

# OPINION POLL IN GOA --- AN EVALUATION OF THE METHOD TO SETTLE THE CONTROVERSY

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BY

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**STATEMENT REQUIRED UNDER ORDINANCE 19.8 (VI)  
RELATING TO PH.D. DEGREE**

The present thesis entitled "Opinion Poll in Goa --- An Evaluation of the Method to settle the Controversy" is entirely based on the work carried out by me under the supervision of Dr. M. J. Audi.

No part of this thesis has been submitted for a degree or diploma or other academic award. The literature concerning the problem investigated has been surveyed and all the necessary references are given in the thesis. This research work has been carried out independently and due acknowledgements have been made wherever the facilities are availed from.



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*Maria do Ceu Rodrigues*  
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# INTRODUCTION

## OBJECTIVES OF STUDY AND METHODOLOGY

### 1. Objectives of Study :

Along with Daman and Diu, Goa was liberated on 19 December, 1961. Between 1962 and 1966, the people of Goa were deeply agitated over their final political status in the Indian Union. As the political status moulds all aspects of life, it was but natural that this issue became the most important issue in Goa. Finally Government of India held an Opinion Poll on 16 January 1967 to ascertain the wishes of the people of Union Territory of Goa, Daman and Diu. Would they like to continue as Union Territory or would they like to merge into the neighbouring State of Maharashtra was the question which was answered by the Goans in the Opinion Poll.

For the first time in Swaraj India such a method was used to solve an acute political controversy. It is very pertinent to note that neither before 1967 nor after 1967, Opinion Poll has been used to solve the disputes though the number of such disputes continue to disrupt the relations between many States of the Indian Union. So far, Goa is the only part of country where Opinion Poll has been used and dispute settled. Hence the Opinion Poll in Goa constitutes a landmark in the political history of India.

Now and then some literature appeared on matters relating to the Opinion Poll in Goa. As far as I know, no attempts have been made so far to analyse in depth the operation and outcome of the Opinion Poll. This study is

a modest attempt in that direction. Such a study has its own importance. Why the powers that be decided to hold the Opinion Poll in Goa? What was the reaction of people to that decision? How was the Opinion Poll conducted by the Chief Election Commissioner? How did the Political Parties, various Groups and Press work to influence the decision of the people in the Opinion Poll? Last but not the least what was the decision of people of Goa? Answers to the questions will enable the scholars and the statesmen to understand the forces operating in society. This Study concentrates only on Goa and excludes Daman and Diu from its scope. The Study pinpoints the impact of Portuguese Colonialism on Goa and Goa's struggle for Freedom. It also pursues the political development in Goa after Liberation and ends with the outcome of the Opinion Poll which was officially declared in January 1967.

## **2. Methodology :**

The thesis is an analytical investigation of the Opinion Poll and main issues related to Opinion Poll. The data is drawn from the Lok Sabha Debates, Debates of the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu, related Government Gazettes and Goa, Daman and Diu Opinion Poll Act. Material is also collected from the Files of the Newspapers. Next to the Official Debates, Newspapers constitute an important source of the collection of data. Material is also collected from Books, Journals and Encyclopaedias. The Questionnaire and Interviews are also used to gather additional information.

The examination of the issues involved in the analysis of problem which was settled twenty nine years ago raised some difficulties in the collection of the data. Unfortunately, the Goa office of the Election Commission of India have not preserved the records related to the Opinion Poll. The Files of some

Newspapers in Goa are also not complete. Some of their issues were not traceable despite strenuous efforts.

### 3. Structure of Thesis :

The thesis consists of an introduction and five chapters. At the end of each chapter there is a list of references.

Introduction	:	Objectives of Study and Methodology.
Chapter I	:	Historical Background.
Part I	:	The Problem.
Part II	:	The Goa, Daman and Diu (Opinion Poll) Act [Act No 38 of 1966].
Chapter II	:	Pro--- Merger and Anti --- Merger --- Political Parties. (Regional and National).
Chapter III	:	Pro --- Merger and Anti --- Merger Groups (Cultural, Economic, Religious and Social).
Chapter IV	:	Pro --- Merger and Anti --- Merger --- Press.
Chapter V	:	Summary and Conclusions.

### Bibliography

## **Main Sources.**

1. Lok Sabha Debates from March 1964 to December 1966.
2. Debates of the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu from January 1964 to July 1966.
3. Government Documents.
  1. The Goa Daman and Diu --- (Opinion Poll ) Act [Act No. 38 of 1966].
  2. Opinion Poll Rules issued by the Opinion Poll Commissioner
4. Newspapers.

## **Secondary Sources**

1. Books.
2. Journals.
3. Encyclopaedias.
4. Pamphlets.
5. Questionnaire.

**N. B :** (Only the Books and Articles in Journals which directly deal with the subject matter of thesis are listed in the Bibliography).

## **Appendices**

1. Text of the Opinion Poll Act.
2. Opinion Poll Rules issued by the Opinion Poll Commissioner.
3. Text of Questionnaire.

# CHAPTER I

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### Part 1

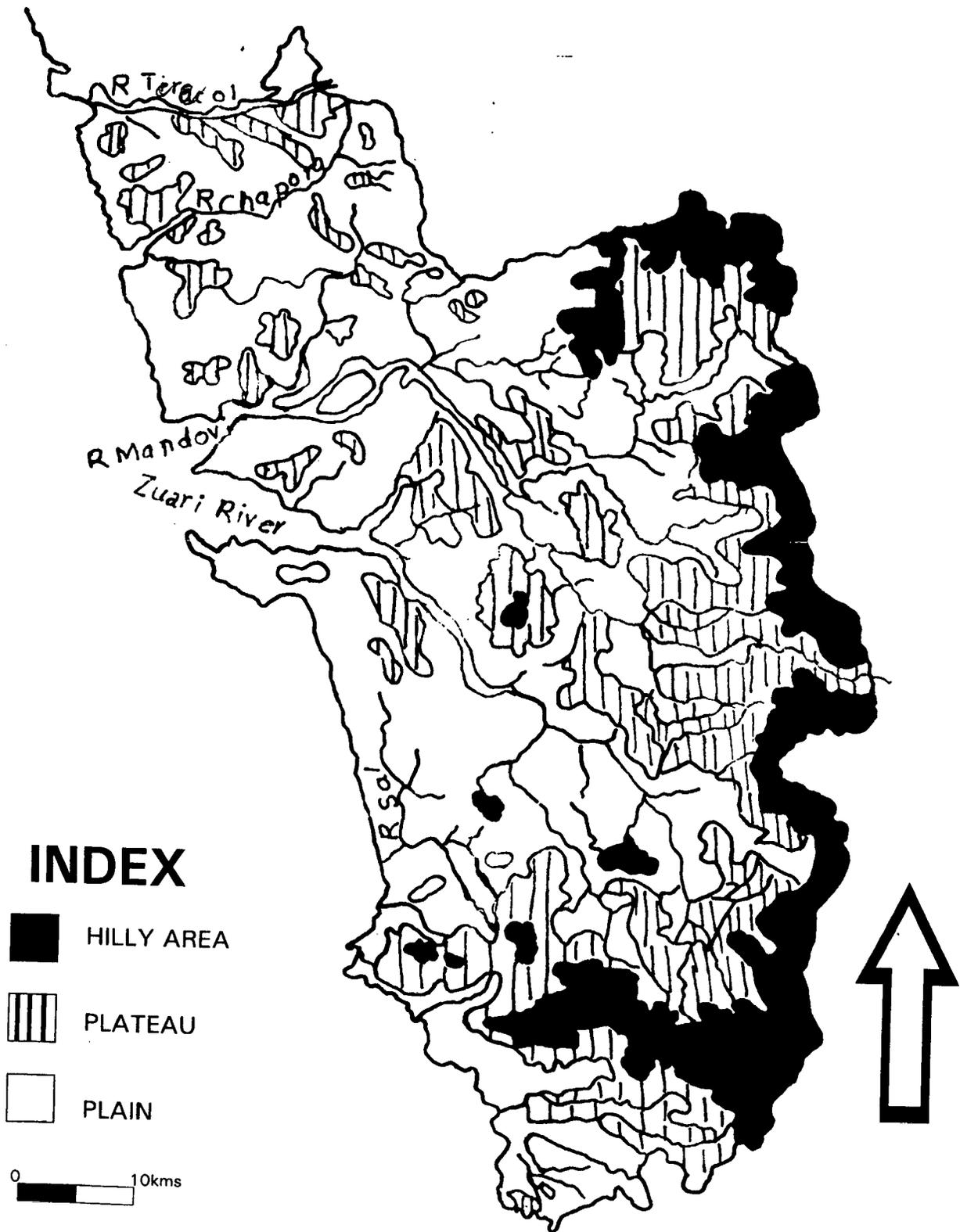
#### Problem

Operation Vijay liberated Goa, Daman and Diu in December 1961 from the Portuguese colonial rule. With it also disappeared the last remnant of European rule from India. The Act of Parliament created the Union Territory of Goa, Daman and Diu in 1962.<sup>1</sup> The Thesis concentrates only on the political future of Goa and excludes Daman and Diu from its scope.

The area of Goa is 3,702 sq. Kms. It is located on the west coast of India, with the latitude of 14°53'57" N and 15°47' 49" E and 74° 20 '11 " E.<sup>2</sup> In the North, Goa has boundary with Maharashtra and in the South with Karnataka. The territory of Goa is cut across by mountains, streams and beaches. Its main rivers are Mandovi, Zuari, Chapora and Sal. Murmugao harbour in Goa is one of the best natural harbours on the west coast of India.

Tropical climate brings long spells of dry summers and cool winters in Goa. The coastal belt which accounts for about 22 percent of the total geographical area of Goa is washed by the Arabian Sea, keeping it warm and humid. The annual rainfall varies from 2,800 to 3,500 millimeters (90 to 120 inches) and the year round temperature ranges from 22° to 32° Centigrade.<sup>3</sup>

# PHYSICAL MAP OF GOA



Directorate of Education, Government of Goa, 1994

Though small in size. Goa has fairly good natural resources. Its mineral wealth includes iron ore, manganese ore and silica. The export of iron ore constitutes major source of Goa's income. Goa is rich in forest such as timber, firewood and grasses. It is rich in wild life. The three wild sanctuaries are at Mollem, Bondla and Kotigao.

According to the census of India 1991, the total population is 11,69,793 with the density of 316 per sq. Km. <sup>4</sup> The literacy rate is 75.51 percent. For administrative purposes, Goa is divided into two districts comprising eleven talukas.

During the colonial rule attempts were made to "Lusitanise" the people of Goa. Portuguese rulers and the Vatican were determined to impose western culture on the people of Goa. Obviously, it involved use of force as nowhere in the world people like to part with their own indigenous customs, traditions and the way of life. "The Cross and the sword together made Goans identify the fear of God with the love of the new 'motherland'."<sup>5</sup> Portuguese forcibly converted the people of Goa to Christianity. They destroyed their temples and prohibited the nonchristian festivals. They interfered with their ancient traditions and imposed upon them a foreign way of life. <sup>6</sup>

The Institution of Inquisition was set up in 1560 for that purpose. The converts to Christianity as well as the non -converts were its victims. The converts were tortured for disobeying religious decrees and edicts and the Hindus for the crimes of sorcery.<sup>7</sup> Cruelties of Inquisition were admitted by the Archbishop of Evora in 1897. "If everywhere the Inquisition was an infamous Court, the infamy, however base, however vile, however corrupt and determined by worldly interests, it was never more so than the Inquisition of

Goa, by irony of fate called Holy Office. The inquisitors even attained the infamy of sending to their prisons women who resisted.....their beastly instincts then burning them as heretics".<sup>8</sup>

Dr. Dellon, a Frenchman, who himself was a prisoner of the Goa Inquisition during the years 1674-1675 wrote "the Holy Office, instead of being useful... for the propagation of the Faith, deters people from the Church, by rendering it an object of horror to them."<sup>9</sup> The Court functioned in 'Orlem Gor' of Old Goa. Its edict of 14 April 1736 forbade the Goans from singing their favourite songs called "vovios" using their Hindu names and surnames, growing Tulsi plant and wearing their traditional clothes even in their homes.<sup>10</sup>

The Portuguese embarked upon mass conversion of Hindus to Christianity to guarantee loyalty of Goans to Portugal and thus to consolidate their rule. They believed that common religion and common culture are more reliable than any other values for the perpetuation of colonial rule in Goa.

These steps of the colonial rulers resulted in the alienation of a section of Goans from their indigenous culture. They also successfully destroyed the national character of the Goans. As T.B. Cunha put it "Not satisfied with exploitation and oppression of the country, such as is done in the name of civilization by all colonising powers, the Portuguese further used other means of mental enslavement that resulted not only in the denationalisation of our people, but even denaturalised them to a degree unknown in other countries".<sup>11</sup> "The whole system of the Inquisition aimed not only at extirpation of superstitions and idolatrous beliefs, but also of innocent usages and customs retaining even a trace of the Asiatic society, which existed previous to the conquest by the Portuguese".<sup>12</sup>

It is pertinent to note that the Inquisition has been helpful to both Portugal and Vatican. As time passed, the descendants of Hindus forcibly converted to Christianity entirely lost the consciousness of their Hindu lineage. They forgot the tortures inflicted upon their forefathers in the process of imitating the foreign culture. Subsequent brainwashing created a conviction amongst the converts of "Superiority of the blend produced by this forcible and unnatural meeting of the East and West". 13

However, the people of Goa refused to accept the Portuguese rule as the gift of God. They made several attempts to expel the Portuguese from Goa. The prominent revolts were as follows :

The First revolt against the Portuguese colonialists and the Roman Catholic Church was in the sixteenth century. In 1575, the people of Cuncolim, Veroda, Assolna, Velim and Ambelim revolted against the religious persecution of the Portuguese. This revolt was led by the Gaunkars of Cuncolim. The Hindus who fled from other parts of Salcete to escape religious persecution took shelter in these villages with their families. They refused to pay the taxes and recognise the sovereignty of the Portuguese. They rejected the decrees of the Provincial Council which forbade the exercise of the Hindu religious ceremonies. As a mark of resentment they killed the bailiff of the lands of Salcete in Assolna in 1575. 14

Portuguese Chronicler Diogo De Couto called Cuncolim "the leader of rebellions" and abused the people of Cuncolim for their valiant action. 15 The Revolt of Cuncolim terribly frightened the Portuguese rulers and the Church functionaries. The colonialists stepped up their cruelty to kill the spirit of revolt. All the fruit bearing trees were cut down and the orchards owned by

the villagers were destroyed. The "military Chaplains" pulled down and desecrated the principal pagodas of the village".<sup>16</sup> The Portuguese troops razed to the ground the villages of Assolna and Cuncolim in 1575.

As soon as the troops were withdrawn, the villagers rebuilt their houses and temples. In July 1583, people of Cuncolim assassinated five European Jesuits who wanted to construct a church. Angry Portuguese quickly retaliated. Colonial Government ultimately gifted the villages of Cuncolim and Veroda to Senhor Joao Da Silva and his descendants and Assolna, Velim and Ambelim to a nobleman called Dom Pedro de Castro. They also summarily killed those whom they suspected as the assassins.<sup>17</sup> Between 1755 and 1912, the Ranes of Satari challenged the colonialists. Custoba Rane and Dipaji Rane have rendered signal service to the cause of Nationalism in Goa.

One of the most interesting revolts against the Portuguese is known as Pinto Rebellion of 1787. Of all the people, it was engineered by a group of Catholic priests who hated the Portuguese colonialism as intensely as other nationalists. The leaders of this movement were Father Jose Antonio Gonsalves and Father Caitano Francisco Couto. Their plan was to expel the Portuguese and establish a Republic in Goa. It was the misfortune of the priests that their plan was leaked out to the Portuguese five days earlier by an informer Antonio Jose Toscano. The Portuguese authorities arrested in all, seventeen priests and seven army officers. Three priests were later released and the rest were banished to Portugal. Of the arrested laymen, fifteen were sentenced to Death, five to Exile and five to Hard Labour. <sup>18</sup> Pinto's Rebellion indicates that even indoctrination by highly organised Church cannot destroy the spirit of Nationalism.

The Goans thought that the establishment of Republic in Portugal in 1910 would be followed by a change in Portugal's colonial policy and would hasten the end of Portuguese colonialism in Goa. Events that followed disillusioned them. In any case, Portugal under the Premiership of Dr. A.O. Salazar made it very clear that Portugal will never leave Goa voluntarily. Dr. Salazar advanced the doctrine of overseas Portugal. Prominent slogan in Goa was : *Aqui é Portugal e sempre será Portugal.* (Goa is part of Portugal and will forever be part of Portugal). In 1947, Salazar stated that "If geographically Goa is India, it is Europe socially, religiously and culturally. If it is inhabited by Westerners, Indo-Portuguese and Indians, politically there are only Portuguese citizens."<sup>19</sup>

While this small piece of India was stagnating under the regime of decadent colonialists, the rest of India was steadily marching towards Freedom. The Portuguese could not prevent Goans from being inspired by the fight for freedom waged by their brothers and sisters to break the shackles of British bondage. Goans decided to employ the methods of Mahatma Gandhi. In 1928, the Goa Congress Committee was set up under the leadership of Dr. T. B. Cunha, one of the most illustrious sons of Goa. Thus Goa's struggle for freedom was brought within the orbit of Nation's Freedom Movement.

In 1946, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia decided to beard the colonial lion in its own den. He launched Civil Disobedience Movement in Goa. When Dr. Lohia was about to address a public meeting on 18th June at Margao, the Portuguese arrested and deported him. The Portuguese succeeded in preventing Dr. Lohia from speaking but failed in silencing the Goans. Deportation of Dr. Lohia was greeted with Satyagraha offered by large number of Goans. Satyagraha stupefied the colonialists. <sup>20</sup>

During the second phase of his action, Dr. Lohia was jailed by the Portuguese in 1946. Portuguese Government could not devise a strategy to stop the Satyagrahis entering Goa from other parts of India. Bewildered, they relied on the easiest recourse open to the colonialists. They freely used brute force to suppress peaceful struggle for freedom. Solidarity shown by people of India with their kith and kin in Goa not only irritated the Portuguese, but also made them nervous. In 1954, the Goa Vimochan Sahayak Samiti was set up in Poona to hasten Goa's liberation. In the same year, the Satyagrahis entered Goa from Terekhol, Karwar, and Banda. They hoisted the Indian Tricolour on the fort at Terekhol.

15 August 1955 proved to be the darkest day in Portuguese colonial history. Satyagrahis from all over India marched towards Goa in different directions. When 600 Satyagrahis chose to enter Goa from Banda, Portuguese fired at them. In all, twenty two Satyagrahis were killed and two hundred and twenty five injured. <sup>21</sup>

Government of India's Goa policy was skillfully exploited by Portugal. Portuguese thought that the cruelties inflicted upon the satyagrahis as well as the fear of death by firing would deter the nationalists and desire for freedom from Portugal would vanish automatically. Events proved them wrong. Repression by Portuguese gave birth to militancy by the Nationalists in Goa. The Nationalists now decided to answer terror with terror. In 1947, Azad Gomantak Dal was born in Cuncolim village, <sup>22</sup> the first village of Goa to raise the first banner of revolt in 1575.

In July 1947, Azad Gomantak Dal attempted to plunder the Government Treasury at Mapusa. Though the attempt failed, it sent a correct message to

the colonialists. The Azad Gomantak Dal was essentially an underground movement. It resorted to guerrilla warfare. It gave military training to its members and from time to time seized arms and ammunition from Portuguese arsenals in Goa. <sup>23</sup> Its outstanding achievement was the Liberation of Dadra and Nagar Haveli from the Portuguese rule in 1954.

The Azad Gomantak Dal became perennial source of nightmares for the Portuguese rulers. They were compelled to deploy military guards in daily Rail Service from Murmugao to Collem. Track from Collem to Caranzol was regularly patrolled only by the white officers of the Portuguese armed forces camped at Collem. Portuguese Police Force trembled at the very thought of the Dal. Brazilian Embassy reported that Azad Gomantak Dal was "smuggling arms, munitions and even people who were probably getting ready to provoke an insurrection in Goa".<sup>24</sup>

The Dal was eminently successful in creating problems for the colonialists. It planted bombs to destroy rail and road bridges and even killed personnel of Portuguese armed forces. Azad Gomantak Dal was heartily supported by the people of Goa. Its members received shelter and all other help in cash and kind. People refused to leak them to the colonial administration. To crush the Dal the Portuguese brutally killed many of its young members. Main drawback of Azad Gomantak Dal appears to be lack of leadership with vision. If the Dal had cared to build up a strong organisation and intensified its activities in consistent manner on all borders of Goa, the Portuguese would have found it extremely difficult to have peaceful administration of Goa. Goa might have become free much before 1961 and that too without the military action.

People of India rejected *prima facie* the vicious contention that Goa is not an Indian problem and that it should be treated by the Government of India as only an issue affecting India's foreign policy. People of India asserted that Country's Freedom will never be complete without Goa's integration in India. Parliament compelled Prime Minister Nehru to spell out his policy for the liberation of Goa in clear and unambiguous way. In August 1954, Pandit Nehru told the Lok Sabha : " The position of the Government of India, and indeed of the people of this country, is well known and hardly needs restatement. Goa and the Union of India form one country. As a result of foreign conquests, various parts of India came under colonial domination. Historical developments brought almost the entire country under British rule. But some small pockets of territory remained under the colonial rule of other foreign Powers, chiefly because they were tolerated as such by the then British power. The movement for freedom in India was not confined to any part of the country. Its objective was the freedom of the entire country from every kind of foreign domination. Inevitably, the movement took shape in what was called British India and ultimately resulted in the withdrawal of the colonial Power and the establishment of the Republic of India. That process of liberation will not be complete till the remaining small pockets of foreign territory are also freed from colonial control. The Government and the people of this country, therefore, fully sympathize with the aspirations of the Goan people to free themselves from alien rule and to be reunited with the motherland". 25

In 1955, repelled by the brutal massacre of the Satyagrahis, Government of India broke off the diplomatic relations with Portugal. Between 1955 and 1961, India left no stone unturned to persuade Portugal to see logic, reason

and reality. India worked in vain. Portugal remained as obstinate as ever. On 18 December 1961, Indian Army entered Goa. Within forty-eight hours, Portugal meekly surrendered. The then Governor General of Goa prudently refused to obey the most powerful Portuguese ruler in Lisbon.

On numerous occasions, Prime Minister Nehru referred to Goa's "distinct cultural personality" and gave the Goans assurances that "The special circumstances of cultural, social and lingual relations and the sense of a territorial group which history has created will be respected".<sup>26</sup> After the Liberation, Goa's separate identity became a highly contentious issue. There appeared two schools of thought in Goa. The first school believed that Goa has its own unique identity and the other denied it.

Champions of unique identity argue that just as an individual has a personality, so the people have an identity. Identity of the Goans is the outcome of centuries of living together under an altogether different colonial master. "Personality of the Goan is largely moulded by the Konkani language and it will not be too much to say that the rhythm of the "Konkani language has so moulded the character and personality of the Goans and lent a peculiar expression to their countenance".<sup>27</sup>

According to Shri Lambert Mascarenhas, "The Portuguese conquest and presence for over four hundred years which has made Goa what it is, DIFFERENT..... This East - West synthesis which apart from investing on the land a singular character and a glowing and peaceful ambience has raised a people with a sharp and unmistakable identity of which they are very proud..... Although the Western influence expressing itself in the food habits.... is more pronounced in the Christians....., the Hindus are nonetheless

influenced by the Portuguese way of life".<sup>28</sup> Manohar Malgonkar claims that the centuries of single alien rule and the evangelical fervour with which that power exercised its rule has given Goa a separate identity. Goans, both Christians and Hindus consider themselves as some kind of "special tribe".<sup>29</sup>

The other school dismisses the unique identity of Goa as nothing but a fiction invented by the vested interests who had dominated Goa's public life under the Portuguese colonialists. It is this group that believes in the superiority of so-called synthetic culture, morals and taste.<sup>30</sup> T. B. Cunha exposed the pretensions of the Denationalised Goans. According to Cunha, unique identity is the off-spring of Denationalisation. "The so much boasted Westernization of Goans is but a superficial pretence. It is more an evidence of their mental subserviency..... The westernization of Goans has essentially a slavish character. In fact, Portuguese intolerance succeeded,..... in instilling the notion that to be civilized..... it was indispensable to ape western manners and to despise everything Indian.... With regard to Goa, one cannot merely speak of denationalisation of culture but of an utter cultural bankruptcy".<sup>31</sup>

A.K. Priolkar asserts that the champions of unique identity are ignorant of the facts of history and have misconceptions of the course of "Cultural evolution". He points out that the Portuguese cultural impact is hardly visible in Canacona, Kepem, Pernem, Ponda, Sanguem and Satari. It was only in Bardez, Murrugao, Salcete and Tiswadi that there was complete deculturation and in the name of Christianity, the Portuguese transformed the local population into a community of "Black Portuguese"<sup>32</sup> forcing upon them Portuguese culture and religion. The Portuguese historians divided these places in Goa into the terminology of "Old Conquests and New Conquests".

Strangely this contentious issue became the sole determinant of Goa's political future within the Indian Union. The Government of India was not in a position to decide Goa's future immediately after the liberation. It also became the main force to mould Political Parties in Goa. It was the major staple for the Press in Goa and it also provided a stimulant to the lobbies in various walks of life. The Constitution (Twelfth Amendment) Act, 1962 placed the Territories of Goa, Daman and Diu in the First Schedule of the Constitution. 33 Parliament passed the Union Territories Act in 1963, giving Goa, Daman and Diu the status of Union Territory". 34

The most important question that absorbed the minds of the people of Goa after liberation related to their political status within the Indian Union. Broadly, there were two currents. One strongly favouring Goa's merger into Maharashtra. Other strongly favouring Statehood for Goa. Both sides worked hard to mould the public opinion and to achieve their respective goals. Both sides used history, religion, language and culture to build up their cases. All Political Parties were perforce obliged to take their stand in a forthright manner. There was no scope for ambiguity and prevarication. A Political Party which refused to take a clearcut stand was humiliated as was seen from the fate of Indian National Congress.

The forces of merger in Goa received moral and material support from Maharashtra. Rivalry between Maharashtra and Karnataka provoked Karnataka to stake its claim for Goa. However, Karnataka was never serious about it. The Indian National Congress which ruled at the Centre decided to postpone the decision and defuse the situation by delay. Indian National Congress therefore gave the status of Union Territory.

The First General Election was held in Goa in December 1963. The Status of Goa was the main bone of contention in the Elections. Consequently, two regional Political Parties were born in Goa; Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party (M.G.P) and United Goans Party (U.G.P). M.G.P wanted Goa's merger into Maharashtra lock, stock and barrel. U.G.P opposed merger tooth and nail. In the House of thirty members the M.G.P bagged fourteen and U.G.P twelve seats. The Goan Electorate made the Indian National Congress to bite the dust. Congress got just one seat and that too not from Goa but from Daman. M.G.P formed the Government with Shri D. B. Bhandodkar as the Chief Minister. Dr. J. De Sequeira became the Leader of Opposition.

From the First Session of the Legislative Assembly in January 1964 till the Parliament approved the Opinion Poll Act in December 1966, the most heated item on the agenda of Goa's Legislative Assembly was Goa's political status.<sup>35</sup> The proceedings suggest that the two Political Parties skillfully used the platform of Legislative Assembly to promote the cause dearest to their hearts.

The Pro-Merger and Anti --- Merger forces steadily and systematically increased the volume of pressure on the Union Government. They pointed out that delaying the decision would worsen the situation and would do Goa more harm than good. Union Government was perforce obliged to scrap its decision to keep Goa as a Union Territory for ten years. In September, 1966, the Congress Parliamentary Board recommended an Opinion Poll in Goa to ascertain the wishes of the people on their future.

On the recommendation of the Government of India, Parliament passed Goa, Daman and Diu (Opinion Poll) Bill, 1966, which was approved by the

President of India on 11 December, 1966. <sup>36</sup> The Act stated that 16 January 1967 would be the date for holding the Opinion Poll in Goa, Daman and Diu.

Opinion Poll held in Goa Daman and Diu should not be confused with the polls conducted by private agencies and organisations to elicit public opinion on the issues of their interest. From time to time such agencies as the Gallup, Harris, Roper, CBS/New York Times, NBC/Associated Press, the Washington Post, Marketing Research Group, The Indian Institute of Public Opinion and the Marketing Research of India conduct the polls. By and large, the aim of these polls is to manipulate public opinion and to advance the fortunes of their favourites. Such opinion polls are never the true indicators of the wishes of the people. They are neither objective nor reliable. Frequently they are exercises in propaganda.

For the first time in Swaraj India, Opinion Poll was used as a method to enable the people of the territory to decide their political future. Each voter was given the right to participate in the momentous decision. Secondly, the Opinion Poll as a method to settle once and for all an acute controversy was also used for the first time in India. Hence, Opinion Poll of 1967 is a landmark in the Constitutional history of India. The roots of Opinion Poll lie in the direct democracy. It is necessary to analyse the main techniques of direct democracy for the proper understanding of the merits of Opinion Poll.

In democracies of our times, people are not at all sovereign in true sense of the term. No electoral system and no electoral process accurately reflects the will of the people. Power and wealth are the main preoccupations of the representatives of the people. Interests of the representatives and the interests of the people they profess to represent rarely coincide. Frequently

they clash. Hence in our times people do not repose same trust in their representatives as they did when representative government was introduced.

As early as the eighteenth century Rousseau condemned Representative Government on the ground that the representatives legislate not to promote public good but to promote their own interests. Rousseau's viewpoint was endorsed by Viscount Bryce, "The frequent rejection by the people of measures passed by the Assembly shows that the latter does not always know or give effect to what has proved to be the real will of the people".<sup>37</sup>

Herman Finer concluded that "the difficulties of representation have sometimes led to .... the demand that parliamentary and party government shall be atleast mitigated, if not displaced by direct action of the people".<sup>38</sup> In a civilized society there must be a source that must have the last word from which there should be no appeal. In a democratic society, the people should be the final source. It has been well said *Vox Populi Vox Dei*. Democratic devices which give the people true power to participate in the management of their Nation are Initiative, Plebiscite, Referendum and Opinion Poll.

Initiative enables the electorate to propose legislative measures and to suggest constitutional amendments.<sup>39</sup> It prevails in Switzerland. Initiative is advantageous because it gives people an opportunity to propose legislation which representatives themselves are reluctant to introduce.<sup>40</sup> Plebiscite is the method to settle the controversies relating to national self - determination. It was widely used between 1919 and 1939. The Paris Peace Conference of 1919 conducted seventeen plebiscites to resolve the territorial disputes.<sup>41</sup>

According to Munroe, referendum is a mechanism to suspend the implementation of the legislation passed by the city council or State

legislatures until the electors themselves had an opportunity to render their judgement upon it. <sup>42</sup> Referendum may be held for the approval or disapproval of legislation. Referendum may also be compulsory or optional. Under compulsory referendum "certain classes of actions by a legislature are required ordinarily by constitutional provision to be referred to a popular vote for approval or rejection".<sup>43</sup> Under the optional referendum - "a specified number of voters by petition may demand a popular vote on a law passed by a legislature". <sup>44</sup>

Referendum not only asserts that the people should actively participate in the decision - making processes of the State but also presumes that people are quite capable to judge even the so-called complicated and intricate matters. Bonjour says that referendum "is the surest method of discovering the wishes of the people..... an excellent barometer of the political atmosphere..... It puts an end to acute conflicts between people and government and provides one of the safest barriers there can be against revolutionary agitation".<sup>45</sup> Butler and Austin are of the opinion that "Referenda has proved to be an useful device to solve the problems which are too hot for the representatives".<sup>46</sup>

Referendum has been widely used in Switzerland, United States of America and France. Switzerland provides for Compulsory Constitutional Referendum and the Optional Legislative Referendum. Under the Compulsory Constitutional Referendum "all changes in the Swiss Federal Constitution must be approved in a national referendum by a majority of all votes cast and by a majority of the cantons". <sup>47</sup> The Optional Legislative Referendum gives the right to the people to accept or reject bills passed by the legislature. It is significant to note that many constitutional and statutory measures approved

by the legislature are rejected by the people of Switzerland. It strengthens the inference that the representatives do not represent the people. In the United States of America, referendum is not used at the federal level. It is used in several American States, notably Alaska, California, Colorado, Michigan and Oregon. In these States, referendum is both Obligatory and Optional and Constitutional and Legislative.

The French Constitution of 1958 provides referendum. <sup>48</sup> Between 1958 and 1962, President Charles De Gaulle conducted four referenda. In 1972, the French through referendum gave their opinion on Britain's entry into the European Economic Community. British political philosophy presumes that only Parliament can express correctly the will of the people. Yet in 1975, Britain used referendum over the question of her continued membership of the European Economic Community. In 1976, referenda were used in Scotland and Wales to know the people's opinion on the issue of political autonomy. <sup>49</sup> In 1980, a referenda was held in Nepal to ascertain the people's verdict on the continuation of the reformed Panchayat system or its replacement by a multiparty system. <sup>50</sup> In 1991, the Soviet Union held a nation-wide referendum on the continuation of the Union under a new treaty. The three Baltic States declined to participate but nine States overwhelmingly voted for the Union. <sup>51</sup>

In India's Constituent Assembly, two members, Shri H. V. Kamath and Shri Brajeshwar Prasad proposed that the Constitution should provide for referendum for enacting amendments to the Constitution. <sup>52</sup> The proposal was rejected. The Constitution of India does not expressly provide referendum or Opinion Poll to resolve political tangles. But none can dispute the power of Parliament to make use of either of them.

Article 3 of our Constitution states :

Parliament may by law -

- (a) form a new State by separation of territory from any State or by uniting two or more States or parts of States or by uniting any territory to a part of any State ;
- (b) increase the area of any State ;
- (c) diminish the area of any State ;
- (d) alter the boundaries of any State ;
- (e) alter the name of any State" 53

Parliament's power's are further amplified by Article 248 and entry 97 of the Union List in the Seventh Schedule which provide that Residuary Powers rest with Parliament. 54

Clearly Parliament itself was quite competent to solve the problem. Generously, Parliament decided to give the people of Goa, Daman and Diu an opportunity to decide their political destiny. And for that purpose, Parliament passed Opinion Poll Act in 1966.

## **Part II : The Goa, Daman and Diu (Opinion Poll) Act, 1966**

Government of India's decision to ascertain the wishes of the people through the Opinion Poll was welcomed by all. However, anxieties continued over the method of implementation of the decision. Though the issue related to only a tiny territory, the curiosity was nationwide. Political Parties, various types of associations and individuals submitted memoranda to the Government of India and to the members of Parliament on what they thought to be the most accurate and effective means to know correct opinion of the people of Goa.

The Opinion Poll Bill was approved by the Lok Sabha unanimously on 1 December 1966. After accepting the resignation of the Bandodkar Ministry, the President of India dissolved the Goa Legislative Assembly on 3 December 1966. The Goa, Daman and Diu (Opinion Poll) Act (Act No. 38 of 1966) received the assent of the President of India, on 11 December 1966. The Act had 35 clauses.<sup>55</sup> This part analyses the provisions of the Act.

Clause 1 gave the title of the Act and provided for its commencement at the discretion of the Union Government. Subsequently, the Union Government announced that the Act would come in force with effect from 12 December 1966. Clause 2 defined the specific terms in the Act. Clauses 3 and 4 contained the most important provisions of the Act.

Clause 3 highlighted basic objective of the Act. It was to ascertain - (a) "The wishes of the electors of Goa as to whether Goa should merge in the State of Maharashtra or should continue to be Union territory;"

Thus, the choice of the people was strictly restricted to the merger with Maharashtra or the continuation as the Union Territory. It invited a fierce fighting between the MPS belonging to Maharashtra and Mysore regardless of their political parties. The ambitions of the region triumphed over the goals of the political party. The Mysore MPS charged the Union Government of indulging in favouritism to Maharashtra and demanded that people should be given a choice to merge in Maharashtra or Mysore.<sup>56</sup> The Mysore stand was understandable.

The Legislative Assembly of Goa approved a resolution for merger into Maharashtra on 22 January 1965 with fifteen votes for and one against. On 10 March 1965 both the Houses of Maharashtra Legislature unanimously passed a resolution urging "the Parliament and the Government of India to take immediately all such measures, including an amendment to the Constitution, as are necessary to make Goa an integral part of Maharashtra".<sup>57</sup> Immediately there was a sharp reaction of Mysore. On 15 March 1965 the Legislative Assembly of Mysore passed a non-official resolution insisting upon the continuation of Goa as a Union Territory for ten years or its merger into Mysore.<sup>58</sup> However, the Government of Mysore did not succeed in including the alternative of merger of Goa into Mysore as the objective of the Act.

According to The United Goans Party, the provision of only two alternatives was "unfair". It reasoned as follows : First- ever general election in Goa was fought over the issue of "future status of Goa". The electors exercised their votes for "merger with Maharashtra", "full-fledged State" and "Union Territory" respectively. The Opinion Poll Act did not include the third alternative. By omitting the "full-fledged State" as one of the alternatives,

Clause 3, argued United Goans Party, was unjust to sizeable section of people of Goa.<sup>59</sup>

Fair or unfair, it appears that by providing the continuation of Union Territory as one of the alternatives, the "future status" of Goa was kept an open issue. All knew that Status of Union Territory was purely transitional and hence a perennial source for agitation. It would have been better if the alternatives were three instead of two, as subsequently people clamoured for Statehood. Luckily the clamour did not provoke an ugly agitation before the granting of Statehood to Goa in 1987.

After the objective, the most important issue was who would be the voter in the Opinion Poll. Clause 4 provided that :- Subject to the provisions of section 23 of the Opinion Poll Act - "(a) every elector of an assembly constituency in Goa, **and no other person**, shall be entitled to vote at the Opinion Poll taken in relation to Goa." Section 23 of the Opinion Poll Act imposed disqualification under Section 16 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 for registration in an electoral roll. A person could be disqualified for registration in an electoral roll if (a) he is not a citizen of India ; or (b) is of unsound mind (c) is for the time being disqualified from voting under the provisions of any law relating to corrupt practices and other offences in connection with elections.<sup>60</sup> The Act defined the term "elector" as a "person whose name is entered in the electoral roll of an assembly constituency for the time being in force in Goa". As early as November 1966 Deputy Home Minister, Shri. V.C. Shukla, told the Raja Sabha that the Electoral Roll prepared for the Parliamentary elections of 1967 would be used for the Opinion Poll. <sup>61</sup>

After the Liberation of Goa, a large number of people from various regions of country settled in Goa to pursue their professions, occupations and trade. This was but natural as large number of Goans had been settled in different parts of the country even before the Liberation of Goa. However, political destiny of Goa was a matter of the greatest importance only to the people of Goa. People other than the Goans were not as much concerned as the Goans. Hence, their participation in the Opinion Poll was likely to distort the outcome of the Poll. This was the fear of some Political Parties and associations within Goa. Hence the United Goans Party demanded a totally new electoral roll which must include Goans not only from Goa but also from all parts of India as well as Goans settled in countries outside India. They also insisted upon the deletion of "non-Goan elements" from the electoral roll. 62

Indian National Congress in Goa supported the United Goans Party and further demanded the exclusion of the "deputationists" from the electoral roll. Strangely even the Indian National Congress in Goa which professed the national outlook was strongly opposed to the inclusion of deputationists in the electoral roll. The "deputationist" was the term used to identify officers serving in Goa Government but belonging to the neighbouring States especially Maharashtra. The "deputationists" were the "bugbear" of the Political Parties and associations hating Goa's merger into Maharashtra. The opponents of merger thought that they could nullify the impact of "non - Goan element " on the Opinion Poll by including the Goans settled outside India in the list of voters. The Objection to the inclusion of "deputationists" in the electoral roll betrayed the lack of self-confidence in the parties which were against the merger.

The "Goan Freedom Fighters" Committee a Bombay based association, in a memorandum to Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi pleaded that six and half lakh Goans living in different parts of India should be eligible to vote and the Goan seamen on the high seas should be also allowed to exercise their votes through postal ballot, in the Opinion Poll. <sup>63</sup> It was supported by another active group styled 'Bombay Goans'. The Bombay Goans Opinion Poll Committee published a booklet entitled "Goa Opinion Poll" and circulated it amongst the members of Parliament to influence their opinion. Their main plea was the inclusion of all "Portuguese Nationals" who had become Indian citizens under the Notification No 1/1/62 - 10 dated 28-3-1962. <sup>64</sup>

The Government of India's stand on the issue of the voters was as follows : Only the provisions of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 decided the voting right. The pertinent provisions were to be found in Sections 19, 20 and 23. Section 19 says that "every person who -- (a) is not less than twenty-one years of age on the qualifying date and (b) is ordinarily the resident in the constituency, is entitled to be registered in the electoral roll for that constituency". Section 20 of the Representation of People Act did not prescribe " minimum period of residence " to be an ordinarily resident. So all Indians who could prove themselves as ordinarily residents were entitled to vote in the Opinion Poll. Section 23 of the same Act entitled every Indian whose name was not included in the electoral roll to get himself enrolled after convincing the Chief Electoral Officer or Electoral Registration Officer. <sup>65</sup>

During the debate on the Opinion Poll Bill some members of Parliament supported the contention that the voting right should be extended to all Goans wherever they may be and it should not be restricted only to the "ordinarily residents". <sup>66</sup> Critics of clause 4 were dejected when the voting rights were

confined only to the "ordinarily residents" of Goa. According to them the right to vote in the Opinion Poll was to be the exclusive monopoly of (1) the Goans living within Goa (2) Goans living in rest of India and (3) Goans living in countries other than India. In addition to this they desired the total exclusion of the "non- Goans".

Insistence on the right to vote to the Goans living in countries outside India was untenable. For all practical purposes, these Goans had no stake in Goa's future. Before liberation many of them were used by foreign Governments to denigrate India. As Peter Alvares put it those "Who never resided in Goa, who treated Goa as a backyard, for a holiday" <sup>67</sup> should not be allowed to be enrolled in the electoral rolls.

The Goa, Daman and Diu (Citizenship) Order 1962 enabled all the residents of Goa to acquire the citizenship of India. Deputy Minister of Home Affairs, V.C. Shukla asserted that every Indian resident of Goa was "as much a Goan as anybody who was born there or whose father was born there or whose grandfather was born there".<sup>68</sup> He added : As the Goans are not at all a "separate race" from other Indians there was no question of granting polling rights on the basis of "Goan" ancestry. The Government of India also rejected the contention that Goans living in other parts of India should be given the right to vote in the Opinion Poll, Government of India's assertion that "Anybody who lives in Goa and who is ordinarily resident in Goa can only be a Goan" was correct. Government's decision to give voting rights to "ordinarily resident", was not only democratic but also a positive step to promote national integration. It goes without saying that in a democracy, people living within any territory must participate in the affairs of that territory. Nevertheless in order to facilitate Goans living elsewhere in India, Government of India added a

provision-- Clause 5-to the effect that they could register themselves as "ordinarily residents" of Goa if for some reasons they were not registered as voters in the coming Assembly and Parliamentary elections". Clause 5 generously exempted such Goans from the payments of the fees which must be paid for the inclusion of names in the electoral roll. No fee was payable in respect of : (a) any application for inclusion of any name in the electoral roll of any assembly constituency in Goa, (b) any appeal preferred against any order made on such application, if such application or appeal is made or preferred within a period of thirty days immediately following the commencement of this Act. If the Government of India were to concede the claim that only Goans should participate in the Opinion Poll, it would have strengthened "the forces of separatism" and hampered Goa's merger in the national mainstream. The slogans such as Maharashtra, for Maharastrians, Punjab for Punjabis and Goa for Goans are nothing but the expression of the vested interests which thrive at the expense of National Interests and weaken the unity of the Nation.

The Act left interpretation of the term "Ordinarily resident" to the discretion of the Chief Electoral Officer or the Electoral Registration Officer. The Chief Election Commissioner K.V.K. Sundaram stated that "only those who are on the electoral rolls" during the holding of the poll would be allowed to vote.<sup>69</sup>

Chief Election Commissioner visited Goa in the first week of December 1966 to finalise the polling arrangements. He was straightforward in declaring publicly that participation in the Opinion Poll would be strictly restricted to only those who were covered by the term "ordinarily resident" of the territory of Goa and the residents of Goa implied those who resided in the "Territory at specified address".<sup>70</sup> He clarified that Goan seamen, registered as voters,

would be entitled to vote but not through postal ballot as it was not provided by the law.

Chief Election Commissioner asserted that "outside Goan" will have to "convince" the registrar that his stay outside Goa was temporary and that he was a permanent resident of Goa and "outside Goan" cannot claim voting rights just because he was "born in Goa or his ancestors were born in that Territory".<sup>71</sup> As no time limit was prescribed for an "ordinarily resident", everything depended on factual statement made by the voter to the registrar. It is to the credit of Government of India that on two most important aspects namely objective of the Opinion Poll and participation in the Opinion Poll it remained firm and upheld the National Interests.

Clauses 6 to 10 specified the powers of Chief Election Commissioner. The Chief Election Commissioner was to "superintend, direct and control" the 'Opinion Poll'. He could designate or nominate one "Opinion Poll Commissioner" for Goa and appoint officers to assist the Opinion Poll Commissioner. There were also to be Assistant Opinion Poll Commissioners performing the functions of Opinion Poll Commissioner. Opinion Poll Commissioner was to be the on-the spot authority responsible for over - all arrangements of the Opinion Poll in Goa. He was directly answerable to the Chief Election Commissioner.

In the Lok Sabha, some members wondered whether the Chief Election Commissioner was competent to conduct the Opinion Poll, which was not his function according to the Constitution.<sup>72</sup> The Speaker of the Lok Sabha ruled that their fears were baseless. If the Chief Election Commissioner could conduct general elections throughout the country with competence and

efficiency, he could easily manage the Opinion Poll. The management of General Election was much more difficult than the supervision of the Opinion Poll which was very limited in nature both as regards to the size of territory and the size of the electorate. There was no other institution in the country better suited to operate Opinion Poll than the Chief Election Commissioner. The representatives of the U.G.P, M.G.P and the Indian National Congress had no grievance against the operation of Opinion Poll by the Chief Election Commissioner.<sup>73</sup> All the contestants agreed that Chief Election Commissioner conducted Opinion Poll in free and fair manner.

Clause 11 provided the publication of the list of polling stations, polling areas and groups of voters for which these polling areas were marked. Clause 12 provided for the appointment of the presiding officers for the polling stations. No person connected with any Political Party directly or indirectly was to be appointed as the presiding officer. Clauses 13 to 15 prescribed the duties of the presiding officers, the polling officers and the subordinate staff belonging to every local authority in Goa. Clauses 16 to 19 covered the conduct of the poll. In consultation with the Chief Election Commissioner, the President of India was to notify, the date or dates of the Opinion Poll. The Chief Election Commissioner was to fix the hours of voting on those dates. The total number of voting hours was not to be less than eight hours. There was also a provision for the adjournment of the Opinion Poll at particular polling stations in case of emergency, natural or man-made disruptions or violence and for fresh voting at such polling stations. The counting of votes was to take place only after the completion of voting at all the polling stations.

Clauses 20 to 23 laid down the manner of voting. Voting by proxy was disallowed. Only four categories of voters were allowed to use the postal

ballot. They were : (1) employees of the armed forces of the Union and the armed police force of the Union Territory, (2) employees of the Government of India serving outside India (3) wives of such employees and (4) voters detained under the Preventive Detention Act. Clause 22 prescribed the steps to prevent "personation" of electors. Clause 23 incorporated the disqualifications. If it was found that any elector has voted more than once, all his votes were to be declared invalid. Bogus voting is one of the greatest enemies of free and fair poll. These clauses served as a strong warning to the would-be mischief-makers who might have planned to manipulate the outcome of the Opinion Poll according to their desires. Chief Election Commissioner himself was very apprehensive of the political parties aiming to register persons below twenty one years as voters.<sup>74</sup>

For the public in general and the contestants in particular the most fascinating part of the Opinion Poll was the counting of votes which gives the outcome of the Poll. Clauses 24 and 25 prescribed the procedure of counting of votes in an orderly manner. Counting was to be done under the supervision and direction of the Opinion Poll Commissioner. Only those Political Parties for whom symbol was allotted by the Chief Election Commissioner were permitted to appoint their representatives to be present at the time of the counting. The Chief Election Commissioner was empowered to order suspension of counting of votes at a polling station where the Opinion Poll Commissioner was not allowed to count the votes in orderly and proper manner by the representatives of political parties. Chief Election Commissioner could declare the counting at such polling stations null and void and order for a fresh poll.

Clauses 26 and 27 provided for the declaration of results. After the completion of the counting of votes and approval of Chief Election

Commissioner, the Opinion Poll Commissioner was to declare publicly the results of the Opinion Poll. The Opinion Poll Commissioner was also to submit the report of the result to the Administrator of the Union Territory and to the Chief Election Commissioner. The Administrator was to publish the report of the result in the Official Gazette. Clauses 28 to 30 mentioned specific offences which were not to be allowed to mar the credibility of the Poll. Would-be offenders were forewarned that the use of bribery, undue influence and personation would mean a fresh poll at every polling station where such offences were detected.

Clause 31 provided that the local government could requisition any premise for being used as a polling station or any vehicle or animal or vessel to transport the ballot boxes. Compensation had to be provided for such requisition. Clause 32 empowered the Chief Election Commissioner to delegate his duties to the Deputy Election Commissioner or to the Secretary to the Election Commissioner. Clause 33 provided that in consultation with the Chief Election Commissioner the Government of India could make necessary rules for the implementation of the Act. Purpose of Rules was the amplification and elaboration of the provisions of the Act. <sup>75</sup> Clause 34 barred the civil courts from entertaining the cases challenging "the legality" of the actions of Chief Election Commissioner, Opinion Poll Commissioner and the officers appointed by them. Clause 35 empowered the Government of India to remove the difficulties which may arise during the implementation of the Act and thus guaranteed its smooth implementation.

16 January 1967 was fixed as the day for holding the Opinion Poll in Goa. The Opinion Poll Act was an excellent piece of legislation. Its language was clear and unambiguous. As the Act was first of its kind, the Parliament

took pains to approve it with great care. The Opinion Poll Act was passed unanimously by both the Houses of Parliament.<sup>76</sup>

The Act was challenged in the Court of the Judicial Commissioner at Panaji on 11 January 1967.<sup>77</sup> Amongst several issues, the petitioners contended that : (1) the Parliament was not competent to approve the Act. And (2) Parliament was not competent to provide for merger in the event of verdict in favour of merger into Maharashtra. The Court found that the case against the Act was "devoid of substance". It was an example of pure "sentimental grievances". According to the Court the Parliament was quite competent to approve the Act by virtue of Article 246 of the Constitution and entry no. 97 of the Union List. The Parliament was equally competent to approve an Act of merger if it so desired. Hence the Court dismissed the petition.<sup>78</sup>

# CHAPTER I

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75. For the test of the Rules made by the Government of India See Government Gazette Goa, 21st December, 1966 Series 1 No. 37 Supplement (No. 3) p. 489 - 496.
76. The Lok Sabha passed it on 1 December, 1966 and the Raja Sabha gave its approval on 7th December, 1966 - See The Navhind Times, 2 December 1966, p. 1 and A Vida 8 December, 1966 p. 1.

77. AIR May, 1967 Vol. 54, Part 641 (Registrar of Newspaper for India) p.p  
79-80.

78. Ibid, July Vol. 54 Party 643 p.p. 81 - 86.

## CHAPTER II

### Pro - Merger And Anti - Merger : Political Parties

#### (Regional and National)

##### Pro - Merger

Atrocious persecution of Hindu Culture by the Portuguese as well as Portuguese attempts to impose their own Culture did not deter the people of Goa from pursuing their original way of life. In the present talukas of Bicholim, Canacona, Pernem, Ponda, Quepem, Sanguem and Satari Portuguese attempts at cultural profanation failed to bear fruit. People considered the Marathas as the guardians and protectors of Hindu Culture. Consequently strong emotional bonds existed between people living in Goa and Maharashtra inspite of alien rule of Goa.

When the Goans began their fight for Freedom, Maharashtra became their base of operation. People of Maharashtra helped the Goans in all respects. But for the support of Maharashtrians, the Goan revolutionaries would never have been able to terrify the Portuguese colonialists. Many freedom fighters thought that after the expulsion of Portuguese, Goa should be merged into Maharashtra because the territory of Goa was too small to be an independent State of the Union of India. Many Goans held that the "integration of Goa with India and her merger with Maharashtra" were "as much a practical necessity as was its freedom from Portuguese domination".<sup>1</sup>

It is very important to note that the idea of Goa's merger into Maharashtra was not at all a post-liberation idea. It existed much before and was developed by both the Goans and the Maharashtrians. It was given concrete shape in 1917 when Shri Vithal Vaman Tamhankar advocated the formation of Maharashtra which was to consist of Berar, Bombay, Central Provinces, Goa and the State of Hyderabad. <sup>2</sup> It was pursued subsequently at the first Maharashtra Unification Conference at Poona in May, 1940 ; at the thirtieth Session of the **Marathi Sahitya Parishad** in Belgaum in May 1946 and at Maharashtra Unification Conference in Bombay in July 1946.<sup>3</sup>

On the political front, National Congress (Goa) was formed in August 1946. The Praja Socialist Party (PSP) was its mentor. The PSP stood for the reorganisation of India on linguistic basis. Even before the liberation of Goa, National Congress (Goa) supported the merger of Goa into Maharashtra on linguistic grounds.<sup>4</sup> After the Liberation, the Party decided to accomplish that objective. Shri P.P. Shirodkar, the President of the Party, till its dissolution in 1963, was eager to bring all the forces supporting Goa's merger into Maharashtra under one umbrella to prevent dissipation of their energy and resources. His viewpoint was shared and supported by Shri N.G. Gore, Shri Sushil Kavlekar, Shri P.K. Atre, Shri N.V. Gadgil and Shri Anant Kanekar at the Marathi Literary Conference in Goa in December 1962.

### **Formation of Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party**

The Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party (M.G.P) was the product of these thought - processes at intellectual and political level. There are conflicting claims about its birth. Shri P.P. Shirodkar, one of the founder -members, claims that M.G.P was born on 6 March 1963. According to him it was

amalgamation of three main groups : Maharashtrawadi Aghadi of Mapusa under the leadership of Shri R.S. Tople and S. Dhond ; Samyukta Maharashtrawadi Gomantak of Mardol led by Shri V. Velingkar and Shri J. J. Shinkre of Ponda and National Congress (Goa) headed by himself.<sup>5</sup> Shri J. J. Shinkre's letter to the Chief Election Commissioner, dated 17-8-1963, requesting the recognition of the party, states 13 March 1963 as the date on which the party was formed. <sup>6</sup> Shri D.B. Bhandodkar claimed that the M.G.P was born in Poona in 1963 under the guidance of Shri Y.B. Chavan, the then Union Defence Minister. <sup>7</sup> He said : "I had to enter politics under the compulsion of events. The Maharashtrawadi Gomantak was founded by me only for the temporary issue of merger of Goa into Maharashtra. The party will be dissolved automatically after the issue is settled."<sup>8</sup>

Who were the founders of M.G.P and where exactly it was born may be a controversial issue, but it is indisputable that the political stalwarts of Maharashtra, notably Shri Nath Pai, Shri S.M. Joshi, Shri Peter Alvares and Shri Y.B. Chavan were instrumental in the formation of the M.G.P. The M.G.P derived an advantage from this confabulation. All political parties of Maharashtra worked for its success in Goa's first general election. The M.G.P chose Lion as its symbol. Incidentally Lion was also the symbol of the **Maharashtra Ekikaran Parishad.**

### **Objective**

Objective of the M.G.P was Goa's merger into Maharashtra. Therefore, it was not shrouded with any ambiguity or vagueness. The objective was rationalised advancing geographical, historical, cultural, linguistic and economic reasons. Article 2 of the Constitution of the Party proclaimed that Goa was



Based upon Survey of India Map, Statewise Road Map of India

Scale 1 : 440,000 = 4.4 Kms.

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"historically and geographically, culturally and economically part and parcel of Maharashtra".<sup>9</sup> Maharashtra comprised of four natural divisions, Konkan being one of them. Goa was an integral part of Konkan division of Maharashtra.

The Party highlighted the fact that Goa and Maharashtra had a common history even before the birth of Chattrapati Shivaji Maharaj, the founder of Hind Swaraj.<sup>10</sup> But for their certain preoccupations, Chattrapati Shivaji and his valiant son Sambhaji would have defeated the Portuguese. Their exploits are perpetuated in Goan folklore. Historical connection was temporarily eclipsed by cruel colonial power. With its exit, it was but natural to restore that connection.

Supporters of merger justified the integration of Goa with Maharashtra on religious ground. They contended that the Goans and Maharashtrians have common religious rituals. However, they failed to note that religious rituals of the Hindus are identical throughout India.

Pro-merger forces propagated that opposition to Goa's merger into Maharashtra was a reflection of political bankruptcy. How can a small territory, a territory smaller than any district of Maharashtra be made an independent State of Union of India? As Goa cannot be forever an Union Territory, prudent political step was to merge it in Maharashtra. "Merger was a national issue, the seeking after a larger national identity."<sup>11</sup>

According to them, economic reasons were the most compelling reasons in favour of merger.<sup>12</sup> Economically, Goa cannot stand on its own legs. Its resources were very scarce. Its agriculture was primitive. Merger into Maharashtra would provide manifold opportunities for developing very close contacts with the economic activities of Bombay. <sup>13</sup> It would stimulate

economic growth, improve agriculture and bring economic prosperity to all. The pro-merger forces openly asserted that it was precisely for these reasons, the vested interests who were the real beneficiaries of Portuguese rule were opposed to merger. The vested interests were identified as the landlords, mine-owners and the Catholic Church.<sup>14</sup>

The supporters of Merger emphasised the existence of strong cultural bonds between Goa and Maharashtra. Shri Shridhar Telkar contended that over the centuries Goa had been the cradle of Marathi language and literature. According to Telkar, culturally Goa was not only a part of Maharashtra but "the soul of Maharashtra":<sup>15</sup> Maharashtra's Art, Music, Dramas and Songs bear the Goan imprint. Literature reflects customs, traditions and living style of the people. The supporters of merger claimed that Marathi was the "literary language" of Goa and Konkani was its "boli" -- the dialect.<sup>16</sup> First Marathi books and dramas were written by the Goans.<sup>17</sup> Literature which was deliberately and systematically destroyed by the Portuguese was Marathi. The Portuguese also ruthlessly suppressed the use of Marathi thereafter in Goa and thus snapped the vital link between Goa and Maharashtra. They banned the "ओवी" -- Ovi is a purely Marathi term for a Marathi metre of verse.<sup>18</sup>

At the intellectual level Pro - Merger case was forcefully presented by A.K. Priolkar . Priolkar advanced evidence to justify the contention that Marathi was the "literary mother - tongue"<sup>19</sup> of the Goans. According to him Marathi was the medium of education, written communication and religion. He pinpointed that even the European missionaries in the beginning used Marathi to propagate their religion. Father Stephens's celebrated **Christian Purana** was composed in Marathi and written in Roman Script.<sup>20</sup> Father Stephens also wrote in Konkani.<sup>21</sup> The suppression of Marathi by the Portuguese compelled

the Hindus to establish private schools for elementary education in Marathi. 22 Priolkar maintained that this common linguistic bond brought emotional integration between Goan Hindus and the people of Maharashtra inspite of their political separation during the Portuguese rule. Priolkar vehemently condemned the movement to replace Marathi by Konkani in Goa. According to him, Konkani is a dialect which was not even standardised. 23 Priolkar violently abused Shri Vamanrao Varde Valavlikar, famous as **Shenai Goibab** for his ceaseless striving, total dedication and matchless contribution to the cause of Konkani.

### **Konkani - A Dialect of Marathi or a Language as independent as Marathi.**

Constitutionally and politically the question of merger or non - merger depended on the answer whether Konkani was or was not a language as independent as Marathi. In 1956, the political map of India was redrawn on the linguistic basis under the States Re- organisation Act. If Konkani was an independent language then it was automatically entitled to have a State of its own. No wonder, supporters and opponents were eager to prove the premise which suited their interests.

According to Priolkar philologically Konkani was not at all an independent language. It was only the dialect of Marathi. He relied on the opinion of eminent philologist Dr. R.G. Bhandarkar: He charged that the supporters of Konkani were the promoters of "parochial patriotism." 24 Priolkar was prepared to accommodate Konkani only as "Goanese Marathi". He also charged that behind the love of Konkani was the sole purpose to prevent "Goa's merger into Maharashtra".

With due respect, it is submitted that neither Dr. Bhandarkar nor Shri Priolkar's judgement on the status of Konkani could be accepted as the correct and final judgement. Equally eminent scholars and philologists like Dr. S.M. Katre claim that from the angle of Phonology, Morphology and Syntax, Konkani is a language with dialects of its own, which have their own Grammars and Dictionaries. It belongs to the same group of Languages to which Marathi belongs. It is a "separate language" from Marathi but "phonological consideration show that both belong to a common parent Prakrit".<sup>25</sup> He adds, as konkani never became a court language or the language of literature, there was no binding force which could evolve one standard language. Kakasaheb Kalelkar and Suniti Kumar Chatterjee state that Konkani is a language as independent as Marathi. Credit for giving Konkani its legitimate place in the family of languages goes to Shri Vamanrao Varde Valavlikar. No wonder, Shri Valavlikar became a target of hatred of even a balanced researcher like Priolkar.<sup>26</sup>

### **Steps to accomplish objective Before Opinion Poll.**

First General Elections of Goa in 1963 became the battle ground between pro - merger and anti - merger forces. M.G.P fought the elections on the issue of merger. It shrewdly exploited Hindu emotions by propagating that if the United Goans Party (U.G.P) was elected, it would work for the return of the Portuguese which would mean suppression of Hindus again. <sup>27</sup> It projected Indian National Congress (I.N.C) as the mouthpiece of upper castes in Goa. <sup>28</sup> In this election all Political Parties used Caste and Religion as the main avenues of approach to the electorate." The language appeal was simplified, rough and ready symbol for a whole complex of feelings and interests, which

may be described as communal".<sup>29</sup> Thus the first - ever democratic experiment in Goa heavily relied on the communal base.

Legislature of the Union Territory of Goa, Daman and Diu consisted of thirty members. The M.G.P bagged fourteen, U.G.P twelve, Independents three and the Indian National Congress one. Of the three Independents, two belonged to the RSP but they contested the elections as independents and were supported by the M.G.P. The M.G.P polled 38.78 percent of the votes.<sup>30</sup> M.G.P formed the Government with Shri D. B. Bandodkar its Chief Minister. M.G.P Government publicly declared that it would redeem its pledge to the people. The pledge was Goa's merger into Maharashtra.

The M.G.P considered itself a "caretaker Government" which would resign the moment the Union Government announced the merger. Shri P.P. Shirodkar, one of the founder - members of the Party, was elected the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. Brushing aside conventional neutrality of the Speaker, Shri Shirodkar declared that Goa was an integral part of Maharashtra and hence the merger was indispensable.<sup>31</sup> The M.G.P Ministry swung into action to intensify its campaign for merger. To strengthen the confidence of the Goan electorate in its objective, the M.G.P promised land reforms, development of farming and industry, minimum wages for labour and modernisation of fishing industry.<sup>32</sup>

From time to time, the M.G.P Government issued Statements. Ministers and Office - Bearers of Party held press conferences within and without Goa. In April 1964 at Kolhapur, Chief Minister Bandodkar argued that the masses in Christianity were not opposed to Goa's merger into Maharashtra. Merger was vehemently opposed only by the rich Christians from Goa and out of Goa.<sup>33</sup>

To protect their own selfish interests, the rich Christians projected Goa as the Rome of the East. According to him a few groups of Goan Christians in collusion with Vatican and Christian States of Europe were exercising pressure upon the Government of India not to merge Goa into Maharashtra. At the same time he expressed confidence in M.G.P's ability to convince the masses in Christianity about the benefits of merger.

M.G.P interpreted the outcome of the election of 1963 as the verdict in favour of merger. The election of 1963 was contested by the Indian National Congress, Frente Popular, Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party, United Goans Party and a few independents. M.G.P secured 1,00,117 votes out of the total 2,60,372. It secured 38.78 per cent of the total votes as against U.G.P's 74,081 votes. U.G.P's percentage of votes was 28.44.<sup>34</sup> M.G.P did not get even one seat in those parts of Goa where opinion was in favour of "cultural diversity" and "separate State".<sup>35</sup> Similarly U.G.P did not get even one seat where opinion was in favour of merger. The Indian National Congress which was non-committal on the question of merger polled 15.52 percent, Frente Popular a little more than one percent and Independents got 10.62 percent.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, M.G.P was not justified in claiming its victory in the election as a verdict for merger.

### **Within the Legislative Assembly**

Parliamentary politics revolves round the Parliament. Hence, for the M.G.P Government nothing was more important than the introduction and approval of the Resolution for Merger. Ofcourse, M.G.P knew very well that the passage of resolution by Assembly by itself cannot bring merger. Merger can come only with the approval of Parliament and Parliament was then

controlled by the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. However, the passage of resolution for merger had immense political advantage. It would have created favourable public opinion for merger throughout India. The Resolution for Merger proved to be the greatest political headache to the leader of the M.G.P. On the one hand Chief Minister, Bandodkar was urged by Prime Minister Nehru "to go slow". Nehru contented that the first-ever general election increased communalism in Goa and hence the times were not propitious for immediate merger. On the other hand, his rivals within the M.G.P doubted his sincerity and called him a "betrayed" for not moving the resolution for merger immediately.<sup>37</sup> The two independents supporting the M.G.P — P.S.P members even threatened to quit M.G.P. fold. M.G.P itself faced the danger of a split. However the crisis was temporarily overcome, thanks to the intervention of the veteran Maharashtrian politician Shri S.M. Joshi.

If common sense and realism are the attributes of sound leadership, Bandodkar's decision "to go slow" on merger resolution reflected both. He correctly perceived that the time was not ripe as political climate was surcharged with communalism. M.G.P was already holding the reins of power. If it uses power shrewdly it could turn the scales in favour of merger by gently pressurising and persuading the Union Government and winning the confidence of all, regardless of their religions and exposing the evil designs of the reactionary forces in Goa.

In January 1964, Bandodkar told the House that though there was no reference to the issue of merger in the Governor's Address which unfolded the policy of his Government, resolution for merger would be introduced at appropriate time. <sup>38</sup> Shri V.S. Karmali , Minister for Education asserted that

the electorate has given M.G.P a "clear mandate" to accomplish its goal of merger of Goa into Maharashtra. <sup>39</sup> He also added that the House was quite competent to admit, debate and approve, the resolution of merger. <sup>40</sup> The Legislative Assembly by approving the resolution would convince the Parliament to endorse the clear verdict of the electorate which alone knew Goa's interests better. <sup>41</sup>

Side by side, M.G.P Government was appealing the Central Government to hasten the merger. They were terribly shocked in October 1964, when one of the members of the Congress Parliamentary Board, Shri S.K. Patil revealed its decision taken on 7 April 1964. The decision was as follows : "for the coming ten years, Goa will continue as a Union Territory. There should be no change in the present status. After that the views of the people of Goa will be ascertained in regard to the question of merger and this final decision will be taken in accordance with the wishes."<sup>42</sup> Union Defence Minister Y.B. Chavan publicly stated that he was not a party to the decision of 7 April 1964. <sup>43</sup> The intense frustration of M.G.P was quite understandable. It could not wait for ten years which was too long a period.

Rank and file in the Party clamoured for bolder and more aggressive steps to shake off the lethargy of the Union Government. Rivals of Bandodkar within the Party demanded rallies and demonstrations to arouse public support. Almost a year was completed with M.G.P in power but there was not even a slightest indication towards the realization of the goal.

In the meantime, Nehru was dead and Lal Bahadur Shastri became the Prime Minister. The M.G.P Legislature Party submitted a Memorandum to Prime Minister Shastri on 10 November 1964. The Memorandum requested

the Prime Minister to take immediately concrete decision on the issue of merger or be ready to face the resolution for merger sponsored by the M.G.P and approved by the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu. 44

The Memorandum was ignored by the Union Government. Finally the M.G.P Government supported four non-official resolutions introduced in the Assembly on 22 January 1965. Of them, three were by its own Party members and one by the P.S.P. 45 As the resolutions were identical, only one of them was discussed in the Assembly. Analysis of the debate reveals the insights of the supporters and opponents of merger. Both the parties reiterated their stock - in - trade arguments.

The Private Member's Resolution - Resolution No. 15: Resolution **Re - Merger of Goa into Maharashtra State** asserted that Goa was culturally, geographically and historically a part of Maharashtra. It reaffirmed that Marathi was the language of Goa and Konkani was its dialect. It proclaimed that merger was not only justified on linguistic grounds but also in the "best interests of the Union Territory of Goa", and "Nation as a whole" as it would "promote the feelings of solidarity and integrity". The resolution called upon the Government of India "to take appropriate steps" to sponsor the "necessary legislation in Parliament," as the delay was only, "frittering away the energies of the people."46

Shri P.S. Naik (M.G.P.), who proposed the resolution argued that the majority of seats gained by the M.G.P. in the Legislative Assembly was more than enough to convince all concerned that people of Goa want to merge into Maharashtra. According to him, if the people of Goa desired to have a separate State, they would have given majority of seats to the U.G.P.

Shri Tony Fernandes, Minister for Labour, ridiculed the contention of the Opposition that merger would obstruct economic development of Goa. Opposition, he charged, was shedding crocodile tears on the miseries of the poor and the down-trodden. These unfortunate people of Goa could reap the fruits of economic development only by joining their likes in Maharashtra. He rejected **prima facie** the argument that merger would reduce Central assistance to Goa. According to him Central assistance to Goa was a trifle when compared to the money spent by the Government of Maharashtra on the development projects in Maharashtra. For example, on its Aaray Milk Colony, the Maharashtra Government was spending fourteen crores of rupees.<sup>47</sup> Opposition to merger, said Shri Fernandes, would delight enemies of India who had always mischievously propagated that the people of Goa had hated Operation Vijay and in the opinion of Goans it was not the liberation but "invasion".<sup>48</sup> Shri Fernandes pointed out that continuation of Union Territory Status for ten years would mean continuation of "C class citizenship" for Goans. Hence, he demanded immediate merger. <sup>49</sup>

The United Goans Party (U.G.P.) fiercely opposed the M.G.P - sponsored "Resolution Re - Merger of Goa into Maharashtra State." Dr. Sequeira's reasoning was that such a resolution was beyond the competence of Legislative Assembly which derived its existence from the Union Territories Act. By allowing its admission, the members were signing the "death warrant" of the Legislative Assembly and the Council of Ministers. <sup>50</sup> On the merits of Resolution, U.G.P's contention was that it was the distortion of reality. Marathi had never been the mother tongue of Goa and hence merger was never in the best interests of the people. The slender majority of two seats does not give M.G.P. the mandate of the people of Goa for merger.

When the resolution was voted; the twelve U.G.P. members staged a walkout. In the House of twenty-nine excluding the Speaker, fifteen members - thirteen of M.G.P and two P.S.P - voted in favour of the Resolution, the member from Diu voted against and the Congress MLA staged a walkout. <sup>51</sup>

The passage of Resolution boosted the morale of the supporters of M.G.P. Now that the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu recommended the "Re- Merger of Goa into Maharashtra" the Union Government could not afford to ignore the wishes of the people of Goa.

The members of Legislative Assembly were perforce obliged to echo and re-echo the opinions of the experts favouring their respective opinions as regards the status of Konkani. All the M.G.P MLAS insisted in speaking in Marathi which they proclaimed was their "mother - tongue". <sup>52</sup> They also unanimously demanded the recognition of Marathi as the official language. <sup>53</sup> The M.G.P MLAS spoke only in Marathi and refused to speak in Konkani which they dismissed as the dialect of Marathi. The U.G.P. MLAS professed that they do not understand Marathi and violently opposed the use of Marathi in the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu. According to them Marathi was not the mother-tongue of Goa. Goa's mother - tongue was Konkani. <sup>54</sup> Dr. Sequeira argued that under the Union Territory Act members could speak in English, Hindi or in the Official language of the territory and in case members did not know either of them then they could speak in their mother - tongue. The U.G.P members insisted that members could use Konkani and not Marathi as Konkani was their mother - tongue. <sup>55</sup>

Within the Assembly U.G.P took the stand that Konkani was an independent language and not a dialect of Marathi. Dr. Sequeira sharply

disagreed with Bandodkar when the latter claimed that Marathi was the language of the people of Goa because of wide circulation of Marathi newspapers and the establishment of Marathi schools. Dr. Sequeira pointed out that merely because people read Marathi, it does not follow that they speak Marathi <sup>56</sup> and that Marathi schools were established due to the patronage of Government and private individuals. If the same patronage was extended to Konkani schools, the number of students would have been much bigger. U.G.P charged that Government of Bandodkar was deliberately and purposefully denying funds which adversely affected the development of Konkani at every step. <sup>57</sup>

The U.G.P struggled very hard to conduct the business of the House only in Konkani. Its members pretended that they did not understand Marathi but refused to accept the pretension of the members of M.G.P that they did not understand Konkani. The language issue literally paralysed the business of the Assembly. Hence, Chief Minister Bandodkar and the Leader of the Opposition Dr. Sequeira arrived at an understanding, that regardless of the opinions about the status of Konkani, the business of the House should be generally conducted in Konkani. <sup>58</sup> However that understanding was shortlived because of the obstinacy of the M.G.P. MLAS.

Exasperated, Speaker P.P. Shirodkar suggested that the members should decide the language of the House by adopting a resolution. On 22 July 1966 a Private Member's Bill - **The Goa Daman and Diu Official Languages Bill No 7 of 1966** ~~The Goa Daman and Diu Official Languages Bill of 1966~~ was moved in Legislative Assembly. <sup>59</sup> The U.G.P strongly opposed the introduction of the Bill on the ground that the Bill was based on an absolutely wrong premise that

Marathi was the language of Goa. The Bill was not discussed as the Assembly was dissolved in December 1966.

The victory in the Legislative Assembly encouraged the M.G.P to intensify the campaign to hasten the pace of merger. Addressing an All-Party meeting in Bombay on 5 February 1965 presided by the celebrated revolutionary Senapati Bapat, Chief Minister Bandodkar stated that if Goa was not immediately merged into Maharashtra, a Merger Samiti would be set up to launch "an agitation".<sup>60</sup> In reply to a reception accorded to him by the Bombay Municipal Corporation on 5 February, 1965 Bandodkar declared that developmental activities in Goa would be accelerated only with merger. He boldly asserted that Goa's development cannot be planned from Delhi.

M.G.P branded the U.G.P as an "anti - national and a fifth columnist Party".<sup>61</sup> It warned Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri about the "Camouflaged activities of the Portuguese stooges". M.G.P highlighted that the same people, who had earlier worked against the Liberation of Goa, were now working to keep Goa isolated from the rest of India" under the garb of status quo".<sup>62</sup>

In a public statement on 19 April 1965 the M.G.P declared that it would not hesitate to launch a joint agitation with the people of Maharashtra to realise their goal. It heartily accepted the assurance of Shri P.K. Atre given on 24 January 1965, that he would march into Goa with twenty thousand Maharashtrian volunteers to ensure merger because "the map of Maharashtra" would never be complete without the "merger of Goa".<sup>63</sup> On 22 May 1965 Shri Nath Pai inaugurated the two day **Goa - Maharashtra Vilinikaran Parishad** at Panaji. The Parishad was a platform for all pro-merger forces in Goa and

was expected to be the replica of **Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti** which had successfully forced the Government of India to end the bilingual State of Bombay. Addressing the Parishad, Chief Minister Bandodkar declared that merger was inevitable and indispensable. He requested the Parishad to work for its achievement. He fully endorsed the resolution of the Parishad that the people of Goa would never give their consent to the holding of fresh elections to decide the future of Goa and that the Congress High Command must respect the democratic verdict of the Goans. <sup>64</sup>

The Union Government continued to ignore the forces of merger. Shri V.N. Lawande and Shri P.P. Shirodkar thought it opportune to challenge the leadership of Bandodkar. They accused him of betraying the Party on its twin objectives - merger in Maharashtra and the recognition of Marathi as the Official Language. They were supported by three M.G.P MLAS. In October 1965, the two PSP MLAS also threatened to withdraw their support to Bandodkar Ministry in case there was a change in M.G.P leadership. Two rebel MLAS of M.G.P gave a notice for motion of no-confidence against the Bandodkar Ministry. This was the third no-confidence motion since Bandodkar formed the Government in 1963. This was the first to be tabled by his own partymen. <sup>65</sup> However the crisis was overcome by the timely intervention of Maharashtrian leaders notably Shri Nath Pai, Maharashtra's Chief Minister V.P. Naik and Home Minister D.S. Desai.

A "Steering Committee" of M.G.P members was set up in November 1965 to hasten the cause of merger. The Steering Committee demanded that the Union Government should order the new election for the Legislative Assembly where merger or non-merger should be the issue. It also stated that should the Central Government refuse to accept "merger" as the main issue in

the new elections, Bandodkar Ministry should resign on or before 14, March 1966 as a mark of protest. <sup>66</sup> A five member delegation of M.G.P headed by Chief Minister Bandodkar was sent to Delhi on 25 April 1966 to seek an assurance from Prime Minister Indira Gandhi that elections would be held in Goa simultaneously with the general elections in the country.

When the delegation returned empty -handed, Shri M. Shinkre MP (M.G.P) advised the Bandodkar Ministry to resign on 1 June 1966 as that alone would force the Union Government to hold fresh elections. On 4 June 1966 in Bombay, Chief Minister Bandodkar declared that M.G.P cannot be deceived by Central Government by referring the matter to any Commission. Hence, he would oppose "tooth and nail" any move by the Union Government to refer the matter to a Commission. He even threatened to go on indefinite fast if the Union Government pursued such a proposal. <sup>67</sup>

M.G.P had consistently maintained that the verdict of elections of 1963 was a mandate for merger and the Union Government had consistently taken the stand that it was only a mandate "to govern" Goa. Atlast the Government of India realised that it cannot continue the policy of evasion. In October 1966 Government of India announced that the Opinion Poll will be held to decide the political status of Goa, Daman and Diu.

### **Steps to achieve goal during the Opinion Poll.**

Incapable to defy the Government of India, the M.G.P welcomed the Opinion Poll. Bandodkar Ministry resigned on 3 December 1966. M.G.P geared itself to meet the challenge by organising public meetings, morchas, street plays and door to door canvassing. Bandodkar personally addressed 133

public meetings and travelled about hundred miles a day. <sup>68</sup> He pinpointed that the propaganda that merger would harm the interests of Catholic Community in Goa was a false and mischievous propaganda because thousands of Catholics were living in Bombay alone. There were also Catholics living in other parts of Maharashtra. He told the lovers of Konkani that merger would not mean step-motherly treatment to the progress of Konkani.

Bandodkar told the people that the vote for the Union Territory would not mean automatic establishment of a Separate State of Goa. The Union Government has not at all provided the alternative of separate state in the Opinion Poll. He warned the people not to fall prey to the deception practised by the opponents. In those parts, where people were strongly in favour of merger emphasis was on the "Hindu Sentiment". People were told that merger would bring the meeting of the Goddess Shanta Durga with Goddess Bhawani after four hundred and fifty years. <sup>69</sup> The two Goddesses were separated by cruel colonialism of the Europeans. Bandodkar explained economic benefits of merger. He pointed out that selfish interests within Goa were shrewdly exploiting the religious and linguistic emotions of the innocent people to keep Goa isolated so that they can continue to live luxuriously by exploiting the masses. According to him without merger, there cannot be economic development of Goa.

M.G.P published a seventeen page pamphlet explaining the advantages of merger in November 1966. It highlighted that the fears against merger were due to pre-conceived notions and prejudices. Merger would guarantee economic benefits. Goa by itself, was not economically viable to become an independent state. Goa's mineral wealth was not at all sufficient to generate opportunities for entire population. Only advancement on industrial front can

provide opportunities for all. Industry needs power, resources and capital. Merger would facilitate easy flow of the needs of industry. The Union Territory Status gave Goa only limited funds which in turn could bring only limited benefits. The procedure inherent in the Union Territory administration and dependence on the Central Government for decisions was bound to make progress not only slow but also stunted. <sup>70</sup>

Citing the examples of obstacles faced by the M.G.P Government, it continued : because of "limited powers of the Union Territory Legislatures, difficulties were experienced in getting financial clearance and projects costing more than ten lakhs rupees, required an administrative and technical approval of the Central Government."<sup>71</sup> As the Central Government failed to clear certain projects, money could not be spent. The installation of sixty MW power sub-station, the Medical College project and the construction of the approach road were held up because of the delay in the clearance by the Centre". <sup>72</sup>

The Plan, the resources and the strategy of the Opinion Poll campaign of M.G.P was master - minded by the Maharashtrians. Bandodkar requested **Maharashtra - Goa Vilinikaran Samiti** of Bombay to send batches of volunteers to Goa for conducting the campaign. <sup>73</sup> The President of the Samiti was Shri Melicio Fernandes. He appealed to Christian voters to give a pro-merger verdict in the poll. He warned "To vote against merger would be as good as breaking heads against the wall... This would be the first and last chance to join Maharashtra which is culturally very near to Goans." <sup>74</sup> The President of the Samiti accompanied by hundred and six volunteers camped in Goa. The volunteers included both Hindus and Christians. Shri Fernandes maintained that if the Goans rejected the merger in the Opinion Poll" then non - Goan

population would eventually increase in numbers and thereby reduce the Goan influence in all spheres in time to come". 75 Another organisation, **The Goa Vilinikaran Sahayak Samiti of Bombay** started an intensive mass education in Bombay to teach the Goans in Maharashtra the merits of merger so that they in turn, advise their kith and kin in Goa for correct decision. 76

The same Samiti set up a "managing Committee" whose task was publicity in Goa. Shri P.G. Kher was its President, Dr. V.N. Shirodkar, Shri S.S. Kavlekar, Dr. Leo D'Souza the Vice Presidents; Shri Vasant Rao Patil, Vice - President of Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee was the treasurer and Shri S.M. Joshi, Shri N.G. Gore and Shri J.S. Tilak Joshi were its members. The Samiti dispatched volunteers and cultural troupes to Goa. They organised street plays, dramas and Kavalis, to convince the people of Goa about the identity of interests of Maharashtra and Goa. The M.G.P organised the performances of the famous Shahirs of Maharashtra in various places in Goa who "enlightened Goans about their ancient culture and their ancient relationship with Maharashtra. Famous Shahir Amar Sheik gave a number of performances glorifying Maharashtra and Marathi language to influence the electorate. 77

Bandodkar proudly declared that he had been always a loyal soldier of Maharashtra and would work to the best of his abilities "to serve" Maharashtra. On their part, Maharashtrian leaders Shri P.G. Kher and Shri S.M. Joshi warmly praised Bandodkar for his "historical work for Maharashtra". Shri S.A. Dange maintained that ties between Goa and Maharashtra which were cut off by foreign rule were restored by Bandodkar. Shri P.K. Atre joined Shri Dange. Shri J.S. Tilak declared that Bandodkar had completed the incomplete work of Shivaji and Sambhaji. 78

The Maharashtra leaders actively and directly participated in the Opinion Poll campaign in Goa. They belonged to all the national political parties such as Indian National Congress, Jan Sangh (now Bhartiya Janata Party) Praja Socialist Party and the Communist Party of India. The Maharashtra Cabinet issued a Nine - point Statement on 30 December 1966, in which it assured that "every effort will be made to accelerate the development of Goa" and that special attention will be paid to agriculture, including irrigation, supply of power, roads and bridges, industrialization and development of mining. <sup>79</sup>

Shri Mohan Dharia, General Secretary of Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee, stressed that the anti-merger groups were closer to Lisbon than to New Delhi. <sup>80</sup> Shri Nath Pai (PSP) accused the Catholic Church of distributing wheat flour and food grains only to those who promised to vote for "Two Leaves" -the symbol for the option of Union Territory. He said that people from Satari and Valpoi had complained to him that they were deprived of these charities because they refused to vote for Union Territory. <sup>81</sup> Shri Madhu Dandavate appealed for the restoration of the age-long cultural relations between Goa and Maharashtra. <sup>82</sup> The anti-merger groups alleged that the Political Parties from Maharashtra offered freely their resources and personnel to M.G.P. They claimed that a lot of money from Maharashtra was spent in influencing the voters during the poll especially in the mining and labour areas of Siolim, Bicholim and Murmugao. <sup>83</sup> However they were not able to furnish evidence of exact amount of money received by the M.G.P from Maharashtra.

The result of the Opinion Poll was officially announced on 19 January 1967. Vote for Merger in Maharashtra was 138170. At last, the M.G.P failed to win its objective of Goa's merger into Maharashtra. <sup>84</sup>

## Anti - Merger

Present talukas of Bardez, Murrugao, Salcete and Tiswadi have predominantly Catholic population. The greatest impact of Denationalisation is in these Talukas. Before Goa's Liberation, the Portuguese Colonialists deftly used the Denationalised class in Goa to create an impression in the world that Goa was different from the rest of India. T.B. Cunha in his famous tract **Denationalisation of Goans** vividly portrayed how Vatican and Lisbon used this class throughout the colonial rule. The Denationalised were ordered to denigrate India. Liberation changed the political scenario in Goa. The Denationalised were demoralised, depressed and worried. Prime Minister Nehru's promise to preserve Goa's "identity" gave them respectability and opportunity to reestablish themselves in Goan politics.

The custodians of Goa's "Identity" held **An All Goa Political** Conference at Margao in January 1962. It resolved that Goa should be an independent State of the Indian Union.<sup>85</sup> The Memorandum submitted by this Conference to the Parliament subsequently became the basic document of their activities.

## Formation of United Goans Party (U.G.P.)

Aggressive campaign for Goa's merger into Maharashtra in the aftermath of the Liberation terribly frightened the supporters of "separate identity" which they thought would be lost once and for all. The Marathi Literary Conference held in December 1962 at Panaji, made them to believe that Maharashtra was bent upon grabbing Goa. They cried "**Down with Marathi Communalism, कोवणी भास आमची मात्य, आमची भास आमवं जात्य.**"<sup>86</sup> Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party was formed in March 1963. Reaction to its formation was the

formation of another Political Party in Goa in September 1963. It was the United Goans Party which included such groups as **Goencho Paksh, Partido Indiano, Goan National Union and the United Front of Goans**. Dr. Jack De Sequeira founder - president of the Goencho Paksh was elected the President of the U.G.P.

### **Objective**

Objective of U.G.P was Statehood for Goa. U.G.P therefore had to struggle for the recognition of Konkani as the Official Language of Goa. Its politics perforce was to oppose M.G.P and frustrate its design of Goa's merger into Maharashtra.

The U.G.P dared not challenge M.G.P over geographical factor because geography cannot be a matter of opinion. Where it could not dispute, U.G.P shrewdly maintained silence. U.G.P's sheet anchor was Goa's "unique culture" and "unique identity". Its logic was geared to propagate that Goa's history begins with its occupation by the Portuguese. Both unique culture and unique identity were the by-products of Portuguese Colonialism. U.G.P invented a slogan "आमचें गोंय आमकां जाय" Goa only for Goans. Cornerstone of U.G.P propaganda was that merger would destroy Goa's identity and Goa's unique culture and thereby the Goans would become total non-entities. Goa would become just one of the insignificant districts of Maharashtra.

It is indeed strange that both supporters and opponents raised lot of dust over "Culture" which, in fact, had nothing to do with merger or non-merger. It goes without saying that culture is flower whose fragrance smells the indigenous soil. Culture is not a hot - house plant. Goa and Maharashtra

are part and parcel of India which no political party in Goa and Maharashtra disputed. How can they dispute that Goa's and Maharashtra's cultures were different from that of India? In fact culture was the greatest common factor of both Goa and Maharashtra. It was therefore height of absurdity to politicise in terms of culture. The main political rivals M.G.P and U.G.P freely indulged in this absurdity. Supporters of Merger praised culture of Maharashtra and opponents of merger praised Goa's unique culture, which according to them was perfect blending of East and West. The most ridiculous was the argument of culture of majority and culture of minority. <sup>87</sup>

It is worthwhile to note that the blending of East and West is not visible in the vital areas of culture. By blending of East and West probably the supporters mean side by side existence of the cultures of the East and West in a few groups in Goa. Rationally, it would be a folly to identify East only with India because East is the home of several cultures amongst them one is Indian Culture. Even Nehru who talked of Goa's unique identity laughed at the contention that Goa has culture of its own. Nehru said "Goa and Union of India form one country" and the "history of Portuguese possession of Goa" is "a very dark chapter of India's history". <sup>88</sup> Nehru ridiculed the contention that Goa is the specimen of European culture. He remarked : "..... Goa is repeatedly referred to as a shining light of European culture. Opinions may differ on what European culture is. But I should like to put it to Europe and to the countries of Europe, whether they regard the culture represented by Goa today, or even by Portugal, as European culture at its highest and brightest". <sup>89</sup>

U.G.P **prima facie** rejected the contention that independent state of Goa would not be economically viable. It reasoned that Goa possessed resources which were capable of sustaining its population. Goa's per capita income was

higher than that of many States of the Indian Union. It earned considerable foreign exchange and had a natural harbour with great potentialities of commerce and industry. U.G.P argued that Maharashtra desired to grab Goa more because of its economic assets than historical, geographical and linguistic reasons. It told the people of Goa that if merger takes place, Maharashtra would use Goa's wealth for its own economic development. Worse, the sons and daughters of soil would be deprived of jobs. Merger would mean employment to the Maharashtrians and unemployment to the Goans.

### **Konkani ; A Dialect of Marathi or Independent Language.**

Leadership of U.G.P was controlled by the elite which was compelled to swallow its pride over many issues. Foremost among them was the issue of language. Till Liberation of Goa this elite was proud to speak only in European languages, especially Portuguese and English. They openly condemned Konkani as "**Lingua de Criadas**" -- Language of servants. As the States of Indian Union derived their existence from their own languages, the U.G.P had no other alternative than to cling to Konkani firmly in order to protect their interests. Hence, they shouted from the house tops that Konkani was not at all the Dialect of Marathi. Konkani is a language as independent as Marathi. Additional advantage was that the concentration on Konkani enabled the Denationalised Christians and Hindus and Roman Catholic Church to use those committed, dedicated and devoted to the development of Konkani to accomplish their goal. The Movement for separate State could not be dismissed as the handiwork of the reactionary forces in Goa. On their part, the reactionaries learnt that only the "Language of servants" was "to be the Official language of Goa.

### Steps to accomplish Objective before Opinion Poll.

In the first general election of 1963, U.G.P's Manifesto concentrated on the separate State of Goa and recognition of Konkani as language of Goa. It polled 28.45 percent of the votes and bagged twelve seats in the Legislature.

In December 1963, Shri Y.B. Chavan, the Defence Minister of India portrayed U.G.P as the mouthpiece of Europe or Portugal. He remarked that there was a ceaseless effort to make Goa a "black Portuguese area". He warned that people with "extra - territorial loyalties were hiding under the facade of separate statehood." <sup>91</sup> U.G.P vehemently denied that it was anti - national. How could "आमचें गोंय आमकां जाच" (Goa only for Goans) be an expression of anti -nationalism it asked? Their goal was only a full-fledged State of Goa within Indian Union like Maharashtra and Mysore. When Y.B. Chavan contended that "separatism" preached by the U.G.P was dangerous to the country, Dr. Sequeira replied that U.G.P was doing in Goa what the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti did for Maharashtra. <sup>92</sup>

As the main opponent of Merger, the U.G.P within Legislative Assembly and out of it carried an intensive propaganda in favour of the Separate State and recognition of Konkani, as the language of the State. It was very alert and attentive on every step of the M.G.P. It never hesitated to retaliate and pursued tit for tat policy to checkmate M.G.P. U.G.P rejected "election" as a "method" to resolve the dispute. It was a rational position. Election is only a "method" to locate the party which can form the Government. Election cannot give a decisive answer to such a controversial issue as merger or non - merger.

U.G.P maintained that Union Territory Act forbade even the discussion of issue of merger within the Assembly. According to Dr. Sequeira discussion of issue of merger or full-fledged State would be the violation of Union Territory Act. <sup>93</sup> Deputy Leader of U.G.P Shri V.N. Salmalkar felt that Goa was moving from bondage to bondage. Before Liberation the slogan was "Aqui é Portugal"-- Goa is Portugal; after Liberation it was "Aqui é Maharashtra" -- Goa is Maharashtra. <sup>94</sup>

U.G.P, therefore, warmly applauded the Congress Parliamentary Board's decision of 7 April 1964. On 17 December 1964 at Panaji, the U.G.P declared : "Goa cannot be merged into any State unless the people so chose in a referendum".<sup>95</sup> The U.G.P strongly resented the Resolution of Maharashtra Pradesh Congress approved in December 1964, at Nagpur demanding the merger of Goa into Maharashtra. Dr. Sequeira condemned it as "chauvinistic attempt of the expansionist elements in Maharashtra". <sup>96</sup>

The Resolution of Merger approved by the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu on <sup>22 January 1965</sup> was exploited by U.G.P to widen its base and improve its prospects. It organised rallies and meetings in all parts of Goa condemning the merger resolution and charged that M.G.P was "selling Goa".<sup>97</sup> The enemies of U.G.P were formidable. They were M.G.P in Goa and combination of all Political Parties of Maharashtra. Merger resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu was enthusiastically and unanimously endorsed by both the Houses of Maharashtra Legislature. As Chanakya put it enemy of your enemy is your friend. U.G.P was supported by the State of Mysore. By demanding that Goa should be merged in Mysore State, Mysore was helping U.G.P to oppose merger into Maharashtra. On 16 March 1965 at

the instance of Mysore Government, Mysore Vidhan Sabha approved a resolution defending the status quo in Goa.

U.G.P was highly suspicious of "increasing influx of Maharashtrian personnel" on "deputation" to Goa. It openly charged that the "deputationists" were the powerful ploy used by the M.G.P and Maharashtra to accomplish merger. Hence on 30 January 1965 Dr. Sequeira demanded that the Government of Goa, Daman and Diu should immediately remove all "Maharashtrian deputationists" from the Administration. <sup>98</sup>

According to the Constitution of India, people of India are free to move, reside and settle in any part of the country. They are entitled for employment in every part of Indian Union. Maharashtrians were, of course, entitled to take jobs in Goa. However when Maharashtra was actively and directly staking its claim for Goa's merger within itself, it was improper to recruit deputationists from that State as they were likely to make use of their positions within the administration to improve the prospects of their State. The Maharashtra Government disclosed in the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly in February 1964 that number of State Government employees excluding those of the State Legislature Secretariat, on deputation to Goa was 1,313 of which 1,155 were police personnel. <sup>99</sup> In June 1966, the Goa Government issued a statement giving details of the number of deputationists in each department. According to that statement the total number of the deputationists in Goa was 1026. <sup>100</sup>

U.G.P gave to Nehru's political promise the reverence which people give to their religious texts. Time and again it complained that the powers that be were not respecting Nehru. In March 1965, U.G.P, through a Memorandum

urged Government of India to honour scrupulously the Congress Parliamentary Board's decision of 7 April 1964. It pleaded with the Government of India that on the basis of principle of Linguistic Reorganisation of India, Goa should be made a State that included all the Konkani speaking areas in India. 101

To neutralise the Maharashtrian propaganda, U.G.P set up offices in Bombay and Delhi. U.G.P sent several delegations to Delhi to win over the Government of India for its cause. It issued series of press notes expounding its goal of separate State. It took pains to persuade all concerned that the movement for separate Statehood for Goa within Indian Union was not the movement of "Portuguese stooges" as propagated by the forces of merger. It was the genuine movement of the people of Goa.

Like Chief Minister Bandodkar, Leader of the Opposition Dr. Sequeira met men and women that mattered in the country and held press conferences. In April 1965 U.G.P actively participated in the Anti - Merger Convention called by the anti - merger groups to condemn the resolution for merger into Maharashtra passed by the Goa, Daman and Diu Legislative Assembly. In May 1966, Dr. Sequeira tried to persuade Prime Minister of India to implement three conditions before holding the Opinion Poll. They were as follows : 1) resignation of the Bandodkar Ministry at least six months before the date set for the poll. (2) Withdrawal of all the deputationists from Maharashtra in Goa and (3) Postal ballots to Goans living in other States of India and in Africa. 102

U.G.P opposed tooth and nail fresh elections as a "method" to determine the future of Goa. On 14 May 1966 in order to bring together all anti - merger forces in Goa, U.G.P held All Goan Convention at Margao. The Convention

told the people that "If we are merged, we are submerged and we shall be non entities in our own country". <sup>103</sup> The Convention demanded the inclusion of Konkani in the Eight Schedule of the Constitution.

In June 1966 U.G.P launched an anti - Deputationists agitation. U.G.P alleged that the Deputationists were involved in political machinations. In August 1966 it joined the Satyagraha organised by Council of Action led by Shri Ravindra Kelekar. The Council of Action claimed that Bandodkar Government was playing the game of caste and communalism.<sup>104</sup> It also demanded the expulsion of all deputationists from Goa. <sup>105</sup>

When the Union Government decided to hold the Opinion Poll in Goa on 16 January 1967, there was a race to usurp the credit for the invention of this totally new method by the Government of India to settle a sensitive political controversy. U.G.P forcefully contended that its President Dr. Jack De Sequeira was the originator not only of the "method" but also of the very term "Opinion Poll". Some called Dr. Sequeira "the Father of Opinion Poll." <sup>106</sup> With equal force some reject Dr. Sequeira's claim as the originator of Opinion Poll. They say that Parliament accepted Opinion Poll not because of the work of any Political Party but because of demand of people of Goa as articulated by the intellectuals, writers and social workers. <sup>107</sup> Shri P. Kakodkar, President of Goa Pradesh Congress Committee (G.P.C.C) claimed that it was he who convinced Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to hold the Opinion Poll. <sup>108</sup>

If Opinion Poll disheartened the M.G.P, it boosted the morale of U.G.P. Gleefully, Dr. Sequeira declared that "we have won the battle". <sup>109</sup> Union Government accepted only one condition suggested by Dr. Sequeira; that is the resignation of the M.G.P Ministry and rejected remaining two conditions.

However, the U.G.P was very unhappy as regards the alternative in the Opinion Poll, namely, the Merger in Maharashtra or Continuation of Union Territory. Rivals of Dr. Sequeira within the U.G.P accused him of betraying the trust placed in him by the masses. The quarrel between the leaders ended with the split in the U.G.P - Dr. J. De Sequeira Group and Pimenta - Loyola Group in October 1966.

### Steps during the Opinion Poll

However, both the groups worked hard during the Opinion Poll. They concentrated on campaigning for their case in predominantly pro - merger constituencies. They organised many meetings in Pernem, Mandrem, Tivim and Satari. They harped upon "Goa's separate identity and separate individuality." Their slogans were "we do not want Maharashtrian Shrikand puri, we are content with our Shit codi", "आमचें गोंय आमकां जाच 'गोंय केणाचें गोंय गोंयकारचें ". They drafted the **Tiatrists**, the counterparts of Maharashtrian **Shahirs** who through their plays, songs and "tiatr" projected the dangers of Goa's merger in Maharashtra. They told the people that if merger takes place, Goa would be "Swamped by Maharashtra".

If the pro-merger forces condemned the Roman Catholic Church of Goa for its active participation in the campaign for the Opinion Poll, the anti merger forces accused Maharashtra of its direct and active interference in influencing the decision of the Opinion Poll which was only for the Goans to decide. Dr. Sequeira tirelessly repeated the disadvantages which would be suffered by the Goans if Goa was merged into Maharashtra. Between the announcement of holding the Opinion Poll and the date of voting, everyday U.G.P organised meetings and processions throughout Goa. Shri Teotonio Pereira, MLA (U.G.P)

claimed that he and his family spent much money in the U.G.P campaign. Everyday several vehicles such as pickups, taxis and cars were on the road. About one hundred - and fifty workers worked everyday with him to promote the cause of U.G.P. <sup>110</sup> During the campaign the U.G.P (Sequeira Group) did not join the Anti - Merger Front which was set up in November 1966 for coordinating the activities of all anti - merger groups. U.G.P (Furtado and Pimenta Group) joined the front. The pro-merger forces accused the U.G.P of using Roman Catholic Church to promote its cause. They claim that the Church worked hand-in-glove with U.G.P, providing the Church compounds for the U.G.P meetings and the priests propagating the benefits of keeping Goa a separate entity, in their sermons. <sup>111</sup>

Opinion Poll was decided in favour of the Continuation of Union Territory. The total votes was 172191.<sup>112</sup> The U.G.P was successful in defeating the M.G.P.

### **National Political Parties**

A : Indian National Congress

From the Liberation of Goa to the holding of the Opinion Poll to decide its final status, the policy of the Indian National Congress, was an excellent example of confusion worse confounded. Indian National Congress controlled the Union Government and hence, it mattered the most in the political arena. The Ruling Party was always divided into groups, - the pro - merger and the anti - merger groups, the pro - Maharashtra and the pro- Mysore groups. Every group was patronized by the powerful leaders within the Party and Government. Union Defence Minister Shri Y. B. Chavan, was patron - in - chief

of the group supporting merger into Maharashtra. The Chief Minister of Mysore, Shri S. Nijalingapa patronized the anti - merger forces. The High Command could neither suppress nor control the rivalries of the Pradesh Congresses in Maharashtra and Mysore. Consequently the Indian National Congress lost the initiative to decide the future of Goa though it was its privilege as the controller of the Union Government.

As early as 1948 at its Jaipur session <sup>113</sup>, The Indian National Congress resolved that the cultural heritage of the Portuguese possessions would be protected and they would be given a measure of autonomy within the framework of free India. In June 1956 at Bombay, Pandit Nehru, The Prime Minister of India, made similar statement. <sup>114</sup> On 28 December 1961, at New Delhi, Nehru said "I do not understand why there is so much excitement over Goa in Mysore and Maharashtra. I have made it perfectly clear that Goa is to remain separate and is not to be joined to either of these two states." <sup>115</sup> During his visit to Goa in May 1963, Nehru stated that Goa's distinctiveness and special personality would be preserved. <sup>116</sup>

It was Nehru's misfortune that he could neither command nor control his party members. The differences within the Congress over the question of future of Goa became prominently visible during the first General Election in Goa, Daman and Diu in December 1963. Party and its Goa branch namely the Pradesh Congress failed to agree on the most important issue. The pro - merger leaders in the Pradesh Congress Shri M.Gaonkar, Shri M. Bir, Dr. G. A. Kamat and Shri A. Souza strongly supported merger into Maharashtra. The President of Pradesh Congress Shri Purshottam Kakodkar, the Vice-President Dr. V. Mayenkar and the Secretary General Shri Ligorio Cotta Carvalho strongly opposed merger. Tussle between the two groups delayed the release of the

Congress Election Manifesto. The bone of contention was inclusion or omission of issue of merger in the manifesto. Conflict was resolved by including a new clause which stated that " The question of integration of Goa into adjoining territory has been raised. The Government of India has made it clear that the future of Goa whether it should merge into the adjoining territory of Maharashtra will be ultimately decided according to the wishes of the people of Goa. For the present the question does not arise as we have to stabilise the economy and facilitate the changes that are taking place because of the integration of Goa in the Indian Union. " <sup>117</sup> Even the list of candidates which was finalised was revised to include pro - merger candidates. <sup>118</sup> The pro - merger Congressmen boldly and openly supported Goa's merger into Maharashtra much to the chagrin of Party High Command.

During the Campaign for the Election of 1963, Congress stalwarts visited Goa and addressed many public meetings. Invariably, they told people that future of Goa was not an election issue. They maintained that Union Territory Status was in the best interests of Goa for the time being as it would guarantee generous funds from the Union Government for Goa's economic development. During the first general election of 1963, the I.N.C was a house divided against itself. The Maharashtra Pradesh Congress openly supported M.G.P. The Mysore Congress covertly supported U.G.P. Two groups within Goa Pradesh Congress worked for two opposite causes. Outcome of election mortified the I.N.C. All the Congress candidates in Goa were not only defeated but eighteen of them including Shri P. Kakodkar forfeited their deposits. <sup>119</sup> The Congress won only one seat in the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu from Daman. In the history of elections in India, Goa proved to be Waterloo for I.N.C. Charisma of Pandit Nehru, powerful positions held by the

stalwarts in Party Organisation and Union Government could not dazzle the Goan electorate. From that election till the Opinion Poll, the I.N.C became a helpless spectator in the politics of Goa though it governed the country.

The pro - merger group within I.N.C was extremely happy over the victory of M.G.P. Shri N. V. Gadgil declared "We have not captured Goa in toto. We have made a hole in the wall and sent Mr. Bandodkar. We must follow him. We must fight the issue not only inside Goa but also outside, in the streets of Chandni Chowk and if necessary in front of Prime Minister's Bungalow".<sup>120</sup> Outcome of elections irritated Nehru to such an extent that he publicly refused to accept it as a mandate for merger. Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs Smt. Lakshmi Menon declared in the Lok Sabha that Prime Minister will stick to the "status quo"<sup>121</sup>.

However, the groups within I.N.C were in no mood to oblige Nehru. They not only rejected Nehru's interpretation of election of 1963 but also intensified their activities. Exasperated, Prime Minister Nehru compelled, Congress Parliamentary Board to declare Party's official position on Goa on 7 April 1964. It was to preserve the status quo for ten years after which the question of merger and final decision was to be taken in accordance with the wishes of people.<sup>122</sup> However the decision was not made public for six months. The decision was first disclosed by Shri S.K. Patil during his visit to Goa on 31 October 1964.<sup>123</sup> It is, intriguing that such an important policy decision was kept secret of the I.N.C. It is more intriguing that it was not leaked out by the interested groups who had access to the Parliamentary Board.

The Office - bearers of the Pradesh Congress approved the Board's decision. They organised public meetings throughout Goa to mould public opinion in favour of status quo. Shri Puroshottam Kakodkar claimed that as the President of the Pradesh Congress he fully supported the decision of the Board and he was not opposed to Statehood. Pradesh Congress, said Kakodkar, was realistic enough that the time was not ripe for the Statehood of Goa in view of the powerful support to merger from Maharashtra and Delhi. Hence, before asking for Statehood, it was necessary to defeat the forces of merger.

Announcement of Board's decision after Nehru's death infuriated the Pradesh Congress of Maharashtra. The General Secretary of Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee Shri Mohan Dharia demanded immediate merger of Goa into Maharashtra. The Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri V.P. Naik assured his Government's full and complete support to the Goan people in their struggle for Goa's merger into Maharashtra whatever may be the dangers involved in giving such support. A five member delegation led by Shri Vinayak Rao Patil, the President of Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) met Prime Minister Shastri and demanded reconsideration of the decision of 7 April 1964. <sup>124</sup> At the Durgapur session of I.N.C in January 1965 the rival groups fiercely competed to convince the High Command about the merits of their cause. Memoranda were presented by the rival camps. Shri Y.B. Chavan and Shri V.P. Naik presented the copies of Memorandum submitted by the Goan Cultural Association. The delegation led by Shri P. Kakodkar highlighted the dangers of merger.

The pathetic and pitiable state of the organisation of I.N.C became fully visible over the reaction to the Resolution for Merger approved by the

Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu. In January 1965, the Goa Pradesh Congress strongly condemned the merger resolution approved by the Legislative Assembly. It held rallies and morchas and organised a protest week.<sup>125</sup>

The Maharashtra Pradesh Congress warmly welcomed the merger resolution approved by Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu in January 1965. On 10 March 1965 Chief Minister V.P. Naik moved the resolution : Re--Merger of Goa with Maharashtra in the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly. The resolution emphasized the historical, geographical economic, cultural and linguistic affinities between Goa and Maharashtra and urged Parliament and Government of India to take immediate measures, including an amendment of the Constitution to make Goa an integral part of the State of Maharashtra.<sup>126</sup> That Resolution was unanimously approved by both the Houses of Maharashtra Legislature.

The Mysore Pradesh Congress (MPC) gave an outlet to its anger. From very beginning Mysore gave covert support to the forces of anti - merger. Led by Chief Minister Shri S. Nijalingapa, the Mysore Pradesh Congress severely and strongly condemned "expansionist tendency of Maharashtrian leaders".<sup>127</sup> M.P.C promised moral and material support to Goa in case Goa refused to merge into Maharashtra. If Goa was at all to be merged in some State, it should be only in Mysore argued Shri Nijalingapa, Chief Minister of Mysore. According to him, geographically, historically, economically and linguistically Goa should merge in Mysore and not in Maharashtra.<sup>128</sup> At its special session at Shimoga on 22 November 1964, Mysore Pradesh Congress unanimously passed a resolution which asserted that on the basis of indisputable facts Goa should naturally merge into Mysore and not into Maharashtra.<sup>129</sup> General

Secretary of Mysore Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) Shri Siddiah fully endorsed the opinion that "if Goa becomes a part of Maharashtra, the Maharashtrian leaders will use it as a spring board in regard to Karwar, Belgaum and other disputed areas." 130 On 15 March 1965 Mysore Legislative Assembly passed a non - official resolution urging for the continuance of Goa as an Union Territory for ten years and in case it was decided otherwise it should be merged into Mysore. 131 The Mysore Government published a booklet entitled **Maharashtra and Mysore -- Facts relating to the Border disputes** in June 1966. It included Goa in the map of Mysore. The Finance Minister Shri Ram Krishna Hegde justified the "Cartographic aggression" much before the "future of Goa was decided", saying if Mysore did not include Goa, than Maharashtrians would say Mysore has conceded the claim of Maharashtra over Goa." 132

In the meantime slogans such as "झालाच पाहीजे" and "आमचें गोंय आमचें जाय" continued to excite and exorcise the people in Goa and Maharashtra. Pro - merger and anti - merger forces were impatient to realise their objectives. "On one hand there was blatant talk of hoisting the Maharashtrian flag on Panjim on the other hand leaders of Maharashtra were likened to Chou - en - lai and denounced for their aggressive design." 133 Their patrons within I.N.C made it difficult for the Union Cabinet to arrive at a solution.

At last, the President of I.N.C, Shri K. Kamaraj realised that this in-fighting within the party would not only weaken the organisation but also make it utterly ridiculous in the public eyes. To save the party, Kamaraj announced that the I.N.C would not take sides in the Opinion Poll and would remain neutral. 134 However, the anti - merger group within the Pradesh Congress of Goa actively participated in the campaign during the Opinion Poll.

At its initiative, the Anti - Merger Front was formed on 17 November 1966. The Anti - Merger Front vehemently asserted that only the Goans should decide whether they would like to be "fish in a small pond or small fish in a big pond".

The Maharashtra Pradesh Congress also actively participated in the campaign for the Opinion Poll. Shri Mohan Dharia, the General Secretary of Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee told the people of Goa at Vasco-Da-Gama that some elements in the anti - merger group were nearer to Lisbon than to New Delhi." <sup>135</sup> Thus like Ten Commandments, the commandment of Kamaraj was honoured more in breach than in observance.

The politics of Goa from Liberation till Opinion Poll clearly indicated that the ruling Party at the Centre should not overestimate its strength and underestimate the people of any part of the Nation. The Indian National Congress was then the strongest national Political Party. It was controlling Union Government as well as the Governments of most of the States of Indian Union. Both Maharashtra and Mysore were controlled by I.N.C, yet it proved to be totally insignificant factor in Goa during very important phase in the life of Goa which was just liberated. From 1962 till 1980 The Indian National Congress fared very poorly in all the elections in Goa. The I.N.C which has been ruling Goa since 1980, is the Congress of the "defectors" from the United Goans Party and Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party.

**B.** National Political Parties like Jan Sangh (now Bhartiya Janata Party) Communist Party of India (C.P.I) and Praja Socialist Party (P.S.P) stood for Goa's merger into Maharashtra. Hence, the central leadership of these Political Parties was not directly involved in Goa's affairs. They delegated full authority

to their branch organisation in Maharashtra. Jan Sangh, now Bhartiya Janata Party demanded Goa's immediate merger in Maharashtra to safeguard national interests. It charged that the leaders of opposition to Goa's merger into Maharashtra were confirmed Pro-Portuguese and anti-Indian. It strongly disapproved the Goa policy of Government of India. That policy Jan Sangh thought, only encouraged the Catholic isolation. In June 1965, Jan Sangh demanded that Government of India, should appoint a high level Commission to study the problem. General Secretary of Jan Sangh Shri Deendayal Upadhyaya opined that a separate Goa was against the National Interests of India. He condemned Government of Mysore and supporters of separate State as those incapable of grasping correct National Interests. He asked the Mysore unit of Jan Sangh to look at Goa from broad national angle and not from narrow provincial angle.<sup>136</sup>

The Communist Party of India, at its Seventh Congress in December 1964, at Bombay, resolved that in the interests of national integration and democratization, Pondichery and Karikal must be integrated with Tamil Nadu, Mahé with Kerela, Diu and Daman with Gujarat and Goa with Maharashtra".<sup>137</sup> The Goa State Council of the Communist Party of India asserted that "right of the people of the recently liberated former French and Portuguese settlements in India to decide their own future without outside interference has to be upheld."

The Praja - Socialist Party (P.S.P) was the most vocal and active national Party on Goa's fate. It was but natural because most of its leaders had actively participated in Goa's struggle for freedom before Liberation. It was the ardent and unequivocal supporter of Goa's merger into Maharashtra. It was a guide, philosopher and friend of M.G.P. Two members of this Party

were elected to the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu in 1963 with M.G.P support. In the Assembly, they worked with the MLA's of M.G.P for merger. Its leaders, notably, Shri Peter Alvares, (MP) Shri Nath Pai (MP) Shri S. M. Joshi and Shri N.G. Gore ceaselessly fought in and outside Parliament to promote the cause of merger. In December 1963, the P.S.P ruthlessly condemned the I.N.C for shielding former Portuguese Compradors, big landlords and the Roman Catholic Church who had supported the Portuguese efforts to perpetuate their colonialism in India. It asserted that by supporting, those very forces, who opposed Goa's merger into Maharashtra the Government of India was blessing communalism and anti - nationalism in Goa. In June 1964 Shri S.M. Joshi declared "If Goa was not merged into Maharashtra within two years than P.S.P is committed to force effective sanctions to achieve Goa's merger in Maharashtra".<sup>139</sup> In December 1965, N.G. Gore, the Chairman of P.S.P, demanded that Union Government should decide Goa's future to end the "squabbles and suspicion in the territory".<sup>140</sup> Peter Alvares ridiculed the U.G.P for demanding a separate State which according to him would be "co-terminus" with Catholic population. Like the M.G.P, the P.S.P saw in the demand for a "Separate State" a lurking danger to the Unity of people of India." It must be recorded that as regards the decisive role of Political Parties over merger and anti - merger, the credit goes to three. The two were M.G.P, and U.G.P the regional parties and the third was P.S.P the national Party.

However, like the I.N.C, these national Political Parties also suffered from the internal divisions. Their branches in Maharashtra assiduously worked for Goa's merger into Maharashtra but their branches in Mysore encouraged and supported the forces which opposed Goa's merger in Maharashtra. The

discussion on the Opinion Poll Bill in Parliament reveals the working of the minds of the members belonging to one and the same party expressing and supporting opposite viewpoints on merger due to their area of operation in Maharashtra or Mysore.

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## CHAPTER III

### **Pro - Merger and Anti - Merger : Groups --- (Cultural, Economic, Religious and Social)**

Issue under study was not the exclusive preserve of only the Political Parties because of its political nature. It was also of equal concern to cultural, economic, religious and social organisations not only within Goa but also out of Goa. Perhaps, no other issue affecting Goa before or after Opinion Poll had enchanted the public mind as the issue of Goa's merger into Maharashtra. All sensitive individuals and associations and even those generally indifferent to politics such as cultural associations were fiercely involved in the struggle that was to decide the political fate of Goa. For the sake of clarity, individuals and groups are classified as Cultural, Economic, Religious and Social. These groups from within and without Goa neatly joined their respective camps in order to increase their strength and to utilise their time, energy and resources in an orderly and effective manner. Thus there were natural allies and natural enemies pitted against each other ardently working for the victory of their cause. They freely used caste and creed as their weapons in the propaganda war. They brought out brochures, published pamphlets and submitted memoranda to the Government of India.<sup>1</sup>

## Pro - Merger

### Cultural Groups

Cultural Groups supporting Goa's merger in Maharashtra relied on language as their basic ground. According to them Marathi was the mother-tongue of the Goans. Goa's contribution to the growth and development of Marathi, they asserted, was second to none even in Maharashtra. In Goa, **Gomantak Gayak Samaj, The Maratha Gayak Sabha** and the **Gomantak Marathi Samaj** were the torch - bearers of Marathi in art and literature. The anti - merger forces likened **Gomantak Gayak Sabha, Maratha Gayak Sabha** and the **Gomantak Marathi Samaj** to Trojan Horses working to spread "Marathi over a sufficiently large portion of the population".<sup>2</sup>

Accusation of the opponents of merger is factually improper and inaccurate. Marathi language existed in Goa even before European Colonialism. The European missionaries chose Marathi to propagate Christianity in Goa. Christian Purana by Father Stephens is written in chaste Marathi. Realising and recognising the importance of Marathi, the Portuguese colonialists established **Escolas de Maratha --- Portuguesa**. Portuguese Government in Goa used Marathi as a language of communication with the Goan masses. When Indo - Portuguese relationship were cut off, the Portuguese Radio - "Emisora de Goa" broadcast Marathi programmes. The songs presented by "Emisora De Goa" were very popular even in Bombay and Pune. The deep attachment of the Goans to Marathi is evident in the fact that the Hindus began their education with instruction in Marathi. **Gomantak Sahitya Savak Mandal** was instrumental in organising the Marathi Literary Conference in Goa in 1962. In May 1964 **Marathi Sahitya Samelan** was held at Margao. These Conferences

asserted that Marathi was the mother-tongue of the Goans and hence demanded Goa's merger in Maharashtra. Gomantak Sahitya Savak Mandal and Gomantak Marathi Samaj strongly ridiculed Goa's "distinct identity".

Forces of merger inducted artistic troupes from Maharashtra during the campaign for the Opinion Poll. **Shahirs** and **Kalapathaks** (Artists and Dramatists) used entertainment and instruction to persuade the electorate.<sup>3</sup> The institution of Shahir could be traced to the times of Chatrapati Shivaji. A skilful Shahir through the medium of **Powada** inspires and arouses the masses. He teaches them the glories of their ancestors and encourages them to fight their enemies. During the freedom struggle the Powadas mobilised the people. This ancient institution of Maharashtra had its modern sister institution. In our times Shahirs and Kalapathaks are the vanguards in social, economic and political battles in Maharashtra. They were at their best in the Opinion Poll campaign of the forces of merger. They presented Powadas and street plays throughout Goa. Their thrust was to tell the people of Goa that Goa was integral part of Maharashtra. Amongst them, the most prominent was Shahir Amar Sheik. His famous lyric " **जय महाराष्ट्र** " held the audiences spell - bound. The poet sang " **भाषेचा थाट मराठी अहिराणी केवणी घाटी** ".His " **गोवा गीत** " and songs highlighting the exploits of Chatrapati Shivaji were equally popular. Shahir Sabale was another notable Shahir participating in the campaign.<sup>4</sup> Shri Vasant Bapat, a well - known poet, composed songs for the Kalapathaks and Shahirs. They also used immortal and heart - touching compositions of the celebrated sants of Maharashtra. They urged the people to vote for the "Flower" the symbol for merger.

## Economic Groups

Smooth and systematic economic development of Goa through its merger into Maharashtra was the next aspiration of the supporters of merger. The pro-merger forces contended that merger was a sure and certain guarantee of Goa's prosperity as Maharashtra was one of the few industrially advanced and progressive States of the Indian Union.<sup>5</sup> They pinpointed that by itself Goa was not only economically viable but also lacked infrastructure for industrial advancement.

By and large, small shopkeepers and traders supported Goa's merger into Maharashtra. Goldsmiths of Margao even passed a resolution supporting merger.<sup>6</sup> Big Business was divided into supporters and opponents of merger. House of Chowgules supported merger. In March 1962, the Chowgules started a daily newspaper in Marathi, **Gomantak** which assiduously worked for merger. Shrimati Parvatibhai Chowgule College of Arts and Science, an educational institution set up by the Chowgules at Margao was one of the key centres for the activists of merger.<sup>7</sup> Other prominent Big Businessmen supporting merger were Shri N. Narvenkar, Shri Sonu Naik, Shri Vishnu Narayan Naik and Shri Bhagvant Naik from Margao, Shri Kashinath Damodar Naik was one of the most powerful supporters of merger. Shri Prabakhar Angle from Panaji, Shri Vasanttrao Joshi from Vasco-da-Gama, and Chief Minister, Shri D.B. Bandodkar, one of the leading mine-owners of Goa supported merger.

Like Shri Kashinath Damodar Naik, Shri M.S. Talaulikar, a Mine -Owner from Panaji supported merger on rational, historical and economic grounds. According to him the "national interests" demanded that Goa should be

merged into Maharashtra. He dismissed the doctrine of "unique culture" as a "myth".<sup>8</sup>

The Goa Unit of Indian National Trade Union Congress (I.N.T.U.C), an organization of labour "accepted the merger unanimously as a policy and put all their strength in favour of merger". Shri S.W. Dhabe, the President of I.N.T.U.C. Maharashtra actively participated in the Opinion Poll Campaign.<sup>9</sup>

Political Parties, and Cultural and Social organizations may have goals. They may eagerly pursue them but pursuit depends upon generous financial support. Campaign for Opinion Poll involved huge amount. Exact amount of money spent by the supporters and opponents of merger is not known. It was stated that the supporters of merger were generously financed by the Business Houses of Goa, Maharashtra and Political Parties from Maharashtra.

## Religious Groups

Religiously, population of Goa is divided into Hindu and Christians, with a very small percentage of Muslims. The Christians belong to the Roman Catholic sect which is controlled by Roman Catholic Church at Vatican, Rome. It would be intellectually dishonest and factually incorrect to belittle or suppress the influence of religion on political and social life in India. Though the people that matter loudly profess Secularism, they subtly manipulate religion to achieve their goals. In Goa, Political Parties and groups, economic groups and social groups, carefully nursed religious leaders to influence the people for the realization of their goals. Religion was one of the vital factors which determined the outcome of the Opinion Poll.

In Goa the Hindus constitute the majority but as Hindu Religion does not have one Organization and one Pope controlling its adherents, it was not as effective as the Roman Catholic Church during the campaign for the Opinion Poll. Forces supporting merger relied on "revivalist" <sup>10</sup> Shibboleth to rally the Hindu voters. They "played on Hindu sentiments".<sup>11</sup> At every merger rally, it was repeatedly asserted that "After 450 years Goddess Shanta Durga, the family deity of most Hindus" will meet "Goddess Bhavani" the family deity of Chattrapati Shivaji only if people voted for merger.<sup>12</sup> As early as the First General Election of 1963, they induced the voters to take vows by placing palms on the coconut in temples to vote for the MGP. During the Opinion Poll, they induced them to vote for the Flower.<sup>13</sup> The Hindus consider the pledge on coconut as the most sacred and hence never violate the pledge.

Political Parties and cultural, economic and social groups tirelessly approached the swamis and priests and earnestly appealed to them to use their

weight in favour of merger. Majority of priests in the Hindu temples of Goa -- the **Bhats** ---originate from Konkan and speak Marathi in their homes. By and large it was as difficult to find an anti - merger Hindu priest <sup>14</sup> as it was difficult to find pro-merger Catholic priest. Only difference was that in the Hindu Temples there are no compulsory daily or weekly sermons as there are in the Churches and Chapels of the Catholics. Like the Christians, Hindus do not have the prayer service where practically entire neighbourhood meets at one place regularly. However the Hindus frequently meet in the Temples for the **Bhajans** and **Kirtans** which do provide an opportunity to the Bhats to discuss matters of public importance. It is pertinent to note that the efforts to unearth the evidence on the role played by the Heads of the Hindu religious organisations and the Hindu priests failed. General tendency among the activists in Politics, Social work and Economic field and scholars is either to brand them as "indifferent" or "inconsequential" factor. The generalisation is fallacious.

## Social Groups

Under the chairmanship of Dr. Leon D'Souza then a member of the Bombay Municipal Council, (I.N.C), **The Goan Socio - Cultural Association** (G.S.C.A) was set up in Bombay in February 1964.<sup>15</sup> Smt. S.G.P. Athaide was its General Secretary. This Association stressed that strong cultural and economic ties existed between people of Goa and people of Maharashtra and vowed to make them stronger by the amalgamation of Goa and Maharashtra. G.S.C.A aimed to "bridge the everwidening breach between the merger and anti - merger forces <sup>16</sup> among the Goans and to provide for a "forum for mutual exchange of ideas" <sup>17</sup> in order to remove the misunderstandings and to defeat the machinations of the opponents of merger.

It rejected outright the contention that Goa's merger into Maharashtra would affect adversely the lives of Goans. According to them, the lives of Goans would be more lively after the merger. Citing empirical evidence, G.S.C.A highlighted prosperous life of thousands of Goans residing in Bombay and contended that the greatest prosperity would be automatically extended to the residents of Goa. It warned that if Goa chooses the status of Union Territory it would invite only the hardships for the Goans.

In a brochure entitled "**Genesis of Linguistic States with reference to Goa**", the G.S.C.A urged that Goa should give up its "sheltered shangrilla existence and join "broader currents of national life".<sup>18</sup> Merger into Maharashtra was the only way for Goa's integration <sup>19</sup> into India. G.S.C.A fully justified the Reorganization of the States on the linguistic basis as the best method to guarantee political stability of the Indian Republic. It rejected Goa's claim for separate State as Goa had no separate language of its own. It

maintained that Konkani was a dialect of Marathi. G.S.C.A felt that it would be a dangerous precedent if a dialect like Konkani was recognised as an independent language. It would encourage several other dialects such as Kacchi and Tulu to demand their own recognition as independent languages.<sup>20</sup> G.S.C.A pinpointed that the so called "Portuguese or Western Culture" was restricted only to a very small strata of the Goan community. That strata had earlier opposed Goa's liberation from Portuguese Colonialism and the same strata was now opposing Goa's merger into Maharashtra.

In May 1964, The G.S.C.A submitted a Memorandum to the Government of India contending that Bhandarkar's victory in the bye - election of May 1964 was the confirmation of the Goan desire to merge into Maharashtra.<sup>21</sup> According to it outcome of 1963 elections was a clear mandate for merger. In January 1965, G.S.C.A and Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Mandal, Bombay jointly held a meeting which approved a resolution urging Parliament to respect the will of the people of Goa and take steps to merge Goa into Maharashtra. Same resolution warned the Congress High Command of dire consequences if it thwarted the wishes of the people of Goa and put obstacles in the path of Goa's merger into Maharashtra. <sup>22</sup> In January 1965, G.S.C.A and the Bombay Branch of the MGP held a one day conference on Goa's future status. At that conference a "pledge" was administered to participants to work for the "merger" of Goa into Maharashtra. The Conference was presided by Shri Mukund Shinkre, MP (MGP). <sup>23</sup> G.S.C.A warmly greeted the resolution for merger passed by the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu in January 1965. According to it thereby the "popular will had been ratified by the highest elected body". <sup>24</sup> It thanked the MGP, Chief Minister Bhandarkar and the MLAS for that action which "heartened the people of Maharashtra". <sup>25</sup>

GSCA found that the poisonous propaganda against merger deters the Goans from joining Maharashtra. Hence, in February 1965 in an "Aide Memoire" <sup>26</sup> to the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Shri V.P. Naik. G.S.C.A appealed to the Maharashtra Government to dispel root and branch the canards spread by the forces of anti-merger against Goa's merger into Maharashtra. G.S.C.A itself was keen to open a "special department solely for the purpose of creating confidence" among the Goan community in Bombay and to look into their "legitimate needs".<sup>27</sup> It requested the Maharashtra Government to nominate a Deputy Minister to help it solve the problems of Goans in Bombay. According to G.S.C.A such a step would immensely improve the image of Maharashtra Government in the eyes of Goans and would bring people of Goa closer to the people of Maharashtra. <sup>28</sup>

In April 1965 the **Goa - Vilinikaran Sahayak Samiti** (G.V.S.S) was set up in Maharashtra. The Samiti appealed that all local selfgoverning bodies such as Panchayats, Zilla Parishads, Municipal Corporations and Municipalities in Maharashtra should approve resolutions requesting Goa's merger into Maharashtra. It was reasoned that local self-governing bodies represent the will of the people, more effectively than the Vidhan Sabha. During the Opinion Poll, the G.V.S.S had close collaboration with MGP in Goa. Its leaders Acharya P.K. Atre, Shri S.A. Dange, and Shri S. M. Joshi applauded what they called "historical work"<sup>29</sup> of Bhandarkar for Maharashtra. Shri Puroshottam Kakodkar alleged that G.V.S.S was formed in Bombay to help "monetarily"<sup>30</sup> the supporters of merger. He also asserted that "sixty lakhs were transferred from Bombay to Panaji" and a large number of small and big vehicles from Maharashtra" <sup>31</sup> flooded the roads of Goa during the Opinion Poll campaign.

**Goa - Maharashtra Merger Front (G.M.M.F)** formed in November 1966 pleaded that only merger into Maharashtra would guarantee healthy development of Goa. Its President Shri Melicio Fernandes warned the national leaders about the trap laid down by the "anti - national forces backed by the Portuguese agents to delay the Opinion Poll" which was "sure to favour merger" of Goa into Maharashtra. <sup>32</sup> He dismissed the demand for granting voting rights to non - resident Goans as preposterous and ridiculous. He contended that all " nationalist Goans" in Bombay and other parts of India had registered themselves as voters after the Liberation of Goa in the respective States of their domicile. Only those who had opposed the Liberation of Goa and who were still dreaming of the return of their "Portuguese master" had not enrolled themselves as voters in India. <sup>33</sup>

G.M.M.F actively and vigorously participated in the Opinion Poll campaign, in Goa. Shri Melicio Fernandes, its President along with hundred and six volunteers, which included Hindus and Christians, campaigned for Goa's merger into Maharashtra during the Opinion Poll. <sup>34</sup> All the volunteers of G.M.M.F were Goans though they had settled in Bombay. They went from house to house and from door to door, throughout Goa explaining to the people the benefits of merger into Maharashtra. G.M.M.F was encouraged and supported by **Sampoorna Maharashtra Samiti** and All India Port and Dock Labour Union.

Within the M.G.P. there were activists who strongly disapproved the leadership of Bandodkar but were not able to dislodge him from leadership. Notable amongst them were Shri P.P. Shirodcar, Dr. Rama Hedge, Shri J. Shinkre, Shri V. N. Lawande, Shri Zotico D'Souza, Shri Dattaram Desai, Shri Narayan Naik and Shri T. Desai. They wanted a common front of all the

supporters of merger regardless of their party affiliations. They formed the **Goa Vilinikaran Samiti** in December 1966.<sup>35</sup> The Samiti worked to remove "misunderstandings" and "misgivings" from the minds of Goans about merger. The Samiti urged that the Government of Maharashtra issue " a statement of policy" <sup>36</sup> on sensitive issues such as " Special status of Goa, Prohibition Judicial Commissioner's Court, Special allocations in the Five Year Plan, Representation to Goans in the Maharashtra Vidhan Sabha and in the Government of Maharashtra." <sup>37</sup>

The President of **Goa - Maharashtra Merger Front**, Shri Melicio Fernandes publicly stated that the Government of Maharashtra has agreed in principle to give to the Goans certain "safeguards". <sup>38</sup> In December 1966, on the eve of the Opinion Poll, the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Shri V. P. Naik announced a Scheme containing the "guarantees and assurances"<sup>39</sup> if the Goans opted for merger. They were as follows : -----

- (1) Ample provisions for economic development of Goa in Five Year Plans :  
of Maharashtra
- (2) Special attention to build Goa's economic infrastructure.
- (3) Protection of interests of small farmers and economically weaker sections of people.
- (4) Technical education, vocational education and opportunities for employment in the services controlled by State Government.
- (5) Full encouragement to Konkani and pledge that "development of Marathi and Konkani shall go hand in hand".

- (6) "Prohibition will not be introduced in Goa till..... the Government of India suggests that it be introduced in Goa"
- (7) Full protection of the scales of pay and service conditions of the employees of the Government of Goa.
- (8) Retention of the principles and policies in respect of grants - in - aid to private educational institutions and salaries of teachers.
- (9) Non - discrimination in case of denominational educational institutions. Free education to graduate and post - graduate students whose parents income does not exceed Rs. 1200 per year.
- (10) A University as "expeditiously as possible"
- (11) Freedom to temples, churches and mosques.
- (12) Identification and Declaration of Backward Classes in Goa for all concessions available to them in Maharashtra.
- (13) Establishment of the Bench of Bombay High Court at Panaji.
- (14) "Due importance" to Goa in the "administrative set up of the State of Maharashtra".

## **Anti - Merger :**

### **Cultural Groups**

Main planks of the forces of opponents of merger were Konkani language and Goa's Unique Identity. The opponents asserted that Konkani was an ancient language which originated from the place called Konkān which was presently the part and parcel of Maharashtra.

If ever there was one person who gave his intellect, time, energy and resources and even sacrificed his life for the restoration of Konkani language, he was Shri Vaman Varde Valavlikar famous as **Shenai Goibab**. In 1950, Shri M.M. Shanbhag petitioned the States Reorganisation Committee for "the formation of the Konkani State based on the Konkani language".<sup>40</sup> Shri Shanbhag was one of the founder members of the Konkani Bhasha Mandal at Karwar in 1939. In 1940 Konkani Bhasha Mandal was set up in Bombay and in Goa in 1962.<sup>41</sup>

**Konkani Bhasha Mandal, Goa (K.B.M)** concentrated on the growth and development of Konkani literature. It organised Konkani Writers Conferences and Sahitya Parishads to convince the people that Konkani was the mother-tongue of the Goans. It pinpointed that Konkani was as rich as any other language of India but the treasure of Konkani language was destroyed by the Portuguese barbarians when they forcibly imposed their own language on the Goans.<sup>42</sup>

**Konkani Bhasha Mandal** made special efforts to convince and persuade the powers that be at New Delhi. It left no stone unturned to destroy the misconception that Konkani was the "dialect" of Marathi. In November 1966

K.B.M demanded the inclusion of Konkani in the Eight Schedule of the Constitution of India <sup>43</sup>. Many members of K.B. M played a leading role in the Opinion Poll campaign. Shri Uday Bhembre, Shri Chandrakant Keni, Shri Ravindra Kelekar, Father Lucio De Viegá Coutinho, Shri Felicio Cardoso, Dr. Manoharao Sardessai, and Shri Shankar Bhandari worked very hard day and night to defeat the forces working for Goa's merger into Maharashtra. Shri Shankar Bhandari and Dr. Manoharao Sardessai composed poems and songs which were repartees to the Shahirs and Kalapathaks from Maharashtra.

Konkani dramatists belonging to Christian community are popularly known as the Tiatrists. For the Christian Community in Goa Tiatr has been always the best means to explain the issues to the masses and persuade them to prefer a particular side. <sup>44</sup> In its simplest form, Tiatr is a street drama with make - shift arrangements. In a sophisticated form it is staged in ultra - modern Theatre. Christian artists from Goa and Bombay joined hands to oppose Goa's merger into Maharashtra. their favourite slogan was " आमचें गोंय आमचें जाय ".

Through the songs and plays the Tiatrists urged the people to reject merger into Maharashtra as it would destroy their language which was the heart of their identity. The famous Trio - Roam - Rem - Road - appealed to the voter only to vote for the Two Leaves. Another famous group - Anthony Nelson - Conception-sang songs warning the people against the dangers of merger. Through witty lyrics they highlighted the disadvantages the Goans would face if they voted for the "Flower", the symbol for merger. A Tiatr entitled "**Almas do Outro Mundo**"<sup>45</sup> (Ghosts from the other World) directed by Nelson was staged in all parts of Goa as part of anti - merger propaganda. The Tiatr told to the people that if merger takes place, Goans would be driven out of Goa and Maharashtrians would grab their precious moveable and

immoveable properties. Maharashtrians were depicted as the ghosts. Shri M. Boyer, a very popular Tiatr, sang songs adoring "Goan identity".

Shri Ulhas Buyanv, a Hindu artist, sang Powadas in Konkani which glorified Goa. His Powadas were a reaction to the Powadas sung by the Shahirs from Maharashtra. Shri Buyanv's contribution for the cause of Konkani and for the defeat of the supporters of merger was as significant as that of the other prominent opponents of merger. He moved through the length and breadth of Goa praising "Goan Identity". During the Opinion Poll, the meetings against merger invariably ended with the songs sung by Shri Ulhas Buyanv and his party. The two notable songs were : उठ रे म्हज्या गोंयकारा, चान्द्याचे राती माडाचे सावळें.

Final status of Goa within the Indian Union stimulated Goans in other parts of India to organise into groups so that they can also influence the decision. The Goans in Calcutta and Delhi preferred the Separate State of Goa. The Goans in Delhi established a group called the National Union. When the U.G.P established its branch in Delhi in October 1964, the National Union merged into it. <sup>46</sup> Goans in Calcutta demanded voting rights for themselves in the Opinion Poll.

Next to Goa, the Goans in Bombay were the most vociferous on the issue. Like Goa, there were two camps in Bombay. One supported merger, the other opposed it. Opponents of merger in Bombay chose the strategy of submitting memoranda, publishing pamphlets, organising conferences, and public meetings in order to convince the Government of India and Union Parliament about the righteousness of their cause.

**All Goan Front of Bombay** headed by Dr. Menino D'Souza propagated that Goa's merger into Maharashtra would be the "end of Goa and the Goan way of life."<sup>47</sup> In November 1964, it stoutly opposed the review of the Central Parliamentary Board's decision of 7 April 1964. In December 1964, it threatened a "fast" in front of Prime Minister's House at Delhi to register its protest. However the "fast" was not held as the Prime Minister assured that there would be no "shift in the policy of Indian National Congress towards Goa" and the "reconsideration of the Goa issue " at Central Parliamentary Board's meeting in January 1965 at the Durgapur Session of the Indian National Congress was only a "procedural matter", in view of the demand made by a few members.<sup>48</sup> The All - Goan Front fully cooperated with the Bombay branch of the U.G.P. Together they approved a resolution in January 1965 condemning the crude methods adopted at the Conference organised by the MGP and the Goan Socio - Cultural Institute in Bombay in January 1965 destroying the image of Goa.<sup>49</sup> It alleged that hundreds of Goans were denied entrance to convention because they refused to "sign the pledge for the immediate merger of Goa with Maharashtra."<sup>50</sup>

The All Goan Front in Bombay was terribly disturbed when Goa, Daman and Diu Legislative Assembly approved a Resolution for Goa's merger into Maharashtra. Along with the U.G.P branch, it held a two - day Convention, in March 1965. Dr. Jack De Sequeira, Leader of the Opposition participated in the Convention. The Convention was inaugurated by Shri Ravindra Kelekar and presided by Dr. Menino D'Souza. Shri S. B. D'Silva, the Chairman of the reception Committee contended that Goans were determined to maintain their "cultural heritage" and their institutions and develop their homeland in their own way. The Convention deplored, the expansionist ambitions of the

neighbouring States and urged the Government of India and Parliament "to maintain present autonomous set-up and safeguard its people against the political pressures and agitations sponsored by the pro-merger leaders". 51

When the Government of India declared the Opinion Poll, the Goans in Bombay set up **Bombay Goans Opinion Poll Committee** under the Presidentship of Dr. Menino D'Souza. It published two pamphlets. They were : **Goa Opinion Poll** and **The Case of Goa and Maharashtrian Machinations**. 52

**Goa Opinion Poll** contended that "Goa's personality" was a synthesis of Eastern and Western Cultures. Prime Minister Nehru had promised the preservation of this 'cultural individuality in the political unity of India" It demanded voting rights to all Goans regardless of their place of residence anywhere in India and in other countries. It demanded that existing electoral rolls in Goa should not be used for the Opinion Poll because after the Liberation of Goa in 1961, non - Goans had settled in Goa and had become voters in the elections. It pleaded that the Parliament should confirm the verdict of the Opinion Poll only if two - thirds of the people supported the option provided in the Opinion Poll. 53

**The case for Goa and Maharashtrian Machinations** pinpointed the efforts of Maharashtra Government to grab Goa. The Indian National Congress, at its Jaipur Session in 1948, decided to preserve the "cultural heritage" of the Portuguese possessions in India. This decision was reiterated in the policy of Government of India after the Liberation of Goa in 1961. It was repeatedly pronounced by Prime Minister before and after Liberation. It alleged that Maharashtrian participation in Goa's freedom movement was with ulterior motives. From the very beginning, Maharashtrians aimed to control Goa's

Liberation Movement. Hence in 1954 they organised the Goa Vimochan Samiti.

It further charged that in October 1964 the Maharashtrians pressurised the Union Government and the Congress High Command to interpret the victory of the M.G.P as a mandate for merger. They forced Chief Minister Bandodkar to introduce resolution for merger in the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu in January 1965. Maharashtra also passed a similar resolution in Vidhan Sabha to embarrass the Union Government. The Union Government surrendered to Maharashtra by declaring an Opinion Poll to settle Goa's final status. Opinion Poll, it concluded, was an "effort" to rescue the "honour" of the nation, so nearly compromised by the machinations of Maharashtrian politicians. 54

In October 1966, some Goan residents of Bombay led by Shri S.B. Silva, Shri Leonor Rangel and Shri A. Souza Roy, all members of the Bombay Goan Opinion Poll Committee, submitted a Memorandum to Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi. The Memorandum welcomed the Opinion Poll on behalf of the Goans in Bombay. It stressed that in the Opinion Poll "everything" that was "dear" to the Goans was at "stake" and therefore the Goans in Bombay must be given a voice in the Opinion Poll. 55

It contended that the Bombay Goans were extremely disappointed because the Opinion Poll Act refused voting rights to the non - resident Goans. Shri A. J. Souza Roy Honorary Secretary of the Bombay Goans Opinion Poll Committee declared that the Opinion Poll was a "hoax on Goans" -- "The great betrayal" of the Goan aspirations. 56

**The Goan Freedom Fighters Committee** in Bombay welcomed the Poll but felt that the Opinion Poll would not be fair unless the right to participate in it was extended to the Goans living in Bombay and in other parts of India. In a Memorandum to Prime Minister in September 1966 it pleaded that proposed Opinion Poll should give the voting rights to all Goans regardless of their residences. According to it out of total of six and half lakhs Goan population, one-fourth lived in Bombay. Goans in Bombay never snapped their links with Goa. They still had their right to the "Zonn" from the "village agricultural communes".<sup>57</sup> Hence they had " a right to be associated with the Poll which is to decide its future".<sup>58</sup>

Their Memorandum demanded that : (1) For the purposes of Opinion Poll the term "Goans" should also include Goans living in Bombay and in other parts of India and the Goan Sea men on the high seas (2) Polling arrangements should be made both within and outside the Territory of Goa (3) The resignation of the Bandodkar Ministry six months before the Poll and (4) Removal of the deputationists from Goa.<sup>59</sup>

Impact of the work of the opponents of merger operating from Bombay was acknowledged by no less a person than Chief Minister Bandodkar himself. In December 1966 Bandodkar appealed to the associations within Maharashtra supporting merger to send their volunteers in Goa to win over the Goans for Goa's merger into Maharashtra.<sup>60</sup>

## Economic Groups

According to the Communist. Party of India and Praja Socialist Party the Vested Interests in Goa opposed merger. The foremost among them were the Mine-Owners.<sup>61</sup> This appears to be an over - simplification. Mine-Owners such as Shri V.D. Chowgule, Chief Minister D.B. Bandodkar, Shri M. S. Talaulikar, Shri N. Narvenkar supported Goa's merger into Maharashtra. Mine-Owners such as Shri V. S. Dhempo, Shri V. M. Salgaocar, Leader of the Opposition, Dr. Jack De Sequeira, Shri Lima Leitao opposed Goa's merger into Maharashtra. Mine-Owners such as Shri G. N. Agarwal, Shri Shantilal Gosalia, Shri Damodar Mangalji were either neutral or helped both supporters and opponents of Merger.

House of Dhempas with interests in Industries and Mines opposed Goa's merger in Maharashtra. Their newspaper -- **The Navhind Times**-- supported those who stood for the status of Union Territory for Goa, Daman and Diu for ten years. During the Opinion Poll, **The Navhind Times** campaigned against the merger. In political arena The Navhind Times was the supporter of the policies pursued by I.N.C.

House of Salgaocars, also with interests in Industries and Mines, was opposed to merger and a staunch supporter of movement for the promotion of Konkani language. Its Chairman Shri V. M. Salgaocar proved to be the most reliable and the most generous patron for the opponents of merger. Generally the businessmen are circumspect and eager to conceal their opinions and patronage in acute political disputes. Suprisingly Shri V. M. Salgaocar was the only industrialist in Goa who openly and ardently supported the movement. He encouraged the development and growth of Konkani language which was

ridiculed as a "dialect" and which was denied official patronage. The champions of Konkani had talent, energy and time but lacked financial resource without which no movement can make any progress. The pro-merger forces were financially sound. They were financed by both the private industrialists and by the Governments of Maharashtra and Goa. They had backing of "influential Marathi press in and outside Goa"; they enjoyed considerable "leverage with the authorities in Delhi".<sup>62</sup> The pro-Konkani lobby found its only saviour in Goa's financial wizard, Shri V. M. Salgaocar at the right time. Shri V. M. Salgaocar had absolutely no interest in narrow and shallow politics. He did not support Konkani just to antagonise the champions of Marathi. He backed Konkani because he perceived that in the-then prevailing circumstances in Goa only Konkani could unite the Hindus and Christians. His generous financial support to Konkani movement was in the interests of prosperity, stability and unity of Goa.

In September, 1963, Salgaocar established Rashtramat a daily in Marathi with Shri Chandrakant Keni as its Editor. Encouragement by a "Hindu industrialist"<sup>63</sup> boosted the morale of the opponents of merger. Thousands of workers in the Salgaocar organisation, the labourers working in the mines spread message that "Vasudevabab was against merger".<sup>64</sup> Shri Keni, Editor of Rashtramat, acknowledges that its owner Shri Salgaocar guided the staff as regards the editorials, articles and plans of action and attack.<sup>65</sup>

During the Opinion Poll campaign, Shri V. M. Salgaocar personally assumed the leadership of his group. Under his guidance and close supervision a task force prepared a plan of action.<sup>66</sup> A special office was set up at Margao to monitor the Opinion Poll campaign. Salgaocar's fleet of trucks was pressed into service. His employees Shri E. Fernandes, Shri M. Kavlekar and

Shri Chandrakant Keni were in charge of gauging "public opinion". They organised meetings in villages and rallies in towns. The services of a Cartoonist Shri Mario Miranda and an advertiser Smt. Sylvia D'Cunha were hired to make propaganda colourful and impressive.<sup>67</sup> Detailed reports of activities were submitted at the end of the day to Shri Salgaocar. Shri Salgaocar liberally financed the publicity material of the anti - merger campaign. Posters and pamphlets were printed in Bombay and distributed throughout Goa. There was no dearth of labourers and volunteers who were paid by Shri Salgaocar. The opponents of merger became very fond of the Slogan "Nako amhala Shrikand puri. Give me my own rice curry".<sup>68</sup> Head Office of Salgaocars at Vasco - Da - Gama was in constant touch with their workers in all parts of Goa and between Goa and Bombay. Shri V. M. Salgaocar personally attended the street meetings and public gatherings.

To a large extent, the outcome of the Opinion Poll was determined by the work done by the Rashtramat, a newspaper started by Salgaocar as well as his employees during the campaign. It is beyond dispute that but for the patronage of Salgaocars, the opponents of merger would have found it a terrible uphill task.

## Religious Groups

During the Portuguese rule of Goa, the Roman Catholic Church with headquarters at Vatican, Rome was not only the final arbiter of Christianity in Goa but also an arbiter in political and administrative matters. Indeed, no Governor - General of Goa, Daman and Diu could rule with peace if he refused to court the friendship of Patriarch of the East Indies. There was an element of truth in the contention of supporters of merger that during Portuguese rule of Goa, Roman Catholicism was the "State Religion" and officials of Roman Catholic Church and Denationalised Christians were a privileged class. During the Portuguese rule of Goa, Government gave the Church every year Rs. Three Lakhs from Goa's treasury. In Goa's Liberation, Roman Catholic Church in Goa lost not only Rs. three lakhs but also political and administrative leverage.<sup>69</sup> In the twilight of Liberation, the Church functionaries in Goa were stupified. So were the Denationalised Christians who were actutely anxious about their official positions and social status.

During the Portuguese rule, the Christians had a monopoly in the administrative services. Liberation of Goa injected into them a sense of despair. Out of this "sense of despair" arose the slogan "Goa for Goans".<sup>70</sup> This appeal to something "distinctive and separate was responded by the Government of India," agrued Shri Peter Alvares. He regretted that Government of India failed to grasp that the "demand for a separate State was co-terminus with the religious population"<sup>71</sup> Cut off from the national mainstream and addicted to Latin Culture, they decided to cling to their "special identity" to protect and promote their interests in liberated Goa. They shrewdly grasped that their best protection lies in making Goa a separate state within the Indian Union. This section of Christian community was blessed by

Roman Catholic Church which was also desperately looking for political influence it can have in Goa's day - to-day life.

During the first general election of 1963, Roman Catholic Church helped champions of separate State by placing at their disposal the services of the "pulpit and the confessional".<sup>72</sup> The Church was one of the chief promoters of the U.G.P. In the field of propaganda, Roman Catholic Church was only institution in the most advantageous position. It was better equipped than even the political parties. It spread its tentacles from east to west and from north to south. It has a disciplined cadre with Archbishop at the top and the priest at the bottom. Church organisation throughout the world enjoys reputation for chain of command and efficient execution of the orders of the Vatican. The Church services include regular Sunday sermons and daily sermons if necessary, which are faithfully attended by the laity. The priests enjoy absolute freedom of expression. No propaganda can be conducted without the generous supply of money. Here too the Roman Catholic Church was in better position than others. It was asserted that the Governments of European Countries and United States of America pumped their money in Goa through the Church. Roman Catholic Church itself is the richest religious institution in the world.

The Communists held the Roman Catholic Church responsible for the debacle of the Frente Popular during the election of 1963.<sup>73</sup> They contended that the Church threatened the Catholics with religious sanctions if they voted for the Frente Popular. Chairman of C.P.I, Shri S.A. Dange condemned the Roman Catholic Church as the chief instigator of separate State for Goa. <sup>74</sup> Shri Peter Alvares MP (P.S.P) emphatically asserted that the dispute over the future status of Goa was nothing but a conflict between the "forces of national integration and religious exclusiveness". According to him the real mentors of

religious exclusiveness were Rome and Lisbon who pulled the strings.<sup>75</sup> Chief Minister Bhandarkar was equally outspoken about the sinister game played by Roman Catholic Church in the politics of Goa. According to him in August 1966 the Church authorities supported the satyagraha campaign organised by the Council of Action in July 1966 to throw him and the M.G.P out of power. He also maintained that Archbishop James Robert Knox, Apostolico Internuncio to India was the guide of the United Goans Party which participated in the agitation.<sup>76</sup>

Roman Catholic Church was intensely active during the campaign for Opinion Poll, though it vehemently denied its involvement in the political affairs of Goa. From time to time, its functionaries issued official handouts. For the purposes of this study some priests were interviewed. They maintained that the Church had not campaigned openly and explicitly. It had not issued any "directives to influence the people on how to cast their vote".<sup>77</sup> Some anti-merger activists also spoke of the neutrality of the Roman Catholic Church. According to Shri Nagesh Karmali, Church opposed the merger as a "socio - secular problem".<sup>78</sup>

The weakness of arguments supporting "neutrality" of Roman Catholic Church is obvious. Roman Catholic Church is essentially a religious organisation, and a religious organisation which claims that it alone knows the Final Truth. Such a Church will always interpret all social problems within the framework of their religious convictions. Rationally, it is difficult to accept the contention that the Church was involved only in a "Social Mission" in the Opinion Poll. Some opponents of merger rejected outright the fiction of neutrality of Roman Catholic Church in the Opinion Poll. They confirmed the active participation of Church functionaries from top to bottom in favour of the

"Two Leaves". The sermons were shrewdly used as propaganda outlets. There were frequent gestures of raising two fingers for Two Leaves and defended as "Victory for - V." 79

In January 1967 Shri Nath Pai (P.S.P) accused Roman Catholic Church of distributing food grains<sup>80</sup> and wheat flour received from the United States of America only to those who pledged to vote for Two Leaves. Shri Jagdish Rao, MLA (U.G.P) remarked that "zeal, fervour and ardour that was generated in the Catholic voters by the **Catholic Padris** and **Tiatrists** was so tremendous that turnout of Roman Catholic voters was simply unimaginable, unlike the Hindus and Muslims. Even from a death - bed the voter was brought to vote by the Catholic householder".<sup>81</sup> Bishop Francisco de P. Rebello's contention that priests never preached politics at the Church Services<sup>82</sup> and the priests as individuals were free to propagate their views on political matters invited the charge of hypocrisy. Priest's primary function is religion. People respect priest not for his superior wisdom but for his religious office. Secondly neither priests, nor bishops nor other human beings are angels. They are bound to use their influence for the cause dear to their heart. Shri Peter Alvares and Shri Anthony D'Souza condemned the Roman Catholic Church for exploiting religious services for political propaganda. They also "accused the priests of allowing Church property and Church compounds and buildings to hold political meetings of the anti - merger groups".<sup>83</sup> Roman Catholic Church branded them as "allegations".

The Roman Catholic Church even had a newspaper acting as its mouthpiece. It was the daily in the Portuguese language - **A Vida**. Father Lucio de Viegá Coutinho told the researcher that he himself wrote many editorials though officially he was not the editor.<sup>84</sup> He also wrote

commentaries under the pen-name "Simple Simon". Simple Simon's favourite theme was "Bandodkar's Communalism". In January 1967 the Church Authorities expressed their joy over the verdict of the Opinion Poll. According to the Church Authorities holding of Opinion Poll proved to be a "blessing in disguise", a sort of "Felix culpa" because its verdict favoured the retention of Goa's "individuality and culture".<sup>85</sup>

## **Social Groups**

Several social groups opposing Goa's merger into Maharashtra decided to evolve a common strategy for campaign during the Opinion Poll. In November 1966, they formed the Anti - Merger Front.<sup>86</sup> A Vida and Rashtramat induced them to work together for the realisation of their objective. Professor Laxamanrao Sardessai was the President of the Front.

Front demanded that the voting rights should be extended to Goans, wherever they lived. It was highly disappointed when the Union Government rejected their demand whilst framing and approving the Opinion Poll Act. During the campaign it organised meetings, skits and plays in different parts of Goa persuading the voters to vote in favour of the retention of the Union Territory status.

## CHAPTER III

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## CHAPTER IV

### Pro - Merger and Anti-Merger : Press

Press is one of the very powerful instruments of democracy. It moulds and shapes the public opinion. It educates and activates the people on issues affecting their lives. Everywhere in the world, the powers that be cannot afford to ignore the Press because the Press reaches all people. No wonder, Press played a key role, in Goa during the Opinion Poll. It was but natural because on such an important issue as the future of Goa, Press could not be expected to be indifferent. Four languages constituted the medium of Press communication. They were - Marathi, Konkani, English, and Portuguese. It may seem strange but it is true that the origin of newspapers in Goa after Liberation can be traced to the controversy that divided the people of Goa into two rival camps : - pro-merger and anti-merger.

**Gomantak** and **Gomantwani**, the dailies in Marathi, emerged only to promote the cause of merger. **Pradeep** also in Marathi, was for merger. After the Opinion Poll, **Gomantwani** and **Pradeep** ceased to exist. Complete files of these two newspapers are not maintained in any library in Goa. Efforts to get them through their publishers and editors were also fruitless. Hence it was impossible to analyse the contribution of **Gomantwani** and **Pradeep** in the Opinion Poll. The issues of **Gomantwani** from January 1964 to June 1964 which could be traced with much difficulty have been studied. Fortunately, the newspapers that spearheaded the agitation from the beginning to the end continue to provide their files up to date.

**Rashtrammat**, a daily in Marathi, was established to espouse the cause of anti-merger. **The Navhind Times** daily in English and **Goa Today** a monthly in English, which were established after Liberation, supported the anti-merger cause. The Press in Konkani and Portuguese were opposed to Goa's merger into Maharashtra. They stood for the status of Union Territory for Goa. Papers published in Konkani used Devnagari script and Roman Script. **Sot** and **Duty** were two dailies published in Roman Script. Sadly, though it is intensely propagated that Konkani is the mother-tongue of Goans, people reading Konkani had been and are very few. Circulation of these two dailies was very restricted and both of them disappeared after the Opinion Poll. **Sot** edited by Shri Felix Cardoso propagated against merger. **Sot** and **A Vida**, a daily in Portuguese, were blacklisted by the Bhandarkar Ministry and denied Government patronage through the advertisements. <sup>1</sup> As the files of **Sot** and **Duty** are not accessible anywhere, it was not possible to assess their contribution to the cause they supported in the Opinion Poll. Goans educated in Portuguese relied on Portuguese papers. Two dailies published in Portuguese - **A Vida** and **O Herald** were strongly opposed to merger. They also provided columns written in English because their readership in Portuguese was very limited.

It is pertinent to note that the dailies, weeklies and monthlies published in Indian languages made greater impact on the electorate than the dailies, weeklies and monthlies published in European languages. Like others, the Press was also neatly divided into two camps. Each attacked the other with no holds barred. Editorials, Articles, Cartoons, Projection of News and even Letters to Editors were deftly used to get maximum mileage.

## Pro - Merger

### Gomantak

The Maharashtrawadi **Gomantak** Party (M.G.P) did not have its own mouthpiece of any type. That was a very serious drawback because in our times no Political Party can make itself acceptable to the public without effective propaganda in favour of its objectives. One of the Business Houses of Goa, the House of Chowgules ran to its rescue. It set up a daily-- **Gomantak** on 24th March 1962.<sup>2</sup> Marathi was its medium of publication. Shri B.D. Satoskar was appointed its first Editor. From that day, till the declaration of the results of Opinion Poll, **Gomantak** was the most faithful ally of M.G.P.

**Gomantak's** commitment to the goal of Goa's merger in Maharashtra was absolute, unqualified and total. It was an ardent crusader. This is clearly visible in its editorials, articles, cartoons, features and letters to the editor. It fiercely and fearlessly contended that Marathi was the mother - tongue of Goans. It accused the Military Government of Goa, Daman and Diu of giving a "step - motherly" treatment to Marathi because that Government gave advertisements only to the papers published in Portuguese and denied them to **Gomantak**. In August 1962, it demanded that the Government of Goa, Daman and Diu should use Marathi as one of the official languages and that the Government Gazette should also be published in Marathi<sup>3</sup>. From 1962 till the first general election in December 1963, **Gomantak** vehemently defended the cause of Marathi language as that was the plank for Goa's merger into Maharashtra.

This daily became the main vehicle of expression of all the champions of merger. In September 1962, Shri Sushil Kavlekar contended that Goa was a part of Maharashtra and Marathi was the language of the people of Goa. Even the Portuguese recognised this fact. Their orders were published in Marathi. According to him those who claimed that Konkani was the mother - tongue of the Goans were "hypocrites". He ridiculed the Christian elite who had dismissed Konkani as the language of the "Criadas" (Servants) during the Portuguese rule were now adoring it as the language of Goa. Shri Kavlekar argued that the language issue was the instrument of the vested interests eager to have a separate State. <sup>4</sup>

In November 1962 **Gomantak** published Kakasaheb Gadgil's warning that if the Union Government failed to recognise Goa's cultural proximity to Maharashtra and continued to postpone merger, it would be guilty of encouraging Political Parties, to exploit religion and caste for achieving their goal. <sup>5</sup> He further claimed that Konkani was a 'boli' of Marathi, which was not even standardized. In November 1962, Shri N.H. Apte asserted that Goa was a part and parcel of Maharashtra. The two were bound together by linguistic bonds. <sup>6</sup> Advocate Jayvantrao Sardessai expressed similar views.

Editor of **Gomantak**, Shri Satoskar strongly supported the holding of Marathi Literary Conference in Goa by **Gomantak Sahitya Sevak Mandal**. It was held in December 1962. Though the Conference was only a literary affair, it approved a resolution declaring Goa was historically, culturally and linguistically a part of Maharashtra. The Conference also passed a resolution strongly supporting Goa's merger into Maharashtra. <sup>7</sup>

**Gomantak** heartily endorsed the resolution and gave prominent coverage for the activities of the Marathi Literary Conference. At that Conference, Prof Anant Kanekar declared that the Maharashtrian participation in the Conference only proved the fact that Goa was a part of Maharashtra. He highlighted the fact that Goa's Marathi traditions were older than the times of Sant Eknath.<sup>8</sup> Shri S.M. Joshi strongly condemned the efforts to impose Konkani, the "minority language" on the majority. He recalled the sacrifices made by the Maharashtrians for Goa's Liberation and argued that it was absurd to dub Maharashtrians as "aggressors". Shri Joshi particularly emphasised the services of veteran fighter, Senapati Bapat for Goa's Liberation from the oppressive rule of the Portuguese.<sup>9</sup>

Shri Nanasaheb Gore asserted that Goans were not at all opposed to Marathi. Konkani was only a "boli" of Marathi. In Goa, people spoke in their dialect but wrote in Marathi. He emphasised that only the "Christian Minority"<sup>10</sup> opposed Marathi and it cannot be considered as the spokesman of the people of Goa. Acharya Atre, who was the star performer in the Conference, visited different parts of Goa. Addressing a student group at Ponda, he declared that **Gomantak** was a part of Maharashtra and called for its merger into Maharashtra. He told the Goans that the four crores of Maharashtrians were ready to embrace their brethren in Goa who had been separated from them by the cruel Portuguese rule.<sup>11</sup> **Gomantak** gave extensive and exhaustive publicity to the views of pro - Marathi thinkers, writers and politicians. It rejected the contention that primary education in Goa should be in Konkani because according to it, Konkani was only a 'boli' of Marathi.

During the first general election in December 1963, the pro-merger forces conducted their propaganda through **Gomantak**. **Gomantak** preached that the economic development of Goa was impossible without Goa's merger in Maharashtra. Shri Peter Alvares pointed out that the record of the Indian National Congress in the governance of India shows that Congress was not interested in solving problems.<sup>12</sup> The pro-merger forces warned that the slogan ' **Goenchem independent Raj**, advanced by the opponents of merger, concealed a dangerous ambition. Its true aim was not a mere separate State for Goa but to convert Goa into an 'independent nation'. They further charged that the true meaning of the slogan "**Goa for Goans**" was an "Independent Catholic Nation." They ridiculed the champions of separate State who were shouting from the house - tops that they were the lovers of Konkani but communicated only in Portuguese.

Shri Lakshimikant Bhembre charged the anti - merger forces of using Konkani as a tool for their own selfish interests. He added that a section of the Goan Hindus and the Indian National Congress were supporting the "anti-national" Goans. <sup>13</sup> Shri Gopal Apa Kamat belonged to the Indian National Congress but he was a strong supporter of merger. According to him opposition to merger was entirely irrational. Merger would bring several benefits to the people of Goa. Definitely it would raise the standard of living of the Goans and contribute to rapid development of Goa. According to him independent State for Goa was not viable from many angles.<sup>14</sup>

In the general election of 1963 **Gomantak** enthusiastically campaigned for the cause of the M.G.P. It propagated that merger was highly desirable for the prosperity of the **Bahujan Samaj**. The paper emphasised that those who had earlier opposed Liberation of Goa were now opposing Goa's merger in

Maharashtra. <sup>15</sup> In December 1963, it endorsed the M.G.P stand that the election results were clear mandate for merger and people's verdict should be respected.

In November 1964, **Gomantak** strongly condemned Shri S.K. Patil's revelation of Congress Parliamentary Board's decision of 7 April 1964. It fiercely disapproved the Goa Policy of the Indian National Congress. According to it, the policy betrayed confusion and contradictions.<sup>16</sup> The paper pointed out that one of the prominent leaders of I.N.C, Shri Y.B. Chavan was not even aware of the fateful decision of 7 April 1964. The paper claimed that Shri Chavan went to the extent of suggesting that the decision of 7 April 1964 was a "forgery". The paper maintained that if Chavan was correct, than the decision of 7 April 1964, was not a Cabinet decision but Nehru's whim. Hence the paper strongly supported Chavan's insistence that the same decision should be reviewed. <sup>17</sup>

**Gomantak** also took pains to persuade anti - merger forces by explaining how their fears about merger were baseless and misconceived. A special column "*बहुजन हिताय, बहुजन सुखाय*" written by Shri Jayvantrao Sardesai was regularly published to convince the people of Goa how merger into Maharashtra was the most advantageous and beneficial to the people of Goa. Shri Sardesai exposed the anti - merger propaganda and especially the anti - Maharashtrian propaganda. According to him it was totally wrong to believe that Maharashtra has deliberately and intentionally neglected the economic development of Konkan, Vidharba and Marathawada. He condemned the propagandists on the pay-roll of the forces of anti - merger for projecting Maharashtra as an evil genius, a "giant who swallowed everything, he came accross". He told the people of Goa that Konkan, Vidharba and Marathawada

were the regions of Maharashtra. Their backwardness was a transitional phase. He also underlined that Maharashtra was one of the few progressive States of Indian Union and Goa's merger in Maharashtra was bound to boost all round progress of Goa. <sup>18</sup> He condemned "hypocrisy and selfishness" of anti - merger forces especially represented by Shri Puroshottam Kakodkar and his group in the I.N.C. According to Shri Sardesai, this group opposed merger for its own ulterior motives and not for the well - being of the people of Goa. Merger had nothing to do with the expansion and development of Railways and Ports as these were the subjects in the Union List and falling within the jurisdiction of Central Government. It was ridiculous, said Sardesai, to contend that the Central Aid for the development of Railways and Marmugao Port would stop if Goa merged into Maharashtra. <sup>19</sup>

In 1964, **Charvak** accused that the Goan Bureaucrats who constituted the most prosperous class during the Portuguese colonial rule and who were the sworn enemies of Goa's Liberation were also the sworn enemies of Goa's merger into Maharashtra. He warned this class stating that M.G.P Government was aware of their machinations and will take action against them at appropriate time. <sup>20</sup>

In October 1964, **Gomantak** supported the idea of the introduction of the resolution for merger in the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu. It was first to report that the M.G.P MLA Shri Shambu Palekar had disclosed the decision of the M.G.P to introduce the resolution in the January 1965 Session of the Assembly. <sup>21</sup> **Gomantak** greeted with joy the resolution for merger introduced in the Legislative Assembly of Goa Daman and Diu on 22 January 1965. It reported about the joyful celebrations and processions held throughout Goa to mark the event. It urged the people to attend the meetings

organized by the M.G.P at Azad Maidan at Panaji on 23 January 1965. <sup>22</sup> It also urged the people to attend the meetings organised by M.G.P throughout Goa and reported the deliberations of such meetings at length.

Approval of the resolution for Goa's merger into Maharashtra by the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu marked the end of a period of uncertainty for the protagonists of merger. The approval of the resolution, they justified, as the ratification of the verdict given by the people in the election of 1963. <sup>23</sup> **Gomantak** went further and demanded that the Centre has no other alternative but to respect the decision of the people and their constitutional and legal mouthpiece the Assembly. **Gomantak** rejected outright the referendum suggested by Shri S.K. Patil in November 1964. The paper was entirely correct when it pointed out that there was no provision for a referendum in the Constitution of India. The proposal of plebiscite to decide the political fate of Goa betrayed the ignorance of the proposers because plebiscite could never be the means to settle the internal disputes within the nation. <sup>24</sup>

**Gomantak** demanded that the issue be solved as soon as possible. In July 1966 it was prepared to have another election for the solution. However, when the Opinion Poll was accepted by the M.G.P, **Gomantak** did not oppose it. It worked hard on the M.G.P side. As regards voting rights, **Gomantak** supported the view that the voting rights should be given only to those who were residing in Goa and who would be the voters in the elections to Legislative Assembly slated in 1967.

Throughout this tumultuous period **Gomantak** had abiding interest in Goa's merger into Maharashtra and place of Marathi in Goa. Very vigorous and

powerful editorials were reserved for these two issues. In September 1962, **Gomantak** ruthlessly condemned Shri Kakasaheb Kalelkar for his proposal that if Konkani was recognised as an independent language, the Konkaniwadis will support Goa's merger in Maharashtra. According to **Gomantak** the proposal was not only opportunistic but also unprincipled, illogical and irrational. The basis of Goa's merger in Maharashtra was none other than the fact that Marathi is the mother - tongue of Goa and Konkani is the dialect of Marathi. 25

In January 1963 **Gomantak** strongly denounced the disruptive activities of the Konkaniwadis at the Marathi Literary Conference held at Panaji in December 1962. 26 It asked them whether these activities reflected the characteristics of 'Goan identity'.? It warmly endorsed the resolutions approved at that Conference which maintained that Marathi was the language of the majority of the Goans and merger was unavoidable.27 In November 1964 Shri S.K. Patil became the special target of **Gomantak's** attack because of his disclosure of Congress Parliamentary Board's Decision of 7 April 1964. Patil's proposal that there should be a referendum after ten years added fuel to the fire. **Gomantak** asserted that future of Goa cannot be decided by a coterie of politicians where the decisions are connived and manipulated through intrigues and machinations.28

In November 1964, **Gomantak** upheld the M.G.P viewpoint that the election of 1963 was an explicit and clear mandate for merger. In that election, there was only one issue. It was merger or non - merger. Neither the M.G.P nor the U.G.P had presented any other issue or programme before the electorate.M.G.P's slogan" was *झालाच पाहीजे* ' and U.G.P's slogan was *'आमचें गोंय आमकें जाय'*.

In January 1965 **Gomantak** pounced upon the forces of anti - merger vilifying the resolution for merger in the Legislative Assembly and attempting to ridicule the supporters of merger in the Legislative Assembly. One of the banners at the protest marches organised by anti - merger forces showed a donkey braying " *झालाच पाहीजे* " and the donkey was projected as Maharashtrian with the caption " *कस्य रे पावण्या.* "

**Gomantak** deeply regretted the low taste and lower mentality of the critics despising Maharashtra. **Gomantak** pointed out that donkey was not at all a symbol of degradation. It cited the famous incident where at the instance of Sant Dnyaneshwar buffalo chanted Vedas. <sup>30</sup> It could have given an appropriate incident of Jesus. When Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem triumphantly, he deliberately chose a donkey. In April 1965, **Gomantak** took to task the anti - merger forces who threatened the use of violence. <sup>31</sup> Acharya Atre had stated that volunteers from Maharashtra would come to Goa to work for merger. Anti - merger forces replied that they would "break" the legs of Maharashtrians at the border itself if they tried to enter Goa. <sup>32</sup>

**Gomantak** gave the widest coverage to the activities of all supporting merger and particularly M.G.P. In November 1964, Shri V.N. Lawande, Vice - President of the M.G.P, gave a call through the columns of the paper to the pro- merger forces to unite and fight for the merger. He maintained that Shri S.K. Patil had awakened the people of Goa. Before his utterings, nothing was done to mobilise the people. He urged the people to be alert and to raise their voice on the issue. <sup>33</sup> **Gomantak** reported meticulously the protests organised by the M.G.P in different parts of Goa against Shri S.K. Patil's announcement. Shri M.S. Prabhu, the Secretary of the M.G.P, asked the people to rise to the occasion. It reported that Shri R.S. Tople, Secretary of

Legislative wing of the M.G.P, assured the people of Goa that M.G.P would not step down from power in the sacred land of **Gomantak** Bhumi and allow the Indian National Congress to oppress the people.

Before and during the Opinion Poll the Office of **Gomantak** was the Centre of co-ordination of the activities of the protagonists of merger. In January 1965 Acharya Atre, the powerful Editor of Marathi daily of Bombay-**The Maratha**, visited **Gomantak** Office and expressed his happiness over the work there.<sup>34</sup> He thanked Shri Satoskar the Editor of **Gomantak**. After the approval of the resolution for merger, **Gomantak** worked ardently to arouse the masses. Indeed, it appeared that Goa's merger with Maharashtra became its *raison d' être*. The declarations of Shri Nath Pai at **Gomantak Sahitya Samelan** held in Goa in April 1965 were highlighted to create an impression that "time" had come closer for the "announcement of merger" and hence people should stop doubting about the certainty of merger as well as give up their baseless fears about merger. Shri Nath Pai assured the Goans that merger would not hamper their economic progress, would not suppress the development of Konkani and would not persecute the Christians.<sup>35</sup>

**Gomantak** left no stone unturned to discredit the Anti - merger Convention held in April 1965. It fully supported the argument of Shri J.S. Shinkre that in Goa, there were two dominant groups committed to two contrary ideologies - one totally and unreservedly identified itself with the Indian Culture and the other hating the Indian Culture. Those who hated the Indian culture wanted to maintain the so called Goan Identity which was neither Goan nor Identity. Shri Shinkre warned the people of Goa that if the opponents of Indian Culture succeed, then Goa would become another 'Kashmir' or 'Nagaland'.<sup>36</sup>

In January 1967, **Gomantak** called the people of Goa to vote for merger into Maharashtra because only merger would guarantee the development of Goa on all fronts. It published the speeches of Bandodkar and other leaders who considered that merger in Maharashtra was like the river integrating in the ocean. <sup>37</sup> **Gomantak** covered the campaign for merger organised by the Political Parties, the artists, the kirtankars and the dramatists who came to Goa to stimulate the electors to vote in favour of merger. The performances of the famous Marathi Shahir Shri Amar Sheik were highly admired by both the people and **Gomantak**.

Though a staunch supporter of merger **Gomantak** simultaneously reported the activities of the forces of anti- merger. In January 1962, it covered the "Goan Unity Week" organised by the anti - merger forces against the resolutions of the Marathi Literary Conference held at Panaji. **Gomantak** specifically referred to the charge made by Shri Chandrakant Keni who denounced the Conference as a "Conspiracy" to merge Goa into Maharashtra. Side by side, it published adverse comments on the 'Unity week'. The pro-merger forces accused the Unity Week, as Caste based and organised and directed by selfish interests.<sup>38</sup> In January 1965, the paper reported the activities of anti - merger groups which cried for the resignation of Bandodkar Ministry for passing the merger resolution. They shouted slogans. " आझाद गोवा झिंदाबाद ' एक दोन तीन चार, आमी सगले गोंयकार, 'आमचें गोंय आमकां जाय".

**Gomantak** was the greatest foe of the U.G.P. It was absolutely forthright in asserting that U.G.P's demand for a separate State for Goa was "anti - national" demand. It asserted that only merger into Maharashtra would enable Goa to enter the national mainstream.

## Gomantwani

In January 1964, a businessman Shri Kashinath Damodar Naik started the publication of a daily **Gomantwani** from Margao, Goa. Its medium was Marathi. Its editor was Shri Ram Pradhan. Its objective "मराठी भाषा व महाराष्ट्रात विलीनीकरण" was prominently printed on the front page. Besides being businessman, Shri Kashinath Damodar Naik was one of the leading intellectuals of Goa. He wrote erudite and illuminating articles in the paper on the merits of Marathi language, treasures of Indian culture and salient Maharastrian customs and traditions in vogue in Goa before the advent of Portuguese. According to him it was an indisputable fact that Marathi was the language of Goa for many centuries and Konkani was only the "boli" or dialect of Marathi. The dialect was used only from the seventeenth century.<sup>39</sup> He pointed out that a Jesuit Priest, Father Stephens showered praises on Marathi language. Gomantwani was staunch supporter of merger movement.

In January 1965 Gomantwani greeted enthusiastically the resolution for Goa's merger into Maharashtra, introduced in the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu. It praised the M.G.P for honouring its pledge to the electorate during the elections. It asked the Union Government to respect the mandate of the people and immediately merge Goa into Maharashtra.<sup>40</sup>

Gomantwani encouraged articles in favour of the twin goals of the paper. In January 1964, Shri Jaysinghrao Rane, the MLA, condemned those who created obstacles in the way of merger. He identified Shri Puroshotam Kakodkar the President of I.N.C (Goa) as the most powerful enemy of the merger.<sup>41</sup> In, January 1964, Shri Madhu Shirodkar attacked the opponents of merger for introducing the language controversy in the Legislative Assembly.

According to him Konkani was not at all a language. <sup>42</sup> In February 1964 Shri S. Sardesai contended that relationship between Goa and Maharashtra was that of a child and its mother and it was but natural that child was eager to embrace the mother. <sup>43</sup>

Editorials of Gomantwani were merciless against the forces of anti-merger. Their sharpest shafts were reserved for the U.G.P. the main opponent of merger. In February 1964 Gomantwani severely reprimanded the U.G.P leadership for threatening "bloodshed" in case M.G.P Government pursued the proposal for merger. <sup>44</sup> It ridiculed the U.G.P leaders who lacked courage even to protest when the Portuguese colonialists were brutally killing the fighters for Goa's Freedom. It branded the U.G.P leaders as the "Cowards" and "Opportunists" taking advantage of changed circumstances.

Gomantwani dismissed the objective of U.G.P as not only absolutely unrealistic but also decisively inimical to the prosperity of Christians which U.G.P was professing. It pointed out that generations of Goans and particularly the Christians have lived and prospered in different parts of Maharashtra. Thousands of Goans were living in Bombay and they never complained of discrimination or suppression. Many Goan Christians were holding high positions in all walks of life. The U.G.P, remarked Gomantwani, was acting like an Ostrich burying its head in sand. If its narrow outlook succeeds, it would convert Goans into birds which are scared of flying because their wings are clipped. <sup>45</sup> According to Gomantwani, merger would not curtail but boost Goa's economic development. It brought to the notice of Goans that when Bombay was merged into Maharashtra, the enemies of Maharashtra propagated that non Maharashtrians would suffer but what

happened was exactly the opposite. Non - Maharashtrians continued to prosper without let or hindrance.<sup>46</sup>

Gomantwani boldly dissected the sacred concepts of opponents of merger such as Goan Identity and Goa's unique culture. It laughed at them and dismissed them as no better than fictions. It asserted that the roots of these fictitious claims are found only in the notorious " Inquisition". It was the conviction of Gomantwani that Goa's merger in Maharashtra was the best remedy to cure these maladies which were nourishing the forces of separation of Goa from the Motherland. Goa's total integration in India depended on Goa's merger in Maharashtra.<sup>47</sup> Hence, Gomantwani garnered its resources to help the supporters of merger during the Opinion Poll.

## **Anti - Merger**

### **Rashtramat**

If ever there was a newspaper dedicated to the cause of anti - merger body and soul, it was the **Rashtramat**, a daily published in Marathi from Margao, Goa. Indisputably, it made the greatest impact on the electorate. Rashtramat was started by the Business House of Salgaocars in September 1963 and was published from Margao, Goa. Shri Chandrakant Keni was its Editor. Ironically, this sworn enemy of Goa's merger in Maharashtra was published in Marathi, the language of Maharashtra. What were the compulsions for a paper opposing merger to propagate in Marathi ? Shri C. Keni states that it was a deliberate strategy to win over those Hindus of Goa loving Marathi and supporting Goa's merger in Maharashtra. The owner and editor were realistic enough to acknowledge the enchanting spell of Marathi language on the Goan Hindus. They worked to destroy that spell using the language of their formidable enemy. "Rashtramat was the only paper which not only opposed merger but undertook an intensive campaign to mobilise public support for opposing merger".<sup>48</sup> By any standards, Rashtramat's contribution to the achievement of the goal of forces of non - merger was the greatest and the most effective because it reached the largest number of electors. Its every issue was sought eagerly by both the supporters and opponents of merger. By and large, Rashtramat reaped rich dividends. It succeeded in driving a wedge amongst the Hindu electors. It concentrated on highlighting inherent dangers of merger.

Rashtramat was the Enemy Number 1 of Goa's merger into Maharashtra. Konkani is the mother - tongue of Goans was its basic axiom. It rejected *prima facie* the contention that Marathi was the mother - tongue language of Goans. It also summarily rejected the contention that Marathi was the language of Goa. According to it, Marathi was only the language of a particular "class" *शिष्टांची भाषा*, " and Konkani was "*लोकांची भाषा* " ---language of the masses. <sup>49</sup> In March, 1964 it asserted that history shows that in every fight between classes and masses, masses are always victorious. Hence Konkani, the language of masses will defeat Marathi, the language of class is as clear as sunlight. According to Rashtramat when Konkani was clearly understood by all the members of Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu regardless of their party affiliations, it was utterly foolish to insist on Marathi as the medium of expression. <sup>50</sup>

Very fact that some of the protagonists of merger in 1966 were insisting that Goa's merger into Maharashtra should be conditional, showed that merger was not in the interests of the people of Goa. <sup>51</sup> During the Opinion Poll, M.G.P itself asked for "safeguards". One of them was Goa would continue to be wet though there was prohibition in Maharashtra. On its part, Rashtramat rejected the cultural and economic grounds advanced by the forces of merger as the justification of merger. According to it the contention that Goa should not remain in a small pond but merger in a big sea would do more harm than good to Goa. <sup>52</sup> It would definitely contribute to the "alienation of the Goan people". It charged the M.G.P of deliberately misusing the names of the venerable sants of Maharashtra to exploit the religious sentiments of the masses and win its objective. <sup>53</sup>

In, November 1964, Rashtramat gleefully praised Shri S.K. Patil's disclosure of the Congress Parliamentary Board's decision of 7 April 1964 and ferociously denounced Shri Y.B. Chavan's efforts to review it. <sup>54</sup> With equal ferocity Rashtramat condemned M.G.P's outbursts against the I.N.C and U.G.P. It ridiculed M.G.P's statement that election of 1963 "demolished the Congress," showed U.G.P its "proper place" and "peoples mandate" was for the fulfilment of the objective of M.G.P. <sup>55</sup> It implored the I.N.C to honour faithfully its decision of 7 April 1964. Rashtramat hailed that decision as "The wisest" because the status of Union Territory for a period of ten years would promote Goa's economic development. Hence, in January 1965, it vehemently opposed the resolution for merger introduced in the Goa, Daman and Diu Legislative Assembly. It contended that notwithstanding the immense pressure exercised by Maharashtra, the Union Government would not decide on the future of Goa without consulting the Goans. <sup>56</sup> In September 1966, Rashtramat heartily approved the decision to hold the Opinion Poll in Goa. It insisted that the right to vote in the Opinion Poll should be extended to the Goans living within Goa, to Goans living in different parts of India and different parts of the world. <sup>57</sup> It analysed the implications of the Opinion Poll Bill for the benefit of its readers.

The most effective and popular part of Rashtramat issue of everyday was the column called **Brahmastra**. It was written by Shri Uday Bhembre under the pen - name 'Parshuram'. **Brahmastra** was read with curiosity by both the supporters and opponents of merger. It also provoked lively debates on every aspect of the controversy. Perhaps no column in any daily, weekly or monthly published in Goa in Indian, European and English language was as popular, as exciting and as effective as **Brahmastra**.

Parshuram concentrated his fire on the Bandodkar Ministry. He continuously lampooned the M.G.P Government whose greatest crime, according to him was M.G.P Government's desire to merge Goa into Maharashtra. Parshuram contended that the Ministry was pursuing not only the destruction of Goa but also its own destruction as merger would automatically end the rule of Goa by M.G.P. He likened the M.G.P to Bhasmasura. Just as Bhasmasura lost his balance and killed himself by misusing the divine boon, M.G.P was killing itself by misusing the political boon. 58

**Brahmastra** forcefully condemned the Pro-merger Conference held in Bombay in January 1965. It refused to accept that the thirty - five Goans who participated in it were the "representatives" of the Goans settled in Bombay. According to Parshuram those thirty - five were the representatives of the 'Hindutva'. He charged that the organisers of that conference refused permission to many Goans who were opposed to merger. Only those Goans who subscribed to the doctrine that Goa was an integral part of Maharashtra and Marathi was the language of Goa were admitted. 59

Parshuram mercilessly and ruthlessly condemned Chief Minister Bandodkar for his sins of commission and omission. He argued that as Chief Minister, it was Bandodkar's sacred duty to attend every session of the Legislative Assembly. But Bandodkar, pointed out Purshuram, lacked courage to face the Assembly. Bandodkar pretended that he had no time but he had plenty of time to visit different places in Maharashtra to attend the functions and address the meetings. He dismissed Chief Minister Bandodkar as 'His Master's Voice'. Parshuram alleged that Bandodkar danced as "His Masters from Maharashtra" ordered him. 60 In June 1966, Bandodkar, agreed to the

holding of election to decide the future status of Goa but changed when Maharashtrians opposed it. In November 1966 he accused Bandodkar of selling Goa to Maharashtra.

In August 1965 Parshuram condemned the policy of the M.G.P Government to bring the "Deputationists" from Maharashtra when the local people were freely available. According to him it was the deliberate move of M.G.P to destroy the local talent and it would in the long run ruin Goa. He was opposed to the policy of running administration with the help of "Deputationists" because the "Deputationists" were out of touch with realities or problems of Goa. <sup>61</sup> In September 1966 Parshuram fully endorsed the decision of the Union Government to hold the Opinion Poll. Parshuram was at his best during the campaign for the Opinion Poll. <sup>62</sup> The thrust of his writings was to convince the people of Goa that there was not even an iota of benefit to Goa if it merges into Maharashtra. According to him, if the Goans decide to merge in Maharashtra it would be the highest act of folly. It would be nothing short of "burning of Goa by the Goans."

Besides, **Brahmastra**, many articles were also published by Rashtramat to create a climate against merger. These articles emphasised that those who opposed merger of Goa into Maharashtra were not "anti-national". In October 1964, Shri Anant Haldankar refuted the contentions of Shri Lakshimikant Bhembre which favoured merger. According to him Shri Bhembre's arguments were identical to those of the Portuguese for the justification of their rule of Goa. According to him, merger would retard Goa's economic development. <sup>63</sup>

Shri V.N. Sarmalkar, MLA (U.G.P) contributed several articles to the Rashtramat. His major grievance was that the M.G.P was purposefully using the innocent people called the **Bahujan Samaj** to achieve its sinister goal. He worked hard to convince the **Bahujan Samaj** that its interests would be safe only in separate Goa. He likened the status of the Union Territory for Goa to the **Kamadhenu** who gave whatever people asked from it.<sup>64</sup> Shri Sarmalkar urged the **Bahujan Samaj** not to be deceived by the propagandists from Maharashtra. According to him it was absolutely absurd to think that separate Goa would establish a **Brahmin Raj**. Pointing out to the control of **Panchayats** of Goa by the non - Brahmins, Shri Sarmalkar stated that those frightening the masses of the **Brahmin Raj** in Goa were the worst liars.<sup>65</sup> Shri Sarmalkar tirelessly and repeatedly stressed that the U.G.P was neither communal nor anti - national. Political philosophy of the U.G.P was that Goa must be a separate State with Konkani as its official language. <sup>66</sup> Shri Motilal Desai, in November 1966, warned the **Bahujan Samaj** not to be a pawn in the hands of their so - called guardians who were sacrificing them for their own selfish interests. According to him the separate State of Goa would in-fact make the **Bahujan Samaj** the true rulers of Goa as they were in majority. <sup>67</sup> Editorials of Rashtramat concentrated on the refutation and rejection of arguments and claims for merger. They also were aggressive in making the counter charges and replying counter - charges by the forces of merger. In February 1965, Rashtramat condemned the resolution for merger introduced in the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu. It strongly supported the policy of the Union Government.<sup>68</sup> In August 1965 it approved the 7 April 1964 decision of the I.N.C. According to Rashtramat the status of Union Territory was only a transitional phase in Goa's political life. Its logical conclusion will be the separate State at appropriate time. In August 1966, Rashtramat attacked the

M.G.P Government for the steps taken by it against the satyagraha organised by Shri Ravindra Kelekar demanding the ouster of Bandodkar Ministry. It justified the actions of Satyagrahis. In December 1966 it asserted that Bandodkar Ministry was not different from Salazar's Administration of Goa. It advised the forces of merger to learn from history. Salazar failed to crush the struggle for Goa's Freedom. Forces of merger would fail to crush struggle to give Goa its proper place in the Indian Union. <sup>69</sup> Rashtramat alleged that the Maharashtrians were making frantic and desperate efforts to grab Goa. It violently attacked the Maharashtrians. If Goa was eager to merge in Maharashtra, let Goans decide it. Why should Maharashtra send volunteers, Kalapathaks, Kirtankars and propaganda literature to Goa? Growled Rashtramat.

During the Opinion Poll the Office of Rashtramat was one of the main theatres of action. Its editor, publisher and the writer of **Brahmastra** were fully and intensely involved in the campaign for the retention of the status of Union Territory for Goa. At its initiative, the anti - merger Front was formed in November 1966 which co-ordinated the activities of the opponents of merger. Rashtramat emphasised economic and social prosperity of Goans. It propagated that both would be destroyed forever if Goa merges into Maharashtra. It told the people that the decision in favour of Union Territory does not mean enmity and hatred of Maharashtra and Marathi. Reverence and respect for Chattrapati Shivaji in Goa was not an inch less than reverence and respect for Chattrapati Shivaji in Maharashtra. Goans and Goa admire Chattrapati Shivaji as one of the greatest nation - builders. Like him, all the nation - builders from Maharashtra all the Sants of Maharashtra are as dear to the Goans as they are to the Maharashtrians.

The outcome of the Opinion Poll showed that the Rashtramat's strategy to persuade the Hindus to prefer the status of Union Territory was, by and large, successful.

## **The Navhind Times**

**The Navhind Times** began its publication in February 1963 from Panaji. It is Goa's first daily in English language. It is owned by the House of Dhempo also a Business House of Goa. Like a newsreel, **The Navhind Times** published the statements of the M.G.P., the U.G.P and the I.N.C. It provided up - to - date information of all developments taking place as regards the future status of Goa. English language newspapers published from places outside Goa were not the favourites of English reading people in Goa. Hence, **The Navhind Times** became their most favourite daily. The Navhind Times was opposed to Goa's merger in Maharashtra but it carefully refrained from being branded as a mouthpiece of the forces of anti - merger and particularly of the U.G.P. Its sympathies were with the I.N.C which was perfectly understandable. I.N.C ruled the Indian Union and no Business House can afford to antagonise the Union Government. Constraints under which **The Navhind Times** functioned provided certain advantages to the researchers. The Navhind Times reported side by side activities of both pro- merger and anti - merger forces. It published the statements of the M.G.P, the U.G.P and the I.N.C. It also covered the activities relating to the future of Goa in Maharashtra, Mysore and New Delhi. Its reporting was not resented by any party or any contender. Hence **The Navhind Times** can be considered as the only newspaper that by and large gave a balanced coverage of the controversy.

Like others, **The Navhind Times** also had its own opinion on the two key issues -- Language and Merger. **The Navhind Times** considered Konkani as the language of Goa. It opposed Goa's merger into Maharashtra but did not support immediate Statehood for Goa. In February 1964, it contended that as long as Goa was not economically viable, as long as Goa cannot be assured of

continuous prosperity, Goa cannot become the State of the Indian Union. **The Navhind Times** favoured the status of Union Territory for Goa for a period of ten years. And that was precisely the declared policy of the I.N.C.

It strongly supported the viewpoint of Shri Kakasaheb Kalelkar that a military action was a surgical operation which needed prolonged period of convalescence. It complained that the Political Parties opposing the deadline of ten years were irrational and victims of self - deception.<sup>70</sup> No wonder in November 1964, **The Navhind Times** warmly greeted Shri S.K. Patil's statement that Goa would continue as a Union Territory for a period of ten years. It requested all concerned to respect that decision. It was disappointed when its wise advice was not accepted not only by the regional Political Parties but also by many within the I.N.C itself. Probably angered, **The Navhind Times** vehemently opposed in November 1964, the review of the I.N.C decision. In January 1965, it strongly disapproved the Merger Resolution introduced in the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu.<sup>71</sup> In September 1966, **The Navhind Times** welcomed the Government of India's decision to hold the Opinion Poll but deplored the inconsistency and indetermination of I.N.C to pursue its decision of ten years moratorium on Goa's final status.<sup>72</sup>

On the question of the right to vote to all Goans regardless of their residence, **The Navhind Times** supported the U.G.P and the I.N.C (Goa branch). It reasoned that the Opinion Poll and Elections were two different processes and "any jugglery to identify the Opinion Poll with elections would create more doubts" about the sincerity of the Poll. It argued that as the "Opinion Poll is something special to meet a special situation", and as such special attention had to be given to the sentiments of the people of Goa.<sup>73</sup> **The Navhind**

**Times** was highly irritated when its reasoning was rejected by the Government of India. It implored the Congress High Command to keep away its Maharashtra and Mysore units from meddling in the Opinion Poll in Goa so that the Goans themselves could decide their fate. In November 1966, the paper attempted minute analysis of the Opinion Poll Bill and published relevant extracts of debates in Parliament.<sup>74</sup>

**The Navhind Times'** opposition to Goa's merger into Maharashtra is clearly visible in its Editorials from 1964 till the holding of the Opinion Poll. In January 1964, it rejected Chief Minister Bandodkar's statement in Delhi that the dispute about the status of Goa was nothing but the continuation of conflict between "Pro - Portuguese and Pro- Indian forces". It condemned Shri Peter Alvares for branding the Catholics and Capitalists as Anti - National having "pro -- Salazar leanings" and for praising supporters of merger as National.<sup>75</sup> It also condemned Maharashtra's interference in Goa's affairs and asserted that Maharashtra's interference exposed its own selfish interests. In January 1965 **The Navhind Times** strongly criticised the Resolution for Goa's merger into Maharashtra introduced in the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu. It argued that the Resolution was against the assurances given to the Goans which were incorporated in the Congress Parliamentary Board's decision of 7 April 1964.

During the Opinion Poll, **The Navhind Times** threw its weight on the side of the opponents of merger. However, it published articles by both the supporters and the opponents of merger. Articles by Shri Yeshwant Naik, Shri M. S. Talaulikar supported merger. Articles by Shri H. De Souza, Dr. Carmo Azavedo and Durshton Rodrigues opposed merger.<sup>76</sup> **The Navhind Times** also published large number of letters for and against the merger. The letter

writers handled all aspects of the problem. The contents of these letters indicate public awareness.

**The Navhind Times** endorsed the viewpoint that impartiality in the holding of the Opinion Poll depended upon the resignation of the Bandodkar Ministry. Everywhere, Party in power is always tempted to abuse the official machinery. Hence in November 1966, it welcomed the resignation of the Bandodkar Ministry.<sup>77</sup> **The Navhind Times** was against the exploitation of religious sentiments for the sake of political advantage. In January 1967, it forcefully condemned an incident where pictures of Hindu deities were paraded at political meetings. It claimed that "some one tried to play on the sentiments of a section of people by even bringing in fake padukas of a deity".<sup>78</sup>

In January 1967, **The Navhind Times** prominently published "instructions for the voters " issued by the Opinion Poll Commissioner. It urged the Political Parties and political leaders to restrain their rank and file from making abusive and provocative speeches and writings and to discourage them from threatening or using violence.<sup>79</sup> It complimented the Opinion Poll Commissioner Shri D.K. Das for the arrangement made by the Commission to ensure fair and peaceful poll.

## Goa Today

**Goa Today**, a monthly established in August 1966, supported the status of Union Territory. It was founded and edited by Shri Lambert Mascarenhas. It was published from Panaji. Basically it was a magazine devoted to the cultural aspects of Goa but it allotted sufficient space for the Opinion Poll.

**Goa Today** approved the Opinion Poll but it was totally unhappy with the modalities of the Poll. It was terribly angry because right to vote in the Opinion Poll was denied to the non - resident Goans. **Goa Today** therefore, characterised the Opinion Poll Scheme designed by Government of India as a "calculated betrayal" of Nehru and Indira Gandhi. It was also the violation of the promises made by the Congress High Command to the people of Goa. It agreed with the forces of anti - merger that the Opinion Poll Bill let down the Goans and had made many concessions to the Maharashtrians. **Goa Today** remarked : " it is a **Carte blanche** to Maharashtra to take Goa on a legal palanquin and do what it likes with it so long as Maharashtra is safe for Congress in the forth coming general elections. "81

According to **Goa Today** only Goans should be given the right to vote in the Opinion Poll. It advised the Goans to declare their "boycott"<sup>82</sup> of the Opinion Poll if the Union Government failed to make the necessary amendment. However, its advice failed to appeal to the Goans.

## A Vida

**A Vida**, a daily in Portuguese language, was published from Margao, Goa. It was established in 1938. It was one of the outright opponents of Goa's merger into Maharashtra. Unlike other newspapers, this paper was owned by three families -- Viega - Countinho, Prazares -- Pinto and Gomes. Shri Hugo De Souza was its editor during the Opinion Poll.

**A Vida** professed the "separate identity" of the Goans and asserted that only way to protect it was by making Goa a separate State. It bitterly cried against "Chauvinism and expansionism" of Maharashtra. It worked to convert "misguided Hindus supporting Goa's merger into Maharashtra". It contended that as Hindus were numerically more than the Christians in Goa, a separate State would give them better benefits and more advantages than the merger. "Bandodkar could do more for his people than a Chavan or a Naik" could do for them. Hindus would be the *de facto* rulers of Goa. On the other hand, merger would at once reduce Goa to the level of an "insignificant district" of Maharashtra.<sup>83</sup> After merger, the Hindus of Goa would totally lose their importance and become insignificant in the vast population of Maharashtra. Maharashtrians would rule Goa and use Goa's resources for the development of other regions of Maharashtra at the expense of Goa. Rich persons of Bombay would buy Goa's land and Goans would be landless in their homeland.<sup>84</sup>

**A Vida** wanted a separate State for Goa. In September 1963, it encouraged Dr. Manoharao Sardesai to bring together all Political Parties and individuals desiring Goa as one of the States of the Indian Union.<sup>85</sup> **A Vida** asserted that the mother - tongue of Goans was not Marathi but Konkani. **A**

**Vida** opposed the final decision on Goa's future after ten years because that period would enable non - Goans to infiltrate into Goa and vitiate the decision. In January 1963, it demanded an immediate "plebiscite" to settle the controversy. <sup>86</sup> However, it was terribly disappointed when people did not uphold its idea of plebiscite. **A Vida** failed to grasp that the plebiscite is a device used to decide self - determination of the nations. It can never be used to settle disputes within the nation.

**A Vida** exhibited its hatred towards Maharashtra without any reservations or restraints. In January 1964, it violently condemned Chief Minister V.P. Naik's statement that his Government would face the worst consequences but would not let down people of Goa who struggled to merge into Maharashtra.<sup>87</sup> In January 1965, it attacked the Resolution for merger passed by the Legislative Assembly, <sup>88</sup> of Goa, Daman and Diu. In November 1966, **A Vida** accepted the Opinion Poll but like others opposing merger it was disappointed with the substance of Opinion Poll Bill. It strongly supported the demands made by the U.G.P in the memorandum submitted to the Government of India for the amendments to the Bill. During the Opinion Poll, it propagated against merger.

Father Viegas - Coutinho wrote a regular Column under the pen name **Simple Simon**. <sup>88</sup> **Simple Simon** concentrated his fire on the Maharashtrians. He produced arguments after arguments whose refrain was Maharashtra was as bad as Satan. If Goa merged into Maharashtra it would be the beginning of the end of Goa politically, economically and culturally. He harped upon four hundred and fifty years of Portuguese rule which has made Goa "Unique". If merger takes place that "uniqueness" would be lost forever.<sup>89</sup> Shri Laxmanrao Sardesai, Shri Mukund Kelekar and Shri Ravindra Kelekar were regular writers

of articles in **A Vida**. The writers of Articles in **A Vida** were intensely irritated by the slogan "झाळाच पाहीजे". In February 1964, Shri Laxmanrao Sardessai thought that there was absolutely no difference between Portugal and Maharashtra. Both coveted Goa which was not theirs. The Portuguese shouted 'Aqui é Portugal e sempre será Portugal' (Goa is part and parcel of Portugal and shall always be Portugal), Maharashtrians say Goa is a part of Maharashtra and hence must merge into Maharashtra. Portuguese glorified Vasco-Da-Gama and Afonso De Albuquerque, the Maharashtrawadis glorify "Shivaji - Baji".<sup>90</sup> He asserted that the great Sants and heroes of India were also venerated by the people of Goa. The forces of merger exploited people's love for nation's heroes for their petty political goals.

Shri Laxmanrao Sardessai highlighted the "emasculatation" of the Goans by the Portuguese under the pretext of "assimilation". Portuguese also pressed into their service the Roman Catholic religion. These Christian "assimilados" became the most loyal servants in the Portuguese Administration of Goa. After Liberation, the same principle has been used by Chief Minister Bhandarkar who was the protégé of Maharashtrian expansionists. Bhandarkar used the Hindu religion to manipulate the masses. He told the masses that after the Portuguese, their exploiters in Goa were the Roman Catholic Christians and Hindu Brahmins. Only merger into Maharashtra would liberate the masses in the real sense. It was preached that "Maharashtrianism" was only an alternative to Christian aggression.<sup>91</sup>

Shri Laxmanrao Sardessai strongly resented the oft-repeated contention that the movement against merger was inspired and controlled by the Christians. A large number of Hindus also opposed the merger. The movement was directed and controlled by both the Hindus and Christians. He severely

castigated Shri N.V. Gadgil for saying that " Life-stream of **Gomantak** will finally meet the Indian Ocean through the Maharashtrian sea". As River Mandovi was merging in Indian Ocean in Goa itself, why should it scale the ghats of Maharashtra to meet the Indian Ocean? Asked Sardesai. <sup>92</sup>

Shri Ravindra Kelekar attacked the renowned patriot Swatantryavir Savarkar because he thought that the " Marathism" of Goa was the off - shoot of Savarkar's philosophy of Hindutva. According to Shri Kelekar those who opposed merger were not "anti - Indian and pro - Portuguese".<sup>93</sup> Shri Kelekar failed to discern that those aiming at "Marathism" were not the champions of Hindutva. Shri Mukund Kelekar denounced the " cawing of the Marathi crows". <sup>94</sup> He supported the contention of Shri R. Kelekar that the opponents of merger cannot be branded as " Pro - Portuguese". Prof. Shashikar Kelekar questioned Bandodkar's contention that only merger into Maharashtra would complete Goa's Liberation and would free Goa from the clutches of "Christian reactionaries". Professor Kelekar thought that if Bandodkar succeeds, Goa would become second Nagaland. <sup>95</sup>

**A Vida** was the most loyal supporter of the U.G.P. To it whatever the U.G.P wanted was by definition good for Goa. **A Vida** condemned Shri Y.B. Chavan who "poured venom" at the Goan Christians branding them as "Black Portuguese". **A Vida** was anguished when there was a split in the U.G.P in 1966. **A Vida's** Editorials echoed the policies of the U.G.P. It supported the U.G.P stand on the Deputationists. In January 1967 **A Vida** vociferously clamoured for the withdrawal of Lt. Governor of Goa, Daman and Diu Shri R.K. Damle who was a Maharashtrian and hence his impartiality could not be taken for granted. It charged that the Governor Shri R.K. Damle, the Secretary of Industries Shri Chowgule and Director of Information and Tourism Shri

Deshmukh - all Maharashtrians, were working for merger of Goa into Maharashtra.<sup>96</sup> **A Vida** also published Cartoons denigrating Bandodkar and worshipping Dr. Jack De Sequeira. In December 1966, **A Vida** earnestly appealed to the voters to make sure that their names were included in the Electoral Rolls prepared for the Opinion Poll. The voters were urged to contact the "Anti - Merger Front Office opened at Margao specially for that purpose. It gave extensive publicity to the appeals issued by the U.G.P to the owners of vehicles to help it with vehicles and drivers to conduct the campaign. It educated the voters on the procedure of voting so that their precious votes as regards the Two Leaves do not become invalid. The Two Leaves which was the symbol for Union Territory status became the symbol of veneration in the issues of **A Vida**.<sup>97</sup> **A Vida** exhorted the forces of anti - merger not to remain placid. It pleaded for special vigilance against " impersonation and rigging" during the voting at the Opinion Poll. <sup>98</sup>

## **O Herald**

**O Herald** is the oldest newspaper published from Goa. It was established in 1900. Its founder was Professor Messias Gomes. After Liberation of Goa in 1961, its Editor was Shri Amadeu P. Da Costa. It was published from Panaji. It was a newspaper in Portuguese language. **O Herald** wanted Goa to be a separate State within the Indian Union. Goa was liberated in the second fortnight of December 1961. In January 1962 itself, **O Herald** strove to move in that direction. It backed the All Goa Political Conference held at Margao on 28 January 1962 which declared that Goa should be made a State of Indian Union. <sup>99</sup>

Like **A Vida**, **O Herald** heavily relied on Goa's "Unique Culture"- "Distinct Personality" and "Konkani Language" for justifying Statehood for Goa. Its motto was - "Goa ever, merger never". **O Herald** contended that Konkani was the mother - tongue of Goa and hence it should be the Official Language of Goa. It urged that the Government of India consider sympathetically the resolution approved by the **Konkani Bhasha Mandal** in March 1962 requesting the inclusion of Konkani in the Eight Schedule of the Constitution. <sup>100</sup> In November 1964 it approved Shri S.K. Patil's announcement of the Congress Parliamentary Board's decision of 7 April 1964 which provided the maintenance of the status quo in Goa.

**O Herald** strongly condemned the Language Bill introduced in the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu in July 1966. It warned that the imposition of Marathi as the Official language of Goa may be good "party politics" but bad piece of statesmanship as it was certain to harm Goa and Goans. <sup>101</sup> Likewise, in January 1965, it condemned the Resolution of merger

passed by the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu. According to *O Herald* such antics cannot pave Goa's merger into Maharashtra. It induced the people to participate in the protest march at Azad Maidan at Panaji, to make it clear to one and all that they do not want to be a "backyard of Maharashtra".

**O Herald** argued desperately that under no circumstances Maharashtra should be allowed to grab Goa. It gave extensive coverage to protests and telegrams sent to the Central Government by the Political Parties and other organisations from within and outside Goa against the Resolution for merger passed by the Legislative Assembly of Maharashtra. In March 1965 the paper published the protests organised by the Goans in Bombay and Calcutta. A resolution was approved by the Goans in Bombay to the effect that the Government of India should stick to its 7 April 1964 decision. The Goan Convention was especially convened in Bombay to remind the Government of India the assurances it gave to the Goans that "individuality of Goa" would be preserved. It urged the Union Government to protect Goa from the expansionist designs of Maharashtra.<sup>102</sup>

**O Herald** liked the Opinion Poll but disliked the contents of Opinion Poll Bill and Opinion Poll Act. Many of its readers expressed their concern over the mechanism of the Opinion Poll. One of them Smt. Berta De Menezes Braganza thought that the Opinion Poll was a "fair means to put an end to the immense bitterness which the undecided problem had generated". But if the Poll was to be "fair and genuine" the electoral roll must be revised and brought up - to date; "right to vote should be strictly restricted only to the Goans and there should not be outside interference in the campaign in Goa".<sup>103</sup>

O Heraldo warned that if the Opinion Poll was conducted on the basis of existing electoral rolls it would be only a "farce or booby trap" to "deceive the Goans".<sup>104</sup> Its grievance was that the electoral rolls of the last elections included large number of deputationists mostly the Maharashtrians. O Heraldo cried that exclusion of Goans residing in Bombay and Calcutta from the electoral roll for the Opinion Poll was an "act of treason".<sup>105</sup>

Articles published by O Heraldo invariably portrayed the M.G.P as the real villain in the dispute. They also castigated the I.N.C for its inconsistency. In March 1965, Shri Zoivonta Desai charged that the High Command was not honouring the assurances given by Pandit Nehru. He accused the M.G.P Government of destroying the communal harmony prevailing in Goa. In March 1965 Shri Victor Telles denounced the Resolution for merger approved by the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu as the most diabolical act of the M.G.P. In December 1966, Shri F. Athaide condemned the M.G.P leaders for the "subjugation" of Goa. Shri Ramesh Rao urged the Goans to vote against merger to preserve "Goa's Culture". Shri Willie exhorted the Goans to save their "individuality". In January 1966, Shri Adelaide D'Souza asked the Goans to be resolute to "save" Goa. <sup>106</sup>

Editorials of O Heraldo preached that Goa's economic development would be better, faster and smoother if Goa continues as a Union Territory and not through its merger into Maharashtra. In December 1966, the paper condemned the Opinion Poll as a "fraud" on the people of Goa and urged that people should oppose it because the outcome of the Opinion Poll was to be decided by means of simple majority. O Heraldo demanded that the decision should be based on two thirds majority. Had the Government of India conceded this demand of O Heraldo, there would have been yet another

Opinion Poll because the difference between the vote for Union Territory and the vote for Merger was 34,021 votes. 107

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# CHAPTER V

## Summary and Conclusions

### 1. Goa.

Portuguese Colonialism was confined to a small territory of India. The area of Goa is 3,702 sq. kms. It is located on the West Coast of India, with the latitude of 14°53'57"N and 15°47'49"E and 74°20'11"E. In the North, Goa has a boundary with Maharashtra and in the South, with Karnataka. The territory of Goa is cut across by mountains, streams and beaches. Its main rivers are Mandovi, Zuari, Chapora and Sal. Mormugao harbour in Goa is one of the best natural harbours on the West Coast of India. (Chap I, p. 5 ). Unlike the British and the French, The Portuguese refused to read the writing on the wall. Government of India's reluctance to use force to liberate Goa reinforced the obstinacy of the Portuguese. In December 1961 Government of India was compelled to expel the Portuguese colonialists from India through a military action.

During the colonial rule attempts were made to "Lusitanise" the people of Goa. Portuguese rulers and the Vatican were determined to impose Western Culture on the people of Goa. Obviously, it involved the use of force as nowhere in the world people like to part with their own indigenous customs, traditions and the way of life. "The Cross and the sword together made Goans identify the fear of God with the love of the new 'motherland'." Portuguese forcibly converted the people of Goa to Christianity. They destroyed their temples and prohibited nonchristian festivals. They interfered with their ancient traditions and imposed upon them a foreign way of life. (Chap I, p.6).

The Portuguese embarked upon mass conversion of Hindus to Christianity to guarantee loyalty of Goans to Portugal and thus consolidated their rule. They believed that common religion and common culture are more reliable than any other values for the perpetuation of colonial rule in Goa. (Chap I, p. 7). These steps of the colonial rulers resulted in the alienation of the section of Goans from their indigenous culture. They also successfully destroyed the national character of Goans. (Chap I, p. 7). "Not satisfied with exploitation and oppression of the country, such as is done in the name of civilization by all colonising powers, the Portuguese further used other means of mental enslavement that resulted not only in denationalisation of our people, but even denaturalised them to a degree unknown in other countries". As time passed, the descendants of Hindus forcibly converted to Christianity entirely lost the consciousness of their Hindu lineage. They forgot the tortures inflicted upon their forefathers to imitate the foreign culture. Subsequent brainwashing created a conviction amongst the converts of "superiority of the blend produced by this forcible and unnatural meeting of the East and West". (Chap I, p. 8).

Liberation of Goa at once raised the question of its final political status within the Indian Union. Should Goa be merged into neighbouring State of Maharashtra or should it become an independent State of Indian Union? Two Schools of thought emerged. One school supported the concept of "separate identity" of Goa which must be preserved at all costs by making Goa a separate State of the Indian Union or its continuation as an Union Territory. Second school supported the concept of Goa as an integral part of Maharashtra. Both schools used the concepts of Culture and Language to enhance their claims.

## 2. Culture.

Champions of Unique Identity argued that Goa's Identity is the outcome of their life under altogether different colonial master for several centuries." The Portuguese conquest and presence for over four hundred years has made Goa what it is..... This East -West synthesis, apart from investing on the land a singular character and a glowing and peaceful ambience, has raised a people with a sharp and unmistakable identity of which they are very proud" (Chap I, p. 14) . It was claimed that the centuries of single alien rule and the evangelical fervour with which that power exercised its rule has given Goa a separate identity. Goans, both Christians and Hindus, consider themselves as some kind of "special tribe". (Chap I, p.15)

The other school dismissed Unique Identity of Goa as nothing but a fiction invented by the vested interests which prospered under Portuguese colonialists. "The so much boasted westernization of Goans is but a superficial pretence. It is more an evidence of their mental subserviency..... The westernization of Goans has essentially a slavish character. In fact, Portuguese intolerance succeeded..... in instilling the notion that to be civilized..... it was indispensable to ape western manners and to despise everything Indian.... With regard to Goa, one cannot merely speak of denationalisation of culture but of an utter cultural bankruptcy". (Chap I, p.15) This school asserted that the Unique Identity is the off - spring of Denationalisation.

This contentious issue became the sole determinant of Goa's political future within the Indian Union. It was also the main force which moulded the Political Parties of Goa. It was the major staple for the Press in Goa and it provided a stimulant to the pressure groups. (Chap I, p.16)

Supporters of Merger emphasised the existence of strong cultural bonds between Goa and Maharashtra. According to them, Goa had been the cradle of Marathi language and culture for many centuries. Culturally, Goa was not only "a part of Maharashtra but the soul of Maharashtra". Goa's mother-tongue was Marathi and Konkani was only its dialect that is, "boli". (Chap II, p. 47). Before the Liberation of Goa, the Portuguese deftly used the Denationalised class in Goa to create an impression in the world that Goa was different from the rest of India. During the colonial bondage of Goa, Lisbon and Vatican used this class, to denigrate India. (Chap II, p.65).

It is indeed strange that both supporters and opponents of merger raised lot of dust over " Culture", which, infact, had nothing to do with merger or non-merger. It goes without saying that Culture is not a hot- house plant. Goa and Maharashtra are part and parcel of India which no political party in Goa and Maharashtra disputed. How can they dispute that Goa's and Maharashtra's cultures were different from the Culture of India ? In fact Culture was the greatest common factor of both Goa and Maharashtra. It was, therefore, height of absurdity to politicise in terms of culture. The main political rivals in Goa - the M.G.P and the U.G.P -freely indulged in this absurdity. Supporters of Merger praised culture of Maharashtra and opponents of merger praised Goa's Unique Culture, which according to them was perfect blending of East and West. The most ridiculous was the argument of culture of majority and culture of minority. (Chap.II, p.67).

It is worthwhile to note that the blending of East and West is not visible in the vital areas of Culture. By blending of the East and the West, probably they mean side by side existence of the Cultures of the East and the West in a few groups in Goa. Rationally, it would be a folly to identify the East only with

India because the East is the home of several Cultures amongst them one is Indian Culture. Even Prime Minister Nehru, laughed at the contention that Goa has Culture of its own. According to Nehru "Goa and Union of India form one country" and the history of Portuguese possession of Goa is "a very dark chapter of India's history". Pandit Nehru ridiculed the contention that Goa is the specimen of European culture. He remarked "..... Goa is repeatedly referred to as a shining light of European culture. Opinions may differ on what European culture is. But I should like to put it to Europe and to the countries of Europe, whether they regard the culture represented by Goa today, or even by Portugal as European culture at its highest and brightest. (Chap II, p.67).

### 3. Language

Constitutionally and politically question of merger or non-merger depended on an answer to one question. Is Konkani a language as independent as Marathi? In 1956, political map of India was redrawn on the linguistic basis under the States Reorganisation Act. If Konkani was an independent language then it was automatically entitled to have a State of its own. No wonder, supporters and opponents were eager to prove the premise which suited their interests. Both sides were fortunate in having philological experts to rely upon.

According to the supporters of merger, philologically Konkani was not at all an independent language. It was only the dialect of Marathi. According to the opponents of merger, philologically Konkani was an independent language. (Chap II, pp48-9). It was asserted that Konkani is the mother-tongue of the Goans. It was also highlighted that Konkani was as rich as any other Indian language but the treasure of Konkani language was destroyed by the

Portuguese barbarians when they forcibly imposed their own language on the Goans (Chap III, p. 109). If ever there was one person who gave his intellect, energy and resources and even sacrificed his life for the restoration of Konkani Language, he was Shri Vamanrao Varde Valavlikar famous as **Shenai Goibab**. Inclusion of Konkani in the Eight Schedule of the Constitution of India in 1992 is a tribute to the foresight of Shri Vamanrao Varde Valavlikar.

#### **4. Political Parties (Regional and National)**

Controversy over the final political status of Goa contributed to the emergence of two powerful regional Political Parties in Goa. They were the Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party (M.G.P) and the United Goans Party (U.G.P) . The M.G.P stood for Goa's merger into Maharashtra,. The U.G.P was totally opposed to Goa's merger into Maharashtra. The two parties were the key players on the chessboard of Goan politics right from the days of the First General Election of 1963 to the holding of the Opinion Poll in 1967. They had their friends and foes in the national Political Parties.

#### **Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party (M.G.P)**

Many Goans held that the integration of Goa with India and her merger with Maharashtra were "as much a practical necessity as was its freedom from Portuguese domination". (Chap II, p.43). It is very important to note that the idea of Goa's merger into Maharashtra was not at all a post-liberation idea. It existed much before and was developed by both the Goans and the Maharashtrians (Chap II, p.44).

Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party (M.G.P) was the product of these thought - processes. (Chap II, p.44). Objective of the M.G.P was Goa's merger into Maharashtra. Article 2 of the Constitution of the M.G.P proclaimed that Goa was "historically and geographically, culturally and economically part and parcel of Maharashtra". Maharashtra comprised of four natural divisions, Konkan being one of them. Goa was an integral part of Konkan division of Maharashtra. (Chap II, p.46).

First General Election of Goa in 1963 became the battle ground between pro-merger and anti-merger forces. M.G.P fought the elections on the issue of merger. (Chap II, p.49). Legislature of the Union Territory of Goa, Daman and Diu consisted of thirty members. The M.G.P bagged fourteen, the UGP twelve, the Independents three and the Indian National Congress one. Of the three Independents, two belonged to the Praja Socialist Party, but they contested the elections as independents and were supported by the M.G.P. The M.G.P polled 38.78 percent of the votes. The M.G.P formed the Government with Shri D. B. Bhandarkar as Chief Minister. The M.G.P proclaimed that it was just a "Caretaker Government" which would resign the moment the Union Government announced Goa's merger into Maharashtra. The M.G.P interpreted the outcome of the election of 1963 as the people's verdict for merger.

If the M.G.P secured 38.78 percent of the total votes, the U.G.P secured 28.44 percent. Indian National Congress polled 15.52 percent. Frente Popular approximately 1 percent and Independents 10.62 percent. The U.G.P did not get even one seat in these parts of Goa where opinion was in favour of "Cultural diversity" and "separate State". Similarly the U.G.P did not get even one seat where opinion was in favour of merger. Therefore, the M.G.P

was not justified in claiming its victory in the election as a mandate for merger. (Chap II, p.51).

Parliamentary politics revolves round the Parliament. Hence, for the MGP Government nothing was more important than the introduction and approval of the Resolution for Merger by the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu. Ofcourse the M.G.P knew very well that the passage of resolution by itself cannot bring merger. Merger can come only with the approval of Parliament and Parliament was then controlled by the Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. However, the passage of resolution for merger had immense political advantage. It would have created favourable public opinion for merger throughout India. (Chap II, p.52). The Private Member's Resolution -- Resolution No. 15 : Re-merger of Goa into Maharashtra -- asserted that Goa was culturally, geographically and historically a part of Maharashtra. It reaffirmed that Marathi was the language of Goa and Konkani was its dialect. The resolution urged the Government of India " to take appropriate steps (immediately) to sponsor the necessary legislation in Parliament" because the delay was "frittering away the e nergies of the people" (Chap. II, p.54).

When the resolution was voted, the twelve U.G.P. members and one INC MLA staged a walkout. In the House of twenty-nine, excluding the Speaker, fifteen members - thirteen M.G.P and two P.S.P - voted for the Resolution and the member from Diu voted against the Resolution. (Chap II, p.54) The passage of Resolution boosted the morale of the supporters of merger. Now that the Legislative Assembly recommended the "re-merger of Goa with Maharashtra", the Union Government could not afford to ignore the wishes of the people of Goa. (Chap II, p. 56 ).

The Private Member's Bill - **The Goa Daman and Diu Official Language Bill NO. 7 of 1966** - was moved in the Legislative Assembly on 22 July 1966. The U.G.P. strongly opposed its introduction on the ground that the Bill was based on an absolutely wrong premise that Marathi was the language of Goa. However the Bill was not discussed as the Assembly was dissolved in December 1966. (Chap II, p. 58).

The M.G.P. branded the U.G.P as an "anti-national and a fifth columnist Party". It warned the Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri about the "camouflaged activities of the Portuguese Stooges". The M.G.P highlighted that the same people, who had earlier worked against the Liberation of Goa, were now working to keep Goa isolated from the rest of India" under the garb of status quo". (Chap II, p.58).

The M.G.P had consistently maintained that the verdict of the election of 1963 was a mandate for merger and the Union Government had consistently taken the stand that it was only a mandate to "govern" Goa. Atlast the Government of India realised that it cannot continue the policy of evasion. In October 1966, the Government of India announced that the Opinion Poll will be held to decide the final political status of Goa, Daman and Diu. (Chap II, p. 60 ).

Incapable to defy the Government of India, the M.G.P welcomed the Opinion Poll. Bandodkar Ministry resigned on 3 December 1966. The M.G.P geared itself to meet the challenge by organising public meetings, morchas, street plays and door to door canvassing. Bandodkar alone addressed 133 public meetings and travelled everyday not less than one hundred miles. He pinpointed that the propaganda that merger would harm the interests of

Catholic Community in Goa was false and mischievous propaganda because thousands of Catholics were living in Bombay alone. There were also Catholics living in the other parts of Maharashtra. He told the lovers of Konkani that merger would not mean step - motherly treatment to the advancement of Konkani. (Chap. II, p.61) Bandodkar highlighted the economic benefits of merger. According to the M.G.P. only Goa's merger into Maharashtra would guarantee continuous economic prosperity to Goa. (Chap II, p. 64 ).

Maharashtrian leaders actively and directly and vigorously participated in the Opinion Poll Campaign in Goa. They belonged to all national Political Parties such as the Indian National Congress, the Jan Sangh, now Bhartiya Janata Party, The Praga Socialist Party and the Communist Party of India. The Maharashtra Government issued a Nine-point statement on 30 December 1966, in which it promised the people that "every effort will be made to accelerate the development of Goa" and special attention will be given to agriculture, including irrigation, supply of power, roads and bridges, industrialization and development of mining. (Chap II, p.64).

The result of the Opinion Poll was officially announced on 19 January 1967. Total vote for Goa's Merger into Maharashtra was only 1, 38, 170 . At last, the M.G.P. failed to win its objective of Goa's merger into Maharashtra. (Chap II, p.64).

### **United Goans Party (U.G.P.)**

Aggressive campaign for Goa's merger into Maharashtra in the aftermath of the Liberation terribly frightened the supporters of "Separate Identity" which they thought would be lost once and for all. (Chap II, p.65).

Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party was formed in March 1963. Reaction to its formation was the formation of another political party in Goa. It was the United Goans Party. (Chap II, p.66). Objective of the U.G.P. was Statehood for Goa. The U.G.P, therefore, had to struggle for the recognition of Konkani as the Official language of Goa. Its politics perforce was to oppose the M.G.P and frustrate its design of Goa's merger into Maharashtra. (Chap II, p.66).

The U.G.P's sheet anchor was Goa's "Unique Culture" and 'Unique Identity". Its logic was geared to propagating that Goa's history begins with its occupation by the Portuguese. Both Unique Culture and Unique Identity were the by - products of Portuguese Colonialism. The U.G.P. invented the Slogan " *आमचें गोंय आमकां जाय* " - Goa only for the Goans. Cornerstone of the U.G.P. propaganda was that Goa's merger into Maharashtra would destroy Goa's Identity and Goa's Unique Culture and thereby Goans would become total non-entities. Goa would become just one of the insignificant districts of Maharashtra. (Chap II, p.66)

Leadership of the U.G.P was controlled by the elite which was compelled to swallow its pride over many issues. Foremost among them was the issue of language. Till the Liberation of Goa, this elite was proud to speak and write only in European languages, especially Portuguese and English. They openly condemned Konkani as "Lingua de Criadas" Language of Servants. As the States of Indian Union derived their existence only from the Indian languages, the U.G.P leadership had no other alternative than to cling to Konkani firmly in order to protect its interests. Hence, they shouted from the house - tops that Konkani was not at all the "Dialect" of Marathi. Konkani is a language as independent as Marathi. Additional advantage was that the concentration on Konkani enabled the Denationalised Christians and Hindus and

the Roman Catholic Church to use those who were truly committed, dedicated and devoted to the development of Konkani. The Movement for Separate State could not be dismissed as the handiwork of the reactionary forces in Goa. On their part, the reactionaries learnt that only the "Language of Servants" was to be "The Official Language of Goa".

In the First General election of 1963, the U.G.P's Manifesto concentrated on the Separate State of Goa and recognition of Konkani as the official language of Goa. It polled 28.45 percent of the votes and bagged twelve seats in the Legislature. In December 1963, Shri Y.B. Chavan, then Defence Minister of India portrayed the U.G.P. as the mouthpiece of Europe or Portugal. He remarked that there was ceaseless effort to make Goa a "black Portuguese area" He warned that the people with "extra - territorial loyalties" were hiding under the facade of Separate Statehood". The U.G.P consistently denied that it was an anti-national party. How could "आमचें गोंय आमकें जात्य " be an expression of anti -nationalism? The U.G.P claimed that its goal was only a full-fledged State of Goa within the Indian Union like State of Maharashtra and Mysore. (Chap II, p.69).

As sturdy opponent of Merger, the U.G.P conducted energetic and vigorous propaganda against the merger and for the recognition of Konkani as the language of Goa. It was very alert and attentive on every step of the M.G.P. It never hesitated to retaliate and pursued tit for tat policy to checkmate the M.G.P. The U.G.P rejected "election" as a "method" to resolve the dispute. It was a rational position. Election is only a "method" to locate the party which can form the Government. Election cannot settle such a controversial issue as merger or non-merger. (Chap II, p.69).

Resolution of Merger approved by the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu on 22 January 1965 was exploited by the U.G.P. to broaden its base and improve its prospects. It organised rallies and meetings in all parts of Goa condemning the merger resolution and charged that the M.G.P. was "selling Goa" (Chap II, p.70).

The U.G.P. was highly suspicious of "Increasing influx of Maharashtrian personnel" on "deputation" to the Government of Goa, Daman and Diu. It openly charged that the "deputationists" were the powerful ploy used by the M.G.P. Government and Maharashtra Government to accomplish merger. Hence, on 30 January 1965 Dr. Jack Sequeira, the Leader of the Opposition demanded that the Government of Goa, Daman and Diu remove immediately all "Maharashtrian deputationists from the Administration". (Chap II, p.71).

According to the Constitution of India, people of India are entitled for employment in every part of the Indian Union. However, when Maharashtra was actively and directly working for Goa's merger within itself, it was improper for Government of Goa, Daman and Diu to employ "deputationists" from Maharashtra. (Chap II, p.71).

The U.G.P. treated Prime Minister Nehru's political promise with the reverence which people give to their religious texts. Time and again it complained that the powers that be were not respecting Nehru. It took pains to convince all concerned that the movement for Separate Statehood for Goa within Indian Union was not the movement of "Portuguese stooges" as alleged by the supporters of merger. It was the genuine movement of people of Goa. (Chap II, p.72).

If the Opinion Poll disheartened the M.G.P. it boosted the morale of the U.G.P. However, the U.G.P. was very unhappy as regards the alternative in the Opinion Poll, namely "Merger in Maharashtra or Continuation of Union Territory". It concentrated on campaigning for its cause in predominantly pro-merger constituencies. The U.G.P. harped upon Goa's "separate identity and separate individuality". (Chap II, p.74).

The verdict of the Opinion Poll was for the continuation of the Status of Union Territory. Total number of votes for Union Territory was 1,72,191. The difference between vote for Union Territory and Vote for merger was 34,021 votes. The U.G.P. succeeded in defeating the M.G.P. (Chap II, p.75)

### **Indian National Congress**

From the Liberation of Goa to the holding of the Opinion Poll to decide its final status, the policy of the Indian National Congress was an excellent example of confusion worse confounded. The Indian National Congress controlled the Union Government and hence it mattered the most in the political arena. The Ruling Party was always divided into groups. The pro-merger and the anti-merger groups, the pro-Maharashtra and the pro-Mysore Groups. Every group was patronized by the powerful leaders within the Party and Government. (Chap II, p.75). Consequently, the Indian National Congress lost the initiative to decide the future of Goa though it was its privilege as the controller of the Union Government.

During the first general election of 1963 the INC was a house divided against itself. The Maharashtra Pradesh Congress openly supported the M.G.P. The Mysore Congress covertly supported the U.G.P. Two groups within Goa

Pradesh Congress worked for two opposite causes. Outcome of the election mortified the INC. All the Congress candidates in Goa were not only defeated but eighteen of them including Shri Puroshottam Kakodkar, the President of Goa Pradesh Congress forfeited their deposits. The Congress won only one seat in the Legislative Assembly of Goa, Daman and Diu, from Daman. In the history of elections in India, Goa proved to be the Waterloo for Indian National Congress. Charisma of Pandit Nehru, powerful positions held by the stalwarts in Party organisation and Union Government could not dazzle the Goan electorate. (Chap II, p.78).

The politics of Goa from the Liberation till the Opinion Poll clearly indicated that the Ruling Party at the Centre should not overestimate its strength and under estimate the people of any part of the Nation. From 1962 till 1980 the Indian National Congress fared very poorly in all elections in Goa. The I.N.C which has been ruling Goa since 1980 is the Congress of the "defectors" from the United Goans Party and the Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party. (Chap .II, p. 82 ).

### **Other National Political Parties.**

National Political Parties such as Jan Sangh, now Bhartiya Janata Party, (B.J.P), The Communist Party of India, (C.P.I) and Praja Socialist Party (RSP) favoured Goa's merger into Maharashtra. Hence, the Central leadership of these Political Parties was not directly involved in Goa's Affairs. They delegated full authority to their respective branch organisation in Maharashtra. (Chap II, p.83).

The Praja Socialist Party (P.S.P) was the most vocal and active national Political Party on Goa's fate. It was but natural because most of its leaders had actively participated in Goa's struggle for freedom before Liberation. It was the ardent and unequivocal supporter of Goa's merger into Maharashtra. It was the guide, philosopher and friend of the M.G.P. (Chap II, p.83).

However like the I.N.C, these National Political Parties also suffered from the internal divisions. Their branches in Maharashtra assiduously worked for Goa's merger into Maharashtra but their branches in Mysore encouraged and supported the forces which opposed Goa's merger into Maharashtra. The discussion on the Opinion Poll Bill in the Parliament reveals the minds of the members belonging to one and the same Political Party but expressing and supporting opposite view points on merger due to their area of operation in Maharashtra or Mysore. (Chap II, p.85).

#### **5. Groups : Cultural, Economic, Religious and Social.**

"Merger issue " cast its shadow on every walk of Goan life. All sensitive individuals associations, groups and even those generally indifferent to politics such as cultural associations were keenly involved in the struggle that was to decide the political fate of Goa. These groups were as active as the Political Parties. These Groups operated from Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and Goa. Economic and Religious groups were predominant.

#### **Money Power**

Exact amount of money spent by the supporters and the opponents of merger from 1963 to 1967 is not known and cannot be known. Money was

received by them from the indigenous and foreign sources. It was openly stated that the supporters of merger received money from the businessmen and Political Parties from Goa and Maharashtra. It was also openly stated that the opponents of merger received money from businessmen from Goa and other parts of India, from the European States, from the United States of America and from the Roman Catholic Church. (Chap II, p.110). Shri Puroshottam Kakodkar stated that Goa - Vilinikaran Sahayak Samiti was formed in Bombay with the specified purpose of helping "monetarily" the supporters of merger. He also asserted that "sixty lakhs" were transferred from Bombay to Panaji and a large number of small and big vehicles from Maharashtra flooded the roads of Goa, during the Opinion Poll campaign. (Chap III, p.105).

Mine-owners such as Shri. V. D. Chowgule, Chief Minister D.B. Bandodkar, Shri M.S. Talaulikar, Shri N. Narvenkar supported Goa's merger into Maharashtra. Mine - owners such as Shri V.S. Dhempo, Shri V. M.Salgaocar the Leader of the Opposition, Dr. Jack De Sequeira, Shri Lima Leitao opposed Goa's merger into Maharashtra. Mine-Owners such as Shri G. N. Agarwal, Shri Shantilal Gosalia, Shri Damodar Mangalji were either neutral or helped both the supporters and the opponents of Merger. (Chap III, p.116). Some of the mine-owners were also the owners of the Newspapers published in Goa. However, neither the supporters of merger nor the opponents of merger were able to furnish evidence of exact amount of money which according each of them was received by the other.

### **Religion**

Political Parties, Cultural Economic and Social Groups were mobilisers of public opinion but they knew that Religion is the moulder of the decision of

the voter. Hence, whilst propagating political economic and social advantages and disadvantages, they at the same time, concentrated on wooing the religious leaders.

Religiously, population of Goa is divided into Hindu and Christians with a very small percentage of Muslims. The Christians belong to the Roman Catholic Church with headquarters at Vatican, Rome. It would be intellectually dishonest and factually incorrect to belittle or suppress the influence of religion on political and social life in India. Though the people that matter loudly profess Secularism, they subtly manipulate religion to achieve their goals. In Goa too the Political Parties and Groups carefully nursed religious leaders to influence the people for the realisation of their goals. Religion was one of the vital factors which determined the outcome of the Opinion Poll. (Chap III, p.101).

In Goa the Hindus constitute the majority but as the Hindu Religion does not have one Organisation and one Pope controlling its adherents, it was not as effective as the Roman Catholic Church during the campaign for the Opinion Poll. Forces supporting the merger relied on the "revivalist" Shibboleth to rally the Hindu voters. They "played on Hindu sentiments". At every merger rally, it was repeatedly asserted that "After 450 years Goddess Shanta Durga, the family deity of most Hindus will meet Goddess Bhawani", the family deity of Chattrapati Shivaji, only if people vote for merger. As early as the first general election of 1963, they induced the voters to take vows by placing palms on the coconut in the temples to vote for the M.G.P. During the Opinion Poll, they induced them to vote for the Flower. The Hindus consider the pledge on coconut as the most sacred and hence never violate the pledge. (Chap III, p.101).

First General Election of Goa in 1963 became the battle ground between pro-merger and anti - merger forces. In this election all Political Parties used Caste and Religion as the main avenues of approach to the electorate. "The language appeal was simplified rough and ready symbol for a whole complex of feelings and interests which may be described as communal". Thus the first - ever democratic experiment in Goa heavily relied on the communal base. (Chap II, p. 50 ). Prime Minister Nehru contended that first ever general election increased "Communalism" in Goa. (Chap II, p.52).

Political Parties and Cultural, Economic and Social Groups tirelessly approached the Swamis and the Priests and earnestly implored them to use their weight in favour of merger. Majority of Priests in the Hindu temples of Goa --- the **Bhats** - originate from Konkan and speak Marathi in their homes. By and large, it was as difficult to find an anti - merger Hindu priest as it was difficult to find pro-merger Catholic priest. Only difference was that in the Hindu temples there are no compulsory daily or weekly sermons as they are in the Churches and Chapels of the Catholics.

Like the Christians, Hindus do not have prayer service where practically entire neighbourhood regularly meets at one place. However the Hindus frequently meet in the Temples for the **Bhajans** and **Kirtans** which do provide an opportunity to the **Bhats** to discuss matters of public importance. It is pertinent to note that the efforts to unearth the evidence on the role played by the Heads, of the Hindu religions organisations and the Hindu priests failed. General tendency among the activists in Politics, Social work, Economic field and scholars is either to brand them as "indifferent" or "inconsequential" factor. The generalisation is presumptuous. (Chap III, p.102).

During the Portuguese rule in Goa, the Roman Catholic Church, with headquarters at Vatican, Rome was not only the final arbiter of Christianity in Goa but also an arbiter in political and administrative matters. Indeed, no Governor - General of Goa Daman and Diu could rule with peace if he refused to court the friendship of the Patriarch of the East Indies. There was an element of truth in the contention of supporters of merger that during the Portuguese rule of Goa, Roman Catholicism was the "State Religion" and the officials of Roman Catholic Church and Denationalised Christians were a privileged class. During the Portuguese rule of Goa, Government gave to the Roman Catholic Church in Goa every year Rs. three lakhs from Goa's treasury. In Goa's Liberation Roman Catholic Church in Goa lost not only Rs. three lakhs but also political and administrative leverage. In the twilight of Liberation, the Church functionaries in Goa were stupified. (Chap III, p.119).

Supporters of merger regretted that Government of India failed to grasp that the "demand for a separate State was co-terminus with the religious population" cut off from the national mainstream and addicted to Latin Culture, they used the Shibboleth of "special identity" to protect and promote their interests in Liberated Goa. They shrewdly grasped that their best protection lay in making Goa a separate State within the Indian Union. This section of Christian Community was blessed by the Roman Catholic Church which was also desperately looking for political influence it can have in Goa's day-to-day-life. (Chap III, p.120).

During the first general election of 1963, Roman Catholic Church helped the champions of separate State by placing at their disposal the services of the "pulpit and the confessional". The Church was one of the chief promoters of the U.G.P. In the field of propaganda, Roman Catholic Church was only

institution in the most and advantageous position. It was better equipped than even the Political Parties. It spread its tentacles from east to west and from north to south. It has a disciplined cadre with Archbishop at the top and the priest at the bottom.

Church organisation throughout the world enjoys reputation for chain of Command and efficient execution of the orders of the Vatican. The Church services include regular sunday sermons and daily sermons if necessary which are faithfully attended by the laity. The priests enjoy absolute freedom of expression. No propaganda can be conducted without the generous supply of money. Here too the Roman Catholic Church was in better position than the others. It was asserted that the Governments of European countries and the United States of America pumped their money in Goa through the Church. Roman Catholic Church itself is the richest religious institution in the world. (Chap III, p.120).

In April 1964 at Kolhapur, Chief Minister Bandodkar asserted that the merger was vehemently opposed only by the rich Christians from Goa and out of Goa. They skilfully projected Goa as the Rome of the East. According to Bandodkar some groups of Goan Christians in collusion with the Vatican and the Christian States of Europe were pressurising the Government of India not to merger Goa into Maharashtra. (Chap II, p.51) Shri Perter Alvares MP (PSP) emphatically asserted that the dispute over the future status of Goa was nothing but a conflict between the "forces of national integration and religious exclusiveness". According to him the real mentors of religious exclusiveness were Rome and Lisbon who pulled the strings. (Chap III, p.121).

According to Chief Minister Bandodkar in August 1966 the Church authorities supported the Satyagraha campaign organised by the Council of Action in July

1966 to throw him and the M.G.P. out of power. Bandodkar also maintained that Archbishop James Robert Knox, Apostolico to India was the guide of the United Goans Party which spearheaded that agitation.(Chap III, p.121 ).

Roman Catholic Church was intensely active during the campaign for the Opinion Poll, though it tirelessly denied its involvement in the political affairs of Goa. From time to time its functionaries issued handouts. For the purposes of this study some priests were interviewed. They maintained that the Church had not campaigned openly and explicitly. The Church did not issue any "directives to influence the people on how to cast their vote". The opponents of merger also stressed the "neutrality" of the Roman Catholic Church during the campaign for Opinion Poll. (Chap III, p.121).

The weakness of arguments buttressing the "neutrality" of Roman Catholic Church is obvious. Roman Catholic Church is essentially a religious organisation and a Religious Organisation which claims that it alone knows the Final Truth. Such a Church will always interpret all social problems only within its religious framework. Rationally, it is difficult to accept the contention that the Church was involved only in a "Social Mission" in the Opinion Poll. the supporters of merger rejected outright the fiction of neutrality of Roman Catholic Church in the Opinion Poll. They asserted that the sermons were shrewdly used as the outlets for political propaganda. There were frequent gestures of raising two fingers for "Two Leaves". (Chap III p.122).

Bishop Francisco de P. Rebello's contention that priests never preached politics at the Church services but as individuals, the priests were free to propagate their views on political matters invited the charge of hypocrisy. Priest's primary function is religion. People respect the priest not for his

superior wisdom but for his religious office. Secondly neither the priests nor the bishops nor other human beings are angels. All human beings are bound to use their influence for the cause dear to their heart whatever may be their religion and Christians are not an exception. (Chap III, p.122).

The Roman Catholic Church even had a newspaper acting as its mouthpiece. It was the daily in the Portuguese language - **A Vida**. Father Lucio De Veiga Coutinho told the researcher that he himself wrote many editorials, though officially he was not the editor. He also wrote commentaries under the pen-name - **Simple Simon**. Simple Simon's favourite theme was "Bandodkar's Communalism". In January 1967 the Church Authorities expressed their joy over the verdict of the Opinion Poll. According to the Church Authorities holding of the Opinion Poll proved to be a "blessing in disguise", a sort of "felix culpa" because its verdict favoured the retention of Goa's "individuality and culture". (Chap III, p.123).

## 6. Press

In a democracy, Press educates the people and shapes the public opinion on important issues. Press can help the activists or frustrate their efforts. Hence the Media is the most feared and the most respected agency in every democracy. Everywhere in the world, the powers that be cannot afford to ignore the Press because the Press reaches all people.

No wonder, Press played prominent role in Goa during the Opinion Poll. It was but natural because on such an important issue as the future of Goa, Press could not be expected to be indifferent. Four languages constituted the medium of Press communication. They were -- Marathi, Konkani, English and

Portuguese. It may seem strange but it is true that the origin of newspaper in Goa after Liberation can be traced to the controversy that divided the people of Goa into two rival camps :-- pro-merger and anti - merger. (Chap IV, p.131 ).

**Gomantak** and **Gomantwani**, the dailies in Marathi emerged only to promote the cause of merger. **Pradeep** also in Marathi was for the merger. After the Opinion Poll, **Gomantwani** and **Pradeep** ceased to exist. Complete files of these two newspapers are not maintained in any library in Goa. Efforts to get them through their publishers and editors were also fruitless. Hence it was impossible to analyse the contribution of **Gomantwani** and **Pradeep** in the Opinion Poll. The issues of Gomantwani from January 1964 to June 1964 which could be traced with much difficulty have been studied. Fortunately, the newspapers that spearheaded the agitation from the beginning to end continue to provide their files up-to-date. (Chap IV, p.131).

**Rashramat**, a daily in Marathi, was established to espouse the cause of anti merger. **The Navhind Times**, a daily in English, and **Goa Today**, a monthly in English, supported the anti -merger cause. The Press in Konkani and Portuguese were opposed to Goa's merger into Maharashtra. They stood for the status of Union Territory for Goa. Papers published in Konkani, used Devnagari script and Roman script. **Sot** and **Duty** were two dailies published in Roman Script. Sadly, though it is intensely propagated that Konkani is the mother - tongue of Goans, people reading Konkani had been and are few. Circulation of these two dailies was very restricted and both of them disappeared after the Opinion Poll. **Sot** edited by Shri Felicio Cardoso propagated against merger. As the files of **Sot** and **Duty** are not accessible anywhere, it was not possible to assess their contribution to the cause they supported in the Opinion Poll. Goans educated in Portuguese relied on

Portuguese papers. Two dailies published in Portuguese - **A Vida** and **O Heraldo** were strongly opposed to merger. They also provided columns written in English because their readership in Portuguese was very limited. (Chap IV, p. 132).

It is pertinent to note that the dailies, weeklies and monthlies published in **Indian languages** made greater impact on the electorate than the dailies, weeklies and monthlies published in European languages. Like others, the Press was also neatly divided into two camps. Each attacked the other, with no holds barred. Editorials, Articles, Cartoons, Projection of News and even letters to editors were deftly used to get maximum mileage. (Chap IV, p. 132).

## 7. Significance of the Opinion Poll

In September 1966, the Congress Parliamentary Board recommended the Opinion Poll to ascertain the wishes of the people of Goa on their future. The Parliament passed the Goa, Daman and Diu (Opinion Poll) Bill 1966 which was assented by the President of India on 11 December 1966. The Opinion Poll Act was an excellent piece of legislation. Its language was clear and unambiguous. As the Act was first of its kind, Parliament took pains to approve it with great care. The Opinion Poll Act was passed unanimously by both the Houses of Parliament. (Chap I, p. 22).

The Constitution of India does not expressly provide Referendum or Opinion Poll to resolve political tangles. But none can dispute the power of Parliament to make use of either of them. (Chap I, p. 21). The roots of Opinion Poll are to be found in the Direct Democracy.

Clause 3 of the Opinion Poll Act provided basic objective of the Act. It was to ascertain : (a) "The wishes of the electors of Goa as to whether Goa should merge in the State of Maharashtra or should continue to be Union Territory". Thus, the choice of the people was strictly restricted to the merger with Maharashtra or the continuation as the Union Territory. (Chap I, p.24). By providing the continuation of Union Territory as one of the alternatives, the "future Status" of Goa was kept an open issue. All knew that the status of Union Territory was purely transitional and hence a perennial source for agitation. It would have been better if the alternatives were three instead of two, as subsequently people clamoured for Statehood. Fortunately, the clamour did not provoke an ugly agitation before the granting of Statehood to Goa in 1987. (Chap I, p.25).

Next to the objective, the most important issue was who would be voter in the Opinion Poll. Clause 4 of the Opinion Poll Act provided that ; subject to the provisions of section 23 of the Opinion Poll Act - " (a) every elector of an assembly constituency in Goa and **no other person**, shall be entitled to vote at the Opinion Poll taken in relation to Goa". (Chap I, p.25 ).

After the Liberation of Goa, a large number of people from various regions of country settled in Goa to pursue their professions, occupations and trade. This was but natural as large number of Goans had been settled in different parts of the country even before the Liberation of Goa. However, political destiny of Goa was a matter of the greatest importance only to the people of Goa. People other than the Goans were not as much concerned as the Goans. Hence, their participation in the Opinion Poll was likely to distort the outcome of the Poll. Such was the fear of some Political Parties, and the groups. On their behalf, the United Goans Party demanded a totally new

electoral roll which must include : 1) the Goans living in Goa (2) the Goans settled in all parts of India and (3) the Goans settled in any country in the world. They also insisted on the deletion of "non-Goan elements", from the electoral roll to be used for the Opinion Poll. (Chap I, p. 26 ). Strangely, even the Indian National Congress in Goa, which professed the national outlook, was strongly opposed to the inclusion of "deputationists" in the electoral roll. The "deputationist" was the term used to identify officers serving in Goa Government but belonging to the neighbouring States especially Maharashtra. (Chap I, p.26).

Government of India replied that every Indian resident of Goa was "as much a Goan as anybody who was born there or whose father was born there or whose grandfather was born there. " It also added : as the Goans are not at all a "separate race" from other Indians there was no question of granting polling rights on the basis of "Goan" ancestry. The Government of India also rejected the contention that the Goans living in other parts of India should be given the right to vote in the Opinion Poll.

Government of India's assertion that "Anybody who lives in Goa and who is ordinarily resident in Goa can only be a Goan and who is ordinarily resident in Goa" was correct. It was not only democratic but also a positive step to promote national integration. If the Government of India were to concede the claim that only the Goans should participate in the Opinion Poll it would have strengthened the "forces of separatism" and hampered Goa's merger in the national mainstream. The slogans such as Maharashtra for Maharashtrians, Punjab for Punjabis, Kashmir for Kashmiris and Goa for Goans are nothing but the expressions of the vested interests which thrive at the expense of National Interests and weaken the unity of the Nation. (Chap I, p.29).

Nevertheless, in order to facilitate the Goans living elsewhere in India, Government of India inserted a provision - Clause 5 to the effect that they could register themselves as "ordinarily residents" of Goa if for some reasons they were not registered as voters in the coming Assembly and Parliamentary elections. Clause 5 generously exempted such Goans from the payment of the fees which must be paid for the inclusion of names in the electoral roll.

The Act left the interpretation of the term "ordinarily resident" to the discretion of the Chief Electoral Officer or the Electoral Registration Officer. (Chap I, p.29). The Chief Election Commissioner K.V.K. Sundaram was straightforward in declaring publicly that participation in the Opinion Poll would be strictly restricted to only those who were covered by the term "ordinarily resident" of the territory of Goa and the residents of Goa implied those who resided in the "Territory at specified address" He clarified that the Goan seamen, registered as the voters would be entitled to vote but not through the postal ballot as it was not provided by the law. (Chap I, p. 30 ).

It is to the credit of Government of India that on two most important aspects namely the objective of the Opinion Poll and the right to vote in the Opinion Poll, it remained firm and upheld the National Interests. (Chap I, p.30).

The Result of the Opinion Poll was declared on 19 January 1967. It was as follows :

The total number of electors is	..... 388392
The total number of electors who voted at the Opinion Poll is	.....317633
The total number of votes rejected as invalid is	..... 7272
The total number of electors of Goa who are of the opinion that Goa should merge in the State of Maharashtra is	.....138170
The total number of electors of Goa who are of the opinion that Goa should continue to be Union Territory is	..... 172191

{Government Gazette, Goa, 21 January 1967 Series II, No.42 Supplement No.2}. The difference between the vote for the Union Territory and the vote for Merger was 34,021 votes.

For the first time in Savaraj India such a method was used to solve an acute political controversy. It is very pertinent to note that neither before 1967 nor after 1967, Opinion Poll has been used to solve the disputes, though the number of such disputes continue to disrupt the relations between many States of the Indian Union. So far, Goa is the only part of country where Opinion Poll has been used and dispute has been settled once and for all.

Hence the Opinion Poll in Goa constitutes a landmark in the political history of India.

Constitutional progress of Goa from the Union Territory to the Statehood has proved that the Opinion Poll is the best method to settle an acute political controversy. Hence it could be used to settle the existing disputes amongst the States of the Indian Union, such as Border Disputes and Disputes relating to the distribution of River waters. Herein lies the significance of the Opinion Poll.

# APPENDICES

1 **15 December, 1966 Government Gazette supplement , Series 1 No. 37**

## GOVERNMENT OF GOA, DAMAN AND DIU

### Secretariat

Law Department

Office of the Chief Electoral Officer

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### Notification

The Goa, Daman and Diu (Opinion Poll) Act (Act No. 38 of 1966) which has received the assent of the President on the 11th December 1966 is hereby published for general information.

P.B. Venkatasubramanian, Chief Electoral Officer.  
Panjim, 14th December, 1966.

## THE GOA, DAMAN AND DIU (OPINION POLL) ACT, 1966

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### ARRANGEMENT OF CLAUSES

#### CLAUSES :

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Short title and commencement.  | opinion poll commissioners performing the functions of opinion poll commissioner.                 |
| 2. Definitions  | 10. General duty of opinion poll commissioner.  |
| 3. Opinion poll to ascertain the future status of Goa, Daman and Diu.                                       | 11. Provision of polling stations.  |
| 4. Persons entitled to vote at opinion poll.  | 12. Appointment of presiding officers for polling stations.                                       |
| 5. Fees not to be paid on applications for inclusion of names in electoral roll, etc.                       | 13. General duty of presiding officer.  |
| 6. Conduct of opinion poll under the superintendence, direction and control of Chief Election Commissioner. | 14. Duty of a polling officer.  |
| 7. Opinion poll commissioner.   | 15. Staff of every local authority to be made available for work in connection with opinion poll. |
| 8. Assistant opinion poll commissioners.  | 16. Notification for opinion poll.  |
| 9. Opinion poll commissioner to include assistant   | 17. Fixing time for opinion poll.   |
|   | 18. Adjournment of opinion poll in emergencies.   |
|   | 19. Fresh opinion poll in case of destruction etc., of ballot boxes.                              |
|   | 20. Manner of voting at opinion poll.   |
|   | 21. Special procedure for voting by certain classes of persons.                                   |
|   | 22. Special procedure for presenting personation of electors.                                     |
|   | 23. Voting at an opinion poll.  |
|   | 24. Counting of votes.  |
|   | 25. Destruction, loss, etc., of ballot papers and time of counting.                               |
|   | 26. Declaration of results.   |
|   | 27. Report of the result.   |
|   | 28. Offences at opinion poll.   |
|   | 29. Fresh opinion poll in case of extensive prevalence of offences referred to in section 28.     |
|   | 30. Other electoral offences.   |
|   | 31. Application of certain provisions of Act 43 of 1951.  |

32. Delegation of functions of Chief Election Commissioner.
33. Power to make rules.
34. Jurisdiction of civil courts barred.
35. Removal of difficulties.

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**The Goa, Daman and Diu (Opinion Poll) Act, 1966**

AN

ACT

to provide for the taking of an opinion poll to ascertain the wishes of the electors of Goa, Daman and Diu with regard to the future status thereof and for matters connected therewith.

Be it enacted by Parliament in the Seventeenth Year of the Republic of India as follows :-

(1). Short title and commencement. -- (1) This Act may be called the Goa, Daman and Diu (Opinion Poll) Act, 1966.

(2) It shall come into force on such date as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint, and different dates may be appointed for different provisions of this Act.

2. Definitions. -- In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, ---

(a) "Administrator" means the Administrator of the Union territory of Goa, Daman and Diu, appointed by the President under article 239 of the Constitution ;

(b) "Chief Election Commissioner" means the Chief Election Commissioner appointed by the President under article 324 of the Constitution ;

(c) "Daman" means the area comprised in the Daman assembly constituency;

(e) "elector" means --

(i) in relation to Goa, a person whose name is entered in the electoral roll of an assembly constituency

for the time being in force in Goa; and

(ii) in relation to Daman and Diu, a person whose name is entered in the electoral roll of an assembly constituency for the time being in force either in Daman or in Diu ;

(f) "Goa" means the area comprised in the assembly constituencies of the Union territory other than the areas comprised in the Daman assembly constituency and the Diu assembly constituency;

(g) "opinion" means a poll taken to ascertain the wishes of the electors in pursuance of the provisions of this Act;

(h) "prescribed" means prescribed by rules made under this Act ;

(i) "Union Territory" means Union territory of Goa, Daman and Diu ;

(j) all other words and expressions used but not defined in this Act and defined in the Representation of the People Act, 1950, or, as the case may be, in the Representation of the People Act, 1951, shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in those Acts.

3. Opinion Poll to ascertain the future status of Goa, Daman and Diu. -- An opinion poll shall be taken for the purpose of ascertaining --

(a) the wishes of the electors of Goa as to whether Goa should merge in the State of Maharashtra or should continue to be Union territory;

(b) the wishes of the electors of Daman and Diu as to whether Daman and Diu should merge in the State of Gujarat or should continue to be Union territory.

4. Persons entitled to vote at opinion poll. --  
Subject to the provisions of section 23 ---

(a) every elector of an assembly constituency in Goa, and no other person, shall be entitled to vote at the opinion poll taken in relation to Goa;

(b) every elector of the Daman assembly

constituency and the Diu assembly constituency, and no other person, shall be entitled to vote at the opinion poll taken in relation to Daman and Diu.

5. Fees not to be paid on applications for inclusion of names in electoral roll, etc. -- Notwithstanding anything contained in the Representation of the People Act, 1950, or in any rule made thereunder, no fee shall be payable in respect of --

(a) any application for inclusion of any name in the electoral roll of any assembly constituency in Goa, Daman and Diu under section 23 of that Act ; or

(b) any appeal preferred against any order made on such application,

if such application or appeal is made or preferred within a period of thirty days immediately following the commencement of this Act.

6. Conduct of opinion poll under the superintendence, direction and control of Chief Election Commissioner. --- The opinion poll shall be conducted under the superintendence, direction and control of the Chief Election Commissioner.

7. Opinion poll commissioner. -- The Chief Election Commissioner shall designate or nominate one opinion poll commissioner in relation to the opinion poll commissioner in relation to the opinion poll in Daman and Diu and each such opinion poll commissioner shall be an officer of Government.

8. Assistant opinion poll commissioners. -- (1) The Chief Election Commissioner may appoint one or more persons to assist the opinion poll commissioner in the performance of his functions, and every such person shall be an officer of Government and shall be called an assistant poll commissioner.

(2) Every assistant opinion poll commissioner shall, subject to the control of the opinion poll commissioner, be competent to perform all or any of the functions of the opinion poll commissioner.

9. Opinion poll commissioner to include assistant opinion poll commissioners performing the functions of opinion poll commissioner :- References in this Act to the opinion poll commissioner shall, unless the context otherwise requires, be deemed to include an assistant opinion poll commissioner performing any function which he is competent to perform under sub-section (2) of section 8.

10. General duty of opinion poll commissioner.

It shall be the general duty of the opinion poll commissioner to do all such acts and things as may be necessary for effectually conducting the opinion poll in the manner provided in this Act and the rules or orders made thereunder.

11. Provision of polling stations. --- The opinion poll commissioner of Goa and the opinion poll commissioner of Daman and Diu shall, with the previous approval of the Chief Election Commissioner, provide a sufficient number of polling stations respectively for Goa and for Daman and Diu, and shall publish, in such manner as the Chief Election Commissioner may direct, a list showing the polling stations so provided and the polling areas or groups of voters for which they have respectively been provided.

12. Appointment of presiding officers for polling stations.-- (1) The opinion poll commissioner of Goa and the opinion poll commissioner of Daman and Diu shall appoint a presiding officer for each polling station respectively in Goa and in Daman and Diu and such polling officer or officers as the opinion poll commissioner concerned thinks necessary, but he shall not appoint any person who has been employed by, or on behalf of, or has been otherwise working for, any political party:

Provided that if a polling officer is absent from the polling station, the presiding officer may appoint any person who is present at the polling station other than a person who has been employed by, or on behalf of, or has been otherwise working for, any political

party, to be a polling officer during the absence of the former officer, and inform the opinion poll commissioner concerned accordingly :

Provided further that nothing in this sub-section shall prevent the opinion poll commissioner from appointing the same person to be the presiding officer for more than one polling station in the same premises.

(2) A polling officer shall, if so directed by the presiding officer, perform all or any of the functions of the presiding officer under this Act and any rules or orders made thereunder.

(3) If the presiding officer, owing to illness or other unavoidable cause, is obliged to absent himself from the polling station, his functions shall be performed by such polling officer as has been previously authorised by the opinion poll commissioner to perform such functions during any such absence.

(4) References in this Act to the presiding officer shall, unless the context otherwise requires, be deemed to include any person performing any functions which he is directed or authorised to perform under sub-section (2) or sub-section (3), as the case may be.

13. General duty of presiding officer, --- It shall be the general duty of the presiding officer at a polling station to keep order thereat and to see that the opinion poll is fairly taken.

14. Duty of a polling officer. -- It shall be the duty of the polling officers at a polling station to assist the presiding officer for such station in the performance of his functions.

15. Staff of every local authority to be made available for work in connection with opinion poll. -

Every local authority in the Union territory shall, when so requested by the Chief Election Commissioner or the opinion poll commissioner concerned, make available to such opinion poll commissioner such staff as may be necessary in the performance of any

duties in connection with the opinion poll.

16. Notification for opinion poll. --- The President shall, in consultation with the Chief Election Commissioner, by notification published in the Gazette of India, fix the date or dates on which an opinion poll shall be taken in accordance with the provisions of this Act and the rules or orders made thereunder in relation to Goa or, as the case may be, Daman and Diu.

17. Fixing time for opinion poll. --- The Chief Election Commissioner shall fix the hours during which the opinion poll will be taken; and the hours so fixed shall be published in such manner as may be prescribed :

Provided that the total period allotted on any one day for polling at an opinion poll shall not be less than eight hours.

18. Adjournment of opinion poll in emergencies.

(1) If, at an opinion poll, the proceedings at any polling station provided under section 11 are interrupted or obstructed by any riot or open violence, or if it is not possible to conduct the poll at any polling station on account of any natural calamity or any other sufficient cause, the presiding officer for such polling station shall announce an adjournment of the opinion poll to a date to be notified later, and where the opinion poll is so adjourned by a presiding officer, he shall forthwith inform the opinion poll commissioner concerned.

(2) Whenever an opinion poll is adjourned under sub-section (1), the opinion poll commissioner shall immediately report the circumstances to the Chief Election Commissioner and shall, as soon as may be, with the previous approval of the Chief Election Commissioner, appoint the day on which the opinion poll shall recommence and fix the polling station at which, and the hours during which, the opinion poll will be taken, and shall not count the votes cast at such opinion poll until such adjourned

opinion poll shall have been completed.

(3) In every such case as aforesaid, the opinion poll commissioner shall notify, in such manner as the Chief Election Commissioner may direct, the date, place and hours of polling fixed under sub-section (2).

19. Fresh opinion poll in case of destruction, etc., of ballot boxes :- (1) If at any opinion poll. --

(a) any ballot box used at a polling station is unlawfully taken out of the custody of the presiding officer or is accidentally or intentionally destroyed or lost, or is damaged or tampered with, to such an extent, that the result of the opinion poll at that polling station cannot be ascertained, or

(b) any such error or irregularity in procedure as is likely to vitiate the poll is committed at a polling station.

the opinion poll commissioner shall forthwith report the matter to the Chief Election Commissioner.

(2) Thereupon, the Chief Election Commissioner shall, after taking all material circumstances into account, either --

(a) declare the opinion poll at that polling station to be void, appoint a day, and fix the hours, for taking a fresh opinion poll at that polling station and notify the day so appointed and the hours so fixed in such manner as he may deem fit, or

(b) if satisfied that the result of fresh opinion poll at that polling station will not, in anyway, affect the result of the opinion poll or that the error or irregularity in procedure is not material, issue such directions to the opinion poll commissioner as he may deem proper for the further conduct and completion of the opinion poll.

(3) The provisions of this Act and the rules or orders made thereunder shall apply to every such fresh opinion poll as they apply to the original opinion poll.

20. Manner of voting at opinion poll. -- At the

opinion poll, votes shall be given ballot in such manner as may be prescribed, and no votes shall be received by proxy.

21. Special procedure for voting by certain classes of persons. --- Without prejudice to the generality of the provision contained in section 20, provision may be made by rules made under this Act for enabling -

(a) any of the following persons to give his vote by postal ballot, and not in any other manner, at an opinion poll, namely:-

(i) a member of the Armed Forces of the Union or, as the case may be, of an armed police force of the Union territory, to whom the provisions of sub-section (3) of section 20 of the Representation of the People Act 1950, apply ;

(ii) a person who is employed under the Government of India in a post outside India;

(iii) the wife of any such person as is referred to in sub-clauses (i) and (ii) to whom the provisions of sub-section (6) of the said section 20 apply;

(b) any person subjected to preventive detention under any law for the time being in force, to give his vote by postal ballot, and not in any other manner, at an opinion poll, subject to the fulfilment of such requirements as may be specified in those rules.

22. Special procedure for preventing personation of electors. -- With a view to preventing personation of electors, provision may be made by rules made under this Act, ---

(a) for the marking with indelible ink on the thumb or any other finger, of every elector who applies for a ballot paper for the purpose of voting at a polling station before delivery of such paper to him;

(b) for prohibiting the delivery of any ballot paper to any person for voting at a polling station if at the time such person applies for such ballot paper he has already such a mark on his thumb or any other

finger.

23. Voting at an opinion poll. --- (1) No person shall vote at an opinion poll in the Union territory, if he is subject to any of the disqualifications referred to in section 16, of the Representation of the People Act, 1950.

(2) No person shall, at an opinion poll, vote more than once, notwithstanding that his name may have been registered in the electoral roll more than once, and if he does so vote, all his votes shall be void.

(3) No person shall vote at an opinion poll if he is confined to any prison, whether under a sentence of imprisonment or transportation or otherwise, or is in the lawful custody of the police;

Provided that nothing in this sub-section shall apply to a person subjected to preventive detention under any law for the time being in force.

24. Counting of votes. -- At the opinion poll, votes shall be counted by, or under the supervision and direction of, the opinion poll commissioner, and a representative of each of the political parties for which a symbol has been exclusively reserved in Goa or, as the case may be, in Daman and Diu by the Election Commission shall have a right to be present at the time of counting.

25. Destruction, loss, etc., of ballot papers at the time of counting. -- (1) If, at any time before the counting of votes is completed, any ballot papers used at a polling station are unlawfully taken out of the custody of the opinion poll commissioner or are accidentally or intentionally destroyed or lost or are damaged or tampered with, to such an extent that the result of the opinion poll at that polling station cannot be ascertained, the opinion poll commissioner shall forthwith report the matter to the Chief Election Commissioner.

(2) Thereupon, the Chief Election Commissioner shall, after taking all material circumstances into account, either---

(a) direct that the counting of votes be stopped, declare the opinion poll at that polling station to be void, appoint a day, and fix the hours, for taking a fresh opinion poll at that polling station and notify the day so appointed and hours so fixed in such manner as he may deem fit, or

(b) if satisfied that the result of fresh opinion poll at that polling station will not, in any way, affect the result of the opinion poll, issue such directions to the opinion poll commissioner as he may deem proper for the resumption and completion of the counting and for the further conduct and completion of the opinion poll in relation to which the votes have been counted.

(3) The provisions of this Act and any rules or orders made thereunder shall apply to every such fresh opinion poll as they apply to the original opinion poll.

26. Declaration of results. --- When the counting of votes has been completed, the opinion poll commissioner shall, unless otherwise directed by the Chief Election Commissioner, forthwith declare the result of the opinion poll in the manner provided by this Act or the rules made thereunder.

27. Report of the result. -- As soon as may be after the result of the opinion poll has been declared, the opinion poll commissioner shall report the result to the Administrator and to the Chief Election Commissioner and the Administrator shall cause the same to be published in the Official Gazette.

28. Offences at opinion poll. --- Section 171B (dealing with the offence of bribery), section 171C (dealing with the offence of undue influence at elections), section 171D (dealing with the offence of personation at elections), section 171E (dealing with punishment for bribery) and section 171F (dealing with punishment for undue influence or personation at an election) of the Indian Penal Code shall apply in relation to an opinion poll taken under this Act subject to the following modifications,

namely : ---

(a) any reference to a candidate shall be omitted;

(b) any reference to election shall be construed as a reference to opinion poll;

(c) any reference to electoral right shall be construed as a reference to the right of a person to vote or refrain from voting at an opinion poll.

29. Fresh opinion poll in case of extensive prevalence of offences referred to in section 28. -- (1) If the Chief Election Commissioner, on receipt of a report from the opinion poll commissioner or otherwise, is satisfied that the opinion poll taken at any polling station or stations has not been a free one by reason that any of the offences referred to in section 28 has been extensively committed in connection with such poll, he may make a report to the President recommending that a fresh opinion poll be taken at such polling station or stations.

(2) The President may, after considering the report of the Chief Election Commissioner, direct that a fresh opinion poll shall be taken at such polling station or stations in accordance with the provisions of this Act and the rules or orders made thereunder and give such further directions for the completion of the opinion poll as he considers necessary.

30. Other electoral offences. --- The provisions of sections 125 to 132 and 134 to 136 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, shall, so far as may be, apply to an opinion poll as they apply to an election under that Act, and any reference in those provisions to --

(a) the chief electoral officer shall be omitted ;

(b) a returning officer and an assistant returning officer shall be construed as a reference to an opinion poll commissioner and an assistant opinion poll commissioner respectively.

31. Application of certain provisions of Act 43 of 1951. --- The provisions of sections 160 to 167 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 shall

apply, so far as may be, to and in relation to an opinion poll as they apply to and in relation to an election and any reference to the State Government in those sections shall be construed as a reference to the Administrator.

32. Delegation of functions of Chief Election Commissioner :-- The functions of the Chief Election Commissioner under this Act or under the rules made thereunder may, subject to such general or special directions, if any, as may be given by the Chief Election Commissioner in this behalf, be performed also by a Deputy Election Commissioner or by the Secretary to the Election Commission.

33. Power to make rules :-- (1) The Central Government may, after consultation with the Chief Election Commissioner, by notification in the Official Gazette, make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act.

(2) In particular, and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power, such rules may provide for all or any of the following matters, namely :--

(a) the duties of the opinion poll commissioner;

(b) the duties of presiding officers and polling officers at polling stations ;

(c) the manner in which votes are to be given both generally and in the case of illiterate voter or voters under physical or other disability and of the persons specified under section 21 ;

(d) the manner of publication of the hours during which the opinion poll will be taken ;

(e) the procedure as to voting to be followed at an opinion poll to prevent personation of electors;

(f) the manner of declaration of the result of the opinion poll;

(g) any other matter required to be prescribed by, or provided for by rules under, this Act.

34. Jurisdiction of civil courts barred. -- No

civil court shall have jurisdiction to question the legality of any action taken or of any decision given by the Chief Election Commissioner or by the opinion poll commissioner or by any other person appointed under this Act in connection with an opinion poll.

35. Removal of difficulties. -- If any difficulty arises in giving effect to the provisions of this Act, the Central Government may, by order published in the Official Gazette, do anything not inconsistent with such provisions which appears to it be necessary or expedient for the purpose of removing the difficulty.

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**Notification**

The President has been pleased by a notification issued under section 1(2) of the Goa, Daman and Diu (Opinion Poll) Act (Act No. 38 of 1966) to bring it into force with effect from the 12th December, 1966.

P.B. Venkatasubramanian, Chief Electoral Officer.  
Panjim, 14th December, 1966.

**Notification**

The following notification issued by the Central Government is hereby republished for general information :--

<< In exercise of the powers conferred by section 16 of the Goa, Daman and Diu (Opinion Poll) Act, 1966 (38 of 1966), the President in consultation with the Chief Election Commissioner, hereby fixes the 16th day of January, 1967 as the date on which an opinion poll shall be taken in accordance with the provisions of the said Act and the rules and orders made thereunder, (a) in relation to Goa and (b) in relation to Daman and Diu.>>

P.B. Venkatasubramanian, Chief Electoral Officer.  
Panjim, 15th December, 1966.

2. **Goa 21st December, 1966, Series  
1 No. 37 Supplement (No.3)  
Government Gazette**

**GOVERNMENT OF GOA, DAMAN  
AND DIU**

Office of the Chief Electoral Officer

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**Notification**

LA/ELN/2227/66

The following notification of the Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary Part II, Section 3, Sub-section (i) dated the 18th December 1966 is hereby republished for general information :--

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**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS**

**Notification**

New Delhi, the 16th December 1966

G.S.R. In pursuance of the powers conferred by section 33 of the Goa, Daman and Diu (Opinion Poll) Act, 1966 (38 of 1966), the Central Government, after consultation with the Chief Election Commissioner, hereby makes the following rules, namely :--

**PART I**

**Preliminary**

1. **Short title and commencement.** -- (1) These

rules may be called the Goa, Daman and Diu (Opinion Poll) Rules, 1966.

(2) They shall come into force at once.

2. **Definitions.** -- In these rules, unless the context otherwise requires :--

- (a) <Act> means the Goa, Daman and Diu (Opinion Poll) Act, 1966 (38 of 1966) ;
- (b) <ballot box> includes any box, bag or other receptacle used for the insertion of ballot paper by voters ;
- (c) <counting agent> in relation to a political party means any counting agent appointed under rule 37 ;
- (d) <elector on poll duty> means any polling agent, any polling officer, presiding officer or other public servant, who is an elector and is by reason of his being on poll duty unable to vote at the polling station where he is entitled to vote ;
- (e) <Form> means a Form appended to these rules and includes a translation thereof in the language or any of the languages used for official purposes of the Union territory ;
- (f) <marked copy of the electoral roll> means the copy of the electoral roll set apart for the purpose of recording the serial numbers of ballot papers issued to electors at the opinion poll;
- (g) < political party> means any of the following political parties : ---
  - (i) the Indian National Congress;
  - (ii) the Frente Populare;
  - (iii) the Maharashtrawadi Gomantak;
  - (iv) the United Goans;
- (h) <poll commissioner> means the opinion poll commissioner appointed under section 7 and includes the assistant opinion poll commissioner appointed under section 8 ;

- (i) < polling agent> in relation to a polling station means any of the polling agents appointed, by a political party, under rule 4 for that polling station ;
- (j) <polling station> means the place provided under section 11 for conducting the opinion poll;
- (k) <presiding officer> includes any polling officer performing any of the functions of a presiding officer under sub-section (2) or sub-section (3) of section 12 ;
- (l) <section> means a section of the Act;
- (m) <service voter> means any person who is required to give his vote by postal ballot under clause (a) of section 21.

## PART II

### General Provisions

3. Public notice of intended opinion poll. --- On the issue of a notification under section 16, the poll commissioner shall give public notice of the intended opinion poll in Form 1 and shall publish it in such manner as he thinks fit.

4. Appointment of polling agents. --- (1) Every political party may appoint one polling agent and two relief agents at each polling station.

(2) Every such appointment shall be made in Form 2 and shall be signed either by the President or the General Secretary of the political party and shall be made over to the polling agent for production at the polling station.

(3) No polling agent shall be admitted into the polling station unless he has delivered to the presiding officer the instrument of his appointment under sub-rule (2) after duly completing and signing before the presiding officer the declaration contained therein.

5. Publication of hours fixed for polling. --

hours fixed for the opinion poll under section 17 shall be published by notification in the Official Gazette of the Union territory.

6. Voting normally to be in person. -- Save as hereinafter provided, all electors voting at the opinion poll shall do so in person at the polling station provided for them under section 11:

Provided that an elector on poll duty may vote at any other polling station subject to his complying with the provisions for rule 7.

7. Electors on poll duty. -- Every elector on poll duty shall send an application in Form 3 to the poll commissioner so as to reach him at least four days, or such lesser period as the poll commissioner may allow, before the date of poll and if the poll commissioner is satisfied that the applicant is on poll duty, he shall --

(a) issue to the applicant a poll duty certificate in Form 4;

(b) mark 'PDC' against his name in the marked copy of the electoral roll to indicate that the poll duty certificate has been issued to him ; and

(c) ensure that he is not allowed to vote at the polling station where he would otherwise have been entitled to vote.

### PART III

#### Postal Ballot

8. Persons entitled to vote by post. -- Service voters and electors under preventive detention shall, subject to their fulfilling the requirements hereinafter specified, be entitled to vote by post.

9. Electors under preventive detention. -- (1) The Administrator shall, within 15 days of the issue of the notification under section 16, ascertain and intimate to the poll commissioner the names of the electors, if any, subjected to preventive detention together with their addresses and electoral roll numbers and the

particulars about their places of detention.

(2) Any elector subjected to preventive detention may, within 15 days of the issue of notification under section 16, send an intimation to the poll commissioner that he wishes to vote by post, specifying his name, address, and place of detention.

(3) The poll commissioner shall issue a postal ballot paper to every elector subjected to preventive detention whose name has been intimated to him under sub-rule (1) or sub-rule (2).

10. Form of ballot paper. --- A postal ballot paper shall be in the same form as the ordinary ballot paper with the words <<postal ballot paper >> stamped on the reverse.

11. Issue of ballot paper.--- (1) A postal ballot paper shall be sent by post under certificate of posting to the voter together with :--

(a) a declaration in Form 5 ;

(b) a cover in Form 6;

(c) a large cover addressed to the Poll Commissioner in Form 7; and

(d) instructions for the guidance of the electors in Form 8.

(2) The poll commissioner shall at the same time--

(a) record the serial number of each ballot paper against the entry relating to that elector in the marked copy of the electoral roll; and

(b) ensure that the elector is not allowed to vote at a polling station.

(3) Every Officer under whose care or through whom a postal ballot paper is sent shall ensure its delivery to the addressee without delay.

(4) After ballot papers have been issued to all the electors entitled to vote by post, the poll commissioner shall seal up in a packet that part of the marked copy of the electoral roll which relates to service voters and record on the packet a brief

description of its contents and the date on which it was sealed and send the other relevant part of the marked copy to the several presiding officers for recording the serial numbers of ballot papers issued to the electors at the polling stations.

12. Recording of vote. -- (1) An elector who has received a postal ballot paper and decides to vote shall record his vote on the ballot paper in accordance with the directions contained in Form 8, and then close it in cover in Form 6.

(2) The elector shall sign the declaration in Form 5 in the presence of, and have the signature attested by, a stipendiary magistrate or such other officer specified below, as may be appropriate, to whom he is personally known or to whose satisfaction he has been identified :--

(a) in the case of a service voter, such officer as may be appointed in this behalf by the Commanding Officer of the unit, ship or establishment in which the voter or her husband, as the case may be, is employed or such officer as may be appointed in this behalf by the diplomatic or consular representative of India in the country in which such voter is resident;

(b) in the case of an elector under preventive detention, the Superintendent of the Jail or the Commandant of the detention camp in which the elector is under detention.

13. Return of ballot paper. -- (1) After an elector has recorded his vote and made his declaration under rule 12 he shall return the ballot paper and declaration to the poll commissioner in accordance with the instructions communicated to him in Form 8 so as to reach the poll commissioner before the hour fixed for the close of the poll on the date or the last of the dates fixed for such poll.

(2) If any cover containing a postal ballot paper is received by the poll commissioner after the expiry of the time fixed in sub-rule (1), he shall note thereon the date and time of its receipt and shall keep all such

covers together in a separate packet.

(3) The poll commissioner shall keep in safe custody until the commencement of the counting of votes all covers containing postal ballot papers received by him.

## PART IV

### Voting in the Opinion Poll

14. Design of ballot boxes. -- The ballot boxes to be used at the opinion poll shall be of the design approved by the Election Commission for use at the Parliamentary and Assembly Elections in the Union territory.

15. Form of ballot papers. -- Every ballot paper shall be in such form, and the particulars therein shall be in such language or languages, as the Chief Election Commissioner may direct.

16. Arrangements at polling stations. -- (1) Outside each polling station there shall be displayed prominently a notice specifying the polling area the electors of which are entitled to vote at the polling station, and if the polling area has more than one polling station, the particulars of the electors so entitled.

(2) At each polling station there shall be set up one or more voting compartments in which electors can record their votes screened from observation.

(3) The poll commissioner shall provide at each polling station a sufficient number of ballot boxes, copies of the relevant part of the electoral roll, ballot papers, instruments for stamping the distinguishing mark on ballot papers and articles necessary for electors to mark the ballot papers.

17. Admission to polling stations. -- The presiding officer shall regulate the number of electors to be admitted at any one time inside the polling station and shall exclude therefrom all persons other than --

(a) polling officers ;

- (b) public servants on duty in connection with the 'opinion poll;
- (c) persons authorised by the Chief Election Commissioner;
- (d) one polling agent of each political party;
- (e) a child in arms accompanying an elector;
- (f) a person accompanying a blind or infirm elector who cannot move without help;
- (g) such other persons as the poll commissioner or the presiding officers may employ under sub-rule (2) of rule 20 or sub-rule (1) of rule 21.

18. Preparation of ballot boxes for poll.--- (1) Where a paper seal, is used for securing a ballot box, the presiding officer shall affix his own signature on the paper seal and obtain thereon the signatures of such of the polling agents present as are desirous of affixing the same.

(2) The presiding officer shall thereafter affix the paper seal, shall sign in the space meant thereof in the ballot box and shall then secure and seal the box in such a manner that the slit for the insertion of ballot paper therein remains open.

(3) The seals used for securing a ballot box shall be affixed in such manner that after the box has been closed it is not possible to open it without breaking the seals.

(4) Every ballot box used at a polling station shall bear labels both inside and outside, marked with --

(a) the serial number and name of the polling station;

(b) the serial number of the ballot box (to be filled in at the end of the poll on the label outside the ballot box only); and

(c) the date of the poll.

(5) Immediately before the commencement of

the poll, the presiding officer shall demonstrate to the polling agents and the persons present that the ballot box is empty and bears the labels referred to in sub-rule (4).

(6) The ballot box shall then be closed, sealed and secured and placed in full view of the presiding officer and the polling agents.

19. Marked copy of electoral roll. -- Immediately before the commencement of the poll, the presiding officer shall also demonstrate to the polling agents and others present that the marked copy of the electoral roll to be used during the poll does not contain any entries other than those made in pursuance of clause (b) of rule 7 and clause (a) of sub-rule (2) of rule 11.

20. Facilities for women electors. -- (1) Where the polling station is for both men and women electors, the presiding officer may direct that they shall be, admitted into the polling station alternately in separate batches.

(2) The poll commissioner or the presiding officer may appoint a woman to serve as attendant at any polling station to assist women electors and also to assist the presiding officer generally in taking the poll in respect of women electors and in particular to help in searching any woman elector in case it becomes necessary.

21. Identification of electors. -- (1) The presiding officer may employ at the polling station such persons as he thinks fit to help in the identification of the electors or to assist him otherwise in taking the poll.

(2) As each elector enters the polling station, the presiding officer or the polling officer authorised by him in this behalf shall check the elector's name and other particulars with the relevant entry in the electoral roll and then call out the serial number, name and other particulars of the elector.

(3) In deciding the right of a person to obtain a ballot paper the presiding officer or the polling officer, as the case may be, shall overlook merely clerical or

printing errors in an entry in the electoral roll, if he is satisfied that such person is identical with the elector to whom such entry relates.

22. Facilities for public servants on poll duty :- (1) The provisions of rule 21 shall not apply to any person who produces at the polling station a poll duty certificate in Form 4 and asks for the issue of a ballot paper to him although the polling station is different from the one where he is entitled to vote.

(2) On production of such certificate, the presiding officer shall --

- (a) obtain thereon the signature of the person producing it ;
- (b) have the person's name entered at the end of the marked copy of the electoral roll; and
- (c) issue to him a ballot paper, and permit him to vote, in the same manner as for an elector entitled to vote at that polling station.

23. Challenge of identity. -- (1) Any polling agent may challenge the identity of a person claiming to be a particular elector by first depositing a sum of two rupees in cash with the presiding officer for each such challenge.

(2) On such deposit being made, the presiding officer shall--

- (a) warn the person challenged of the penalty for personation;
  - (b) read the relevant entry in the electoral roll in full and ask him whether he is the person referred to in that entry;
  - (c) enter his name and address in the list of challenged votes in Form 9; and
  - (d) require him to affix his signature in the said list.
- (3) The presiding officer shall thereafter hold a summary inquiry into the challenge and may for that purpose --

(a) require the challenger to adduce evidence in proof of the challenge and the person challenged to adduce evidence in proof of his identity;

(b) put to the person challenged any questions necessary for the purpose of establishing his identity and require him to answer them on oath; and

(c) administer an oath to the person challenged and any other person offering to give evidence.

(4) If, after the inquiry, the presiding officer considers that the challenge has not been established, he shall allow the person challenged to vote ; and if he considers that the challenge has been established, he shall debar the person challenged from voting.

(5) If the presiding officer is of the opinion that the challenge is frivolous or has not been made in good faith, he shall direct that the deposit made under sub-rule (1) be forfeited to Government, and in any other case, he shall return it to the challenger at the conclusion of the inquiry.

24. Safeguards against personation. --- (1) Every elector about whose identity the presiding officer or the polling officer, as the case may be, is satisfied, shall allow his left forefinger to be inspected by the presiding officer or polling officer and an indelible ink mark to be put on it.

(2) If any elector refuses to allow his left forefinger to be inspected or marked in accordance with sub-rule (1) or has already such a mark on his left forefinger or does any act with a view to removing the ink mark he shall not be supplied with any ballot paper or allowed to vote.

(3) Any reference in this rule to the left forefinger of an elector shall, in the case where the elector has his left forefinger missing, be construed as a reference to any other finger of his left hand, and shall in the case where all the fingers of his left hand are missing, be construed as a reference to the forefinger or any other finger of his right hand, and shall in the case where all his fingers of both the hands are missing be

construed as a reference to such extremity of his left or right arm as he possesses.

25. Issue of ballot papers to electors.--- (1) Every ballot paper shall before issue to an elector be stamped with such distinguishing mark as the Chief Election Commissioner may direct.

(2) At the time of issuing a ballot paper to an elector, the polling officer shall record the serial number thereof against the entry relating to the elector in the marked copy of the electoral roll.

(3) Save as provided in sub-rule (2), no person in the polling station shall note down the serial number of the ballot paper issued to particular electors.

26. Voting procedure. -- (1) The elector on receiving the ballot paper shall forthwith --

(a) proceed to the voting compartment, and if there are more than one voting compartment, to one of the voting compartments.

(b) there make a mark on the ballot paper with the instrument supplied for the purpose on or near the symbol for which he intends to vote,

(c) fold the ballot paper so as to conceal his vote,

(d) if required, show to the presiding officer the distinguishing mark on the ballot paper,

(e) insert the folded ballot paper into the ballot box, and

(f) quit the polling station.

(2) No elector shall be allowed to enter a voting compartment when another elector is inside it.

27. Recording of votes of blind or infirm electors.

(1) If the presiding officer is satisfied that owing to blindness or their physical infirmity an elector is unable to recognise the symbols on the ballot paper or to make a mark thereon without assistance, the presiding officer shall permit the

elector to take with him a companion of not less than twenty-one years of age to the voting compartment for recording the vote on the ballot paper on his behalf and in accordance with his wishes, and, if necessary, for folding the ballot paper so as to conceal the vote and inserting it into the ballot box :

Provided that no person shall be permitted to act as the companion of more than one elector at any polling station on the same day :

Provided further that before any person is permitted to act as the companion of an elector on any day under this rule, the person shall be required to declare that he will keep secret the vote recorded by him on behalf of the elector and that he has not already acted as the companion of any other elector at any polling station on that day.

(2) The presiding officer shall keep a record in Form 10 of all cases under this rule.

28. Spoilt and returned ballot papers. -- (1) An elector who has inadvertently dealt with his ballot paper in such manner that it cannot be conveniently used as a ballot paper may, on returning it to the presiding officer and on satisfying him of the inadvertence, be given another ballot paper, and the ballot paper so returned shall be marked < Spoilt : cancelled> by the presiding officer.

(2) If an elector after obtaining a ballot paper decides not to use it, he shall return it to the presiding officer, and the ballot paper so returned shall be marked as < Returned : cancelled> by the presiding officer.

(3) All ballot papers cancelled under sub-rule -- (1) or sub- rule (2) shall be kept in a separate packet.

29. Tendered votes. -- (1) If a person representing himself to be a particular elector applies for a ballot paper after another person has already voted as such elector, he shall, on satisfactorily

answering such questions relating to his identity as the presiding officer may ask, be entitled, subject to the following provisions of this rule, to mark a ballot paper (hereinafter in these rules referred to as a <tendered ballot paper>) in the same manner as any other elector.

(2) Every such person shall, before being supplied with a tendered ballot paper, sign his name against the entry relating to him in a list in Form 11.

(3) A tendered ballot paper shall be the same as the other ballot papers used at the polling except that it shall be --

(a) serially the last in the bundle of ballot papers issued for use at the polling station ; and

(b) endorsed on the back with the words <tendered ballot paper> by the presiding office in his own hand and signed by him.

(4) The elector, after marking a tendered ballot paper in the voting compartment and folding it, shall instead of putting it into the ballot box, give it to the presiding officer who shall place it in a cover specially kept for the purpose.

30. Close of poll.--- (1) The presiding officer shall close a polling station at the hour fixed in that behalf under section 17 and shall not thereafter admit any elector into the polling station : Provided that all electors present at the polling station before it is closed shall be allowed to cast their votes.

(2) If any question arises whether an elector was present at the polling station before it was closed, it shall be decided by the presiding officer and his decision shall be final.

31. Sealing of ballot boxes after poll.-- As soon as practicable after the closing of the poll the presiding officer shall close the slit of the ballot box:

(2) The ballot box shall thereafter be sealed and secured.

(3) Where it becomes necessary to use a

second ballot box by reason of the first ballot box getting full, the first box shall be closed, sealed and secured as provided in sub-rules (1) and (2) before another ballot box is put into use.

32. Account of ballot papers. -- (1) The presiding officer shall at the close of the poll prepare a ballot paper account in Form 12 and enclose it in a separate cover with the words <Ballot Paper Account> superscribed thereon.

(2) The presiding officer shall permit any polling agent who so desires to take a true copy of the entries made in the ballot paper account and shall attest it as a true copy.

33. Sealing of other packets.--(1) The presiding officer shall then make into separate packets --

(a) the marked copy of the electoral roll;

(b) the unused ballot papers;

(c) the cancelled ballot papers ;

(d) the cover containing the tendered ballot papers and the list in Form 11;

(e) the list of challenged votes ; and

(f) any other papers directed by the Chief Election Commissioner to be kept in sealed packet.

(2) Each such packet shall be sealed with the seals of the presiding officer and of those polling agents present who may desire to affix their seals thereon.

34. Transmission of ballot boxes, etc. to the poll commissioner.-- (1) The presiding officer shall then deliver or cause to be delivered to the poll commissioner at such place as the poll commissioner may direct --

(a) the ballot boxes referred to in rule 31;

(b) the ballot paper account;

(c) the sealed packets referred to in rule 33 ; and

(d) all other papers used at the poll.

(2) The poll commissioner shall make adequate arrangements for the safe transport of ballot boxes, packets and other papers and for their safe custody until the commencement of the counting of votes.

35. Procedure on adjournment of poll. -- (1) If the poll at any polling station is adjourned under sub-section (1) of section 18, provisions of rules 31 to 34 shall, as far as practicable, apply as if the poll was closed at the hour fixed in that behalf under section 17.

(2) When an adjourned poll is recommenced under sub-section. (2) of section 18, the electors who have already voted at the opinion poll shall not be allowed to vote again.

(3) The poll commissioner shall provide the presiding officer of the polling station at which such adjourned poll is held, with the sealed packet containing the marked copy of the electoral roll and a new ballot box.

(4) The presiding officer shall open the sealed packet in the presence of the polling agents present and use the marked copy of the electoral roll for recording the serial numbers of the ballot papers issued to electors at the adjourned poll.

(5) The provisions of rules 14 to 34 shall apply in relation to the conduct of an adjourned poll as they apply in relation to the poll before it was so adjourned.

## PART V

### Counting of votes

36. Time and place for counting of votes. -- The counting of votes under section 24 shall commence at 9.a.m on the date next succeeding the date of poll and be done at such place as the poll commissioner may appoint ; and the poll commissioner shall, at least two days before the date of poll, give public notice of the date, time and place of counting :

Provided that if, for any reason, the poll commissioner finds it necessary so to do, he may, with the approval of the Chief Election Commissioner, alter the date, time and place so fixed, or any of them, and give public notice of the alteration.

37. Appointment of representatives and counting agents by political parties. -- (1) Every political party may appoint a representative to be present at the time of counting as provided in section 24, and may also appoint not more than fifteen counting agents for the same purpose.

(2) Every such appointment shall be made in Form 13 and shall be signed either by the President or the General Secretary of the political party and shall be made over to the representative or counting agent for production before the poll commissioner not later than one hour before the time fixed for the commencement of counting under rule 36.

38. Admission to the place fixed for counting.-

(1) The poll commissioner shall exclude from the place fixed for counting of votes all persons except --

- (a) such persons as he may appoint to assist him in the counting;
- (b) persons authorised by the Chief Election Commissioner;
- (c) public servants on duty in connection with the poll; and
- (d) representatives and counting agents appointed by political parties.

(2) The poll commissioner shall decide which counting agent or agents shall watch the counting at any particular counting table or group of counting tables.

(3) Any person who during the counting of votes misconducts himself or fails to obey the lawful directions of the poll commissioner may be removed

from the place where the votes are being counted by the poll commissioner or by any police officer on duty or by any person authorised in this behalf by the poll commissioner.

39. Maintenance of secrecy of voting.-- The poll commissioner shall before he commences the counting read the provisions of section 30 of the Act and section 128 of the Representation of People Act, 1951, to such persons as may be present.

40. Counting of votes received by post.-- (1) The poll commissioner shall first deal with the postal ballot papers in the manner hereinafter provided.

(2) No cover in Form 7 received by the poll commissioner after the expiry of the time fixed in that behalf shall be opened and no vote contained in any such cover shall be counted.

(3) The other covers shall be opened one after another and as each cover is opened, the poll commissioner shall first scrutinise the declaration in Form 5 contained therein.

(4) If the said declaration is not found, or has not been duly signed and attested, or is otherwise substantially defective, or if the serial number of the ballot paper as entered in it differs from the serial number endorsed on the cover in Form 6, that cover shall not be opened, and after making an appropriate endorsement thereon, the poll commissioner shall reject the ballot paper therein contained.

(5) Each cover so endorsed and the declaration received with it shall be replaced in the cover in Form 7 and all such covers in Form 7 shall be kept in a separate packet which shall be sealed and on which shall be recorded the date of counting and a brief description of its contents.

(6) The poll commissioner shall then place all the declarations in Form 5 which he has found to be in order in a separate packet which shall be sealed before any cover in Form 6 is opened and on which

shall be recorded the particulars referred to in sub-rule (5).

(7) The covers in Form 6 not already dealt with under the foregoing provisions of this rule shall then be opened one after another and the poll commissioner shall scrutinise each ballot paper and decide the validity of the vote recorded thereon.

(8) A postal ballot paper shall be rejected --

(a) if no vote is recorded thereon ; or

(b) if the vote is recorded on or near both the symbols; or

(c) if it is a spurious ballot paper ; or

(d) if it is so damaged or mutilated that its identity as a genuine ballot paper cannot be established; or

(e) if it is not returned in the cover sent along with it to the elector by the poll commissioner.

(9) A vote recorded on a postal ballot paper shall be rejected if the mark indicating the vote is placed on the ballot paper in such manner as to make it doubtful whether the vote is for merger or for Union territory.

(10) A voter recorded on a postal ballot paper shall not be rejected merely on the ground that the mark indicating the vote is indistinct or made more than once, if the intention that the vote shall be for merger or for Union territory clearly appears from the way the paper is marked.

(11) The poll commissioner shall count all the valid votes given by postal ballot for merger and for Union territory, record the total thereof in the result sheet in Form 14 and announce the same.

(12) Thereafter, all the valid ballot papers and all the rejected ballot papers shall be separately bundled and kept together in a packet which shall be sealed with the seals of the poll commissioner and of such of the counting agents as may desire to affix their seals thereon and on the packet so sealed shall be recorded the date of counting and a brief description

of its contents.

41. Scrutiny and opening of ballot boxes.--- (1) The poll commissioner may have the ballot boxes used at more than one polling station opened and their contents counted simultaneously.

(2) Before any ballot box is opened at a counting table, the counting agents present at the table shall be allowed to inspect the paper seal and to satisfy themselves that it is intact.

(3) The poll commissioner shall satisfy himself that none of the ballot boxes had in fact been tampered with.

(4) If the poll commissioner is satisfied that any ballot box has in fact been tampered with, he shall not count the ballot papers contained in that box and shall follow the procedure laid down in section 25 in respect of that polling station.

42. Counting of votes. -- (1) The ballot papers taken out of each ballot box shall be arranged in convenient bundles and scrutinised.

(2) The poll commissioner shall reject a ballot paper --

- (a) if it bears any mark or writing by which the elector can be identified, or
- (b) if it bears no mark at all or bears a mark made otherwise than with the instrument supplied for the purpose, or
- (c) if votes are recorded on or near both the symbols, or
- (d) if the mark indicating the vote thereon is placed in such manner as to make it doubtful whether the vote is for merger or for Union territory; or
- (e) if it is a spurious ballot paper, or
- (f) if it is so damaged or mutilated that its identity as a genuine ballot paper cannot be established, or

(g) if it bears a serial number or is of a design different from the serial number or, as the case may be, the design of the ballot paper authorised for use at the particular polling station, or

(h) if it does not bear the distinguishing mark which it should have borne under sub-rule (1) of rule 25;

Provided that where the poll commissioner is satisfied that any such defect as is mentioned in clause (g) or clause (h) has been caused by any mistake or failure on the part of a presiding officer or polling officer, the ballot paper shall not be rejected merely on the ground of such defect :

Provided further that a ballot paper under sub-rule (2) the poll commissioner shall allow the representatives of the political parties present at his table a reasonable opportunity to inspect the ballot paper but shall not allow them to handle it or any other ballot paper.

(4) The poll commissioner shall endorse on every ballot paper which he rejects the letter 'R' and the grounds of rejection in abbreviated form either in his own hand or by means of a rubber stamp, and shall initial such endorsement.

(5) All ballot papers rejected under this rule shall be bundled together.

(6) Every ballot paper which is not rejected under this rule shall be counted as one valid vote :

(Provided that no cover containing tendered ballot papers shall be opened and no such paper shall be counted.

(7) After the counting of all ballot papers contained in all the ballot boxes used at a polling station has been completed, the poll commissioner shall make the entries in a result sheet in Form 14 and announce the particulars.

43. Sealing of used ballot papers. --- The valid ballot papers and the rejected ballot papers shall thereafter be bundled separately and the several bundles

made up into a separate packet which shall be sealed with the seal of the poll commissioner and of such representatives of the political parties as may desire to affix their seals thereon and on the packets so sealed shall be recorded the particulars of the polling station where the ballot papers have been used.

44. Counting to be continuous.-- The poll commissioner shall, as far as practicable, proceed continuously with the counting and shall, during any intervals when the counting has to be suspended, keep the ballot papers, packets and all other papers relating to the poll sealed with his own seal and the seals of such counting agents as may desire to affix their seals and take sufficient precaution for their safe custody during such intervals.

45. Recommencement of counting after fresh poll. -- (1) If a fresh poll is held under section 19, the poll commissioner, shall, after completion of that poll, recommence the counting of votes on the date and at the time and place which have been fixed by him in that behalf and of which notice has been previously given.

(2) The provisions of rules 42 and 43 shall apply, as far as may be, to such further counting.

46. Declaration of the results.--- (1) When the counting has been completed, the poll commissioner shall ascertain the total number of votes polled for merger and for Union territory, announce the same and record it in the result sheet in Form 14.

(2) The poll commissioner shall then, unless otherwise directed by the Chief Election Commissioner, certify the result of the opinion poll in Form 15A or in Form 156, as may be appropriate, declare the same and send signed copies thereof to the Chief Election Commissioner and to the Administrator.

47. Custody of ballot papers relating to the poll.-- The poll commissioner shall keep in safe custody the packets of unused ballot papers, the packets of used ballot papers, whether valid, tendered or rejected, and all other papers relating to the poll.

48. Production and inspection of poll papers. While in the custody of the poll commissioner --

- (a) the packets of unused ballot papers ;
- (b) the packets of used ballot papers whether valid, tendered or rejected;
- (c) the packets of the marked copy of the electoral roll; and
- (d) the packets of the declarations by electorals and the attestation of their signatures ;

shall not be opened and their contents shall not be inspected by, or produced before, any person or authority except under the order of the Chief Election Commissioner.

49. Disposal of poll papers. -- Subjected any directions to the contrary given by the Chief Election Commissioner, all papers referred to in rule 48 shall be retained for a period of two years and shall thereafter be destroyed.

50. Application of rules 98 and 99 of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961.-- The provisions of rules 98 and 99 of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961, shall apply in relation to requisitioning of any premises, vehicle, vessel or animal in connection with the opinion poll as they apply in relation to requisitioning of any premises, vehicle, vessel or animal under section 160 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 in connection with an election in the Union territory.

\*Goa

\*Daman and Diu

## PART VI

### Miscellaneous

## FORM 1

Notice of Opinion Poll

(See rule 3)

Notice is hereby given that --

(1) an opinion poll is to be held for the purpose of ascertaining the wishes of the electors of Goa as to whether Goa should merger in the State of Maharashtra or should continue to be a Union territory;

(2) the poll will be taken on ..... between the hours .... and .....

Place .....

Date .....

\_\_\_\_\_  
Opinion Poll Commissioner

\* Strike out the portion not applicable.

-----  
**FORM 2**

Appointment of Polling Agent

(See rule 4)

\*Opinion Poll in Goa

\*Daman and Diu

I, President of ..... Party do hereby appoint Shri....

General Secretary

of .... as a polling agent to attend polling station no....

Place .....

Date .....

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of President

\_\_\_\_\_  
General Secretary

-----  
I agree to act as such polling agent.

Place .....

Date.....

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of polling agent

Declaration of Polling Agent to be signed before Presiding Officer

I hereby declare that at the above opinion poll I will not do anything forbidden by @ section 128 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 as made applicable by section 30 of the Goa, Daman and Diu (Opinion Poll) Act, 1966, \*which I have read/has been read over to me.

Date.....

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of polling agent

Signed before me.

Date.....

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Presiding Officer

-----  
\* Strike out the portion not applicable.

@ Section 128 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 and section 30 of the Goa, Daman and Diu (Opinion Poll) Act, 1966 (reproduced below) :-

Extract from the Representation of the People Act, 1951

128. Maintenance of secrecy of voting. -- (1) Every officer clerk, agent or other person who performs any duty in connection with the recording or counting of votes at an election shall maintain, and aid in maintaining, the secrecy of the voting and shall not (except for some purpose authorised by or under any law) communicate to any person any information calculated to violate such secrecy.

(2) Any person who contravenes the provisions of subsection (1) shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months or with fine or with both.

Extract from the Goa, Daman and Diu (Opinion Poll) Act, 1966

30. Other electoral offences. -- The provisions of sections 125 to 132 and 134 to 136 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, shall, so far as may be, apply to an opinion poll as they apply to an election under that Act, and any references in those provisions to --

(a) the chief electoral officer shall be omitted;

(b) a returning officer and an assistant returning officer shall be construed as a reference to an opinion poll commissioner and an assistant opinion poll commissioner respectively.

-----  
**FORM 3**

Application for Poll Duty Certificate

(see rule 7)

To

The Opinion Poll Commissioner,

\* Goa/\*Daman and Diu

Sir,

I intend to cast my vote in person at the ensuing

opinion poll. I have been posted on poll duty at a polling station other than the polling station at which I am entitled to vote.

My name is entered at Sl. No.... in Part No.... of the electoral roll for ... assembly constituency.

I request that a poll duty certificate in Form 4 may be issued to enable me to vote at the polling station where I may be on duty on the polling day. It may be sent to me at the following address :

....

....

....

Yours faithfully,

Place.....

Date .....

-----  
\* Strike out the entry not applicable.

-----  
**FORM 4**

Poll Duty Certificate

(see rules 7 and 22)

Certified that Shri... is an elector for the opinion poll, being an elector in the.... assembly constituency, that by reason of his being on poll duty he is unable to vote at the polling station where he is entitled to vote, and that he is therefore hereby authorised to vote at any polling station he may be on duty on the date of poll.

Place.....

Date .....

Signature .....

-----  
(Opinion Poll Commissioner)

**FORM 5**

Declaration by elector  
(See rules 11,12 and 40)

Cover

(see rules 11, 12 and 40 )

\* Strike out the entry not applicable.

\*Goa Opinion Poll.

\*Daman and Diu

I hereby declare that I am the elector to whom the postal ballot paper bearing serial number..... has been issued at the above opinion poll.

Signature of elector....

Address.....

----

Attestation of signature.

The above has been signed in my presence by... (elector) who is personally known to me/has been identified to my satisfaction by... (identifier) who is personally known to me

Signature of identifier, If Signature of Attesting Officer

any ... Designation.

Address..... Address...

Date .....

\* Strike out the entry not applicable.

<p>A) Not to be opened before counting</p> <p>*Goa _____ Opinion Poll</p> <p>* Daman and Diu</p> <p>Postal Ballot Paper</p> <p>Serial number of ballot paper.....</p>
---

**FORM 6**

Cover B	<p>Every officer under whose care or through whom a postal ballot paper is sent shall ensure its delivery to the addressee without delay -- Rule 11(3) of the Goa, Daman and Diu (Opinion Poll) rules, 1966)</p> <p><u>Opinion Poll - Immediate</u></p> <p>Postal Ballot Paper</p> <p>For <u>*Goa</u></p> <p>Daman and Diu</p> <p>(Not to be opened before counting)</p> <p>To</p> <p>The Opinion Poll Commissioner.</p>	Service Paid
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**FORM 7**

Cover

(See rules)

\* Opinion poll commissioner to strike out the entry not applicable.

\*\* Opinion poll commissioner to mention here his full postal address.

**FORM 8**

Instructions for the Guidance of electors

(see rules 11, 12 and 13)

## Opinion Poll in \*Goa

-----

## \* Daman and Diu

The alternatives which are printed on the ballot paper sent herewith are the issues at the opinion poll. If you desire to vote, you should record your vote in accordance with the directions given in Part I below and then follow the instructions contained in Part II.

## PART I - Directions to electors

1. You have only one vote.
2. You must not vote on or near both the symbols.  
If you do so, your ballot paper will be rejected.
3. Record the vote by placing clearly a mark opposite the symbol for which you wish to give that vote.
4. The mark should be so placed as to indicate clearly and beyond doubt whether your vote is for merger or for Union territory. If the mark is so placed as to make it doubtful whether the vote is for merger or for Union territory, that vote will be invalid.
5. An elector shall obtain the attestation of his signature on the declaration in Form 5 by a stipendiary magistrate, or
  - (a) if he is a member of the Armed Forces of the Union, or of an armed police force of the Union territory but is serving outside that Union territory, by such Officer as may be appointed in this behalf by the Commanding Officer of the unit, ship or establishment in which the voter or her husband, as the case may be, is employed, or if he is employed under the Government of India in a post outside India, by such officer as may be appointed in this behalf by the diplomatic or consular representative of India in the country in which such voter is resident ;
  - (b) if he is under preventive detention by the Superintendent of the Jail or the

Commandant of the detention camp in which he is under detention.

## PART II -

## Instructions for Electors

1. (a) After you have recorded your vote on the ballot paper, place the ballot paper in the smaller cover marked 'A' sent herewith. Close the cover and secure it by seal or otherwise.

(b) You have then to sign the declaration in Form 5 also sent herewith in the presence of a stipendiary magistrate or any other officer competent to attest your signature (see direction 5 in Part I above). Take the declaration to any such officer and sign it in his presence after he has been satisfied about your identity. The officer will attest your signature and return the declaration to you. You must not show your ballot paper to the attesting officer nor tell him how you have voted.

(c) After your declaration has been signed and your signature has been attested in accordance with item (b), place the declaration in Form 5 as also the smaller cover marked 'A'; containing the ballot paper in the larger cover, marked (B). After closing the larger cover send it to the opinion poll commissioner by post. You have to give your full signature in the space provided on the cover marked 'B' but no postage stamp need be affixed by you.

(d) You must ensure that the cover reaches the opinion poll commissioner \*before ....p.m. on the \*...(date).

(e) Please note that ---

(i) if you fail to get your declaration attested or certified in the manner indicated above, your ballot paper will be rejected; and

(ii) if the cover reaches the opinion poll commissioner after \* ...p.m. on the \*...(date), your vote will not be counted.

\* Here specify the hour and date fixed for the close of the poll.

(see rules 29 and 33)

**FORM 9**

List of Challenged Votes

(See rule 23)

Opinion Poll in \*Goa

-----

\* Daman and Diu

Polling Station .....

Signature of Presiding Officer

\* Strike out the entry not applicable.

-----

**FORM 10**

List of Blind and Infirm voters

(See rule 27)

\*Goa

----- Opinion Poll

\* Daman and Diu

No. and name of polling station ....

Date .....

Signature of Presiding Officer

\* Strike out the portion not applicable.

**FORM 11**

List of Tendered votes

Opinion Poll in \* Goa

-----

\* Daman and Diu.

Number and Name of  
Polling Station.....

Date.....

Signature of  
Presiding Officer.

\*Strike out the entry not applicable.

**FORM 12**

(see rule 32)

Part I - Ballot paper account

Opinion Poll in \*Goa

-----

\* Daman and Diu

No. and name of polling station.....

Serial number Total number

1. Ballot papers received
2. Ballot papers not used
3. Ballot papers issued to voters
4. Ballot papers cancelled
5. Ballot papers used as tendered ballot papers.

Date..... Signature of Presiding Officer.....

\* Strike out the entry not applicable.

**Part II - Counting of votes**

Symbol representing Number of valid  
votes cast

Signature of.....  
of .... Party.

Signature of the counting  
supervisor...

I agree to act as representative/counting agent  
of... Party at the counting of votes at...

Signature of the Opinion Poll

Place .... Signature of  
Date ..... representative  
counting agent

Commissioner.....

Date ...

Strike out the entry not  
applicable.

Declaration of the Representative/Counting Agent  
(to be signed before the Opinion Poll Commissioner)

**FORM 13**

Appointment of Representative /Counting Agent  
(see rule 37)

I hereby declare that at the above opinion poll I  
will not do anything forbidden by section 128\*\* of  
the Representation of the People Act, 1951, as made  
applicable by section 30 of the Goa Daman and Diu  
(Opinion Poll ) Act, 1966 which I have read/has been  
read over to me.

Opinion Poll in \* Goa

-----

\* Daman and Diu

Date .... Signature of  
representative..

To

Counting agent

The Opinion Poll Commissioner,

Signed before me.

\* Goa

\*Daman and Diu

Date .... Opinion Poll  
Commissioner

I, President

\* Strike out the inappropriate alternative.

----- of the .... Party, do hereby appoint  
Shri....

\*\* Section 128 of the Representative of the People  
Act, 1951 and section 30 of the Goa, Daman and Diu  
(Opinion Poll) Act, 1966 (Reproduced below):-

General Secretary

as the representative/counting agent of the .... Party to  
attend the counting of votes at...

Representation of the People Act, 1951

Address of representative/counting agent.

128. Maintenance of Secrecy of Voting. -- (1) Every

officer, clerk, agent or other person who performs any duty in connection with the recording or counting of votes at an election shall maintain and aid in maintaining, the secrecy of the voting and shall not (except for some purpose authorized by or under any law) communicate to any person any information calculated to violate such secrecy.

(2) Any person who contravenes the provisions of sub-section (1) shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months or with fine or with both. Goa, Daman and Diu (Opinion Poll ) Act, 1966

30. Other electoral offences.--- The provisions of sections 125 to 132 and 134 to 136 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 shall so far as may be apply to an opinion poll as they apply to an election under that Act, and any reference in those provisions to --

- (a) the chief electoral officer shall be omitted ;
- (b) a returning officer and an assistant returning officer shall be construed as a reference to an opinion poll commissioner and an assistant opinion poll commissioner respectively.

3.

## QUESTIONNAIRE

1. According to you, what are the reasons for having an Opinion Poll?
2. What was the role played by the Press in the Opinion Poll?
3. What was the role played by the Political Parties in the Opinion Poll?
4. Campaigning motivates the voter and influences the decision.
  - A. What was the impact of the campaign conducted by the Religious Organisation such as Temples, Churches, and Mosques?
  - B. What was the impact of the campaign conducted by Social Organisations such as 1) Konkani Bhasha Mandal 2) Anti - Merger Front 3) Goa - Maharashtra - Vilinikaran Parishad 4) Goan Socio-Cultural Association, Bombay?
  - C. What was the impact of the campaign conducted by such groups as Tiatrists and Shahirs?
5. Were you satisfied with the steps taken by the Election Commission to conduct the Opinion Poll ? Give reasons for your satisfaction.
6. Did you approve the decision that the verdict would be on the basis of simple majority ? Please substantiate your opinion.
7. Which factors influenced voting in the Opinion Poll?
8. Were you satisfied/disatisfied with the verdict of Opinion Poll? Please give reasons.
9. Any other information you would like to provide.

**N.B.** The respondents are requested to give their names and addresses and to sign their responses.

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