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Gujarat Cong. (O) list on Saturday

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AHMEDABAD, January 4: In view of the uncertainty of the Swatantra Party joining the grand alliance, the Gujarat unit of the Congress (O) has convened its parliamentary board's meeting again on Saturday to finalise its list of candidates for the mid-term poll to the Lok Sabha.

The executive committee of the PCC (O) has also been called on the same day to finalise the election strategy and to set up the party's election machinery. The executive meeting will be attended by, among others, the State Cabinet Ministers and district panchayat presidents.

The Congress (O) hopes that the picture about the alliance will be clear by that time and it will be possible for it to finalise its list of candidates. According to sources close to the GPCC (O), the party has decided not to put up its candidates for the Lok Sabha seats won by the Swatantra nominees in the last general election.

The PCC (O)'s willingness to accommodate some Swatantra candidates was also indicated in the statement of Mr. Brahmakumar Bhat, secretary of the GPCC (O), who told reporters that he could not say whether the list of candidates submitted to the Central Parliamentary Board of his party would be accepted in "toto." "We will suggest names for all the 24 Lok Sabha constituencies in Gujarat," he said.

In addition to the seats to be allotted to the Swatantra Party in the State, the PCC (O) might have to concede one or two Lok Sabha seats to the Jana Sangh.

This was clear from the way the State unit of the Jana Sangh released its list of candidates within hours of the understanding reached in New Delhi among the national leaders of the Congress (O), the SSP and the Jana Sangh.

The Sangh has staked its claim to 16 Lok Sabha seats and has already released the name of five candidates—Mr. Keshubhai Patel (Rajkot), Mr. Vasant Gajendragadkar (Ahmedabad),

Mr. Hemendrakumar Radia (Junagadh), Mr. Shambhu Maharaja (Dhanuoka) and Mr. Kanjibhai Patel (Bulsar).

The Sangh will also contest the Bhavnagar, Sabarkantha and Mandvi seats.

A spokesman of the party said the central parliamentary board had already approved these names.

Morarji hopeful of Swat. joining front

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AHMEDABAD, January 4: While conceding that the mass resignations from the GPCC (O) over the alliance issue had caused a set-back to the Congress (O), Mr. Morarji Desai said here today his party had not been "crippled" on account of this.

Mr. Desai said that it would be known only from the list of the party's nominees for the Lok Sabha election from Gujarat whether he had carried the GPCC (O) with him or not.

Mr. Desai, who tried to mollify the opponents of the alliance during his day's stay in the city, refused to disclose the outcome of his talks with Mr. Gordhandas Chokhawala, Education Minister, and Mr. Madhavilal Shah, Deputy Agriculture Minister.

Mr. Desai also denied that he had sought any promise from Mr. Jhina-bhai Darji that the latter would not contest against him from the Surat constituency.

The former Deputy Prime Minister said he was optimistic about the Swatantra Party joining the electoral front. He said he would discuss the matter with Mr. Masani.

Asked about the differing ideologies and programmes of the SSP and the other allies, Mr. Desai said that they all had one common aim of removing Mrs. Gandhi from power. These parties should accommodate one another. "Some may have to give up extremism and some others conservatism," he said.

Mr. Desai said unnecessary at-

tempts were being made to defame the Jana Sangh. He did not believe that the Jana Sangh wanted India to wage a war against Pakistan.

He also said he was opposed to the idea of a confederation of India and Pakistan as suggested by the Swatantra Party. But differences between the Congress (O) and its allies on various issues, including the foreign policy, would not come in the way of the smooth functioning of a coalition government they might form at the Centre.

Asked whether he would like to join the Government or to work for the organisation if the front was returned to power, Mr. Desai said: "This question does not arise at present. However, I am ready for any contingency."