

Reimagining Ethical Governance in India: Revisiting Sardar Patel's Vision in the Era of Administrative Reforms

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Abstract: *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel played a vital role in building the administrative foundation of modern India. Known for his discipline, honesty, and strong decision-making, Patel believed that a good government must be built on the values of ethics, responsibility, and public welfare. This paper aims to understand how Sardar Patel's vision of governance can help India address current problems like corruption, delays in government work, and lack of trust in institutions. The objective of this research is to connect Patel's ideas with today's reform efforts such as the Right to Information Act, Lokpal, e-Governance, and Mission Karmayogi. By studying Patel's role in integrating princely states and shaping the Indian Civil Services, this paper shows how his commitment to national service and administrative ethics remains relevant even today. Key findings of the paper suggest that Patel's governance model was both people-centric and results-oriented. His actions were guided by moral strength, clarity of purpose, and the goal of building a strong and united nation. If applied today, his principles can help bring greater transparency, faster decision-making, and more responsible public service. This research also reflects on how ethical leadership is the need of the hour in both political and bureaucratic spaces. By drawing lessons from Patel's life, we can shape reforms that are not just policy-based but also value-based.*

Keywords: Sardar Patel, Ethical Governance, Administrative Reforms, Accountability, Indian Civil Services

1. Introduction

Why Sardar Patel's Vision Still Matters Today

When India became independent in August 1947, it faced enormous challenges right away. The country had to deal with the painful effects of Partition—violence, mass migration, and resettlement. On top of that, there were shortages of food, resources, and services. One of the biggest issues was integrating over 560 princely states into the Indian Union. These states were not required to join either India or Pakistan, and many considered staying independent. This situation could have broken the country apart before it even began. Sardar Patel stepped in to prevent that and helped unify the nation through a strong and practical administrative vision.¹

India's system of governance has deep roots. In ancient times, there were local village republics, as seen in Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, and powerful central empires like the Mauryas and Guptas.² Then came British rule, which brought a formal, rule-based bureaucracy and trained civil servants.³ After independence, India chose the path of democracy and tried to balance traditional values like ethical leadership and community spirit with modern ideas of efficiency and global competitiveness.

Even today, despite progress, India still struggles with issues like corruption, delays in public services, and falling trust in government.⁴ These problems show that something deeper might be wrong—perhaps a gap between our current systems and the ethical foundations on which they should stand. Policy fixes and technology alone may not be enough. What we might need is a return to core values like those Patel stood for.

Sardar Patel: Architect of Modern Indian Administration and His Core Philosophy of Governance:-

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, often called the “Iron Man of India,” played a vital role in shaping the country after independence. As India's first Home Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, he led the massive effort to support refugees during Partition, managed the difficult task of merging over 560 princely states into India, and helped set up the All India Services—earning him the title “patron saint of India's civil servants.”⁵ His leadership during this time helped lay the foundation for the administrative system we use today.

Patel strongly believed in values like honesty, discipline, integrity, and bold decision-making. He once said that integrity is the “bedrock” of public service—it's what earns the trust of the people and ensures that officials work for the public good. He didn't just say these things—he lived them. Even in his youth, Patel showed great self-discipline and initiative. He once asked, “If something needs to be done, why wait for others? Why not I?”⁶

His idea of good governance was clear: it should serve the people, focus on results, and be guided by moral strength. He reminded civil servants that they are the “servants of the people, not their masters,” and they must always work in a way that brings people along with them. For Patel, public trust wasn't just nice to have—it was necessary. Without trust, even the best reforms might fail because people won't support them. But when leaders act ethically and win trust, it leads to cooperation and better results. This creates a positive cycle: trust brings good governance, which builds more trust.

Sardar Patel's Foundational Principles of Ethical Governance:

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel deeply lived by the principles he believed in—honesty, integrity, discipline, and service to the people—and these remain guiding values for governance even today. He always said that civil servants must have “*impeccable integrity*” and be above all suspicion, stressing that they should put the public first and remain morally upright. His own life—from his disciplined student days to giving up a successful law career for national service—reflected these ideal. Patel also warned against an undisciplined bureaucracy, calling it “*probably the most dangerous thing*” for any country⁷. For him, discipline was not just about rules but about shared purpose and ethical action, and he never let personal opinions come before national interest. He believed civil servants were “*servants of the people and not masters*”, who must act with empathy, transparency, and public trust. As head of Ahmedabad Municipality (1924–1928), he led reforms to improve sanitation, health, roads, schools, and community life, making special efforts to uplift poor children through education and encouraging local participation, saying that ⁸“True democracy lies in the hands of the people”. His inclusive vision promoted balance between agriculture and industry, empowered rural areas, and supported equality in development. Patel’s leadership also showed how moral values can guide practical governance—he was tough when needed, yet used negotiation and unity to integrate over 560 princely states. He led farmer struggles like Kheda and Borsad with action, not just words, and managed disasters with empathy and speed. He believed in cooperative federalism, not forced uniformity, and worked for unity while respecting India’s diversity. Through simple, clear language, he built public trust and shared national dreams. His vision shows that ethical governance means being people-first, morally firm, and realistic—and that public trust is not just a result of good governance but the very foundation it must be built on.

Today’s Administrative Challenges and Why Patel Still Matters:

India’s current administrative system faces many serious problems. Widespread corruption, weak trust in institutions, delays in decision-making, and poor service delivery are just some of the issues that make it hard for the government to serve its people well.⁹ In such a difficult situation, it’s worth revisiting the ideas of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel—India’s first Deputy Prime Minister and the man behind the unification of the country. His thoughts on ethical leadership, fair recruitment, and people-first governance offer powerful lessons even today. His principles connect well with modern reforms like the Right to Information Act, Lokpal law, digital governance, and Mission Karmayogi.¹⁰ Patel’s values are not just inspiring—they are necessary to fix the system and make governance more transparent, accountable, and people-friendly. He believed that building a new India needed more than political unity—it needed an honest and united administrative system. His way of thinking was different from both the colonial style of administration and the ideas of many of his peers. Patel believed in strong institutions, but he also believed deeply in ethics and moral values. Speaking to new civil servants in Delhi on April 21, 1947, he said: “Your predecessors stayed away from the common people. Your duty now is to treat every citizen as your own.”¹¹

Key Ideas from Patel’s Governance Model:

Ethics and Integrity Come First

For Patel, good governance always began with ethics. He warned that power without moral responsibility leads to corruption. He once said, “Trust in an administrator’s word is his greatest asset.” That’s because good governance isn’t just about rules and power—it’s about being trusted and respected. He also believed that governance should come from a place of kindness. Helping the poor, caring for each other, and showing compassion were central to Indian culture in his view. That’s why he saw government service not just as a job, but as service to society.

Unity Through Diversity: Patel’s Vision in Action

Sardar Patel’s work in bringing the princely states into the Indian Union showed his rare ability to create unity without ignoring diversity. He used a smart mix of diplomacy and firmness, respect for local traditions, and a strong focus on national unity. His balanced approach—welcoming yet decisive—offers valuable lessons for today’s governance, especially when it comes to managing Centre-State relations and meeting regional demands. The *Instrument of Accession*, prepared by Patel and V.P. Menon, allowed princely states to join India voluntarily while keeping some of their rights, ensuring a smooth transition into the Union. It was a powerful example of leadership that combined thoughtful negotiation with bold action. It shows that even big challenges can be solved with patience, principles, and a clear vision.

Today’s Governance Challenges in India:

The Challenge of Corruption

Corruption remains one of India’s biggest problems in governance. India ranks 85th out of 180 countries on the Corruption Perception Index, showing that the issue is widespread and deeply rooted. It affects everything from politics to public services.¹² Corruption takes many forms—political favoritism, election fraud, misuse of government money, and officials asking for bribes. Since 2009, many major scandals have been linked to poor leadership, weak systems, and delays in justice.¹³

Why Corruption Keeps Coming Back

Despite new laws and anti-corruption bodies, corruption keeps coming back. This shows that the problem is not just about bad people—it’s about weak systems. Too many rules, confusing taxes, complicated procedures, and unclear laws make the system hard to follow and easy to misuse. On top of that, political loyalty often matters more than merit. Resources go to those with connections, not necessarily those who deserve them. Weak enforcement and delays in punishment encourage wrongdoers to take chances. The slow legal process, interference in investigation agencies, and light penalties create a culture where corruption is seen as low-risk.

A Crisis of Trust in Public Institutions

Another big problem is that people don’t trust government institutions anymore. Many citizens feel let down by politicians, public offices, and service systems. This leads to people avoiding government services, using shortcuts or informal ways, and losing faith in public promises. Surveys show that institutions like the army are highly trusted, but

politicians and political parties are not. This shows that people can tell the difference between institutions based on how well they perform and how honest they seem.¹⁴

Why Trust Matters

When people don't trust the system, they stop participating. They avoid voting, ignore policies, and stop giving feedback. This makes it hard for the government to run programs effectively or deliver services well. This lack of trust also affects public servants. If officers are always doubted, they may lose motivation and become afraid to try new ideas. In the long run, this weakens the entire system.

Administrative Delays and Bureaucratic Inefficiency

Administrative delays have become a serious issue in India, affecting both the country's economy and the day-to-day lives of citizens. These delays often happen because files move slowly, there are too many levels of approvals, rules are too complicated, and there's no real accountability for timely decisions. Experts believe this is not just about slow procedures — it reflects deeper problems like rigid bureaucratic culture and outdated institutional systems. One major problem is the reluctance to accept change. India's bureaucratic system is often unwilling to adopt reforms, even when political leaders push for them. This resistance usually stems from ideological rigidity and a long-standing fear of change, which blocks progress and weakens effective governance.

Impact on Economic Development

These delays also slow down India's economic growth and hurt the business environment. For example, it takes about 18 days to start a new business in India, while in China, it takes just 8 days. Also, businesses in the manufacturing sector must deal with over 6,700 compliance rules. These complications not only make it harder to invest in India but also create opportunities for corruption and bribery. The Economic Survey of India has admitted that these problems are real. It points out that manufacturing businesses are especially troubled by overlapping rules and procedures between the central and state governments¹⁵. These delays are not just annoying — they hold back the country's GDP and make India less competitive in the global market.

Service Delivery Challenges

Another big issue is poor service delivery, especially in areas where people depend heavily on public support. Problems include poor infrastructure, not enough staff, lack of user-friendly systems, and limited use of technology to improve services. People in rural and marginalized communities suffer the most because they rely on these services the most¹⁶.

The digital divide makes things worse. While online services and e-governance projects have improved, many people still can't access them due to poor internet, low digital literacy, or lack of devices¹⁷. This means large parts of the population are being left behind.

Contemporary Administrative Reforms: Progress and Limitations

Right to Information Act 2005: Making Governance Transparent

The Right to Information (RTI) Act of 2005 was a major step towards making the Indian government more open. It gives every citizen the right to ask for information from government offices, which helps increase transparency and accountability¹⁸. Since it came into effect, it has helped citizens get answers, uncover corruption, and improve government performance. Research shows that the RTI Act has been a success in improving democracy and making public officials more responsive. It has allowed people to learn how decisions are made in the government and has built more trust between citizens and government institutions.

Implementation Challenges

However, putting the RTI Act into practice has not been easy. Many public officials still resist it, and many citizens are not aware of how to use it. There are also issues like lack of resources, delays in replies, and inconsistent application across states. The quality of information provided varies widely.

Balancing transparency with the need for privacy and confidentiality is another challenge. Public Information Officers need better training, and simpler processes are needed to make the system work better¹⁹.

Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act 2013: A Step Toward Combating Corruption

The *Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013* was passed after a historic nationwide movement, popularly known as the **Jan Lokpal movement** led by Anna Hazare. This law aimed to tackle corruption in high offices by creating an independent institution — **the Lokpal** — which acts as a national watchdog to investigate allegations of corruption against public officials.

The **Lokpal** has the authority to investigate corruption cases involving top leaders, including the Prime Minister (with certain checks), central ministers, MPs, and senior bureaucrats. It also has the power to supervise the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in cases assigned to it and can recommend action like suspending or transferring officers accused of wrongdoing²⁰.

Challenges in Implementation

Despite the bold step of setting up Lokpal, its impact has remained limited. Delays in making the institution fully functional, lack of sufficient staff and budget, and the complicated nature of corruption cases have reduced its effectiveness so far. Since it's still a relatively new body, we're yet to see its full impact on the system. There's also a need to improve our investigation and judicial systems to make anti-corruption efforts more effective. At the state level, many **Lokayuktas** (state-level anti-corruption bodies) are still either inactive or lack proper authority and resources, making this a continuing challenge.

E-Governance: India's Digital Leap in Governance

India has taken major steps to improve governance by using technology. Initiatives like **Digital India**, **Aadhaar**, **Government e-Marketplace (GeM)**, and various online services are part of this effort. These programs aim to reduce delays, increase transparency, and make it easier for people to access government services²¹.

Launched in 2015, **Digital India** focuses on building digital infrastructure, expanding digital services, and promoting digital literacy. E-governance tools have already shown how technology can cut down on corruption, make systems more efficient, and bring services closer to people — especially in remote or rural areas.

Technology as a Tool for Accountability

Studies show that technology helps fight corruption by reducing the need for human involvement in routine processes. For example, real-time tracking, online applications, and automated approvals limit the chances of bribery and favoritism.

Digital tools like **Aadhaar-based attendance systems**, **e-Office platforms**, and **online tendering** have made government operations more open and accountable. Many welfare schemes now run more smoothly because of these digital solutions, helping ensure benefits reach the right people without leakage.

Mission Karmayogi: A New Path for Civil Services

Launched in 2020, **Mission Karmayogi** is India's big push to reform the civil services. The aim is to build a pool of skilled, ethical, and citizen-friendly civil servants who are ready to meet today's challenges. It promotes **continuous learning**, **behavioral transformation**, and **performance-based roles**²².

Key components of this mission include the **iGOT (Integrated Government Online Training)** platform, which offers role-based training for government employees; a new **competency framework**; and improved systems to evaluate performance. The focus has shifted from rule-based to **role-based governance**, emphasizing the needs of citizens over bureaucratic formalities.

Linking Back to Sardar Patel's Vision: Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel believed that civil servants should be guardians of the public interest — honest, capable, and committed. **Mission Karmayogi** reflects this vision by aiming to develop "Karmayogis" — officials who serve with a sense of duty and integrity. The institutional design of Mission Karmayogi — such as the **Prime Minister's Public Human Resource Council** and **Capacity Building Commission** — supports long-term reforms and mirrors Patel's belief in strong institutions for a strong nation.

Connecting Patel's Vision with Contemporary Reforms:-

Conceptual Framework: Sardar Patel's Governance Ideals and Today's Administrative Reforms

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel envisioned a civil service rooted in **ethics, competence, and commitment to public welfare**. His thoughts continue to inspire ongoing administrative reforms in India. By revisiting Patel's values in the light of

present-day governance needs, we find a meaningful path toward building an effective and morally upright administration.

Ethical Leadership and Value-Based Governance

Patel believed that civil servants should not only be skilled but also **morally courageous** and ethically sound. This perspective remains highly relevant in today's discourse on public service. Scholars today stress that **integrity, accountability, empathy, and social justice** are central to good governance²³. These qualities strongly reflect Patel's expectation that administrators uphold **high moral standards** and work with a deep sense of responsibility.

Institutional Ethics and Accountability Mechanisms

Patel's approach to ethics wasn't limited to individuals; he believed that **institutions themselves must reflect ethical values**. This begins with leadership. Leaders, in Patel's view, must model ethical behavior and ensure accountability at every level. Today, we see this idea in action through **codes of conduct, ethics committees, and transparency mechanisms**—all aimed at embedding ethical behavior within the structure of governance. Such institutional frameworks reinforce a culture where doing the right thing is expected, not exceptional.

Merit-Based Administration and Capacity Building

Patel strongly supported **merit-based recruitment and professional training**, ensuring that civil servants serve the nation with dedication and capability. This vision finds reflection in modern reforms like **Mission Karmayogi**, which promotes structured learning and skill development for bureaucrats. Today's performance-based systems and **adaptive governance models** echo Patel's philosophy—strong yet flexible, capable of responding to complex challenges without losing ethical grounding.

Competency-Based Development and Modern Learning

The **competency-based training approach** of Mission Karmayogi represents Patel's belief that civil servants must continuously evolve in terms of their **skills, mindset, and values**. This modern initiative emphasizes **role-based learning** and lifelong capacity building, much like Patel's ideal of adaptable, dedicated officers. Moreover, combining **technology with training** aligns with Patel's pragmatic vision—embracing innovation while staying rooted in ethical principles²⁴.

People-Centric Governance and Public Service Delivery

One of Patel's core messages was that **administrators must be accessible to the common people**. His reminder that "the lowliest of the people should have access to you" highlights his belief in **inclusive and responsive governance**. Present-day initiatives such as the **RTI Act, digital governance platforms, and e-services** carry forward this vision by reducing barriers and enhancing transparency in public service. These reforms are steps toward making government more **citizen-focused**, responsive, and accountable—just as Patel had imagined.

Transparency and Accountability

Sardar Patel strongly believed that governance must be open and accountable to the people. Today, this idea is seen clearly

in initiatives like the Right to Information (RTI) Act, which gives people the right to ask questions and demand clarity from the government. Patel understood that for democracy to work, citizens must have access to information, and governments must be answerable to them.

Digital technology has made this even more powerful. Platforms now allow services and information to be shared instantly, reducing delays and making the government more transparent. These tools help reduce corruption, give people direct access to services, and limit unnecessary control by officials⁴⁶.

National Integration and Federalism

Patel believed deeply in unity, but not at the cost of diversity. His efforts to unite the princely states into one India show how it's possible to bring people together without erasing their unique cultures. He proved that strong leadership, with respect for differences, can create real unity.

Even today, when we face challenges between the Centre and the states or between different regions and communities, Patel's balanced approach is highly relevant. He believed in giving respect while expecting commitment to national goals — a principle that can guide federal cooperation even now.

Combating Corruption Through Ethical Leadership

Patel did not believe that laws alone could stop corruption. He believed the key lay in ethical leadership — in administrators who act with character and honesty. Instead of just punishing the corrupt, Patel focused on creating a culture where being honest is the norm.

His thinking shows that we need both deterrents and incentives for good behavior. When people in power see themselves as public servants, not as people chasing personal gain, corruption loses its roots.

Institutional Integrity

For Patel, institutions must stand firm in their purpose, no matter the pressures they face. His vision was of systems that work fairly, serve the people, and do not bend under political or personal influence. This idea is especially important today, when we are trying to create strong anti-corruption systems. Modern India's efforts to build independent bodies and transparent systems show how his ideas are still shaping our path. But these structures need leaders like Patel — firm, ethical, and dedicated to the public good²⁵.

Building Public Trust Through Responsive Governance

Patel always stayed close to the people. He believed administrators must listen, understand, and serve citizens — not just rule them. His people-first approach is key to earning trust.

Today's reforms, such as involving people in decisions and improving service delivery, reflect this very idea. Public trust grows when governments are seen as caring, competent, and honest.

Communication and Engagement

Patel had a clear, honest way of talking to people. He could simplify complex issues and build trust by being direct and

transparent. His way of engaging people helped create consensus, even during tough times.

Modern tools like digital feedback platforms and open communication channels continue his legacy. While technology has improved reach, the human touch Patel valued still remains crucial.

Improving Administrative Efficiency Through Strong Leadership

Patel's leadership was not just about vision; it was about getting things done. He believed in setting clear goals, watching over their implementation, and holding people accountable. His work ethic pushed the administration to deliver results.

Even today, when we push for faster service delivery and efficient administration, Patel's focus on strong, result-oriented leadership remains deeply relevant. His belief that action must follow vision is something we still need²⁶.

Organizational Culture

Sardar Patel strongly believed in building an organizational culture where civil servants share common values and a united sense of purpose. He focused on developing a sense of belonging and high standards among administrators. This idea is still highly relevant today, especially when we look at reforms like *Mission Karmayogi*, which goes beyond rules and systems to change how officials think and behave.

Today's capacity-building efforts are not just about new rules—they must also help civil servants adopt a service-oriented mindset. This broader and deeper approach echoes Patel's vision of not just changing procedures, but nurturing ethical attitudes.

Policy Recommendations: Implementing Patel's Vision in Today's India:-

1) Strengthening Ethical Infrastructure

Following Patel's ideals, modern India must build a stronger ethical foundation in administration. This could include developing clear codes of conduct, mandatory ethics training for officials, and well-functioning ethics committees. Patel believed that character-building was as important as policy-making. Along with systems for punishing unethical behavior, there should also be positive rewards for ethical service. Honoring honest public servants can inspire others and reflect Patel's vision of character-based leadership.

2) Leadership Development Programs

Patel's belief in ethical leadership means we must train leaders not just in skills but in values. Leadership programs should focus on public service ethics, moral courage, and a deep sense of duty. These programs must blend classroom learning with real-life practice. Leaders should be encouraged to take principled stands, negotiate fairly, and stay committed to the welfare of the people. In this way, India can develop future leaders who carry forward Patel's legacy of value-driven governance.

3) Institutional Reforms for Transparency and Accountability

Sardar Patel believed in building institutions that last. To carry this forward, India must strengthen systems that promote transparency and accountability. This includes better implementation of the Right to Information (RTI), empowering anti-corruption agencies, and increasing citizen involvement in governance. Institutions like Lokpal and vigilance commissions must be made independent and well-resourced. These bodies should be capable of investigating wrongdoings without fear or favor—just as Patel envisioned institutions rooted in fairness and strength.

4) Technology Integration

Patel was practical in using whatever tools were available for governance. In today's time, digital tools must be used to improve citizen services—such as e-governance, user-friendly digital portals, and data analytics to monitor performance. But this must be done without losing the human touch. Patel's idea of blending innovation with ethics reminds us that technology should serve people, not replace them. It should support, not dominate, the governance process.

5) Capacity Building and Professional Development

Developing civil servants who are skilled and value-driven requires a structured framework that includes both competencies and character. These frameworks should evolve with changing governance needs but must always stay rooted in core democratic values.

6) Building a Continuous Learning Culture

Patel believed in lifelong learning and adapting to changing situations. Therefore, civil servants should be encouraged to learn continuously—not just through formal training but also from practical experience, mistakes, and innovation. Training programs should stay connected with ground realities and offer opportunities for experimentation and honest reflection. This way, we can nurture public servants who are both capable and connected to the people they serve.

7) Federal Governance and Inter-Governmental Coordination

Patel's work on national integration teaches us how to balance state autonomy with national unity. Today, this lesson is critical for improving cooperation between the Centre and the States. We need regular platforms for dialogue, policy coordination, and joint problem-solving. Dispute-resolution mechanisms should promote consensus, not conflict. This reflects Patel's belief in harmony without losing the strength of unity.

8) Collaborative Governance Models

Patel's success in persuading diverse princely states to join India shows the power of collaborative governance. He combined firmness with flexibility and turned differences into strengths. Today's governance problems require similar collaboration—between governments, citizens, and private players²⁷. Modern governance should not rely on top-down control but on partnerships that bring different stakeholders together with shared goals.

2. Conclusion

Toward Ethical and Effective Governance

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's vision of ethical governance is still deeply relevant for solving the administrative challenges that India faces today. He believed in integrity, merit-based services, people-first thinking, and strong institutions. These values can guide how we shape our governance system even now. When we look closely, it becomes clear that many of our modern reform efforts are actually rooted in Patel's original thoughts on good administration.

India has taken big steps in reforming its administrative setup—whether it's the RTI Act, Lokpal, e-governance, or Mission Karmayogi. But these reforms will only reach their full potential if we also focus on ethical leadership and institutional commitment—the same qualities Patel stood for. He showed us how to blend strong morals with real-world effectiveness, how to keep institutions powerful but still people-sensitive, and how to dream for the nation while staying rooted in local needs.

Issues like corruption, lack of trust in government, delays, and poor services won't be solved just with new policies or technology. What we need is a revival of the ethical foundations of governance. Patel's life reminds us that real change starts with building character in individuals and a values-driven culture within our institutions.

The road ahead should not be about choosing between old and new. Instead, it should be about merging Patel's timeless values with today's modern tools. That means developing both ethical and technological infrastructure, building the skills of our civil servants along with strengthening our systems, and upholding democracy while making administration efficient. This is the kind of all-round reform that Patel's vision truly calls for—to ensure our governance works fairly, transparently, and with dignity for every citizen.

Patel proved that real leadership in public administration is possible—when there's a clear vision, strong ethics, practical know-how, and loyalty to institutions balanced with respect for democratic values. As India moves forward to become a developed country, Patel's principles offer both inspiration and a workable model to follow.

So, reimagining ethical governance is not about discarding today's reforms. It's about building them on the strong base of values, honesty, and service that Patel laid down. His ideas are not just of historical interest—they speak powerfully to today's needs. They remind us that good governance is not only about rules and systems, but about the people who lead and their unwavering commitment to public service.

Patel's vision teaches us that public trust is not just a happy outcome of good governance — it is a **prerequisite**. Without public faith, even the best policies can fail. His success in bringing people together — not just through law or force, but through **shared ideals and a collective dream** — remains a guiding lesson for today's administrators and leader

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