspondence and diaries, including the Sardar's letters and the remarkable diary kept by his daughter Maniben, PATEL is as authentic, intimate and complete an account as can be assembled.

"That there is today an India to think and talk about," President Rajendra Prasad wrote in May 1959, "is very largely due to Sardar Patel's statesmanship and firm administration." "Yet," added Prasad, "we are apt to ignore him."

If ignored, Sardar Patel is also missed. Troubled times engender a longing for the grip on India's affairs that Patel had. How he acquired that grip is part of PATEL's story.

A quarter-century after the selection of India's first premier, C. Rajagopalachari recalled the event and wrote: "Undoubtedly it would have been better if Nehru had been asked to be Foreign Minister and Patel made the Prime Minister."

Why did Nehru, with Gandhi's support, become Premier, and not Patel? Was Vallabhbhai anti-Muslim? What were his relationships with Maulana Azad, Nehru, Subhas Bose and the Mahatma? Why did he clash with the socialists?

How did he unify India? Why did he accept partition? Why, much earlier, did he exchange a life of comfort and riches for the struggle at Gandhi's side? These are only some of the questions answered as PATEL's diligently researched and frank narrative unfolds. Inquiring into Vallabhbhai's times as well as his life, PATEL becomes a segment of history.

Patel: A Life Details

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From Reader Review Patel: A Life for online ebook

Twisha says

Finally I get a chance to review this momentous work on Sardar Patel by none other than Rajmohan Gandhi. There is something poignant about the life of a man known as the 'iron man' of India. His legacy largely forgotten as he did not propagate the idea of making family a political affair, his contributions ignored by the very party he served with utmost dedication, he was sidelined by his guru, Mahatma and slighted by Nehru, his companion and colleague. But the India we see today, its integrity and sovereignty we are proud of, was impossible without this one man, he was at the front and center of the Indian struggle for Independence, an indefatigable soldier in the service of the nation, from the Bardoli Satyagrah to the integration of princely states to his wisdom on Kashmir issue and foresight on China, India could not have found a better statesman and Nehru, a more worthy opponent. Yes, even the 'Mahatma' had a blind side and who better than his grandson to rectify it so beautifully with this tribute to 'Sardar', whose stature in our history makes the tallest statues look small!

Ronak Patel says

After searching many books on Sardar, came through this book about him.

After reading this book, with no second thought I can say this is by far best book available on Sardar, his work and his life.

The author(grandson of Gandhi) has justified the boom and its contents and has been neutral in writing the book. No where I felt that anything but the facts have been reported rather than any preset information or prejudices.

The book takes your through Sardar life journey right from his childhood in Karamsad till his last breath in Bombay in 1950.

Must read for every Indian as in school history books, academicians haven't given justified space to this great man who has earned it.

Arvind says

One of the few (perhaps the only) biography of Sardar Patel worth reading. The author is (also) a historian and I have also read other works by him. There is simplicity of language and a strict chronological order is followed in an old-fashioned manner but found them consistently readable.

A couple of periods in between 1922-28 and 1939-45 bored me when he was in jail or there was a lull in Indian politics.

Mahesh Kumar says

One among the 3 people who shaped Significantly Shaped Modern India.

Someone who preferred to be A Man of Action. A pragmatist than ideologue.
Integrated 564 Princely States in 13 Months!

His demise left vacuum to Counter Nehru and balance his policies where required.

An Excellent work by RajMohan Gandhi!

Raj says

When it comes to record the lives of Indian leaders Vallabhbhai Patel is an unlucky one. Though he played the critical role in integrating the Indian states, the government after Nehru treated him with disdain. And they didn't even care to celebrate his centenary.

Hence the majestic and important biography from Gandhi's grandson is a tribute to that "Iron Man".

Rajmohan covers Patel's early life, how he got into nation's independence struggle, followed Gandhi's footsteps until 1947, gave up the chance to become India's first prime minister (though Rajmohan covers Gandhi and Patel's conversation regarding that in a paragraph, it is really a moving moment in the book), his iron will to bring all the princes into the fold. Patel's views on Kashmir was very interesting (didn't want to spoil it here, so read the book). His unquestioned loyalty to Gandhi made sure he was an able supporter of Nehru, though they were diagonally opposite in their politics.

Rajmohan's objective analysis of Patel brings the human side of the leader who dedicated his life to India.

Must read for anyone who wants to understand the Indian history during the period of 1900-1950.

Mitesh Patel says

This is an extraordinary account of the man, the myth and the legend who hasn't received enough credit he should have. This is purely due to the greed and jealousy of Nehru who continued to behave as a cry baby to derive concessions from MK Gandhi and in turn Patel suffered or instead he let himself suffer.

Ankit Chouksey says

A fitting biography of the iron man. Although I have not read any other biography of Sardar Patel, I liked it. The book maintains speed throughout excluding the little part in the middle. Author presents facts and historic records, while keeping his personal opinion to a bare minimum. You want to understand and appreciate the contribution of PATEL..go read this book.
