

Integration of princely states was the most important challenge that India had to face after independence. Why?

Britain gave the princely states in India the options to join either India or Pakistan or to be independent. The Integration of princely states was a Herculean task and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was the Union Minister entrusted with this mission. He appointed V.P. Menon, a Keralite, as Secretary of the Department of States. Patel and V.P. Menon prepared an Instrument

of Accession, which stipulated that the princely states had to transfer their control over defence, external affairs



Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel



V.P. Menon

and information and communications to the Government of India. Following the diplomacy of the government and popular protests, majority of the princely states signed the Instrument of Accession and joined Indian Union. But some states such as Hyderabad, Kashmir and Junagarh resented. Finally they were also integrated into the Indian Union through conciliation talks and military interventions.