

Swatantra Executive moves cautiously to avoid split

From Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, APRIL 14.—Obviously to avoid a major split in the party, the National Executive of the Swatantra Party has decided to move cautiously against the party members in Gujarat who defeated the party's official candidate in the Rajya Sabha election.

The Executive, which had over two hours debate on the question today, decided not to take action against these members as Mr. N. Dandekar, General Secretary at the party, explained that in secret voting it was "difficult to know who voted in what way."

Instead, the Executive decided to take action against the four members who had sponsored the rival candidate against the official party candidate and the member who had acted as the rival candidate's polling agent.

But the action in their case also would not be very severe now; they have been simply asked to explain within a fortnight why they had acted in this way. It is only after the receipt of their explanations as well as comments of the State Party President that the Executive would decide what further action would be taken against them. The rival candidate, Mr. U. N. Mahida, who had defeated the official candidate, has, however, been suspended from the party, a show cause notice has also been issued against him.

Open revolt

When a correspondent asked what action the Executive was taking against what he described the "open revolt" by a sizeable number of members of the State unit in the Gujarat Assembly, Mr. Dandekar said, "nothing except the action against these five gentlemen". He said that it was not an isolated case of indiscipline. It was the "climax of certain growing dissatisfaction" over the failure to consult the MLAs over issues like elections to Rajya Sabha, Council etc. He was now considering what procedure should be adopted for consultations.

Mr. Dandekar said that it was the unanimous opinion of the National Executive as well

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