

Minutes of the State Council Meeting of the Swatantra Party, Maharashtra, held at Bombay on Saturday, the 27th April 1974 at 4.00 p.m.

State Council

An urgent meeting of the Swatantra Party, Maharashtra was held at the Party Office, Sassoon Building, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay on Saturday, the 27th April 1974 at 4. 00 p.m. The following members were present:

1. Mr. Madhu Mehta - Chairman
2. Mr. Parmanand Kejriwal
3. Mrs. Manorama Dandekar
4. Mr. Girish Munshi
5. Mr. Shaffi Pirzada
6. Mr. A.J.Pimenta.
7. Mr. Dhiraj Shah
8. Mr. K.B.Pande
9. Mr. Pramod Tejookava
10. Mr. Motilal Sharma,
11. Mr. G.S.Dhende
12. Mr. K.B.Magodia
13. Mr. L.B. Bharkhada
14. Mr. H.G. Vishnav
15. Mr. Y.A. Yazdani
16. Mr. B.R. More
17. Mr. Sumatilal Shah
18. Mr. Shaikh (Osmanabad)
19. Mr. Indukumar Thakkar
20. Mr. S.Ramachandran
21. Mr. K.H.Subramaniam
22. Mr. A.L. Saldhana
23. Mr. D.R. Nagda.
24. Mr. R.Ramakrishnan
25. Mr. G.V.Somaiva
26. Mr. Jitendra Dave
27. Mr. L.R.Sampat
28. Mrs. Sarla Datar
29. Mr. G.B.Sukhee
30. Mrs. Leela Sukhee
31. Mrs. Veena Mehta
32. Mr. M.R.Joshi
33. Mr. A.E. Tarapore
34. Mr. N.K. Jagtap
35. Mr. Jaiuddin Shaikh
36. Mr. Gulabrao Dodke
37. Mr. Zarir Mehta.
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Leave of absence to Mr. F.C. Cama, Vice-President and Mr. M.R. Masani was granted.

This meeting was specially convened to consider the proposed merger of our Party with the other democratic parties arising out of the National Executive's Resolution at the meeting held at Delhi on 6th and 7th April 1974 and the subsequent Press reports.

The General Secretary requested Mr. Madhu Mehta, Vice-President of the All-India Swatantra Party to brief the members about the merger issue.

Mr. Madhu Mehta explained to the members that at the meeting of the National Executive of the Party held on 6th and 7th April 1974 at Delhi, a two Party System in India was considered necessary in the changing political situation in the country. Establishing two Party system in the country, he said, was by no means an easy matter. The National Executive after lengthy deliberations came to the conclusion that possibilities of evolving a two party system should be explored. The subsequent Press report from Delhi afterwards that eight parties including the Swatantra Party had decided to merge a new party had taken him as well as Mr. Piloo Mody by surprise. He added that the National Headquarters had written to Mr. R. N. Singh Deo drawing his attention to the premature announcement. Mr. Mehta mentioned that Swatantra Party was formed with a clear cut programme and principles and doubted how it would be possible to undermine our own principles and work hand to hand with parties having different ideologies. He, however, invited the members to give their opinion and that the gist of the opinions of the members of the Maharashtra State Council should be submitted to National Executive. He reminded the members that merger of the Party cannot take place immediately and none of us should be carried away by the Press Reports which were not accurate. Mr. Mehta went on to say that this morning (27th April), there was a meeting between Mr. Piloo Mody, Mr. Masani and himself in which it was decided that no hasty plan of merger should be considered and that Mr. Piloo Mody should talk to Mr. Charan Singh and others to lay down minimum common programme on the basis of which close cooperation between the different parties could be contemplated.

Following are the views of the members .

1. Mrs. Dandekar: She did not favour our Party to merger with other parties. If other parties agree with our principles and ideologies, they should merge with us.
2. Mr. Parmanand Kejriwal. He was of the view that the Swatantra Party cannot make adjustment with the BKD, SSP and Utkal Congress and said that ours is a National Party, while BKD and Utkal Congress were regional ones. The aim of both Mr. Charan Singh and Mr. Biju Patnaik was well known and if these people are not given prominent positions in the merged Party, they would soon split away. He stated that the principles of our Party were important.
3. Mr. K. H. Subramaniam He said there were conflicting reports in Press. He fully agreed with the feelings expressed by Mr. Kejriwal. He did not favour merger.
4. Mrs. Datar. She was not in favour of the leadership of Mr. Charan Singh and Utkal Congress and stated that

4. Mrs. Sarla Datar: She did not like the leadership of BKD, SSP and Utkal Congress and stated that it may not be practicable to make any adjustments with these parties.
5. Mr. I.C. Thakkar. As a member of the National Executive, he attended the meeting at Delhi and it was true that the merger issue was discussed. But he was surprised with the newspaper reports that the eight Parties had agreed to merge. He added that he was ~~not in favour of merger and that the approach was also not proper.~~ *He was not like in favour of the merger or against it but* He held the view that the matter be left to the leaders.
6. Mr. D.R. Nagda. He was of the firm view that merger should take place.
7. Mr. N.K. Jagtap. He did not object to merger in principle and in the larger interest of the country but said that since the talks of merger were going on, this meeting should not decide against the merger at this stage.
8. Mr. G.B. Sukhee He was of the view that we might think of bringing Cong(O) to our fold, if they meet to our fundamental principle.
9. Mr. Vaishnav. Since ours is a National Party, merger should be based on agreed principles.
10. Mr. Sumatilal Shah His view was that under no circumstances, we should lose our identity. Swatantra Party was formed by leaders with certain ideologies and if a merger takes place, our Party will be completely out of the political scene of the country. Leaders should clearly think about the situation.
11. Mr. Ramachandran. He found no other alternative in the present situation, other than an immediate merger. He added we were going down day by day and found no scope for Swatantra Party to come up.
12. Mr. F.C. Cama Due to sudden sickness, he did not attend the meeting but sent a note to the President objecting to the merger. The note said that he and many of his friends joined the Swatantra Party because of its good principles and ideologies. He doubted whether the merged party would be able to do anything good.
13. Mr. Adi Tarapore Did not favour merger but cautioned that they should come out openly and improve the Party immediately as it was going down day by day.
14. Mrs. Veena Mehta She wanted other parties to come to us and we should not go to them.
15. Mr. Girish Munshi ^{Two} He had no objection to the Party system but the proposed merger of parties as appeared in the Press would not serve any useful purpose.

Having heard the views from members, Mr. Madhu Mehta concluded that we should prepare a gist of the discussions and submit the same to the National Executive, who may take up the matter in the General Council.

Madhu Mehta
Chairman.