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Masani firm on quitting party posts

NEW DELHI, May 14: The Swatantra leader, Mr. M. R. Masani, has turned down the appeal of the central parliamentary board and the national executive of the party that he withdraw his resignation from these bodies.

Mr. Masani offered to resign from the membership of the parliamentary board and executive early in April following the conduct of some Swatantra Party men in the elections to the Rajya Sabha from Gujarat. Disobeying the party high command's directive, Gujarat Swatantra M.L.A.s set up their own candidate against the high command nominee and helped him win the election.

In his letter to the general secretary of the party, Mr. Dandekar, Mr. Masani said the reported "disciplinary action" initiated against six Swatantra members of Gujarat by the national executive was a mere "eyewash."

Mr. Masani feared that the Swatantra Party also was developing the same cynicism about the sanctity of the party's pledged word and the same contempt for the electorate which the Congress Party had been showing.

In these circumstances, he felt he could do more for the party and the maintenance of democratic processes by staying outside the executive and the parliamentary board. While he would continue to spread the party's principles both in Parliament and outside, Mr. Masani said he would also be free to give expression to the suppressed feelings of the rank and file, many of whom were not happy with the state of the party.—U.N.I.