

THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION AGAINST PORTUGUESE RULE

Once the Goan parliamentarian Dr. Francisco Luis Gomes, somewhere in Paris said in 1861 the following;

‘ I belong to that race which composed the Mahabharata and invented chess.....but this nation which recorded her laws in poems and formulated her politics in the rules of a game, exists no longer. Here lies, chained in her own country exhausted from all her fecundity and in obscurity amidst the dazzling brilliance of her own glory.¹

The person who talked about his country with so much pride was none other than an Indian by heart, by mind and body, a Catholic by religion, a Portuguese by a quirk of history, a nationalist by spirit, who was dedicated to the cause of his country, who did not identify any difference between Goa and the rest of India and Portuguese in Goa. Can Goa be separated from rest of India just because Britishers ruled in India and Portuguese in Goa? The answer to this question is ‘no’. Goa was considered an integral part of India not only geographically but from all other aspects.

The entire liberation struggle of Goa, was influenced by the Indian National Movement, especially the last phase, beginning with the 18th June 1946 movement for civil liberties. Since Goa was considered as an integral part of India, people of Goa thought that without the liberation of Goa, the Indian struggle for Independence is incomplete. Thus the two main demands in the liberation struggle of Goa were; (i) Liberation of Goa from Portuguese colonial rule, and (ii) its integration with the Indian Union.

The feeling of unity with India is best expressed by Evagrio Jeorge in the following words. Commenting on the 18th June 1946 movement for civil liberties; he said,

¹ Gomes, Joquim (2000), *Indo-Portuguese Historical Encyclopaedia-Gorre do Combo da Casa Da India*, Goa, India: p. 3.

'If the movement wants civil liberties and a representative government; why tricolour flag and the slogans, identical with those used in the rest of India?

The thought that presides over this movement is the Indian thought. The spirit of these people continues to be, as it has been, purely Indian. The Goan people do not renounce the way to swaraj, they do not repudiate their great men, dead or alive of India. In the philosophical and the ideological field, they do not accept barriers within India. Meanwhile, it merely wants civil liberties and leaves the rest to the mercy of the very revolution that no one shall be able to impede'.²

In this chapter, I am going to attempt a synoptic account of the liberation struggle of Goa. This chapter is divided into three sections: (a) Background of the struggle, (b) Prominent events in the liberation struggle, and (c) Evaluation of the Liberation Struggle of Goa.

At the outset I would like to mention that the Indian National Movement, which is regarded as one of the biggest mass movements in the history of the world, had a major impact on the liberation struggle of Goa. The best example is the integration of Goa Congress Committee (GCC) with the Indian National Congress in 1928 which was possible due to the efforts of Dr. T. B. Cunha. Besides this, the 1942 'Bharat Choro' or 'Quit-India' movement had galvanised the entire Indian territory and Goa was not left untouched. I would therefore like to take the help of the story of Indian National Movement while studying liberation struggle of Goa.

Background Of The Struggle.

The liberation struggle of Goa is said to have begun on the very day when Portuguese established their rule in 1510. Goans expressed their resentment in the form of revolts against conversion, heavy land revenue and other taxes, racial discriminations and acts of tyranny. The Goan people had not accepted the Portuguese sovereignty over themselves and expressed their anger through the revolts which had rocked Goa before the beginning of the last phase of the liberation struggle of Goa.

I am here however concerned only with the liberation struggle of Goa during its

² Menezes, Juliao (1947), *Goa Freedom Struggle*, Bombay: published and printed by Dr. Juliao Menezes, at Shiva Printing Press. p. 60.

last phase especially after the 18th June 1946 movement for civil liberties started by Dr. R. M. Lohia. My study is limited to an examination of a brief period of about 15 years beginning with 1946 till the liberation of Goa by 'Operation Vijay' on 19th December 1961. This is because the last phase of liberation struggle of Goa involved a large number of people from different communities and social strata all concerned with ending Portuguese rule in Goan territory.

The last phase of the liberation struggle of Goa started with the movement for civil liberties on 18th June 1946. This day is remembered since then as Goa Revolution Day or Kranti Din. The reasons responsible for the generation of this movement for civil liberties are highlighted by Dr. T. B. Cunha in the following statement,

This movement (18th June 1946 movement for civil liberties) is not yet organised and is a movement of the masses without proper direction. From its start you can see it was spontaneous. If anybody is the cause of the movement, it is the Portuguese administration which by its economic mismanagement during recent years has caused intense economic discontent among the people. That is the cause of the movement.³

Goa was indeed a poverty stricken territory without industrial development. The interest of the Portuguese in keeping Goa with them was only political and not in developing it. However, the mismanagement of Goan economy by the Portuguese government, which has been held responsible for 18th June 1946 movement for civil liberties, does not find its echo in the movement itself. There is however no single instance which denotes this fact as right from Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia's visit to Goa till his arrest on 18th June 1946 and his subsequent release emphasizes more on acquiring civil liberties which were denied to the Goans under the Portuguese rule. This is evident from his following speech of 18th June 1946,

'You (people of Goa) cannot form organisations. Not to talk of political organisations like Indian National Congress, even organisations, for study or sports or village uplift, require previous sanctions of the government and must obviously work under police watch. You cannot hold meetings not to talk of political meetings, even social and private gatherings, require permissions and come in for police inquiry.

³ Kunte, B. G. (ed.) (1978), *Goa Freedom Struggle viv-a vis Maharashtra, 1946-1961*, (Vol. VIII, Part-I), Bombay: Gazetters Department, Government of Maharashtra. p. 60.

You cannot issue publications.....this meeting is held with a very limited purpose. It is an invitation to you to speak and act as if these laws did not exist'.⁴

Although the movement largely concentrated on the demands of the Goans for civil liberties a brief mention of the people suffering under intense poverty was made by Dr. R. M. Lohia in the same speech, he said,

'There are semi-starved and semi-naked people in Goa....the poor and the very poor are here as anywhere, the landless labour in the villages, specially those away from the coast, the women and men who carry loads, the labour on the railways and the men and women who live in holes.....'⁵

Dr. R. M. Lohia was in fact aware of the poverty in Goa, but the economic mismanagement and resulting poverty did not figure anywhere in the liberation struggle of Goa especially in its last phase. Due to this, 18th June 1946 movement came to be called as movement for civil liberties which was later on became the struggle for liberation of Goa from Portuguese rule. The speech of Dr. R. M. Lohia also depicts how the people of Goa were subjugated under the dictatorship of Portugal. No one before him had actually assessed the situation prevailing in Goa at the time when India's freedom was at its doorsteps. But one thing he makes clear in his speech that the meeting which was called on 18th June 1946 was only to gain the civil liberties that were denied to Goans.

To understand the complexities of economic mismanagement under the Portuguese rule is not an easy task. A good economist or a scholar like Dr. T. B. Cunha who studied the entire Goan situation, political, social and economic may help us to understand how Portuguese rule of about 450 years destroyed the Goan culture and its economy under their political rule. For the common people of Goa, poverty was just a thing of past, present and future and no change can be brought about in their living conditions.

The sad plight of poor people is depicted by a Goan freedom fighter who lived with them in their villages during the liberation struggle of Goa. He narrates his experiences of the people of two villages namely Morley and Navashi, both in North Goa. The people of

⁴ Dr. Lohia is quoted in, P. P. Shirodkar, (ed.) (1990) *Who's Who Of Freedom Fighters-Goa, Daman and Diu* (Vol. II) Goa: Gazetteer Department, Government of Goa. p. XI.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. XIII.

both the villages were very poor, belonged to the poorest social strata and far from civilised life. He noticed that their staple food was 'Nachni' and not rice. From Nachni, Ambil was prepared. This Nachni was not only cheap but also more filling than that of rice, which they tasted once a week. When this freedom fighter talked to them about their poverty and injustice meted out to them by the alien Portuguese rule, their answer was 'Amchian Kitem Jatale' (What can we do?).⁶

The poverty was more felt in the village areas where the people largely depended on agriculture. Although rice was grown, its cultivation was dependent on the monsoon rains and primitive methods were adopted in its cultivation. The production of rice was not even sufficient for local consumption. And due to this reason, Portuguese government was forced to import a third and even one half of the quantity necessary for consumption, the imported quantity varying according to the degree of shortage or scarcity of annual production which greatly depends on monsoon rains.⁷

Due to the scarcity of rice, nachni flour was preferred by the Goans as it was comparatively cheaper than the rice. The villages of Sattari like Morle and Navshi proved that the staple food of the poor Goans was nachni and not rice. Morle was a village in Sattari Mahal (Taluka) near the border area covered by dense forest. Navashi, another village mentioned above, was a tiny village, the village folk belonged to 'Gaudo' community. They laboured in Panaji the whole day in construction work and in the evening walked back to Navashi. In both the villages, cultivation of the land was not given importance as Morle was a dense forested area whereas in Navashi, gaudo tribe worked for the construction work in Panaji.

Dr. T. B. Cunha, in his detailed study on the economic situation in Goa under the Portuguese rule brings out the truth of then existing poverty in Goa and the reasons responsible for the same. He confirms that it was the Portuguese government that was responsible for reducing the Goan population to misery while filling its treasury at peoples cost. While explaining how Portuguese rule in Goa has been responsible for economic degradation

⁶ Ranade, Mohan. (1988), **Struggle Unfinished**, Goa: Vimal Publications, p. 19.

⁷ Cunha, T. B. (1961), **Goa Freedom Struggle**, Bombay: Dr. T. B. Cunha Memorial Committee, The New Age Printing Press, p. 37.

resulting into poverty, he gives the best example of the rice production, which was considered as the staple food of Goans. He maintains that the backwardness in agriculture has resulted into low production which has caused great difficulty to the cultivator as well as buyer. Further this has resulted into a high cost of production which is higher than the imported rice. Thus increase in the cost of production has led to the increase in the labour wages, manures, seeds, etc. Rather than lowering the cost of production which would have been more beneficial to the local farmers, government has increased price of rice though rice is grown for the domestic consumption. Further rice cultivation in Goa is fragmentary and quantity produced by each cultivator is hardly enough for his own domestic consumption. Dr. T. B. Cunha also noticed that the cost of a bag of rice on the other side of the frontier costs Rs. 6 and was sold at Rs. 12 or if not more in Goa, it was even sold at Rs. 15.

Although it was difficult for the common man to understand the complexities of economic aspect, the poverty was actually felt by these people under the Portuguese rule and could reason the cause of such poverty. This is understood when these poor people asked themselves, 'Amchian Kitem Jatale' (What can we do?). This also depicts the bad state of affairs of these people and also their inability to fight against the then prevailing situation in Goa. But to see only economic mismanagement as the cause of the people's outburst on 18th June 1946 is inadequate. As Ashoka Mehta puts it,

'It is important to understand the background to the struggle in Goa... They could not meet and discuss their intimate problems as there was ban on meetings, speeches and assembly. All these things were revolting to any decent minded man and women and the Goan people were only raising a protest against these horrible restrictions approximating to slavery itself.'⁸

The ban on the civil liberties under the dictatorship of Dr. Salazar in Goa was an open and widely known reason for the rise of discontent among the Goans.

One more reason I would like to highlight here, which is not given much importance is inequality among the Catholics that was brought about by the 'Acto-Colonial' which was enforced in May 1930⁹ in Portugal. This colonial act brought about

⁸ Kunte, B. G. (ed) op.cit., 69

⁹ Gaitonde, P. D. (1987) *The Liberation of Goa, A Participants view of History*, Delhi: Oxford University Press. p. 21.

two changes; (i) the Portuguese possessions came under the control of the government of Lisbon and (ii) two categories of communities were established in the Portuguese colonies, *Indigenous* and *Nao Indigenous*. The later was divided into three sub-categories- '*Branços*', '*Mesticos*', and '*Assimilados*'. Further 'Acto Colonial' declared that the nation 'Possesses and Colonises' these dominions and 'Civilizes' their indigenous populations thus giving two different meaning to the nation admitting two kinds of citizens 'the possessors and the possessed'.¹⁰

The first change in the status of the colonies did not have any impact on the Goans, neither Hindus nor Catholics. It only meant that constitutionally there was an end to the Republic of Portugal, which Goans had enjoyed from 1910 till 1926. By establishing 'Acto-colonial' in May 1930, Dr. Antonio Salazar had only legalised his dictatorship. But the second change i.e. the differentiation made among the citizens in Goa had tremendous impact on the upper class Catholic community in Goa. By adopting Portuguese culture, eating and dressing habit, they had become more Portuguese than the Portuguese themselves.

They, like Portuguese used to hate the people who spoke konkani language at home and called them as 'Konkane'. Those people who communicated in Portuguese language were always respected and konkani was considered as the language of labourers and poor people. However, unfortunately only one change they could not be brought about in them. They could not change the colour of their skin.¹¹ 'Acto-colonial' had completely shaken their Portuguese faith. Now they understood that white Portuguese will never consider coloured Indians as equals.

Economic exploitation of Goa during Portuguese rule and social injustice leading to inequality among the citizens which was adopted through 'Acto Colonial' may not be direct consequences of 18th June 1946 movement. But I am convinced that above mentioned factors were 'hidden' causes of it in which Hindus as well as Catholics participated. I consider them as hidden causes because firstly 18th June 1946 movement for civil liberties,

¹⁰ Cunha, T. B. op.cit., pp. 15, 16.

¹¹ Interview with Freedom Fighter Shri. Felix Cardozo. (October 1999)

did not encompass economic exploitation and inequality preached by 'Acto Colonial' of 1930 and secondly, in the absence of elementary civil liberties, common man could not protest openly against economic exploitation and 'Acto colonial'. It was only the newspaper which was published named 'Prakash' dared to raise the voice against this Colonial Act and the elected ministry that represented Goans in Portugal.¹² Thirdly, 18th June 1946 movement for civil liberties was led by the middle class who did not feel the pain of economic exploitation by the Portuguese and social injustice through 'Acto Colonial' did not have any impact on the poverty as poverty was felt by poor people the most, whereas upper class especially Catholics felt the pain of unequal treatment meted out to them by 'Acto-Colonial'.

Prominent Events Of The Liberation Struggle.

Having seen the background of the liberation struggle, I would now like to concentrate on the main topic of the chapter, i.e. prominent events in the liberation struggle of Goa.

18th June 1946 Movement For Civil Liberties.

Let me start this section by quoting Shri. Juliao Menezes who was with Dr. Lohia at the meeting held in Margao on 18th June 1946.

'Three Goans on seeing us came forward to garland us. At this sight Capt. Miranda with his latin blood and excitement straight took out his revolver and pointed it gallantly at the unarmed civilian Goans who were approaching us with garlands in their hands. Lohia, at this moment acted quickly. He caught hold of the hand of the brave captain in which the weapon was held, ordered him to be calm, brushed him aside, calmly proceeded to the place of meeting and started to address the people. At this stage the European commissioner of police came on the scene and immediately placed us under the arrest. We were then taken to the police station'.¹³

This was the first satyagraha campaign that was triggered off in Goa during the Portuguese rule on 18th June 1946 in the form of the movement for civil liberties under the leadership of Dr. R. M. Lohia. The last phase of the liberation struggle started amidst

¹² Gaitonde, P. D. Op.cit., p. 22.

¹³ Menezes, Juliao. Op.cit, p. 49.

jubilation and scenes of popular enthusiasm. The support this satyagraha received from all the sections of the people for the first time in Goa's history and I feel the last time before the liberation of Goa on 19th December 1961 confirmed that the people of Goa were interested in the freedom of Goa from the Portuguese domination. I say, the last time because no other leader during the last phase of liberation struggle was supported by Goans to such an extent. It was after Dr. Lohia's deportation to India, we do not find any other leader, Indian or Goan, who selflessly took the Goa's freedom movement forward with lot of people supporting. Although the movement was for civil liberties, it was clear that this was the first step towards Goa's liberation. This is evident when Dr. Juliao Menezes firmly replied to the European police commandant on the police station at Margao that this fight (of 18th June 1946) was for the assertion of civil liberties and that the question of sovereignty will be decided later by the people of India and not by the Portuguese.¹⁴ It is not clear whether by 'people of India' it is the people of Goa who are being referred to or the people of British India or both. One thing however is clear that right from 18th June 1946 Goans felt the need of India and looked towards it as their country to solve the Goan problem.

It all started with the arrival of Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, an Indian socialist leader, to Dr. Juliao Menezes place at Assolna on 10th June 1946. On 12th June 1946 he took an important decision of defying the Portuguese government's ban on civil liberties in Goa.¹⁵ On 18th June 1946, at 4:30 p. m. in Margao in a speech delivered by him, he invited the Goans to speak freely and act as if the laws banning the civil liberties did not exist.

It is surprising to note here is that such an important decision was taken by Dr. R. M. Lohia within just two days of his arrival in Goa. A socialist leader, who dedicated his entire life for the freedom of India could not keep quiet when he saw how Goans live under fascist rule. He was forced to take such a step without the help of any organisational build-up and pre-planning. He believed that in a land where civil liberties were so rigidly controlled, organisations would have to emanate from action. It was from action, would

¹⁴ Ibid, p.50

¹⁵ Sukhatankar, J. S. (1992) *Portuguese Rajvatitil Swatantrya Ladhyachi Panne 1510-1947*, (Marathi) Goa: Gomantak Marathi Academy, Panaji p. 111.

emerge men of intelligence and character, selfless people who would place the common interest above personal interest and be prepared to suffer in the interest of the public¹⁶.

Thus,

(a) the ban on the most essential and elementary civil liberties which should be considered as birth right of human beings,

(b) the helplessness on the part of Goans due to the lack of proper guidance and leadership,

(c) Goans were criticised as 'pez' (cunji)¹⁷ meaning the weak and cowardly character of Goans were the reasons, which had prompted Dr. Lohia to take such decisions.

By defying the ban on civil liberties, Dr. Lohia wanted to prove two things;

(a) That Goans do not lack courage and patriotism and will rise up against the Portuguese Government at the first available opportunity. This proved to be true, at least for some time.

(b) His direct involvement in the Goan problem, as he had way back in 1938 proclaimed that 'Goa is a part of us. We cannot allow her movement for freedom and unity to be suppressed with such wanton ferocity'.¹⁸

In his eight days brief stay in Goa he could rest (for which he had come to Goa) only for one day i.e. on 11th June, as from 12th June many people from all the sections of society paid him a visit at Assolna as the news of his arrival in Goa was published in 'O Heraldo' a Portuguese newspaper on 12th June 1946. Except on 17th June 1946 Dr. Lohia had a very busy schedule of meeting the people at Assolna, Vasco, and Panaji¹⁹ and discussing with them on various issues concerning Goa and his determination to launch a direct action against the Portuguese Government's ban on civil liberties.

The action of Dr. R. M. Lohia to defy the ban on civil liberties on 18th June 1946 received a swift reaction from the Portuguese administration. As soon as he started addressing the gathering, the European commissioner of Police came on the scene and

¹⁶ Jorge, Evagrio (nd) **Goa's Awakening- Reminiscences of The 1946 Civil Disobedience Movement**, Panjim: 18th June Silver Jubilee Celebrations. p. 10.

¹⁷ Interview with Freedom Fighter and Gandhian Shri. Ravindra Kelekar. (November 2000)

¹⁸ Kelkar, Indumati (1996), **Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia- His Life and Philosophy**, Pune: Published by Sripad Kelkar, Sadashiv Peth. p. 112.

¹⁹ Sukhatankar, J. S. op.cit., pp. 108-110.

arrested both Dr. Lohia and Dr. Menezes. They were then taken to the police station. To this people reacted sharply. A huge crowd marched to the police station and demanded the release of Dr. Lohia and Dr. Menezes. As the situation was going out of control, Capt. Miranda requested Dr. Lohia to persuade the people to go home. Grabbing this opportunity, Dr. R. M. Lohia completed his incomplete speech. Both were then taken to the headquarters at Panaji.²⁰ On the same day, Vishwanath Lawande, Dr. Vinayak Mayekar, Vainktesh Verenkar, T. V. Vaidya, Nilkanth Karapurkar, Kumari Vatsala Kirtani and Evagrio Jorge, were also arrested for breaking the Portuguese laws.²¹

The support of the general public to the 18th June 1946 movement was telling. Besides participating directly in the 18th June 1946 movement, people all over Goa observed complete hartal on their own on 19th June 1946 against the arrest of Dr. R. M. Lohia and Dr. Juliao Menezes.²² The support which it gained from all the section of the people suggested that the liberation of Goa was not a distant dream. But it was at the same time not an easy adventure too. It required the participation of men and women, young and old, irrespective of caste, class, status, not only the Goans but also that of Indians, forgetting the artificial barrier that was created by an accident in history. The response of the people to this movement was spontaneous. The people also organised the demonstrations, held meetings, shouted anti-Portuguese and pro-Indian slogans and entire Goa was rocked by the nationalist activities and demanded release of Dr. R. M. Lohia and Dr. Juliao Menezes. Due to the pressure of the people from all the sides, Portuguese government unconditionally released Dr. R. M. Lohia and Dr. Juliao Menezes on 19th June 1946.²³

Even after the release of Dr. R. M. Lohia and Dr. Juliao Menezes, people of Goa continued with their nationalist activities. On 20th June 1946 itself, Margao witnessed a satyagraha by Dr. T. B. Cunha who addressed a crowd of nearly about a thousand people. Again on 30th June 1946, a meeting was organised by Dr. T. B. Cunha and Mrs. Berta Menezes where both them arrested and released after taking them to Chandor. On 21st

²⁰ Interview with Shri. Vasant Karapurkar. (October 1998).

²¹ Sukhatankar, J. S.. op.cit., pp. 116-118.

²² Interview with Freedom Fighter Dayanand Kantak.(October 1997)

²³ Interview with Shri. Madhav Pandit. (October 1997)

June 1946 a meeting was held on Lohia Maidan (as it was named the same on the same day) which was addressed by Upendra Talaulikar, Purushottam Kakodkar, Mr. Pimenta and Dr. B. D. Sukhatanakar and Umabai Shirolu, Laximanrao Sardesai, Evagrio Jorge, etc. spoke in a meeting held at Ponda on the next day itself. As a part of 18th June 1946 movement, the Goans celebrated the 18th death anniversary of Luis de Menezes Braganza at Chandor on 18th July 1946. Satyagraha were also held at different places in Goa specially at Mardol and Mapusa.²⁴

After the formation of National Congress (Goa) on 18th August 1946 at Londa, the nationalist activities began with the greater strength. The first satyagraha on behalf of NC(G) was organised by Shri. Laximikant Bhembre who spoke in a meeting held at Margao on 18th September 1946. Although it was decided that the satyagraha will be held on 8th, 18th and 28th of every month, not a single day was spared without satyagrahas, demonstrations, meetings, slogans, etc. Sometimes satyagrahas were held at many places in Goa in a single day. Nearly for about five to six months from the beginning of 18th September 1946 satyagraha entire Goa was involved in giving a challenge to the Portuguese administration by breaking the Portuguese laws against civil liberties.²⁵ And during this time nearly 450 people courted arrest, sentenced to rigorous imprisonment and deported. While some others who were released soon joined the nationalist activities, again to be arrested and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. However till then, the Satyagrahas which were held under the banner of NC(G) were restricted to the attainment of civil liberties only.

A brief look at the overall picture of 18th June 1946 movement and its aftermath confirms that Goans did not lack in courage and determination to fight against the foreign rule. What they wanted was a good leader who could direct them, lead them and support them during their struggle. They had found their leader in Dr. R. M. Lohia and support to him came from all the corners of Goa. The movement also involved a large number of women and young girls for the first time. The word 'Jai-Hind' sounded to them as a 'mantra',

²⁴ Sukhatankar, J. S. op.cit., pp. 118-120.

²⁵ Interview with Freedom Fighter Shri. Prabhakar Ghodge.(October 1997)

a 'hymn' which was recited several times. It was with this battle cry that Subhash Chandra Bose had challenged the mighty British empire in the far east during the second world war. The same battle cry found its echo just two years later in the patriotic hearts of Goans to fight against the Portuguese imperialism. 'Jai-Hind' dominated so much that the Goa's liberation struggle itself started to be called popularly and officially as 'Jai-Hind' movement²⁶ and its participants as 'Jai-Hind wallas'.²⁷

The movement was successful in creating the nationalism in the minds of Goans. Some noted it as unsuccessful²⁸ for the simple reason that Goans could not attain freedom during this time. But let us not forget that this movement was not for the attainment of liberation from the Portuguese at all, but it was only for the attainment of civil liberties. Though Goans did not get civil liberties under Portuguese laws, they themselves have obtained them under the natural rights of man. They held demonstrations, meetings, organised satyagrahas as if the laws banning the civil liberties did not exist. For about five to six months Goa was just like any other part of India defying the laws of foreign imperialism. The punishment which nationalist received during this movement was just for about six months imprisonment according to the new Portuguese laws as Portuguese feared that freedom of Goa will come with the freedom of India which was not so away.²⁹ However the movement subsided after six months with the arrest of many of its top leaders. The people got confused and did not know how to carry on with the struggle in the absence of their leaders. The Portuguese authorities now became strong and started suppressing the people's movement ruthlessly. As more and more people did not come forward in the later period of the movement, it became evident that the agitation had fizzled out. This had an adverse effect on the movement. Replying to a question in the legislature on 10th February, 1947, Nehru said that the (Indian) government could not say categorically that the people of Goa, Daman and Diu favour their territory's merger with the Indian Union.³⁰

²⁶ Ranade, Mohan. Op.cit., p.12.

²⁷ Interview with Freedom Fighter Shri. Madhav Pandit.(October 1997)

²⁸ Kunte, B. G.(ed) op.cit., p.48.

²⁹ Sukhatankar, J. S. op.cit., p.123.

³⁰ Kelkar, Indumati (1996), **Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia – His Life and Philosophy**, Pune: Published by Sripad Kelkar, Sadashiv Peth, p. 123.

Liberation Of Dadra And Nagar Haveli.

Let me now turn my attention towards one of the most important event in the liberation struggle of Goa and that is liberation of Dadra and Nagar Haveli. This event had prompted NC(G) to announce mass satyagraha on 15th August 1954. The organisations behind the liberation of Dadra and Nagar Haveli were United Front of Goans, Azad Gomantak Dal with the help of Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh and Goan Peoples Party with Communists from Maharashtra.

The Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and is comprised of two enclaves (pockets) that is Dadra with three villages and Nagar Haveli with sixty-eight villages and one town. The two pockets are separated from each other by about a four kilometre belt of land from Paradi Taluka of Valsad district³¹. Further the enclaves of Dadra and Nagar Haveli are separated from Daman by a narrow strip of land, eight to eleven kilometres wide and intersected by the Western railway.³² On the west of Daman is ocean and other three sides it has Indian borders. Whereas Nagar Haveli was surrounded by Indian territory from all the sides.³³ Thus the area of this territory is surrounded by the Umargaon Taluka of Surat district, Dahanu Taluka of Thana district in the west, Pardi Taluka of Thana district in the east. The capital of Nagar Haveli is Silvassa for which the nearest railway station is Vapi, at distance of 19 Kms.³⁴

As the history goes Portuguese divided Daman in two Talukas. One was Daman itself and the other was Nagar Haveli³⁵. In 1783 the Portuguese obtained Nagar Haveli from Peshwa as a compensation for a vessel destroyed by the Maratha Navy. By another treaty in 1785 the enclave of Dadra was offered to them by the Peshwa as a fief³⁶. In this way Dadra and Nagar Haveli was occupied by Portuguese from Peshwa.

³¹ Lele, P. S. *Dadra and Nagar Haveli-Past and Present*, (1987), Bombay: Mauj Printing Bureau. p. 40.

³² Desai, S. S. *Goa, Daman and Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli* (1976), Faridabad: Government of India: Publication Division Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. p. 5.

³³ Radhakrishna, Vaman. *op.cit.*, p. 55.

³⁴ Desai, S. S. *op.cit.*, p. 5.

³⁵ Radhakrishna, Vaman, *op.cit.*, p. 55.

³⁶ Desai, S. S. *op.cit.*, p. 17.

The liberation of Dadra and Nagar Haveli was seen by the Goan nationalist as the first step towards the liberation of Goan territory from the Portuguese rule. Being surrounded by Indian territory from all sides and an easy adventure to liberate it from Portuguese rule attracted a number of Goan political organisations, all being revolutionary in spirit. Thus United Front of Goans, Goan Peoples' Party and Azad Gomantak Dal saw the task of liberating Dadra and Nagar Haveli from the two view points, (1) getting the credit and publicity by an easy adventure and (2) to show the Portuguese that they can be defeated easily. Since the first view point prevailed over the other, rather than a co-ordinating activity with co-operation from all the sides, it became conflicting activity because of jealousy and ill attitude towards each other during its liberation. Yet the liberation of Dadra and Nagar Haveli had a tremendous impact on the liberation struggle of Goa. Portuguese administration was threatened and its liberation came as a shock to Portuguese administration. As I have already mentioned that this event was responsible for the organisation of Mass satyagraha on 15th August 1954 in Goa.

Let me now analyse the liberation of Dadra and Nagar Haveli. Let me first consider the case of liberation of Dadra on the night of 22nd July 1954 under the leadership of Mr. Francis Mascarenhas and Waman Desai, both being the members of United Front of Goans. This organisation, which believed that Goa being different from rest of India, it should have its own separate identity after liberation outside the Union of India. Thus Mr. Francis Mascarenhas (President) and Mr. Waman Desai (General Secretary) of United Front Of Goans organised entry of 20 volunteers into Dadra at night. The group had some ex-army personnel like Shri. Shankarrao Ghorpade, Captain of the Indian National Army of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Mr. Namdeo Pawar, ex-army and Mr. Constancio Vaz from Assolna formerly of Navy.³⁷ They overpowered the Portuguese police and with least resistance from them, declared Dadra free.

³⁷ Almeida, Urselino 'Liberation Of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Freedom Struggle by means of Arms' a paper presented in a seminar, 'Advent Of Portuguese In Goa And Goa's Struggle For Freedom' held on 14th and 15th December 1990 under the Aegis of The Cuncolim Educational Society and Cuncolim College of Arts and Commerce- Cuncolim.

Actually, the liberation of Dadra was planned by the volunteers of RSS and AGD, before the liberation of Naroli.³⁸ However their plan fizzled out when Dadra was suddenly overtaken by the leaders of United Front.

While describing the act of UFG's leaders in suddenly liberating Dadra, and death of a Portuguese police at the police station, Lambert Mascarenhas, a Goan freedom fighter writes;

'A very successful businessman in Bombay, handsome and dashing, (Francis) Mascarenhas had been toying with the idea of forming a Goa government in exile in Bombay....On the strength of the great popularity of United Front of Goans and his own sound financial backing, reportedly he was contacted by a high official of the government of Goa and informed that Lisbon was prepared to withdraw from its possessions in India after handing over the government to the United Front and that for discussions on the modalities of transfer of power Mr. (Francis) Mascarenhas should meet Capitao Romba at a convenient place. So Mascarenhas fell for the ploy and confiding only in Waman Desai, an adventure in the party, he fixed the railway station of Vapi, a small village in Gujrat, a few kilometres away from Daman as well as Dadra, as the meeting place. Besides Waman Desai, (Francis) Mascarenhas also took Mudras, another adventurer, with him to Vapi. It must be said to the credit of the Portuguese that they are a charming people and captain Romba oozing out more charm than usual informed (Francis) Mascarenhas on his meeting him that the railway station affording no amenities of any kind was no fit a place for such an important discussion and that they should go to the government secretariat in Daman for the purpose. In a very shrewd and a practical person like (Francis) Mascarenhas his agreeing to accompany capt. Romba to the Portuguese territory of Daman was an act of naivete par excellence. On their entry into Daman, Mascarenhas with his two cohorts was put under arrest'.³⁹

It must be borne in mind that Azad Gomantak Dal volunteers with Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh were actually waiting for an opportunity to take over Dadra at the earliest. They had received the information that Mr. Anaceto Rosario, head constable at Dadra would go to see his family in Daman. Thus in his absence, the other two constables could be easily overpowered. On the other hand, the same news of Anaceto Rosario's departure to Daman was also received by United Front leaders. Francis Mascarenhas and Waman Desai thus wanted to act quickly in order to punish Rosario for his past deeds and his enmity with the United Front leaders. Thus after an unsuccessful attempt to liberate Dadra

³⁸ Interview with Shri. Prabhakar Vaidya, Sinari, Lawande.

³⁹ Mascarenhas, Lambert 'Goa Freedom Movement Outside Goa', in B. Sheik Ali(ed) (1986) **Goa wins Freedom- Reflections and Reminiscences**, Panaji: Goa University Publication Series-I, Government Printing Press, p. 129.

by Francis Mascarenhas and Waman Desai on 21st July, the very next day i.e on 22nd July 1954 UFG with its fifteen volunteers liberated Dadra from the Portuguese rule.

The leaders of United Front of Goans advocated that although Goa is a part of Indian sub-continent, the culture and social life of Goans is quite distinct from the people of Union of India and as such they were against the merger of Goa with the Union of India after liberation.⁴⁰ Thus the proposal of transfer of power and its ready acceptance by the leaders of United front of Goans should be seen from this point of view. It has also been mentioned that Francis Mascarenhas had been toying with the idea of forming a Goa government in exile in Bombay. And thus because of power hungryness, UFG believed in the rumours that pressure was being brought upon Portugal by America and other friendly nations to strive for a settlement of dispute with India and hence there was possibility of some new proposals from Portugal.⁴¹ But the fact, if there was any reality in the rumour that was spread, was the 'settlement of dispute with India' and it was not with the United Front of Goans. UFG as an organisation for the liberation of Goa did neither represent Indian government nor the Goans. Thus the question of such a proposal of handing over power to UFG from the Portuguese government of Goa was very funny and its acceptance was the foolishness on the part of UFG. It should be also remembered at this point that United Front of Goans, as a political organization was formed outside Goa i.e. in Bombay. Most of the nationalist Goans were of the opinion that since Goa is a part of India, after its liberation, Goa should be merged with the Indian Union. UFG became a part of 'Goa Action Committee' which was formed under the Presidentship of Dr. T. B. Cunha. But after the liberation of Dadra one cannot find its role in the liberation of Goa in the later period. Thus one cannot believe that UFG represented the Goan nationalist. The liberation of Dadra was a revenge taken by these UFG leaders as they were arrested by the chief of police at Daman Captain Fernando da Costa Romba.

Thus the motive behind the liberation of Dadra was not its freedom initially from Portuguese rule but it was a revenge taken on the Portuguese for their past deeds. Thus it

⁴⁰ Lele, P. S. p. 39.

⁴¹ Ibid. p. 39.

was on 22nd July at midnight, when Mr. Rosario was addressing a crowd nearly fifteen volunteers of UFG succeeded in liberating Dadra and killed Rosario, the police sub-inspector⁴² and Antonio Fernandes, his Assistance. The volunteers then liberated other four villages next day with 32 guns, stenguns and ammunition left behind by Portuguese police.

Before going into the details of the liberation of Nagar Haveli, let me have a brief look at the Communist Party of Maharashtra which was active among the Warlis who constitute 33% of the population among Adivasis in Nagar Haveli. Mrs. Godavaribai Parulekar, a Communist leader was holding a sway over Warlis in the area of Talasari, Dahanu, Umargaon, Palaghar, etc. right from 1945. These above mentioned areas form the border of Nagar Haveli. She, with the help of other communist leaders, helped these Warlis to liberate themselves from the bondage of money-lenders, Sahukari (land-owners) and other high caste people. These Warlis had suffered economically, physically as well as mentally due to the atrocities perpetrated on them by the dominant elite group in the area. It was due to the work done by Mrs. Parulekar and Communist party of Maharashtra Warlis woke up to fight against the dominant group and gave a tough fight from 1945 and won the battle in 1947.⁴³ Thus G. P. P. with its communist ideology had the full support of Mrs. Godavaribai Parulekar and Warlis on account of her. But the main hurdle in the liberation of Nagar Haveli was Shri. Morarji Desai who was against the Communist. Communist Party was banned during this time by government and Indian government was deadly against the activities of red flag.⁴⁴ Thus in order to stop the Communist from taking over Nagar Haveli, Shri. Morarji Desai deployed S. R. P. forces and entire Nagar Haveli was surrounded by these forces. Though Morarji Desai said that he wanted to help the Goan nationalist to liberate Nagar Haveli without much bloodshed and since they had asked for his help, he kept the SRP forces on the borders on Indian side⁴⁵. It was difficult for the Communists to enter into the territory of Nagar Haveli though they were stationed at

⁴² Interview with Shri. Labert Mascarenhas (UFG) (November 1999)

⁴³ Parulekar, Godavari. *Jhevha Manus Jaga Hoto*, (Marathi) (1970) Mumbai: Mauj Prakashan Grih. pp. 1-6.

⁴⁴ Interview with Shri. Narayan Palckar. (October 1997)

⁴⁵ Desai, Morarji. (1974), *The Story Of My Life*, (vol.II) Madras: The Macmillan Company Of India Limited. p. 47.

Umbargaon close to Nagar Haveli. Morarji Desai feared that Nagar Haveli might come under the rule of the Communists if they succeeded in its liberation.

This was not just the case with the Communists. After the liberation of Naroli on 28th July 1954 by twenty-five volunteers of RSS and eight-ten volunteers of AGD under the leadership of Raja Wakankar and Prabhakar Sinari respectively wanted to march on to Silvassa, the capital city of Nagar Haveli as early as possible. But they had to wait for about two-three days. This was because Shri. Morarji Desai was even against the liberation of Nagar Haveli by militant groups since he was a believer in non-violence and satyagraha. The organisations which were involved here were AGD and RSS⁴⁶ which were revolutionary in nature. So initially he even resisted their entry into Nagar Haveli but later on permitted them, because he preferred AGD and RSS over Communists. This is evident from the following description by Shri. Mohan Ranade of AGD who took part in the liberation of Silvassa;

‘I was very much surprised to note the sudden change in the attitude of Bombay police authorities. Till a few hours back they were against our entering the territory of Nagar Haveli and now they were entreating us to immediately advance towards Silvassa. Had the Portuguese presence in Nagar Haveli suddenly become more dangerous to the security of India? No, that was not the case. The truth was that the Warli tribes organised by Communist were active and marching towards Silvassa under the banner of Goan Peoples’ Party. Thus Silvassa was in danger of being falling into the hands of Communists and it was exactly this that the Bombay government led by Shri. Morarji Desai wanted to avoid and we were being utilised as mere instruments for that end. However, whatever may be the reason, we were finally allowed to enter Nagar Haveli and march against Silvassa which was that moment ruled by the Portuguese’.⁴⁷

Azad Gomantak Dal was one of the important organisations in the liberation struggle of Goa. These volunteers believed that Portugal being a fascist country does not respect satyagraha and non-violence.⁴⁸ Thus in order to give a violent challenge to Portuguese rule in Goa, AGD was formed in 1947. In order to threaten the Portuguese, the volunteers of AGD attacked a number of police station, outposts, killed Portuguese stooges and were

⁴⁶ Nagar Havelicha Swatantrya Sangram (Marathi) in *Navjivan* (Fortnightly) published by AGD, dated 28th February 1961, 30th March 1961 and 29th April 1961.

⁴⁷ Ranade, Mohan op.cit., p. 40.

⁴⁸ Interview with Freedom fighter Shri. V. N. Lawande.(May 1996)

involved in many other raids. This organisation was always running short of arms and ammunitions and many a times due to the lack of money as well as armaments they were handicapped. Further, due to their violent nature, no help, whatsoever, was provided to them by government of India. The primary motive behind its involvement in the liberation of Nagar Haveli was the capture of armaments. As Prabhakar Sinari, one of the volunteers of AGD who was involved in the capture of Silvassa rightly said that their main aim in going all the way to Nagar Haveli was primarily to take the possessions of a large quantity of weapons which they would then be able to utilise against the Portuguese in Goa, Daman and Diu.⁴⁹

Azad Gomantak Dal with its revolutionary ideology began its work with the raid in 1947 on the National Overseas Bank (Banco Nacional Ultramarine) in Mapusa. However due to the arrest of Dattatraya Deshpande and Prabhakar Sinari, this organization had to work underground. But Prabhakar Sinari, escaped from Portuguese custody. He later on participated in the liberation of Nagar Haveli.

Like the AGD, GPP was also an off-shoot of NC(G) and was formed in 1948 in Bombay. They advocated armed struggle vis-à-vis satyagraha and non-violence⁵⁰ and Communist Party of Maharashtra was closely associated with GPP, as GPP also believed in Communists ideology.

As we have seen earlier, from the description of Mohan Ranade, that in the beginning, Bombay government was not ready to allow AGD and RSS to enter into Nagar Haveli. In spite of the strict vigilance by DIG and SRP personnel on the Communists and GPP, who had purchased a rented bungalow, near border area of N. H., near Umargoon Capt. Gole alias Dabholkar and Narayan Palekar, moved out of the bungalow from the back. They laid down themselves in the fields and actually crawled by their hands inch by inch in the rains, joined nearly 1500 Warlis on the decided spot and moved into Nagar Haveli. When it became clear to the Indian authorities that Communists were already on the way to Nagar Haveli, they suddenly allowed AGD and RSS volunteers to enter into

⁴⁹ Interview with Shri. Prabhakar sinari. (October 1998)

⁵⁰ Interview with Shri. Narayan Palekar.(October 1997)

Nagar Haveli at the earliest. But by the time AGD volunteers could enter Nagar Haveli, GPP with the Communist Party of Maharashtra and Warlis were successful in liberating most of the villages of Nagar Haveli from Portuguese rule.⁵¹ Whereas AGD with RSS were able to capture Silvassa, the capital city of Nagar Haveli without much resistance.

At this point of time, it is important to note the alliance of AGD and RSS who cooperated with each other in the liberation of Silvassa, Naroli and Khanvel and GPP was helped by Communist party of Maharashtra in liberating Nagar Haveli.

After analysing the Liberation of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, let me now have a look at the third prominent aspect, which I consider to be the movement for liberation of Goa from Portuguese rule.

Movement For Liberation Of Goa. (15th August 1954 to 15th August 1955).

As I have said it before, 18th June 1946 movement was for civil liberties. The movement for the liberation of Goa actually started on 15th August 1954 and subsided on 15th August 1955. I call it as a movement because Goa was rocked with political and nationalist activities during this time. The movement for liberation of Goa began with the commencement of 15th August 1954 mass satyagraha. Let me illustrate the above point by referring to both the satyagrahas. It was an effort of the Goans with the help of Indians to liberate Goa by peaceful means.

The liberation of Dadra and Nagar Haveli in July-August 1954 by Goan nationalist had created an enthusiasm in the minds of Goans. Action Committee, formed by a number of nationalist groups in Bombay in 1953 had announced on 15th July 1954 that volunteers would carry out a 'march on Goa' on 15th August as the beginning of the satyagraha campaign in the Portuguese settlements. The Goa Action Committee was a co-ordinating body and represented three main Goan nationalist parties that were responsible for the work of liberation during all these last years. Those parties were National Congress (Goa), United Front of Goans and Goan People's Party. Goa Vimochan Sahayak Samiti (All Party Goa Liberation Aid Committee) which was formed in June 1954 was to help the liberation

⁵¹ Interview with Narayan Palekar.

struggle by propaganda and financially. The actual conduct of the struggle was to be entirely organised and managed by National Congress (Goa). Shri. Peter Alvares, the President of National Congress (Goa) was of the view that Goa's struggle for liberation should be carried out on the soil of Goa itself. With this intention he was preparing Goans for non-violent struggle inside Goa by enlisting their names as volunteers for the satyagrahas and was preparing them to challenge the Portuguese rule inside Goa.

In response to the call given by Goa Action Committee and Goa Vimochan Sahayak Samiti (GVSS), a large number of satyagrahas from India gathered on India-Goa border on 14th August 1954. But only 45 satyagrahis entered Goa via Pollem, Patradevi and Terekhol with 18, 12, and 15 satyagrahis respectively in three batches.

Though Indian satyagrahis could not enter Goa they supported and encouraged the Goan satyagrahis wholeheartedly. Ramakrishna Karpe, a satyagrahi from the batch which entered Goa from Terekhol remembered about the support which their batch got from the people of India in the following words,

'I enrolled my name in the batch led by Alfred Afonso which was to cross Goa border at Terekhol....Shri. N. G. Goray was with us when we went to Shiroda, a place near India-Goa border before entering into Goa. Flag hoisting ceremony was done at the hands of Shri. N. G. Goray on 15th August at Shiroda. We then started proceeding towards the border. Thousands of men, women and children of Shiroda accompanied us to the border. On the way to the border we came across a church where our leader Alfred Afonso said his prayers. After reaching to the border Shri. N. G. Goray made a speech to encourage us. We then proceeded towards Terekhol by shouting slogan like viva-liberadade, viva-democracia, NC(G) ki jai, Goi Konache, Goikaranche...but when we entered the village the entire village was deserted....We then entered into the fort, hoisted the flag with the slogans such as Jai-Hind'.⁵²

Terekhol is a small village and it is a part of land which is connected with other territories in Maharashtra and is separated from Goa by Terekhol river. Terekhol fort was built by Khem Sawant of Sawantwadi and was under their control till Portuguese brought it under its occupation. However in 1761, Portuguese were defeated by the Bhonsle of

⁵² Karpe, Ramakrishna A. 'Goa Swatantrya Ladhyaatil Majhe Karya' (Marathi) in Gomantak Marathi Academy (August 1996), *Maitra* (Bimonthly) (1996) Goa: Published by Nisha Vaidya from Gomantak Marathi Academy Office- Panaji. pp. 12-14.

Sawantwadi and Terekhol fort came under their occupation. Later on it was again lost to Portuguese in 1800. Till 1817, Terekhol fort was under the acquisition of Portuguese sometimes and sometimes under the acquisition of Bhonsle. However, after 1817, Portuguese permanently occupied it. The name Terekhol is derived from the word 'Tere' or 'Tir' meaning 'bank' and 'khol' meaning 'deep'. Thus the fort built on the deep bank of river came to be called as 'Terekhol Fort'. Due to its significance, Britishers had demanded it from Portuguese for Five lakh pounds.⁵³

Thus this batch of satyagrahis wanted to occupy this fort which was considered to be important by the Portuguese for their security and defence. But the satyagrahis were also adamant on their desire to occupy this fort, not by violent means but by non-violent means. The mission was accomplished by these satyagrahis on the same day and entered the fort without any resistance and hoisted the Indian Tricolour. The capture of Terekhol Fort by Goan satyagrahis is described by one of the participants Shri. Prabhakar Ghodge in the following words,

'When we came to the Terekhol village, we found only one sub-inspector, customs officer and four or five officials. After coming to the fort, we desired to hoist the flag but sub-inspector resisted and told us that you cannot hoist the flag. We said, we would hoist the flag and if you wish so you arrest us but we will not desist from our resolve to hoist the flag...But I don't know what happened to him, after some talk with our leaders, he decided to leave the place and go away. One of his guards was very aggressive and was forcing sub-inspector to open fire with the machine-gun. With great difficulty sub-inspector calmed him down and hurriedly left the place with them. We then hoisted the flag on the fort....Next day, (on 16th August 1954) early in the morning I crossed the border to have some snacks and tea as I was feeling very weak for having fever last night. After having tea when I decided to go back to the fort, N. G. Goray stopped me and told me that something unusual has happened on the fort and I should not go. I did not listen to him and came back to the fort, one sentry took me directly to the European officer. He made me stand in front of him and without saying a single word, he slapped me on my face and sent me to other satyagrahis'.⁵⁴

A brief description of the event gives us the clear picture that the hoisting of flag on Terekhol fort was an easy job for the Goan satyagrahis. In spite of the orders from the top

⁵³ Radhakrishna, Vaman.(1989), *Goa Muktisangram*, (Marathi) Pune: Sadashiv Bagayatdar Smritimala p. 65.

⁵⁴ Interview with Freedom Fighter Shri. Prabhakar Ghodge.(October 1997)

officials of Portuguese administration, sub-inspector Jose Antonio De Rosario Alvares refused to open fire on the unarmed satyagrahis. This happened for the first time in the history of the liberation struggle of Goa. If the credit of offering satyagraha at Terekhol fort goes to the Goan satyagrahis, thanks should be given to sub-inspector Alvares. In spite of threat of losing his job and even arrest and detention and deportation, he dared to allow satyagrahis to occupy the fort. If he wanted he could have opened fire on unarmed satyagrahis as Portuguese laws did not respect the philosophy of satyagraha or peaceful protest. In order to avoid the punishment it fell into the hands of Portuguese, Alvares crossed the border and entered Indian territory. But he got the reward for helping the Goan satyagrahis. He was arrested as soon as he entered into India and was imprisoned.⁵⁵ Later on Indian officials sent him back to Goa where he was kept in custody by Portuguese government for three months.

After the departure of sub-inspector Alvares, the Indian flag was hoisted which remained there for about 24 hrs. However on 16th August 1954 it was replaced by Portuguese flag after arresting the Goan satyagrahis. The atrocities committed by the Portuguese police on the Goan satyagrahis while arresting them are remembered by Shri Ramkrishna Karpe in the following words,

'On the next morning (16th August 1954) Vishwanath Kudchadkar and I were chatting at the door of the fort. We saw Portuguese officers, coming towards us with guns in their hands. While entering inside the fort, Commandant Homba, Capt. Larangera and Agente Monteiro were shooting in the air...As soon as they reached towards us I shouted in English, 'come on, shoot me'. Agente Monteiro started snatching the national flag from my hand. And at the same time he started beating me by his legs...Another officer threw me on the floor, sat on my chest and started pressing my neck with his hands in order to kill me. Capt. Larangera came to my rescue and shouted at the officer not to press my neck as I would die. He then threw me aside. Other satyagrahis were beaten by bayonets. Blood started flowing from my body... We were then taken inside the fort....They brought down the Indian flag and hoisted the Portuguese flag'.⁵⁶

The Portuguese officers had come to the fort with all the preparations. They had thought something like that of Dadra and Nagar Haveli might have taken place. Thus in

⁵⁵ Interview with Shri. Rambhan Kakodkar (May 2000)

⁵⁶ Karpe, Ramakrishna A. 'Goa Swatantrya Ladhatil Majhe Karya', op.cit., p. 14.

order to meet the rising situation, they had made preparations on war footing. But when they approached the fort, they found that all the satyagrahis were unarmed. The satyagrahis were then easily arrested by full fledged military and naval force. Their hands and even legs were tied up and were loaded like carrier goods inside a launch. Satyagrahis were then taken to Kiranapani, an adjacent village and were thrown out in the open space on ground. The people of Terekhol who had run away on the previous day had gathered there. Portuguese officials made them sit and Monteiro ordered an old Catholic man to beat their leader. Alfred Afonso was beaten up severely by him with the chappal. He was wounded badly and blood started flowing from his mouth. Satyagrahis were then taken to police station first at Pernem and than at Panaji.⁵⁷

The Goan satyagrahi batches which entered Goa from Pollem, Patradevi and Terekhol were led by Anthony DeSouza, Mark Fernandes, and Alfred Afonso. It is to be noted here that all three leaders were Catholics by religion. This was an answer to Dr. Salazar who had mentioned on the Radio that Hindus are responsible for the movement that is going on in Goa and Christians are not a party to it.⁵⁸ The entire world then came to know regarding the truth and false propaganda of Dr. Salazar.

As I have said earlier that thousands of satyagrahis from different parts of India had gathered on India-Goa border to offer satyagraha in Goa, but only few satyagrahis entered Goa. This was due to the policy of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. While inaugurating the All India Newspaper Editors Conference on 13th August 1954, P. M. Nehru said that he was successful in restraining Indians since last seven years and that he did not want non-Goans entering Goa as a part of the satyagraha. This policy change was unexpected. It resulted in hundreds of satyagrahis being prevented from crossing the border at various places.⁵⁹ When this news was received there was sudden panic in the satyagrahi camp on the border. Leaders started searching for the Goan satyagrahis as only they were permitted to cross the border. During this time even some of the non-Goans came forward to offer

⁵⁷ Interview with Freedom Fighter Shri. Prabhakar Ghodge.(October 1997)

⁵⁸ Karpe, Ramakrishna A. op.cit., p. 12.

⁵⁹ Gaitonde, P. D. op.cit., p. 98.

satyagraha by calling themselves as Goans. One of the satyagrahis from the batch of Shri. Alfred Afonso which entered Goa through Terekhol by name Anthony De Souza (not to be confused with Shri. Anthony De Souza who led the satyagraha batch through Pollem) was a non-Goan. When these satyagrahis were arrested by military and Portuguese officials on 16th August 1954 at Terekhol, he in order to escape the beatings and arrests, started running towards the border to cross it and enter Indian territory. However, European officers caught hold of him and beat him mercilessly for about fifteen minutes.⁶⁰

The other satyagrahis who tried to enter into Goa through Pollem and Patradevi under the leadership of Shri. Anthony De Souza and Shri. Mark Fernandes received the same fate at the hands of Portuguese officials. They were beaten up and then taken to the police station. Special punishment was meted out to the leaders of all the three batches especially because they were Catholics⁶¹. Their mistake was that they being Catholics were nationalist and pro-Indian. For Portuguese, only Hindus can be anti-Portuguese while Catholics should be loyal to the Portuguese rule due to their religion. This satyagraha taught the Portuguese that the Catholics can also be nationalist and would not fear to come out openly. It was on this day, the world came to know what Portuguese knew much before that Catholics were far better nationalist, just like Hindus. If in the eyes of Portuguese, some Catholics were for Portuguese rule in Goa, it was true with some Hindus too. But by giving communal colour to the liberation struggle of Goa, Portuguese were not able to destroy the secular fabric which Goans held from hundreds of years together of which they were proud of during the liberation struggle⁶².

The 15th August 1954 satyagraha assumed importance because Indian flag remained at Terekhol fort for about 24 hrs. However this satyagraha could not achieve success in liberating Goa from Portuguese rule as at the last moment, Indian satyagrahis were not allowed to enter into Goa. Due to the failure of this satyagraha, Goa Vimochan Sahayak Samiti took the task of liberation of Goa by sending a large number of Indian

⁶⁰ Interview with Freedom Fighter Shri. Prabhakar Ghodge. (October 1997)

⁶¹ Interview with Shri. Prabhakar Ghodge (October 1997)

⁶² Interview with Shri. Verissimo Coutinho. (October 2001)

satyagrahis in batches beginning from 18th May 1955 as the day 18th had special significance, which culminated in a mass satyagraha on 15th August 1955. Goa Vimochan Sahayak Samiti was formed in June 1954 for lending a helping hand to the Goans in their liberation struggle had announced on 24th April 1955 that it was seriously considering the move for 'active participation' in the Goa liberation movement by sending batches of volunteers. The Samiti with Keshavrao Jedhe as its president, Jayantrao Tilak as general secretary, S. A. Dange, S. M. Joshi and representatives of other parties as members announced its plan of individual satyagraha from 18th May 1955.⁶³ The date 18th was considered to be a revolutionary date in the history of Goa's liberation, as it was on this date in June 1946, that last phase of Goa's liberation struggle was inaugurated by Dr. R. M. Lohia in 1946 at Margao. Thus, even Goa Vimochan Sahayak Samiti felt that the satyagraha campaign should begin on that auspicious day. The 15th August has another significance in India. As it was on this day, India got independence from British rule, but Goa, a small part of India remained under the alien rule. Since both the days were significant, Goa Vimochan Sahayak Samiti felt that the struggle should begin on revolutionary day i.e. on 18th and liberation of Goa would be attained on 15th August 1955. By sending a large number of Indian satyagrahis, the Portuguese administration would be paralysed, which will result into total breakdown of political machinery. However this was not to happen.

As the preparations for the satyagraha movement, altogether eleven centres of NC(G) were created on India-Goa border like Banda, Kankumbi, Sawantwadi, etc. It was decided by Goa Vimochan Sahayak Samiti that the satyagrahis would enter into Goa led by the prominent personalities such as N. G. Goray, Madhu Limaye, Shirubhau Limaye, Senapati Bapat, Premanath Vasnik, Rajaram Patil and many others.⁶⁴

The satyagraha campaign as decided started on 18th May 1955. Let me now just have a look at the satyagraha that was offered by a group of satyagrahis under the leadership of Shri. Shirubhau Limaye, on 24th May 1955. Shri. Limaye writes,

⁶³ Interview with Shri. Rambhau Kakodkar (2000)

⁶⁴ Interview with Freedom Fighter Shri. Rambhau Kakodkar. (May 2000)

'We were disappointed when nobody arrested us after reaching Goa. We were under the impression that our arrest would take place as soon as we enter into Goa.....Then we decided to attract the attention of Portuguese police officials. All started shouting 'Salazar Murdabad', 'Bharat Zindabad', on the top of their voices. But nothing happened that day. On the third day, I decided to commit a greater mistake. I wrote a letter to police commissioner asking him to join our satyagrahi batch and also wrote to him of our decision of organising demonstrations on the roads and to hoist the Indian flag on every government building, we come across on our way.

As decided earlier, we started for our journey and hoisted national flags on one or two unused police stations and school buildings. At that time they recognised my letter. When we were resting in a village, we heard the sound of some police jeeps and soon they came near us. Before participating in this satyagraha, I had sent a letter to Goa Governor from Poona, explaining him the philosophy of satyagraha and the rationale behind the liberation of Goa, the participation of satyagrahis in the batch, their number, about the way they would enter into Goa and at the same time promising him that we would not resort to violent means during our march into Goa. Monteiro, the police sub-inspector had brought the letter with him and started inquiring about Limaye.

When I told him that I was Limaye he started arguing with me over the status of Goa. Goa, he believed, has no links with India. Portuguese are ruling on Goa for more than 450 years. Goa is an overseas province of Portugal. I also started arguing with him and explained how Goa cannot be a part of Portugal. The culture, language, customs, religion, etc. is similar to that of India. And in no way Goa can be associated with Portugal. After a big discussion, Monteiro said, "You could not prove that Goa is a part of India. And thus I have no other option than to arrest you. Everybody should sit in the vehicles and we will take you to the borders". I told Monteiro, that I could not prove what you wanted, but at the same time you could not prove that Goa is a part of Portugal. You should understand that since Goa is indivisible part of India we have the right to enter into Goa'.

Monteiro signalled at us to sit in the vehicles. I told him that we are satyagrahis. We are all well-mannered and do not resort to violent means. But since we hold Indian flags we can not come with you. You take away the flags from our hands and then we will decently come along with you.....Monteiro and his officials then started snatching the flags from our hands, by beating us with bayonets and lathis. I was then tied to a tree individually and others were beaten up mercilessly. I was then separated from rest of the satyagrahis and was imprisoned while others were taken to the borders and left'.⁶⁵

This was the satyagraha offered by Indians on 24th May 1955, one week after the first satyagraha that was held on 18th May 1955 under the leadership of Shri. N. G. Goray and Shri. Senapati Bapat. The batch comprised of nearly eighty satyagrahis which entered

⁶⁵ Limaye, Shirubhau, 'Goa Muktiladha Va Majha Sahabhag', (Marathi) in Akhil Bharatiya Goa Swatantryra Sainik Sangh- Pune and Goa Freedom fighters Association- Panaji, *Smaranika* (1991), Maharashtra: published by shri. Ram Tupe, President, Akhil Bharatiya Goa Swatantrata Sangram Sainik Sangh, Pune.

into Goa via Talewadi (where river Mandovi originates in Karnataka) and reached a village called 'Savarde' in Sattari Taluka and spent nearly three days before their arrest. The leader of satyagraha of this batch had expected the arrest by Portuguese police after reaching Goa. But it is surprising to note as to why the disappointment came to them when arrest did not take place. Was the aim of the satyagrahis to get arrested without achieving the goal of defying the Portuguese rule? Further it should be remembered that Goa was a Portuguese colony and the things in Goa were not the same like that of British India. The British understood the meaning of satyagraha and non-violence. But in Goa, Portuguese had to be told what they were supposed to do with the satyagrahis. In this case, Shri. Shirubhau Limaye had to tell Agente Monteiro, the Portuguese police officer to take away the Indian flags from their hands before arresting them. The overall narration of the incident suggest that the satyagrahis were only interested in courting arrest and filling the jails as that was done in British India by Indians. These satyagrahis wanted to make the situation difficult for the Portuguese officials to handle them in jails.

The leaders of this satyagrahas like that of leaders of 18th May 1955 satyagraha Shri. N. G. Goray and Senapati Bapat, had, in advance, informed the Goa Governor General by letter about this satyagraha movement. But even then, as the incident suggest that notice of this letter was only taken notice of by the Portuguese when the leader of this satyagraha wrote another letter to the police commissioner. The satyagraha campaign led by Goa Vimochan Sahayak Samiti which was started on 18th May 1955 had till 25th July 1955, sent ten batches of Satyagrahis which consisted of total 700 satyagrahis.⁶⁶

The mass satyagraha of 15th August 1955 was not just the satyagraha against the Portuguese administration but it was also against the government of India in as much as Samiti's member wanted the government to take police action.⁶⁷ Further Shri. Peter Alvares, then president of NC(G) told the Samiti members many a times that 'the External Affairs Ministry had given him to understand that the Government of India was in need of some excuse to strike the final blow and this satyagraha, if carried on steadfastly for some time,

⁶⁶ Sardesai, M. H. (1994), *Gomantakache Ase Te Diwas*, (Marathi) Goa: Purogami Prakashan, p. 310.

⁶⁷ Gaitonde, P. D. op.cit. p. 107.

would provide such an excuse to the government.⁶⁸ Whatever may be the reasons for organising the mass satyagraha of 15th August 1955, its announcement received great enthusiasm among the Indians and the Indian satyagrahis numbering in thousands left their homes to offer satyagraha in Goa. The enthusiasm was so much that even after Government of India's decision to seal off India's border with Portuguese enclaves, thousands of satyagrahis went on foot to offer satyagraha.

Rambhau Kakodkar, a member of NC(G) remembers the enthusiasm of the people in the following words;

'Even after sending the satyagrahis in batches, nearly 530 satyagrahis remained at Belgaum. I got the message from Peter Alvares and S. M. Joshi that these satyagrahis were ready to offer satyagraha and I should also accompany them. It was about 4:30 in the evening. It was raining very heavily and without umbrellas these satyagrahis were ready to walk the distance of about 28 miles of snake and tiger infested jungles. Peter Alvares and S. M. Joshi asked me how I will manage the things. I said it is my duty being a Goan to take care of them and told them not to worry. I sent two local men in front of our satyagraha batch to tell the villagers on the way to make some arrangements for them. Jambhoti is a village which is at a distance of 12 miles from Belgaum. The villagers are tribals especially Gavadas. It was a small village of 30-40 families and they lived in small houses. But after getting my message they had made all the arrangements, prepared bhakri and rice. In the houses where only four to five people could stay, nearly 40-50 people stayed overnight. They could only sit as there was no place for them to sleep. But even with such difficulties, the morale of the satyagrahis was very high'.⁶⁹

It should be remembered that these satyagrahis who had come from different parts of India were all enthusiastic to march into Goa to liberate it from the Portuguese rule. Thus without caring for the rain which was pouring down heavily on them, they set out for Goa on foot. Thus even after the Indian government's decision to stop the use of trucks to carry the satyagrahis from Belgaum to the border, Goa Vimochan Sahayak Samiti decided to send the satyagrahis on foot those arriving before 13th (August 1955). It should be noted that even those who reached after 13th August at Belgaum wanted to go to Goa on foot. For example, a group of 1,300 satyagrahis who had come to Belgaum under the leadership of Madhu Dandvate, when asked to stay back by Samiti, refused to turn back.

⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 107.

⁶⁹ Interview with Shri. Ramabhau Kakodkar. (May 2000)

‘We have not come for a picnic,’ they said, ‘We have come to die to complete India’s freedom’. Through the dense fog that enveloped the ghats at Amboli and through heavy rain, they walked seventy miles. It took them exactly three days. They were tired but happy. ‘We have fulfilled our pledge’, they said.⁷⁰

One thing that has to be noted here is that these satyagrahis were given the accommodation by Gavadas of Jambhoti village. Though their houses were small and even the people were poor they had prepared Bhakri and rice for the satyagrahis. This explains the fact that even these Gavadas were inclined to help those people who were going to sacrifice their life to complete India’s Independence.

The satyagraha was started with the intention of liberating Goa from the Portuguese rule. The Samiti’s members took a great responsibility in organising this satyagraha on a mass scale. However, the same samiti which had announced and organised the mass satyagraha on 15th August 1955 with great efforts and enthusiasm, had to call off the satyagraha at its own will. The members of the Samiti noticed that the satyagrahis were being killed by the Portuguese authorities. It was a question mark in front of Samiti as how many satyagrahis would they allow to die like this? And thus Samiti members met and decided to stop the satyagraha.⁷¹

The mass satyagraha which was organised on 15th August 1954 under the leadership of Shri. Peter Alvares had got converted into group satyagraha, when non-Goans were banned from entering into the Goan territory. The announcement of mass satyagraha of 15th August 1955 under the banner of Goa Vimochan Sahayak Samiti received a great response from the Indian people. I have called it as a ‘movement’, where Goans as well as non-Goans participated to liberate Goa from Portuguese rule, since there were not just two satyagrahas, which were organised in two different years, but a continuous movement for over a year from 15th August 1954 to 15th August 1955. This is because from the beginning of 15th August 1954 satyagraha, the satyagraha activities within Goa were also challenging

⁷⁰ Menezes Francis A. ‘Lest We Forget... 15th August 1955, in The Goa Daman and Diu Freedom Fighters’ Association on 25th anniversary of the event, **The Massacre of the satyagrahis in 1955**, (1980) Goa: Edited and Published for Goa Daman and Diu Freedom Fighters Association by Lambert Mascarenhas, p. unnumbered

⁷¹ Interview with Shri Narayan Palekar.

the Portuguese administration. Some of the important satyagrahas that were offered inside Goa between the two great satyagrahas include (a) Satyagraha of 25th November 1954 (the day of reconquest) at Panaji in front of Panaji police station where Sindhutai Deshpande and Laxman Govekar participated, (b) Satyagraha of 26th January 1955 at a village called 'Dhabem' in Sattari Taluka under the leadership of Govind Haribhat Bhave Shastri, (c) Satyagraha of 17th February 1955 at Margao by Shashikala Hodarkar and Vilasini Prabhu in the morning and Suryakanti Fal Desai and Laxmi Poinguinkar in the evening to celebrate Dr. Gaitonde Day and (d) Satyagraha session of 6th April 1955 at Mapusa under the leadership of Smt. Sudhatai Joshi and at Margao on the same day by Fabiao de Costa, Narayan Kurade and Vishnu Angle led their batches.⁷²

All these satyagrahas which were held inside Goa had selected prominent days to challenge the Portuguese administration. While the satyagrahas of 25th November 1954, 17th February 1955 and 6th April 1955 have been dealt in detail in chapter IV – The Gendered Face Of The Liberation Struggle, the satyagraha of 26th January 1955 was mainly against the introduction of economic blockade by Indian government against Portuguese rule. In order to paralyse the Portuguese economy India, in 1954, had announced economic blockade of Goa. The result of this economic blockade was such that the Goans who were living under poverty suffered the most⁷³. This was not just the case with the people of Sattari but even the people of Canacona who joined liberation struggle of Goa in large numbers were actually motivated due to the same reason.⁷⁴

The earnings which were made by exporting coconuts and betlenuts from Goa received a setback due to economic blockade and the condition of these people became worse. Thus, considering the Portuguese responsible for the imposition of economic blockade by Indian government, Brahmins of Sattari Taluka under the leadership of Govind Haribhat Bhave Shastri offered this satyagraha at Dhabem, a village in Sattari Taluka. They hoisted Indian tricolour at 6 O'clock in the morning as India celebrated its fifth

⁷² Sardesai, M. H. op.cit, p. 310.

⁷³ Ibid. p. 179.

⁷⁴ Interview with the Freedom Fighter Shri. Manohar Prabhu Desai.(NC(G)). (November 1998)

Republic day. They were then arrested at a village called Savarde at Sattari while marching in a procession on the same day.⁷⁵ Though it was believed by Shri. Morarji Desai, the then chief Minister of Bombay State that Goans had not sacrificed enough to deserve freedom,⁷⁶ Goans had actually struggled hard to solve the Goan problem both violently as well as non-violently by themselves.⁷⁷ But due to its small size, it was not possible for them to work independently without the help of Indians. Thus the Satyagraha under Goa Vimochan Sahayak Samiti by the Indians began from 18th May 1955, entered Goa under the leadership of N. G. Goray.⁷⁸ From then onwards, as we have seen earlier, with a gap of a week or two the satyagrahis entered Goa in different batches and 15th August 1955 was celebrated as mass satyagraha day.

Right from the beginning of the satyagraha movement on 15th August 1954 till 15th August 1955 (except in few cases), Portuguese administration had stationed their army not exactly on the borders of India-Goa but quite inside Goa.⁷⁹ So the satyagraha batches which entered into Goa from the Indian borders managed to go inside Goa without any resistance. This is clear from the capture of Terekhol fort by Goan satyagrahis on 15th August 1954 who were not challenged by Portuguese army or police at the borders. Even the batch that was led by Shri. Shirubhau Limaye on 24th May 1955 reached a village called 'Savarde' in Sattari and spent nearly three days there before their arrest. Similar was the case with many other satyagraha batches of 15th August 1955. For example, the first batch of satyagraha entered Goa via Aronda reached deep inside Pednem and other adjacent villages such as Morjim, Pavrem, Paliem, etc. Fourth batch reached Surla village in the north, fifth batch entered Goa via Dodamarg and satyagrahi from this batch even hoisted the Indian tricolour in a village called 'Hedus', sang National Anthem, read a pledge and declared the village free.⁸⁰ Seventh batch consisting of about seventy-one satyagrahis entered Pollem village in Canacona Taluka. Thus before their arrest some of the satyagrahis even

⁷⁵ Sardesai, M. H. op.cit., 179.

⁷⁶ Gaitonde, P. D. op.cit., 104.

⁷⁷ Interview with Shri. Rambhau Kakodkar.(May 2000)

⁷⁸ Interview with Shri. Rambhau Kakodkar.

⁷⁹ Interview with Shri. Rambhau Kakodkar.

⁸⁰ Menezes, Francis A. op.cit. p. unnumbered.

hoisted flags inside Goa.⁸¹ This denotes the fact that the satyagrahis at different points were allowed to enter into Goa before opening fire on them. It was however at Banda and Patradevi, Portuguese started firing on unarmed satyagrahis. Since Portuguese posts at many places were vacant many Goan residents at the borders crossed over into Indian territory during the satyagraha of 15th August 1954 fearing the attack of Indian army on Portuguese⁸² in Goa which might result in the war-like situation. However, Rambhau Kakodkar points out the actual fact of the vacated borders by Portuguese police in the following words;

‘Portuguese government knew that India wanted to interfere in the Goan problem and waiting for the right opportunity to strike the final blow. Thus in order to avoid any critical situation or war-like situation on borders, Portuguese administration took the step of self-defence. Strict orders were given to the military and other police officials that they should not fire on Indian people without orders from the top officials, but should only guard the border area. And this was the reason that military was not stationed on the borders but few kilometers inside from India-Goa border’.⁸³

Even Shri. Prabhakar Vaidya, a Goan nationalist believed that the Portuguese administration had vacated the border posts at the time of the 15th August 1954 satyagraha fearing under the name of satyagraha, armed Goanese, as was the case during the Nagar Haveli liberation, would enter and try to liberate Goa.⁸⁴

Infact there were two reasons behind the organisation of 15th August 1955 mass satyagraha. One was the liberation of Goa by peaceful methods. If this did not work, this satyagraha would itself give an excuse to government of India to solve the Goan problem if unarmed satyagrahis were attacked by Portuguese military.

Further, it should be noted here that all these satyagrahis were released by Portuguese by taking them to borders. But before that they were arrested and beaten-up ruthlessly. Only the leaders of these batches were arrested and imprisoned.⁸⁵

⁸¹ Interview with Shri. Rambhau Kakodkar.(May 2000)

⁸² Ranade, Mohan. Op.cit., p. 47.

⁸³ Interview with Shri. Rambhau Kakodkar.(May 2000)

⁸⁴ Vaidya , P. T. ‘Advent Of Portuguese in Goa and Goa’s Freedom Struggle- A Summarisation’ a paper presented at a seminar on **Advent Of Portuguese In Goa and Goa’s Stuggle For Freedom**, held on 14th and 15th December 1990 under the Aegis of The Cuncolim Collegc of Arts and Commerce, Cuncolim.

⁸⁵ Interview with Freedom Fighter Shri. Narayan Palekar.(October 1997)

The arrest and imprisonment of the leaders and release of other satyagrahis suggest that Portuguese government did not want to fill its jails with the Indian people. As it would have prompted Indian government to take action against the Portuguese in Goa. As Rambhau Kakodkar rightly said that the Portuguese government during the satyagraha movement was only taking the defensive attitude and not offensive position. It knew the strength of the Indian government as they did not want to loose Goa to India by giving any excuse to the government of India. And due to this reason, even the leaders who were arrested during satyagraha campaigns were released soon by the Portuguese government.⁸⁶ As I have mentioned earlier, the satyagraha of 15th August 1955 was organised to give an excuse to the Indian government to interfere into the Goan problem and solve it as early as possible. But due to the defensive nature of the Portuguese government, though many satyagrahis were killed Indian government had to wait for another opportunity to strike a final blow.⁸⁷ The firing on unarmed satyagrahis on India-Goa border, though referred to as 'brutal and uncivilised in the extreme⁸⁸' by Jawaharlal Nehru on 16th August 1955 in Lok Sabha, did not come as a shock or surprise to the government of India. This is because Dr. Salazar, much before had declared that mass entry of Indians would amount to invasion of Portuguese territory and had warned India that there would be bloodshed if any attempt by its citizens was made to cross the International border.⁸⁹ And due to this on 12th August 1955, Prime Minister of India advised the people not to cross the International border and on the following day sealed off India's border with the Portuguese enclaves. Even Goa Vimochan Sahayak Samiti was under the tension as to how the Portuguese would respond to the mass satyagraha of 15th August 1955 as they had seen how Portuguese had opened fire on unarmed satyagrahis on 24th June 1955, when Amirchand Gupta of Mathura was beaten up, trampled upon and thrown back into Indian territory, due to which he had died and on 3rd August 1955 which had led to the death of Comrade Thorat and Comrade Sahay, both communists

⁸⁶ Interview with Freedom Fighter smt. Shashikala Almeida.(October 1999)

⁸⁷ Interview with Shri. Rambhau Kakodkar.(May 2000)

⁸⁸ Gaitonde, P. D. op.cit., p. 108.

⁸⁹ Lawande V. N. 'They Embraced Death With smiling Faces' in *The Massacre Of The Satyagrahis in 1955*, (1980) op.cit., p. unnumbered.

from Maharashtra and West Bengal respectively.⁹⁰ The final casualty figures, according to Indian officials, were 22 shot dead and 225 wounded, 38 of them seriously. At Patradevi, on the Banda border, 35 out of 600 satyagrahis had hardly moved 20 yards into Goan territory when the police fired several rounds on them. Mrs. Subhadra Bai Sagar of West Bengal was shot dead followed by the death of Kamal Singh of Punjab.⁹¹

The organization of satyagrahas, firstly under the banner of Goa Action Committee and secondly under Goa Vimochan Sahayak Samiti, saw the fantastic unity of all the political parties irrespective of their ideology. While Goa Action committee which was formed in July 1953 under the Presidentship of Dr. T. B. Cunha, comprised of National Congress (Goa) with its ideology of satyagraha and non-violence, Goan Peoples' Party with its communist ideology and United front of Goans which initially preached that Goa's identity is different from the rest of India and Goa, after its liberation, should have its own independent status. This unity was possible mainly due to the efforts of Dr. T. B. Cunha who understood the need of the hour. This committee was responsible for organising 15th August 1954 mass satyagraha.

However, after the conversion of 1954 mass satyagraha into group satyagrahas on 15th August, due to the ban on non-Goans satyagrahis entering into Goan territory, Dr. T. B. Cunha felt that the Goa problem should be considered as an All-India problem. And thus it was the duty of the Indians to help the Goans in their efforts to overthrow the Portuguese rule from the Indian soil. While presenting Goa Action committee's report to an all parties parliamentary convention in May 1955, he said,

'The main burden of the liberation of the Portuguese possessions in India and their incorporation into the Indian Union has till now been borne by Goan nationalists. This work has been wrongly considered as of exclusive concern of Goans, when the very fact that Goa is an integral part of India makes its liberation an all-India problem..... The lack of co-operation of the Indian forces in the work, which aims at recovering the territorial integrity of India and thereby at assuring her future security, has been in great part responsible for the delay in the settlement of our problem which after eight years of India's independence has taken a new and graver importance in Indian national life'.⁹²

⁹⁰ Interview with Shri. Narayan Palekar. (GPP)(October 1997)

⁹¹ Gaitonde, P. D. op.cit., p. 108.

⁹² Cunha, T. B. op.cit, p. 314.

Goa Vimochan Sahayak Samiti comprised of all non-Congress parties including C. P. I., S. K. Party, Forward Bloc, Bharatiya Jan Sangh, Praja Socialist Party, Revolutionary Party, Kisan Mazdoor Sangh and Hindu Mahasabha with National Congress (Goa). Indian National Congress officially boycotted the mass satyagraha of 15th August 1955⁹³ as it felt that the mass entry of Indians into Goa would likely to change the nature of the peaceful struggle.⁹⁴ However the individual congressmen supported GVSS and even participated actively in the satyagraha movement. For example, Keshavarao Jedhe,⁹⁵ a congressman was elected as President of GVSS. It was during both the satyagrahas of 15th August, Government of India took a retrograde stand. Firstly it took the decision of not allowing non-Goans into Goan territory on 15th August 1954 and secondly it sealed off India's border with Goa during 15th August 1955 satyagraha. Both the times, according to many Goans,⁹⁶ this decision of government of India strengthened the hands of Portuguese administration. And this led to the beatings, killings and arrests of many of the satyagrahis especially during the mass satyagraha of 15th August 1955. However the decision of government of India of not allowing the non-Goans into Goan territory during the satyagraha of 15th August 1954 is upheld by Shri. Rambhau Kakodkar, a member of NC(G). He believed that North Indians who had come to Goa to offer satyagraha were under the impression that Goa was full of gold which was imported from abroad and smuggled into the Indian territory. If these people who carried only towels on their shoulders, were allowed to enter into Goa, Goans would have suffered economically due to their immigration. This was the reason why only Goans were allowed to enter and not non-Goans. But this was not so with the mass satyagraha of 15th August 1955. Due to the proper organisation and strict supervision by many of the top leaders from India, it was properly handled by them under the banner of GVSS.⁹⁷

⁹³ Interview with Shri. Narayan Palekar (GPP).(October 1997)

⁹⁴ Gaitonde P. D. op.cit., p. 105.

⁹⁵ Interview with Shri. Narayan Palekar. (October 1997)

⁹⁶ Interview with many Freedom Fighters for Goa liberation such as Madhav Pandit, Rameshwar Langekar (November 2000), Gurnath Kelekar, (June 1999), Manohar Prabhu Desai (May 1999) etc.

⁹⁷ Interview with Shri. Rambhau Kakodkar.

Let me now have a look at the response of the general public towards the satyagraha of 15th August 1954 and 1955. While some people inside Goa wondered and even some of them wished GVSS a success, in achieving its goal, some had helped them in creating an atmosphere conducive for the liberation of Goa by organising a number of satyagrahas inside Goa⁹⁸. However, the reaction of common people, especially those who were not aware of what is going to happen during the satyagraha movement were in panic. Those people who lived in border areas appeared to be in a desperate hurry to cross over into Indian territory. They were under the impression that there was going to be a war, where Indian army would march into Goa on 13th or 14th August and Portuguese would flee. For them it was risky to live in the border areas. While some residents of Margao, Panaji and Mapusa left the town and went to live in the villages due to the fear that these cities might be bombed at any time by the Indian air-force.....In Volvoi (a village) the people had even brought the crackers to be used to extend a hearty welcome to the advancing Indian army when it could reach the place on 15th August 1954. Some of the people had even got their tailors to sew the Indian tricolours for them to hoist them. At Ponda wherever they saw a jeep or motorcycle approaching from the region of Colem (a village near Goa border), they all believed that it was the Indian forces moving in.⁹⁹

This was the Goan peoples' response to the satyagraha of 15th August 1954. We have seen the response of the people to 18th June 1946 movement for civil liberties which was very much positive. Though 15th August 1954 was announced as a mass satyagraha day and thousands of satyagrahis were to march into Goa from the borders, Goans on the other hand thought that it would be the march of Indian Army. From this, it is easy to conclude that the publicity of the organisation of mass satyagraha was made in India but unfortunately this was not done in Goa. Even those Goans who entered into Goa via Terekhol, Pollem and Patradevi were either Poona or Bombay based Goans. For example, Prabhakar Ghodge, one of the satyagrahi who entered into Goa via Terekhol under the

⁹⁸ Satyagrahas were held at Mapusa, Pedncm, Pirna, Caisua, Shiolim, Panjim and Canacona.

⁹⁹ Ranade, Mohan. op.cit., p. 49.

leadership of Alfred Afonso was studying in Bombay. when the news of the organisation of mass entry on 15th August 1954 was announced, he came forward to participate in this mass satyagraha.¹⁰⁰

However this was not so with the Goans from inside Goa. From the above description of peoples' response, it seems that very few people were aware of the satyagraha movement and the other people were innocent about it. At the last moment, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru banned non-Goans from entering into Goa and the mass satyagraha movement fizzled out. Only few Goans in three small batches were allowed to enter into Goa. The unsuccessful nature of mass satyagraha of 15th August 1954 lies in the fact that the leaders of Goa's liberation struggle depended heavily on the Indian satyagrahis and Goans were uninformed about this movement. As Prabhakar Vaidya, one of the nationalists asserted that the reason for the failure of the 15th August 1954 mass satyagraha because Shri. Peter Alvares relied only on the Indian satyagrahis without any organisational build-up in Goa or outside Goa among the Goans residing in Bombay or other parts of India.¹⁰¹ Further the announcement of the 15th August 1954 mass satyagraha was a 'hasty decision without any pre-planning'. It is believed that soon after the liberation of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, this decision was taken as during this time the morale of the Indians was high and that of Portuguese government was very low. But the movement was unsuccessful. There was even confusion in the minds of people over the date as to when the army (in fact they were satyagrahis) would march whether on 13th or on 14th August 1954. This was not just the case with the people living on border areas. But even the people from towns like Margao, Panaji, Mapusa and Ponda were unaware as to what is going to happen on 15th August 1954. It should be remembered here that during the movement for civil liberties on 18th June 1946 under the leadership of Dr. R. M. Lohia these principle towns of Goa were rocked by nationalist activities. But during this time the fearless residents of these cities who had shown

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Shri. Prabhakar Ghodge.

¹⁰¹ Vaidya , Prabhakar (1992). *Agnichya Jwala* (Marathi)Panaji: Rajkamal Prakashan- Cuncolim p. 2.

undaunted courage during 18th June 1946 movement were leaving the cities and moving into villages out of the fear that these villages might be bombed by Indian Air Force at any time. Even the depositors were crowding at the doors of the Portuguese government banks "Caixa Economica" and "Banco Ultramarino" to withdraw their money and gold from the banks as they feared that after the 'war' deposits would be transferred to Portugal if they did not withdraw it in time.¹⁰² This was due to the lack of publicity of the mass satyagraha of 15th August 1954 inside Goa. The people in Goa were all ready with fire-crackers, flags, etc. to welcome the Indian army on the Goan soil. In the same enthusiasm the people of Vazrem hoisted a flag high up on the hill top of Khetke¹⁰³. A young patriot Hemant Soman, a teacher from Margao reached Panaji in the morning of 15th August 1954 and hoisted Indian Tricolour on the palace.¹⁰⁴ But everybody was waiting for the Indian army march into Goa. The desperation of these people after the end of the day is explained by Mohan Ranade, a freedom fighter in the following words;

"The morning ended into noon, then into afternoon and afternoon passed into evening, night came and still nothing happened....."The battle may be at Panaji because the Portuguese army is stationed there. We are far away in the distant woods. The sweet tidings of the liberation would reach us tomorrow".....Next day Gundlo (a resident of Vazrem) who was till yesterday confidently asserting, "Now it is bound to happen", started saying, "it will never happen, Portuguese will continue ruling Goa forever, God wishes so".¹⁰⁵

15th August 1954 satyagraha was over and people believed that Government of India would not do anything for the cause of Goa. The mass satyagraha of 15th August 1955 was announced which had got huge publicity not only in India but also in Goa too. This time Goans were all well aware of the fact that Indian satyagrahis and not army would march into Goa and waited eagerly to welcome them. They had made all the preparations as were made on 15th August 1954, welcome the peaceful and non-violent satyagrahis. For example the women in Pednem Taluka had worked hard to prepare Bhakri and Chuteny. As Shri. Rambhau Kakodkar notes,

¹⁰² Ranade, Mohan.op cit.,p. 48.

¹⁰³ Ibid. p. 50.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. p. 50.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. p. 50.

'Many Goan Women of Pednem, especially at the India-Goa borders had prepared thousands of Bhakris and Chutney for the satyagrahis who would enter into Goa on foot to complete India's Independence. The whole night on the previous day of satyagraha they were continuously engaged in this task'.¹⁰⁶

The satyagraha movement for liberation of Goa which began on 15th August 1954 came to an end on 15th August 1955. While speaking on 2nd September 1955 at the Peoples' Hall in Bombay, Dr. T. B. Cunha remarked;

'This satyagraha will forever remain as a great landmark in the history of the liberation of Goa. It has been a decisive step in our march to liberation. Some people may have not yet grasped the real significance of that great event, but one can say that it has brought us very near to our final goal. Only people who lack the sense of perspective in our movement could brand the satyagraha as a failure because it did not bring us freedom on that very day. The fact that it did not bring immediate and visible results must not make us ignore the great achievements of the memorable event.'¹⁰⁷

Let me now evaluate the liberation struggle of Goa.

Evaluation Of The Liberation Struggle.

The liberation struggle of Goa came to an end on 19th December 1961 by 'Operation Vijay' when government of India sent its military to liberate Goa by force. When all the peaceful methods, diplomatic i.e. at nation to nation level were unsuccessful, the last resort left to the government of India was nothing else but to send its military to liberate its little part, which was under the control of Portuguese since 1510. However, if somebody was responsible to change the attitude of government of India, to change the course of action, it was the 'people of Goa', who for over thirteen long years after India's freedom gave a tough fight to Portuguese rule.

I say this because, if we glance through the entire liberation struggle- violent and non-violent, it was carried out by Goans without proper leadership. In this thirteen long years they had to fight two wars, two battles, one against the Portuguese rule and second against the Government of India. It is no doubt that the people of India were always with

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Shri. Rambhau Kakodkar.

¹⁰⁷ Cunha, T. B. op.cit., p. 328.

the People of Goa. This was evident from the direct involvement of the Indians in mass satyagrahas of 15th August 1954 and 1955. People of India, in many other ways also directly as well as indirectly, helped the liberation struggle of Goa. Government Of India, right from the beginning of the last phase of liberation struggle on 18th June 1946 took a negative stand on the Goan issue. Though Mahatma Gandhi, wholeheartedly supported the Goan movement for civil liberties, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, on the other hand, did not seem to be much inclined in solving Goa's problem at the earliest. On the other hand, he considered it as the simple affair and tried to convince Dr. R. M. Lohia through Gandhiji that the Government of India is trying to settle the Goa issue at the Government level.¹⁰⁸ But Pandit Nehru's all the efforts of persuading Portuguese to leave Goa by 1947 did not achieve success. Due to passiveness of Pandit Nehru on the Goan issue, Dr. R. M. Lohia declined taking interest in the Goan problem.¹⁰⁹

People of India were in fact lucky to get the straightforward, disciplined, intelligent and able leadership like that of Mahatma Gandhi. Goans on the other hand were unlucky. Though the beginning of the last phase of the liberation struggle in 1946 was initially directed by and led by Dr. R. M. Lohia, after his arrest and deportation to India, the movement that was followed was the movement of the people of Goa. The satyagrahas, bandhs, meetings, demonstrations and all other nationalist activities resulted from the spontaneous reaction of the people to the Portuguese rule. However, I would not say that there were no people in Goa who tried to lead this peoples' movement. But in some or the other way they were not successful in it. This is due to the fact that a number of small organizations existed in Goa, with different ideologies and since Goa is a small territory, confusion prevailed in the minds of the people. Due to this, support which came to Dr. Lohia on 18th June 1946 from all the sections of the people, the similar kind of support was not received by any of the leaders after 18th June 1946 movement for civil liberties. Shri. Prabhakar Vaidya, a Freedom Fighter notes,

¹⁰⁸ Kelkar, Indumati ,op. cit., p. 122.

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Shri. Vasant Karapurkar.

‘On the Goan horizon there did not seem to be any leading nationalist who could have the organizational capacity to amalgamate the different Goans who could start a struggle that could give sleepless nights to the well entrenched Goa Government who luckily had a tremendous financial resources to curb nationalist activities’.¹¹⁰

This was evident from the satyagraha of 15th August 1954 when Shri. Peter Alvares, the then president of NC(G) announced the mass entry of the Indians into Goa. Though the ban on non-Goans entering into Goa was announced, it did not deter the Goans who entered Goa in three small batches. The movement did not fail, but the idea of being dependent on leadership of non-Goan who were followers of particular Indian political party to march into Goa on 15th August 1954 had subsided.¹¹¹ Similar was the case with the 15th August 1955 mass satyagraha. The satyagrahis who were Indians were killed by the Portuguese on India-Goa borders. But the movement that was going on inside Goa was actually disturbing the Portuguese Government because it was the movement of the Goans. While putting a ban on the entry of Indian satyagrahis on 15th August 1954, Prime Minister justified his action by saying that the liberation of Goa is primarily a Goan concern and Goan efforts in this regard should not be eclipsed by its supporters.¹¹²

The Goan movement that was fought with violent methods under AGD, GLA, GPP and such others actually involved the common people of Goa. They by their violent terrorist activities threatened the Portuguese government whenever the satyagraha movement in Goa subsided. From 1948 to 1954 and from 1956 to 1960, there was essentially no movement on a large scale but political activities and militant activities by the Goans were giving a challenge to the Portuguese administration.

On the other hand, without helping the Goans in their fight against the Portuguese, government of India was playing a negative role. Take for example the policy of economic blockade, which was criticised by all the Goans as a ‘foolish’ decision because instead of paralysing the Portuguese economy it was paralysing the social and economic life of

¹¹⁰ Vaidya, Prabhakar, ‘Advent Of Portuguese In Goa and Goa’s struggle for Freedom – A Summarisation’ a paper presented at a seminar held on 14th and 15th December 1990 op.cit.,

¹¹¹ Kunte, B. G(ed). *Goa Freedom struggle vis-à-vis Maharashtra 1946-61* (Vol. VIII, part II), op.cit., p. 2.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 3.

Goans.¹¹³ Due to the permit system, the Goan students who used to go to answer their exams outside Goa were sometimes held up since they were not allowed to go without permits.

However, to throw off the listlessness and apathy which had taken hold of the liberation movement, four groups namely the National Congress (Goa), Goan Peoples' Party, Azad Gomantak Dal and Goa Liberation Council came together with the Goan clubs' federation as one of the constituent units and held a convention on 2nd to 4th October 1959 at Bombay.¹¹⁴ The Afro-Asian solidarity movement came into being following the Bandung Conference in Indonesia. It was formed in order to put an end to the foreign colonialism in Asia and Africa, the people of both these continents came together, resulted in the birth of Afro-Asian Solidarity movement. Its first important conference was held at Cairo from 26th December 1957 to January, 1, 1958 followed by second conference at Konkri in 1960 which was participated by nearly about fifty countries.¹¹⁵ Indian Association of Afro-Asian Solidarity movement held two National Conferences, first at Hyderabad in 1955 and second at Calcutta in 1959. It was decided in the second National conference that all the nationalist organizations should celebrate 25th November as 'Goan Independence Day' in the year 1960.¹¹⁶ The Indian wing of the Afro-Asian solidarity movement under Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali, took upon itself the task of bringing about a shift in Pandit Nehru's policy on Goa formed at a joint convention of the Afro-Asian solidarity movement and the Goan political convention held at Delhi in December 1960. Further a conference was held at Casablanca in April 1961 under the patronage of King Hassan II of Morrocco and it was attended by important African leaders of the Portuguese colonial freedom movements some of whom like Mr. Marcelino dos Santos (Mozambique) and Mr. Aristidis Pereira (Guinea Bissau). The Goan freedom forces represented at the conference were Dr. Pundalik Gaitonde (NC(G)), Mr. George Vaz (GPP) and Mr. Cajetan Lobo (Goa Liberation Council) and

¹¹³ Interview with Shri. Armando Pereira.

¹¹⁴ 'The Navjivan' (Fortnightly) issued and published by AGD dated 16th October 1959.

¹¹⁵ 'The Navjivan' (Fortnightly) issued and published by AGD dated 30th November 1960.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

many others. The conference came to the inevitable conclusion that opportunity for striking a blow at Portuguese colonialism presented itself to India over Goa.

A seminar on Portuguese colonialism was held due to the call given by National Campaign Committee for Goa commenced on 20th October 1961 under the Presidentship of Mr. Balawantrao Mehta, inaugurated by Pt. Nehru at Delhi and concluded on 23rd October 1961 at Bombay. It was attended by important African leaders of Portuguese colonial freedom movements who had earlier attended the Casablanca conference along with the Goan freedom forces¹¹⁷ from India. Among those who attended the Delhi seminar were the Zambian president Kenneth Kaunda,¹¹⁸ Tanzanian commerce Minister Abdel el-Katib¹¹⁹ and Mr. Anthony Wedgewood Ben, Minister for scientific development in the labour government of Mr. Harold Wilson all of whom urged Pandit Nehru not to delay action on Goa any further. The concluding session of the seminar held in Bombay also came to the conclusion on Goa as had the Casablanca conference eight months earlier after the seminar, on Chowpatty sands at Bombay. Pandit Nehru warned the Portuguese government in no uncertain terms, making it clear to the world, that though India had for the past 14 years desired a peaceful solution of the Goa problem, the time had come, due to the obduracy of the Portuguese government, to change the policy and adopt 'a different method'.¹²⁰

Thus the government of India was forced by the Goans themselves to send its military to solve the problem of Goa at the earliest.

While discussing about the struggle for liberation against Portuguese rule, I have considered three events as prominent events; (i) 18th June 1946 movement for civil liberties, (ii) Liberation of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and (iii) Movement for liberation of Goa (15th August 1954- 15th August 1955). Out of the above mentioned events, the first and the third were the movements conducted on the Goan soil by adopting non-violence and satyagraha

¹¹⁷ The following representatives of the Goan Political Organizations took part in the seminar. Shri. V. N. Lawande, Shri. Shamrao (AGD), Dr. P. Gaitonde, Shri. Peter Alvares, Dr. Ram Hegde, Smt. Sudha Joshi (NCG), Shri. K. Lobo, Smt. Heredia (GLC), Shri. George Vaz, Shri. D. Kakodkar (GPP), editor of 'Free Goa' Smt. Berta Braganza, Dr. Vinayak Mayekar and from Goan Clubs Shri. Diniz Vaz, Shri. J. M. Souza, Prof. L. Rodrigues and Smt. Laura D'Souza.

¹¹⁸ He spoke on 'Portugal's Colonial Policy' at the first meeting on the second day of the seminar.

¹¹⁹ He spoke on 'Portuguese Colonies and UNO' at the second meeting on the second day of the seminar.

¹²⁰ Lobo, Cajetan. Afro-Asian Involvement In Goa's Freedom Struggle, in **Silver Jubilee Of Goa's Liberation 1961-86**, (1986) Goa: Goa Daman Diu Freedom Fighters Association, Sahyadri Printers-Goa. p. unnumbered.

as its strategy. The liberation of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, was done by some of the Goan militant organisations with the help of RSS and Communist Party of Maharashtra. Let me have a look at the significance of all the above mentioned events in the liberation struggle of Goa.

18th June 1946 movement for civil liberties has got special importance in the sense that an Indian Socialist leader, Dr. R. M. Lohia who had played an important role in 1942 Quit India movement, who was well-known among the Goans in Goa was responsible to organise this movement. It was this movement only which received full fledged support from all the sections of the people of Goa. This movement also saw the participation of young girls and women, who came out on the streets and held demonstrations against Portuguese rule in Goa. This movement which had started on 18th June 1946 continued with the same spirit and enthusiasm for a period of six months, even after the arrests and deportation of Dr. R. M. Lohia. However it could not continue after the period of six months only because of the arrests and deportation of many of the nationalists during this period. I call this movement as a successful movement for the simple reason that this movement achieved what it wanted to. From then onwards, Goans continued to challenge the Portuguese rule even under the ban on elementary civil liberties. Though Shri. Prabhakar Vaidya, a member of AGD believed that the non-violent struggle that took place from 18th June 1946 till the liberation of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, was nothing but a fight of no consequence in the sense it created no awe in the minds of Portuguese bureaucracy either in Goa or for that matter in Portugal,¹²¹ is not true. This movement for civil liberties was conducted in order to encourage the Goans to rise up against the Portuguese government, with spirit and enthusiasm. Thus 18th June 1946 movement for civil liberties should be seen from this point of view. Dr. R. M. Lohia taught the Goans to challenge the Portuguese rule by peaceful methods.

It is also true that the liberation of Dadra in the last days of July 1954 and that of Nagar Haveli in August 1954 created ripples of fear in the minds of all Portuguese elements

¹²¹ Vaidya, P.T., 'Azad Gomantak Dal, on looking back', in Vikas V. Desai (ed), (1986), **Armed Coups Against Portuguese Regime**, Cwa: India, Centro Promoter de Instrucao de Canacona, p. 33.

in Goa and elsewhere.¹²² There is no doubt, that the Portuguese administration was threatened when Goan freedom fighters, by using violent methods liberated Dadra and Nagar Haveli. The significance of this event lies in the fact that it was soon after the liberation of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, GVSS took the decision of organising mass satyagraha on 15th August 1955 in which the Indians would participate. Though the liberation of Dadra and Nagar Haveli was an easy task, since these territories were surrounded by the Indian territory, yet it was for the first time that a part of Portuguese colony in India was overtaken by the nationalists forces and soon declared free. It also became an integral part of the Indian Union and Indian tricolour was hoisted there on 15th August 1954 in the hands of Dr. T. B. Cunha, father of Goan nationalism. This event marked the beginning of the collapse of Portuguese colonialism.

The movement for liberation of Goa was started on 15th August 1954 and subsided on 15th August 1955. It was on 15th August 1954, though a large number of Indian satyagrahis gathered on India- Goa border, only Goan satyagrahis were allowed to enter into Goa in three small batches. This satyagraha has its own significance in the sense that the leaders of these batches were Catholics. Though this mass satyagraha got converted into group satyagrahas, one thing which needs to be highlighted is that the group of satyagrahis which entered Goa via Terekhol, hoisted the Indian flag at Terekhol which remained there for about 24 hours. Shri. Prabhakar Ghodge, a satyagrahi of the same batch believed that if Indian government had helped the Goans during this time by sending their forces at Terekhol, then a parallel government or 'prati-sarkar' would have been established in Terekhol village.¹²³ The satyagraha activity which began on 15th August 1954 continued till the organization of mass satyagraha on 15th August 1955, with a number of satyagraha activities that took place inside Goa. Though 15th August 1955 mass satyagraha was called off by GVSS, due to the firings on peaceful satyagrahis, this satyagraha was responsible to create a lot of publicity at the international level about the dictatorial regime of Portuguese in Goa. It was also responsible to create a favourable world opinion towards the liberation struggle in Goa against Portuguese rule.

¹²² Ibid. p. 33

¹²³ Interview with Shri. Prabhakar Ghodge.