

Swatantra decides to stay neutral in U.P. trial of strength

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THE Swatantra Party has decided to dissociate itself from the Samyukta Vidhayak Dal in U.P. and stay neutral in the trial of strength between the Congress and the SVD in the State Legislature.

There are seven Swatantra members in the U.P. Vidhan Sabha.

The General Secretary of the Swatantra Party, Mr. N. Dandekar, stated here at the conclusion of a two-day session at the party's Central Parliamentary Board and National Executive that his party had continued to support the SVD so long as Mr. Charan Singh was the Chief Minister.

Mr. Dandekar urged that some device ought to be found to determine whether the Congress or the SVD had the majority in the Assembly. He would prefer a meeting of the Assembly for this purpose within a constitutional arrangement.

The National Executive discussed its party position in Gujarat for over two hours and decided to suspend from the party Mr. U. N. Mahida, who had recently contested a Rajya Sabha seat against an officially-sponsored candidate. The executive called for an explanation from him as well as from four of Mr. Mahida's sponsors—the Thakore Sahab of Dhrol, Mr. Natwar Singh Solanki, Mr. Jamubhai Bhatt and Mr. Chunilal Vasava. Mr. Chandrakant Parekh, who worked as Mr. Mahida's election agent, has also been asked to explain why he

acted against the party's decision. Mr. C. C. Desai expressed his dissent from the majority decision of the executive.

GUJARAT EPISODE

Mr. Dandekar described the Gujarat episode as the climax of a growing sense of dissatisfaction among the State legislators about their role in party affairs. It was recognised by the National Executive that a well-established consultative machinery had to be developed. He was already in touch with the presidents and secretaries of the State units in this connection.

Consequent on the resignation of the State party leadership by Mr. Bhailabhai Patel, Mr. Jadedevsingh had been requested to accept leadership of the Gujarat Assembly Party.

The executive unanimously request-

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