

# 12

**THE SUN SETS ON**

**PROTUGAL'S ASIAN EMPIRE**

Liberation of Goa , Daman and Diu

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By the end of the 16th century, the Portuguese occupied territories in India, popularly known as the 'jewels in the Portuguese Crown' mat dotted the entire length of the Indian coastline included Diu, Daman, Goa, Sals Bassein, Chaul, Bombay, San Thome (near Madras) and Hooghly (in Bergal). By 1947 most of them were lost save Goa, Daman and Diu, which were finally liberated by India in 1961. With that ended the 'suzerainty' of the King of Portugal over the isolated Portuguese 'pockets' in this country, who held the title 'Lord of the Conquest, Navigation and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia and India' ever since Vasco da Gama set foot on Indian soil in 1498. This overlordship had been granted to the Portuguese monarchs by the bull (papal edicts) of different popes such as Nicholas V, Alexander VI, Julius II and Leo X on the basis of whose fiat, during the last decade of the 15th century, Portugal was given the exclusive right to all the undiscovered countries to the east of 'an imaginary line drawn 370 leagues west and south of Cape Verde Islands.'

Though no event during the Middle Ages had such far-reaching repercussions on the civilised world as the opening of the sea-route to India' by Vasco da Gama, the European discovery of the sea-route to this country *per se* was of no great importance as a feat of exploration or even of nautical adventure. To quote *KM. Panikkar*

The historical results that have flowed from the direct contact of European Powers with India and the commerce and wealth which the control of the Indian seas has given to Europe, have shed an exaggerated light on Vasco's achievement \_\_\_\_\_ India was in no sense a *terra incognita*. It was in close contact with Europe, through the Venetians and the Moors. Besides, the seafaring people on the coast of Africa, consisting mainly of Arabian settlers, knew the routes and the winds, and da Gama had the help of competent Arab pilots supplied, to him by the King of Melinde (the pilot who brought him to India from the

African Coast Davane, was, however, an Indian) \_ His glory is based entirely on the historical results that followed, for which he was hardly responsible!

### Europe's Quest for a Sea Route to India

Ever since the dim centuries before the Christian era, India has been carrying on trade with the West by land and sea, the sea route passing generally from the ports on our West Coast to the Persian Gulf or the Red Sea, the merchandise then being carried overland respectively to Beirut, Alexandria or other Mediterranean ports-and from there by sea to various European entrepots. The main Indian port was Cranganore (Kodungallore) from where the trade routes fanned out to Arabia, Egypt and Europe carrying merchandise, which mainly comprised pearls, pepper and gems, to these countries and bringing back coal, tin, lead and other commodities. With the rise of Islam in Arabia, Muslims, referred to in Europe those days as Moors, gradually took over this trade. By the last quarter of the 15th century, a regular maritime trade had been in existence for several centuries between ports in India and those in the Arabian Sea, Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. This flow of merchandise between the east and the west resulted in Venice becoming the focal point of trade through these ports which engendered considerable jealousy in other European maritime nations. These nations were hence determined to bypass Egypt and Venice and establish their own direct trade routes to India.

The three countries that led the quest for the Indies' were Spain, Portugal and England. They sent many expeditions in search of the pepper (pepper was the most coveted merchandise) route and one of these resulted in the accidental discovery of the West Indies and America by Columbus in 1492. The Portuguese had already been exploring the immense expanse of the West Coast of Africa from 1418 but success continued to elude them despite the fame of India beckoning the brave explorers and the seemingly interminable stretch of the African continent southwards that would thwart the efforts of even the intrepid 15th century adventurers of the Iberian peninsula and other parts of the West. Reports from travellers about the fabulous wealth of India were the stimulus for several great voyages of discovery, leading to the search for a sea route to the East receiving fresh impetus under the Portuguese Prince Henri the Navigator, during the first half of the 15th century. The European nations at that time did not know the exact location in the Indian Ocean of India, China and Sri Lanka, the main sources of silk and spices. When Dom Pedro, Prince Henri's brother and a great traveller, obtained an invaluable map of the world prepared by Marco Polo, the greatest traveller known to the Middle Ages, it provided a tremendous fillip to the quest for the sea route to the 'mysterious East'. But India continued to be as elusive as before 'in a dark corner of an imperfectly understood world'.

Emperor Joao II of Portugal, in perpetuation of the bull granted by the Pope to Henri the Navigator, conferring on him and his successors suzerainty over all the lands that might be discovered beyond Cape Bojador on the African West Coast, discovered in 1434, 'including India', sent expeditions to the East, both by land and sea, with the dual goal of developing Indo-European trade and spreading Christianity. The two emissaries despatched by Joao II, Alfonso de Paiva and Joao Peres de Colvilhao, parted company after reaching Aden, the former proceeding by land to Ethiopia and the latter embarking on an Arab vessel and reaching the Malabar Coast also visiting Calicut. On his return to Aden from Calicut, Colvilhao proceeded to Sofala and extracted information from Arab sailors on the trade with India, the sea route to Calicut, the location of the major islands in the Indian Ocean and navigational data on this Ocean. He then proceeded to Cairo from where he sent a detailed report to his King. The report also pointed out that if the Portuguese ships which traded with Guinea on the African West Coast were to continue their course southwards, they were likely to reach the southern tip of the continent and then proceed eastwards to India. Thus what had so far been limited to rumour and hearsay among European seafarers and explorers had now been confirmed by Colvilhao.

It was Bartholmew de Diaz, a brave seafaring adventurer, who was sent out by King Joao II in 1487 to sail down the west coast of Africa in quest of the pepper route. Diaz proceeded down the African West Coast and was the first Portuguese to round the continent's southernmost tip though he encountered heavy storms while rounding the cape. He sailed on for some days despite his sailors' entreaties to turn back but, after a few days he abandoned his projected venture across the Indian Ocean and returned to Portugal, after having been on the voyage for seventeen months. King Joao II realised the significance of Diaz's discovery and renamed the stormy cape of Africa (Cabo Tormentoso) the Cape of Good Hope (Cabo de Boa Esperanca) which, as it was 'hoped', would open the sea route to India. It may seem strange', Panikkar says, 'but it is nonetheless true, that till the last decade of the 15th century, except perhaps the Vikings, no European nation had ventured into oceanic navigation. The navigational activities of the European peoples were confined to inland seas like the Mediterranean, the North Sea and the Baltic and to the coasts of Europe. Only the

Hindus, the Chinese and the Arabs had developed a tradition of oceanic navigation and of these, the Hindus had the largest share till the end of the 13th century'. Compared to the achievements of the Indian and Arab seafarers, what Diaz achieved by hugging the west coast of African during his voyage to the Cape, was in no way remarkable but, in a way, it is considered epoch-making as it made a direct route to India from Europe possible.

### **Vasco da Gama's Indian Landfall**

In 1495 King Joao II died and his successor, King Manoel, continued the efforts to reach India by sea. From the experience gained by Bartholomew de Diaz and other Portuguese seafarers of the sea conditions at the Cape of Good Hope and the east coast of the African continent, a new design of ships with long endurance was evolved by Portuguese naval architects and three ships were specially built for the expedition to India.

Vasco da Gama, an experienced sailor, was to lead the new venture on board the *Sao Gabriel* (120 tons), the flagship of a four-ship fleet which also included the *Sao Raphael* (100 tons) commanded by his brother Paulo da Gama, *Berrio* (50 tons) commanded by Nicolas Coelho, and a navire de charge, i.e., a store and ammunition ship (200 tons), commanded by Gonsalo Nunes, an ordnance officer. The *Sao Gabriel* had an overall length of about 85 feet and a draught of 8 feet, had three masts and six sails, was equipped with an array of 20 guns and displayed on her main-top mast a white flag with the Portuguese coat of arms of King Manoel.

With the fleet of four ships and 160 men under the command of Vasco da Gama, the expedition set sail from Belem near Lisbon on March 25, 1497. The fleet arrived in Moussel Bay at the southern end of Africa in December 1497. While rounding the Cape, the fleet encountered a violent storm and the ships' crew conspired to mutiny but it was put down by da Gama threatening to throw the ringleaders over the side and arresting some recalcitrant members of the *Berrio's* crew.

Land on the African southeast coast was sighted by the expedition on December 25, 1497 and was promptly and appropriately named *Terra de Natal* (land of birth). By February 1498, having encountered several storms on the way, the *Berrio* had lost her watertight integrity and seaworthiness and was found to be well beyond repair. She was hence broken up to repair the two vessels, *Sao Gabriel* and *Sao Raphael*, which had also suffered some damage. The store and ammunition ship had already been sent back to Portugal after her stores had been transferred to (the other ships).

There were now only two ships left, the *Sao Gabriel* and the *Sao Raphael*, which reached Mozambique, then an important Arab trading centre of the African coast, in March 1498. At this African entrepot, they acquired necessary stores and victuals for the voyage across the Indian Ocean and also carried out some major repairs to the two remaining ships. Vasco da Gama then engaged a local pilot who helped him navigate the ships further north to Melinde, the regular port of departure for Indian destinations. There was considerable traffic in those days between India and the African and Arab ports across the Indian Ocean and so it was not difficult for Vasco da Gama to find a capable and experienced pilot. It was a Gujarati Moorish broker and pilot, Davane, who had excellent knowledge of the winds and the route. He offered to counsel da Gama against raising any possible Arab jealousy and to pilot the expedition across the Ocean.

By this time the first monsoon winds had already begun, the weather was favourable and Vasco da Gama and his brother embarked on their historic voyage across the Indian Ocean on April 24, 1498. After spending three weeks at sea they sighted a large blue land mass on the eastern horizon which, on a closer approach, was clearly defined as the famous landmark on India's west coast, Mount Deli (also known as Kappat). The ships then coasted down to a roadstead off Capocate which stood two leagues to the north of the great city of Calicut and dropped anchor on 17 May, 1498.

The Hindu ruler of Calicut, who bore the hereditary title of Zamorin, accorded a warm welcome to Vasco da Gama whose visit opened the way for the establishment of commercial relations between Portugal and the principalities on the Indian peninsula's western seaboard. This was soon followed by Portuguese merchants coming to India's shores in large numbers. As Panikkar looks at it, 'The full significance of da Gama's arrival at Calicut can be recognised only if we appreciate that it was the realisation of a 200-year-old dream and of 75 years of sustained effort'.

### The Portuguese Spread their Tentacles

Until the arrival of Vasco da Gama, Indo-Portuguese trade was exclusively in the hands of Arabs who were reputed for their commercial probity and who, in matters of trade, had held complete sway over the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea for several centuries. In fact, a large number of Arabs had already been settled on the coast of Gujarat, Cambay and Malabar for five or six centuries before the Portuguese arrived on the scene.

Vasco da Gama soon returned to Portugal and was followed by Pedro Alvarez Cabral, a renowned explorer, who sailed out of Lisbon on March 9, 1500 with a fleet of 33 ships under his command, bound for India's west coast. But Cabral had other ideas. Instead of confining himself to the route established by da Gama, Cabral took a westerly course after passing the Cape Verde islands which led to the discovery of Brazil which was promptly claimed as Portuguese territory. He then altered course to skirt the coast of Africa and passed through the stormy stretch of the Cape of Good Hope where half his ships were lost. With dogged determination, he continued his venture and reached Mozambique in July and Melinde in August. From there, with the help of two Gujarati pilots, he reached the Gulf of Cambay, coasted to the island of Anjadip and then proceeded to Calicut, by which time only six of his 33 ships were left.

From the very outset Cabral had decided to establish the supremacy of the Portuguese in the eastern seas. Hence, instead of confining himself to the limits of legitimate trade, he began raiding merchantmen of other nations and depriving them of the benefits of their commerce. Zamorin, the ruler of Calicut, whose prosperity largely depended on Arab merchants with whom he and his subjects had extremely cordial relations, was thus inevitably brought into hostilities with the Portuguese. In their efforts to establish a toehold on Indian soil and full control over Indian trade with West Asia and Europe, the Portuguese then started befriending and entering into alliance with rulers of other principalities on the west coast of India, especially the Rajas of Cochin and Kolathiri (Cannanore).

On his arrival at Calicut, Vasco da Gama had expressed to the Zamorin a desire to trade with him. An indication of the marauding policy he was going to adopt was his refusal to pay the customs of the port. Cabral, who followed him, laid on unequivocal and uncompromising claim to the complete monopoly of the seas including confiscation of all goods from those who navigated the seas without the permission of the Portuguese. This led to a sea battle between

the Zamorin's navy and Cabral's fleet as a result of which the latter had to sail away.

### **The Capture of Goa, Anjadip, Daman and Diu**

The real foundation of Portuguese power in India was laid by Afonso de Albuquerque, who came to India in 1503 and was later appointed Governor of Portuguese Affairs in India, in 1509. Goa, which belonged to the Bijapur Sultanate at that time, was captured in 1510 by Albuquerque who then strengthened its fortifications and increased its commercial activities. And as a matter of Portuguese policy he, like da Gama, continued with his policy of persecuting the Moors - the Muslim traders from West Asia.

As regards the capture of Goa, Henry Beveridge, author of *A Comprehensive History of India*, says, Albuquerque made his appearance off the west coast in the beginning of 1510. At first anticipating a valiant resistance, he sent his nephew along with Timoja to take soundings. They discovered a fort which was well provided with guns and defended by 400 men, and they not only had the hardihood to attack, but the good fortune of capturing it. This seemed a most auspicious commencement, and proved only the first of a series of fortunate events which followed rapidly, and put Albuquerque in possession of this most important locality before he was required to strike a blow. According to Portuguese accounts, some conjuror or *fakir* whose predictions were implicitly believed, had announced that Goa was destined shortly to become subject to foreigners. On the faith of this prediction, the inhabitants thought it a stroke of good policy, instead of enduring the miseries of a siege which must ultimately be successful, to make a voluntary surrender. Accordingly, to the great but -most agreeable surprise of Albuquerque, when he approached Goa in March 1510, he was received ashore by the population as if he had been their native prince, conducted in state to the gate, where he received the keys and thereafter put in possession of a palace.

When Adil Shah, the Sultan of Bijapur, was informed of Albuquerque's cake-walk capture of Goa, he made preparations and attacked Goa in May 1510, with a large contingent of troops and drove the Portuguese out of Goa. Albuquerque and his fleet had to perforce return to Anjadip and then to Cannanore. A few months later, however, he returned to Goa with a large fleet when the Bijapur garrison was away and launched a brutal attack. He soon recaptured Goa and, in an act of great blood-bath and wanton cruelty, he put 6,000 Moors to the sword. Goa thus became the capital of Portuguese India and by the time Albuquerque died in 1515, the Portuguese were controlling India's west coast and had established themselves as the strongest naval power in the region.

The island of Anjadip, situated about eight kilometres southwest of Karwar, was first visited by the Portuguese in 1498 when Vasco da Gama and his fleet spent a few days. They established themselves there in 1503 after capturing it from Arab traders who had occupied it after driving out a Vijaynagar garrison in the 15th century. The Portuguese reinforced the island by building a formidable fortress on it. However, the fortress that exists on the island today was built in 1682 and was manned by a Portuguese garrison until its liberation. Anjadip was used for centuries thereafter as a watering station for Portuguese sailing ships.

Daman, which lies on the entrance to the Gulf of Cambay about 160 kilometres north of Bombay, was formerly

ceded to the Portuguese by the Marathas in 1780. Until 1954 this Portuguese settlement comprised Daman

proper and a detached *pargana*, Nagar Haveli, to its east, the latter including the enclave, Dadra. The intervening land between Daman and the two enclaves, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, was Indian territory which had to be crossed to gain access to the two pockets. Freedom fighters from both these enclaves ousted the Portuguese in 1954 which was followed by their accession to India.

Daman is divided into two distinct parts, Nani (small or northern) Daman and Moti (big or southern) Daman, with a ferry crossing over a tidal river being the only means of physical communication between these two parts. After the loss of the two enclaves of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, the area of Daman had been reduced from 213 square kilometres to about 60 square kilometres.

The Portuguese colony of Diu comprised a small area on the mainland, the island of Diu about 11 kilometres long and 3 kilometres broad, and a small island, Panikota, about 16 kilometres away to the east northeast. This colony was gifted to Albuquerque by the ruler of Gujarat and Cambay, Mahmud Begarha, after the Egyptian fleet under the renowned Admiral Mir Hussain, had fought two inconclusive sea battles with the Zamorin's support against the Portuguese in 1509 - he was in fact deprived of an outright victory by an act of treachery on the part of the Governor of Diu, Malik Aiyaz, who had withheld the supplies from the fleet - and had sailed away in disgust. The ruler of Gujarat and Cambay released Portuguese prisoners of war, entered into a treaty of peace and allowed the Portuguese to construct a factory and a fortress on Diu island.

Albuquerque died in 1515 but his successors gradually established a number of important Portuguese settlements near the sea - Goa, Daman, Diu, Salsette, Bassein, Chaul, Bombay, San Thome near Madras and Hoogly in Bengal - dotting the entire length of the Indian Coast. The major part of Sri Lanka too was under Portuguese influence. But over the next century and a half most of these places were lost and by 1662 only Goa, Daman and Diu were left with the Portuguese.

## **Historical Background**

Goa's history goes back to our hoary past. References to it can be found even in the *Ramayana* or *Mahabharata*. The ancient Hindu city of Goa, of which only a few fragments are identifiable today, is mentioned in the *Puranas* and certain other inscriptions as Gove, Govapuri and Gomant. Goa is also mentioned in the Periplus of the Erythraean Sea (Guide to the Indian Ocean) compiled in the 1st century A.D. wherein it is said to have been politically and commercially supported by the ports of Naura (Cannanore) and Tyndis (Ponnani). Goa was referred to as the Island of Aegidni in West Asia at that time. The mediaeval Arab geographers knew it as Sindabur or Sandabur and the Portuguese as Goa Velha.

Originally a tribe of Dravidian origin known as Kannadigas, inhabited Goa and were converted to the Hindu faith by

Hindus who came from the north. At the time of Ashoka, Buddhism came to Goa and was widely practised until the beginning of the 2nd century B.C. Then a Hindu tribe from Kamataka known as Kadambas captured Goa, developed the place into a centre of trade and commerce and defended their territory with a strong army and navy for the next fifteen centuries, in 1312 Malik Kafur, the Commander-in-Chief of Sultan Alauddin Khilji, invaded South India and, after considerable devastation and plundering, captured Goa. The territory was soon recovered by the Kadambas but was plundered once again in 1327 by the army of Muhammad Tughlak. The Kadambas once again captured Goa but were soon thrown out by the navy of the Nawab of Honavar. It changed hands between the Mohammedan rulers of the Bahamani Kingdom and the Hindu emperors of the Vijaynagar Empire for over a century and a quarter thereafter, until the break-up of the Bahamani Kingdom into five independent kingdoms in 1482 when it was passed into the power of Yusuf Adil Shah, King of Bijapur, who was its ruler when the Portuguese first reached the Indian shores.

For centuries Daman was known for its commerce and trade and continued to flourish under the Portuguese but the trade languished with the decline of Portuguese power in the east. Early in the 19th century Daman's main trade was confined to opium which came from Karachi and was exported to China but this was stopped when the British annexed Sind.

During the earlier centuries of the Christian era, Diu had a flourishing trade with Arabia and the Persian Gulf and hence was a prosperous and wealthy island. It was this wealth which attracted the Portuguese who became its masters around the middle of the 16th century. There was regular trade and commercial intercourse between Diu and Mozambique for several centuries. However, this trade gradually dwindled and ultimately fishing became the chief occupation of its inhabitants.

In fact, by the 18th century, the Portuguese had lost their influence in the sphere of Indian trade, though they were the earliest intruders into the East\*, and most of them had taken to robbery and piracy. The causes of their downfall were their religious intolerance, their clandestine and dishonest trade practices, their ignorance and lack of respect for local customs, the discovery of Brazil which drew their colonising activities to the west and their failure to compete successfully with the other European trading companies.

The Portuguese persecuted not only the Moors but all non-Catholics including Christians. The infamous Inquisition was in force in Goa from 1560 to 1814. They destroyed the places of worship of all non-Catholics including Hindus and Muslims. According to Panikkar, The popular idea, which was on the whole right, was that the Portuguese were, as a nation, treacherous, untrustworthy and barbarously cruel. They even alienated the Raja of Cochin, who was friendly to them and supported them in their operations against the Zamorin, by plundering and destroying one of his temples after having pledged not to harm it. They indulged in large-scale nepotism and auctioning public appointments and had a highly inefficient and corrupt administration. It was because of these aspects of their attitude towards Indians and other Asians that they eventually lost their possessions to the Dutch, the English and the French who had also proved to be better soldiers and seamen.

## **The Struggle for Freedom Begins**

Ever since the Portuguese occupation of Goa, the local population had been taking all efforts to throw off the yoke of slavery. Revolts started in the very first year of Portuguese occupation and were ruthlessly put down. From 1555 there were a number of rebellions averaging once every decade.

An uprising known as Pinto's rebellion occurred in 1787 and was planned by some army officers and a group of priests who were determined to overthrow the Government and establish a republic but they were betrayed by some colleagues and the first major attempt to liberate Goa was smothered.

Meanwhile, a series of revolts were staged since 1755 by members of a martial class known as Rane. The Ranes in Goa continued in their efforts and rose in rebellion several times before being finally put down in 1912 when the Portuguese authorities resorted to the use of troops brought from Portugal and some Portuguese colonies in Africa.

Until the final suppression of the Rane rebellion in 1912, the freedom struggle in Goa was violent in nature. However, during the third decade of this century, they decided to adopt non-violent means on the lines of the philosophy of *ahimsa* of Mahatma Gandhi. In 1928 a Goa National Congress was formed by Goans in Bombay at the instance of Dr Tristao Braganza Cunha, a firm believer in non-violence. This organisation decided to adopt the Gandhian creed for attaining liberty.

On June 30, 1946 Mahatma Gandhi wrote in the *Harijan*, 'I would venture to advise the Portuguese Government of Goa to recognise the signs of the times and come to honourable terms with its inhabitants rather than function on any treaty that might exist between them and the British Government'. At a meeting held on August 12, 1946 the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution accusing the Portuguese Government of Goa of having reduced the people of Goa to a state of penury leading to their migration out of the enclave and declaring that 'Goa has always been and must inevitably continue to be part of India. It must share in the freedom of the Indian people'.

The struggle for freedom gained momentum after India attained Independence on August 15, 1947. Agitators in Goa began holding meetings to demand freedom in June 1948 and during the course of one of these meetings, the Indian socialist leader, Dr Ram Manohar Lohia, and several local leaders were lathi-charged and arrested. In 1949 the Government of India wrote to the Government of Portugal seeking the peaceful transfer of their enclaves to India but the Portuguese, far from responding to the Indian request, intensified their repressive measures and radically curtailed civil liberties in Goa. All efforts to negotiate Goa's merger with India were brought to nought by the Portuguese; Government's intransigence.

With India becoming a republic on January 26, 1950 the French Government had decided to vacate its territorial possessions on India's east coast and with that the freedom movement in Goa had been intensified. An Indian Legation was then opened in Lisbon to discuss the modalities for the transfer of Goa but the Portuguese Government responded by not only refusing to even discuss the liberation of Goa but also stepping up the repressive measures already instituted in the enclaves by detaining freedom fighters without trial, shadowing the leaders of the freedom struggle and restricting their movement. In 1953 another attempt was made to start negotiations with the Portuguese - this time with the added assurance that the cultural identity of the enclaves would

be preserved after their transfer and the laws and customs would remain unchanged and yet they were as intransigent as before and refused to even respond to the overtures made by India. It was, however, made clear to the Portuguese authorities that the three enclaves of Goa, Daman and Diu were culturally, linguistically, ethnically and geographically integral parts of India. It was pointed out that the presence of a foreign power in these enclaves ran counter to the winds of change that were blowing across the entire globe and an anticolonial movement was garnering momentum in the subject nations of the third world, most of which had already gained independence and acquired their 'places in the sun'. It was also reiterated that India was a firm adherent to the principles of peaceful settlement of such issues and would welcome bilateral discussions to finalise the modalities for the peaceful transfer of the enclaves. As was to be expected, the only reaction of the Portuguese Government to these overtures was the further tightening up of the Draconian repressive measures, for which the Portuguese have been notorious for centuries, and their refusal to discuss the issue. The Indian Legation in Lisbon was consequently closed in June 1953.

### **Rebellion in Daman**

As a reaction to these repressive measures, Dadra, the detached Portuguese pocket east of Daman, rose in rebellion on July 21, 1954. The volunteers of the United Front of Goans liberated the pocket well before nightfall. Only eleven days later, on August 1, 1954, Nagar Haveli, the other Portuguese pocket east of Daman, overthrew the Portuguese regime. And that marked the beginning of the end of Portuguese colonial rule in the Indian sub-continent. The Papal Bull had ceased to be omnipotent.

In December 1955 Portugal appealed to the International Court of Justice at the Hague accusing India of having sent armed Indians into Dadra and Nagar Haveli and demanded the right of passage from Daman to these pockets through Indian territory in order to re-establish Portuguese rule there. After over four years of protracted argument, the International Court delivered its judgement on April 12, 1960, upholding India's refusal to allow the right of passage to the Portuguese as perfectly legal stating that Portugal 'never had and has not any right of passage over Indian territory to these regions and between each of them. It added that, 'since the right of passage assumes the continuance of the administration of the enclaves by the Portuguese, the establishment of a new power in the enclaves must be regarded as having *ipso facto* put an end to the right of passage'.

For some time after their liberation, Dadra and Nagar Haveli were treated as autonomous territories administered by a *Varishta Panchayat* which sought their merger with India. Two bills for integrating these enclaves into the Indian Union, to be administered by the Centre, and according these enclaves the right to be represented in the Lok Sabha, were passed by the Parliament in August 1961, irrevocably granting to them the status of being integral parts of the Indian Union.

### **The Movement Reaches Flash-Point**

Meanwhile, the clouds of revolt had started gathering over Goa, Daman and Diu, On the night of August 14/15,1955, *Satyagrahis* (non-violent freedom fighters), armed only with the Indian tricolour as banners of freedom and dogged determination, entered Goa, Daman and Diu from all directions to demonstrate their sympathy and support for the liberation movement. The Portuguese army and police, who had already manned the border, attacked the 'invaders' with lathis and rifles. The Goans joined the *indian Satyagrahis* by hoisting the Indian tricolour on buildings and distributing leaflets carrying the imprints of *Jai Hind* and *Viva Goa*. The army and the police opened fire and caused a large number of casualties - 22 Indians and two nGoans shot dead, including a woman *Satyagrahi*, Subhadra Bai Sagar, who was carrying the Indian standard and was cut down at point-blank range. As many as 225 persons were injured, 38 of them seriously, and a large number of Goans were rounded up and brutally assaulted before arrest

A groundswell of resentment had already been sweeping across India for some time as reports of indefinite incarceration of Goan freedom fighters and their inhuman torture at the hands of the Portuguese were carried by the Indian press. The savagery perpetrated on the participants in the movement launched on August 15 caused the groundswell to develop into a tidal wave of anger. *Bandhs* (strikes) and demonstrations were held all over India and the Government was strongly urged to take police action against the Portuguese administration of Goa. The Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, conceded that while such situations could not be handled in haste or anger, it was necessary to prevent any further escalation so that conditions could once again be created to start negotiations and to settle the issue peacefully. The Government of India sealed the borders of the three enclaves, the world press assailed the Government of Portugal but the Portuguese persisted in their refusal to compromise.

The case for Goa's liberation came up in the United Nations too. Several countries demanded in July 1960 that Portugal be asked to submit requisite information on its colonies and possessions around the globe before the United Nations but the Portuguese retort was that these were not 'their colonies or possessions but integral parts of Portugal and hence the developments in Goa were an internal matter of Portugal. This led to the UN Trusteeship Council passing a resolution in November 1960 urging the General Assembly to request Portugal to provide the information asked for. Once again Portugal refused to co-operate. The Trusteeship Council then passed another resolution in November 1961 conveying its condemnation of Portugal's refusal to transmit information about its overseas territories and requested all member states to deny to Portugal any help which could be used for the subjugation of the people of the non-autonomous territories under Portuguese administration'.

Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's exhortations to the Indian people to exercise restraint and to try to achieve their objective - liberation of Goa - in a calm and considered manner was misinterpreted by the Portuguese during the debate in the Trusteeship Council to say that the Indian Prime Minister had given the assurance that he would not resort to the use of force to end Portuguese rule in Goa. The Indian representative at the UN, Shri V.K. Krishna Menon, made the Indian position very clear in November 1961 by stating that India 'had at no time abjured the use of force in international affairs' and that India would not hesitate to use force if provoked'. That the Prime Minister of India too had resolved to use 'other means' to liberate Goa had already become apparent when, while addressing a seminar on Portuguese colonialism in October 1961, he said that the policy of using peaceful means to resolve the Goa question had failed and that 'we

have been forced into thinking afresh by the Portuguese to adopt other methods to solve this problem. When and how we will do it cannot be forecast now. But I have no doubt that Goa will soon be free'.

Freedom for the Goans was now only two months away and little did the Portuguese know at that time what began in the very first year of the Portuguese occupation of Goa, i.e., 1510, and continued to be ruthlessly put down for four and a half centuries by Portuguese tormentors, would soon achieve success and that their day of reckoning would dawn on December 19, 1961.

### **Nehru's Green Signal to the Armed Forces**

A couple of months before Operation Vijay - the Armed Forces operation in India for the liberation of Goa and the other Portuguese colonies in India - it had become apparent that Prime Minister Nehru had realised that he would have to eventually resort to 'other means' to liberate the colonies soon and rid India of the last bastions of the Portuguese dictatorial might, though the Armed Forces had not yet been apprised of the probability of India using any military action. However, Lieutenant General (later General and Chief of the Army Staff) J-N. Chaudhuri, the then General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Southern Command, had prepared a comprehensive 'appreciation' (assessment) of the prevailing situation covering its land, sea and air aspects and a detailed plan for the tri-Service operation.

### **Deployment of Portuguese Forces**

According to his appreciation, the Portuguese Army in Goa had a strength of three Portuguese infantry battalions whose total strength was approximately 2,200. Daman and Diu had three companies of strength 360 each. In addition, all strategic points were defended with anti-tank and anti-personnel mines. Four squadrons of armour had been positioned at Mapuca, Bicholim, Ponda and Bally and three batteries of artillery comprising 105-mm howitzers had been deployed at Margao, Vasco da Gama and Bicholim. Anti-aircraft guns had been installed at Dabolim airfield and Marmagao harbour, the latter having also been provided with long-range anti-shipping coastal guns. The border of the Goan enclave was being defended by 3,000 armed local police personnel and customs guards equipped with mortars and automatic weapons. The borders of Daman and Diu were being protected by about 450 such personnel each.

For the naval defence of Goa, it was reported that there were four frigates, each equipped with three 120-mm guns and four multiple pom-poms (automatic rapid-firing guns), which patrolled the sea areas of all three enclaves. These ships were the *Afonso de Albuquerque*, *Bartholomeu Bias*, *Gonsalves Zarco* and *Joao de Lisbon*. When the action took place, however, it was found that only the *Afonso de Albuquerque* was available for the naval defence of Goa, the other three having sailed for Portugal earlier.

The Portuguese air force in Goa was reported to comprise a few transport planes fitted out to carry bombs and up to a squadron of transonic fighter bombers. The Dabolim airport had been modernised and equipped to international standards. Daman and Diu had an airstrip each but these could only be used for staging

purposes. The total strength of the Portuguese forces thus was 5,200 in Goa, 800 in Daman and 800 in Diu.

### **The Task Force**

The Army task force required to liberate Goa, as envisaged by General Chaudhuri in his appreciation, included two infantry brigades, one independent para brigade less one battalion, one light infantry battalion, two light armoured regiments, one medium artillery regiment and some engineer units. For capturing the Portuguese forces at Daman, it was estimated that the Army would require one infantry battalion with one 25-pounder battery and at Diu the requirement was one infantry battalion and one company.

To assist the task force in its operation, General Chaudhuri recommended the assignment of four tasks to the Navy - first, blockade of the ports of Marmagao, Panjim and Daman and the islands of Diu and Anjadip, second, prevention of the removal of important stores and equipment, third, close support by Naval aircraft if required, and fourth, close support by naval guns in an emergency.

The Air Force was likely to be assigned the tasks of providing close support to the ground forces, carrying out air drops whenever necessary, providing intercommunication flights, undertaking interdiction, whenever necessary, and immobilising Portuguese aircraft in Goa.

### **The Denouement Begins**

Merchant ships had for many years been taking passage through the mile-wide expanse of water between the Portuguese-occupied Anjadip island and the Indian mainland with the tacit concurrence of both countries but on November 17, 1961, when the Indian steamship *Sabarmati* was negotiating this short stretch on her way to Mangalore, Portuguese soldiers on the island suddenly resorted to unprovoked firing on the ship which was caught totally unprepared for such an eventuality. While the damages suffered by the ship were not extensive and the ship succeeded in reaching her next port of call, the Chief Engineer of the ship, Shri Pehna, was injured when a bullet hit the ship's superstructure, ricocheted and hit him.

This incident generated considerable tension in the three Portuguese enclaves and the neighbouring territories on the mainland. When a protest was lodged with the Portuguese Government accusing it of having committed an act prejudicial to the laws of the sea thus having violated the right of innocent passage through the stretch of water which all merchant ships enjoyed, they denied that the *Sabarmati* had been fired upon by the Portuguese. They however, committed a diplomatic *faux pas* by claiming that while passing through 'our territorial waters' on the night of November 24, 1961, a week after the *Sabarmati* incident which they had denied, some

Indian merchant ships had refused to identify themselves when challenged and had made an attempt to reach the island of Anjadip.

(It is interesting to note that the *Sabarmati*, which was the first vessel to face Portuguese wrath, was present in Marmagao harbour on January 26, 1962, the first Indian Republic Day to be celebrated in post-

On the same night, i.e., on November 24, 1961, the Portuguese garrison on Anjadip island committed another belligerent act by once again opening fire on Indian fishermen who were operating close to the same area in about 20 fishing boats. The unprovoked firing fatally injured Rajaram Atmaram Kochrekar, one of the three-member crew of a *tony* (fishing craft). Kochrekar died before medical aid could reach him. Four other fishermen were seriously injured.

During this firing three rounds had been fired from Anjadip Island. The first had buzzed over Kochrekar's *tony*, the second hit the front side of the deck and the third hit him.

On November 28 Prime Minister Nehru told the Lok Sabha that in a statement issued by the Portuguese Government and broadcast by the British Broadcasting Corporation, they had stated that some Indian fishing boats and passenger ships had carried out an attack on Anjadip Island. Nehru said that the Government of India would not send fishing boats and passenger ships to attack this island as she had 'stouter ships' to attack the island with if she wanted to.

These two events became the turning points in the history of the two nations. For the Portuguese it signalled the final departure from the Indian subcontinent, after having entered the race for European colonialism in South East Asia four and a half centuries ago, and for the Indians it meant the beginning of the elimination of the last vestiges of colonialism.

In order to boost the sagging morale of the fishermen of the area and to ensure Indian Naval presence in the area as a deterrent, two ships of the *Indian Navy*, *Rajput*, a destroyer, and *Kirpan*, an antisubmarine frigate, were deployed off the Karwar coast on November 28, 1961. The two ships held exercises at a distance of 10 kilometres from the Portuguese-occupied enclaves, this distance having been assumed to be the extent of the Portuguese territorial waters. The ships arrived at Karwar on November 28, 1961 and started patrolling the area.

Meanwhile, all roads leading to Goa's interior from the border had been heavily mined by the Portuguese and a dusk-to-dawn curfew imposed. At a public meeting held on December 1 at Allahabad, Prime Minister Nehru reacted to these developments with anguish and said, 'We cannot tolerate such acts. We will take the necessary steps at the right time'.

### **Sanitising the Approaches**

By December 1, Naval Headquarters had instituted a surveillance and, patrolling exercise - *Operation Chutney*. The two ships positioned at Karwar, *Rajput* and *Kirpan*, had been withdrawn and *Betwa* and *Beas*, two anti aircraft frigates, commenced a linear patrol off the Goan coast at a distance of 13 kilometres. They were to report all ingress and egress - of shipping, air craft and personnel-into and out of the Portuguese enclaves and to retaliate with necessary force, if engaged by the Portuguese units in the air or on the surface. This patrol remained established by a relay of ships till after D-Day, with minor alterations to its length and the distance from the coast. Through out the period the ships on patrol observed and signalled useful

information. Though the bulk of intelligence obtained by them related to the volume of merchant shipping, the situation of an airfield at Dabolim was established with considerable accuracy. They did not, however, observe any air activity other than four-engined and two-engined transport aircraft occasionally using this airfield, neither did they observe any flying activity from anywhere in the vicinity. All this convincingly indicated the absence of any other airfield in the area and also the absence of any Portuguese combat aircraft. The ships on patrol also maintained an effective watch on the only Portuguese man-of-war seen, the frigate *Afonso de Albuquerque*, whose movements between Anjadip Island and Marmagao were faithfully reported. It was also observed that other than the *Albuquerque*, there did not seem to be any other men-of-war of the Portuguese Navy of similar or larger size in the area (though the area even today teems with 'Portuguese men-of-war', sea animals which are able to give a painful, even deadly, sting)!

These tow ships could not, however, confirm the existence of coast batteries in the area. The location of such batteries had been indicated on charts, albeit of circa 1880 vintage, and were later confirmed by IAP air reconnaissance just prior to D-day.

No definite information regarding Portuguese submarines operating in Indian waters was available but on the basis of the existence of a submarine wing in the Portuguese Navy, it was decided not to discount submarine threat in the area.

Meanwhile, Naval Headquarters had promulgated the requirement for Indian Naval Ships *Vikrant*, *Mysore*, *Delhi*, *Talwar*, *Kuthar*, *Khukri Kistna*, *Dharini*, *Shakti*, *Karwar*, *Kakinada*, *Cannanore* and *Bimlipatan* to be made operational at the earliest possible date. This was in addition to the ships which were already operational, viz., *Rajput*, *Trishul*, *Betwa*, *Beas*, *Kirpan* and *Cauvery*. It was also decided to embark 14 Seahawk aircraft of the No. 300 Air Squadron and 15 Alize aircraft of the No. 310 Air Squadron on the carrier by December 10.

The initial reaction of the Government of India to the firings on *Sabarmati* and the fishing craft was to occupy only the Anjadip Island. Detailed consideration of this course of action, confirmed that no particular advantage would accrue by restricting the 'take-over' to Anjadip Island.

Consequently, the 'take-over' of Portuguese territory in the enclave of Goa, and the Island of Anjadip was favoured. Later, on reconsideration, in order to obviate Portuguese retaliation originating in the enclaves of Daman and Diu, these two enclaves were also included in the proposed 'take-over' action plan.

### **Portuguese Intentions and World Opinion**

The threatening posture adopted by the Portuguese soon became more acute with Portuguese soldiers trespassing into Indian territory, harassing Indian villagers, carrying out searches, confiscating villagers' possessions and then opening fire and withdrawing into Goan territory. For instance, on December 10,

twenty Portuguese soldiers crossed into Indian territory and fired 300 rounds on the unarmed people of village Talwadi and then withdrew into Goa. Soon thereafter the Foreign Minister of Portugal sought the aid of the NATO powers in throwing the Indian forces out if Goa was attacked and threatened to take up the issue at the Security Council, asserting that the local residents of Goa had for centuries been loyal to the Portuguese and wished to remain with them.

At this time Professor J.K. Galbraith, who had achieved worldwiderecognition as an eminent economist, writer, journalist and diplomat, was the US ambassador to India. Datelined New Delhi, December 8,1961,he said in his book *An Ambassador's Journal*, 'Early this week I got off a long, elegantly constructed telegram (to the US Government) urging our final detachment from Portugal, or at least from its possessions. ... Only those inexperienced in association with paper strongmen and dictators would be uncontrollably anxious to support Salazar'. In a footnote to this entry, he added, 'Goa, which occupied some 65 (square) miles of the west, or Malabar, coast of India to the South of Bombay, constituted, along with the two small enclaves of Daman and Diu, the Portuguese Africa in India. There was no obvious reason, its greater antiquity (from 1510) apart, why it should not have become part of the Indian union, along with British and French India and the partially independent Princely States at'the time of Independence. The failure of the Portuguese to yield was a major annoyance to the Indians as was the use of Goa as a centre for smuggling on a considerable scale including the whisky that was banned by the formidable dry laws of the adjacent state of Maharashtra. Though extensively converted to Christianity, the Goanese are not ethnically distinct from the people of India'.

As regards the unflinching US support to the Portuguese cause, Galbraith said, 'In 1955, in a uniquely regressive gesture, Dulles (US Secretary of State) had agreed with the Portuguese Foreign Minister, Cunha,incalling Goa a province, that is to say, an integral part of Portugal. This endorsed a latter-day constitutional amendment adapted by the Portuguese in 1951, which so described the overseas territories and thus made them exempt, hopefully, from anticolonialism. Secretary Rusk enthusiastically continued, both in Spain and Portugal, what liberals in the Department, some at least, called the *Iberia uber Alles* (Iberia above everything) policy'.

Galbraith continued in his endeavour to seek a peaceful solution to the Goa problem especially because 'India, having rid herself by peaceful means of the British and the French, would be showing real weakness if ever she had to use force to be rid of the Portuguese people'. He made all efforts to dissuade Nehru from using force and as late as december 17, 'I had another talk with Nehru. He was much more relaxed, listened appreciatively to my arguments and we parted in friendly fashion. . . . I came away with the feeling that the operation might be put off and also that my arguments had something to do with it'.

The Portuguese, sensing danger, 'wentto Adlai Stevenson, the US Representative in the United Nations in grave alarm to sayan attack was imminent. The latter got UThant (Secretary General of the Uni~edNations) who drafted a letter to Indians and Portuguese calling for talks within the framework of the UN Charter and

Resolutions. Since the latter are anticolonial, the Portuguese protested violently, so the letter was dispatched by Thant with the proviso that the Portuguese did not accept the anticolonial provisions of the Resolutions. When it got here (Delhi) the Indians exploded at the reservation'.

Another development that irked Galbraith as well as India was the fact that Dr. Franco Nogueira, the Portuguese Foreign Minister, had approached Dean Rusk, the US Secretary of State, at a NATO meeting and made two preposterous proposals. First, to ask Islamabad to move a couple of Pakistan divisions to the border to frighten the Indians', and next, to bypass the UN 'with its inconvenient anticolonial attitudes' and bring as much pressure as possible to bear on the Indians to desist them from using force. Rusk's reaction to these two proposals was sphinx like silence. 'tis interesting to note that Rusk was a *defender* of armed action against Cuba.

Meanwhile George Ball and George McGhee, US State Department officials, 'had called in B.K. Nehru (the Indian Ambassador, or in the USA), urged the disastrous effect on American public opinion, damage to Nehru's reputation and chain reaction of violence which would result from the Indian action. Then they proposed that Prime Minister Nehru announce a six-months' suspension. They would then promise to make a major effort with the Portuguese. The nature of the latter effort was unspecific and badly hedged but it did mean in effect that we (the US) would do something to bring the Portuguese round'.

On the evening of December 17, Galbraith met Nehru and pleaded 'only for sufficient time to put the arm fully on the Portuguese. But in the course of the discussion, it became plain to me that the zero hour had passed'.

Yes, until the zero hour came, Nehru had remained averse to the use of force and was hesitant to send the armed forces in. Ever since India's Independence, there had been parleys between Portugal and India but these had reached an impasse by the end of 1956 and Nehru, being a believer *in Panch Sheel*, and not being a hardliner, felt that India should act with responsibility and wisdom and should exercise restraint, but what action was contemplated was not clear.

Ellsworth Bunker, who was the US Ambassador to India earlier, had made the quaint suggestion to Nehru to consider the 'purchase' of Goa from Portugal as had been done by the United States for acquiring Louisiana from France in 1803 for \$15 million or by Denmark when King Christian I mortgaged the Shetland and the Orkney Islands in 1469 for the dowry for his daughter, Margrete's marriage to King James III of Scotland. Denmark had also 'sold' Serampore and Tranquebar to the British in 1844 for the modest sum of Rupees 12 lakh and 'transferred' the Virgin Islands to the United States in 1917 for \$25 million. Little did Bunker know that the Portuguese were not prepared to trade off their possessions in Africa or India for mere lucre, however impressive the sum, though they had ceded Bombay to King Charles II of England as a part of his dowry for marrying Infanta Catherine of Braganza, the Portuguese princess, in 1622 (King Charles II had in turn transferred Bombay to the East India Company in 1668 at a princely annual rental of £10).

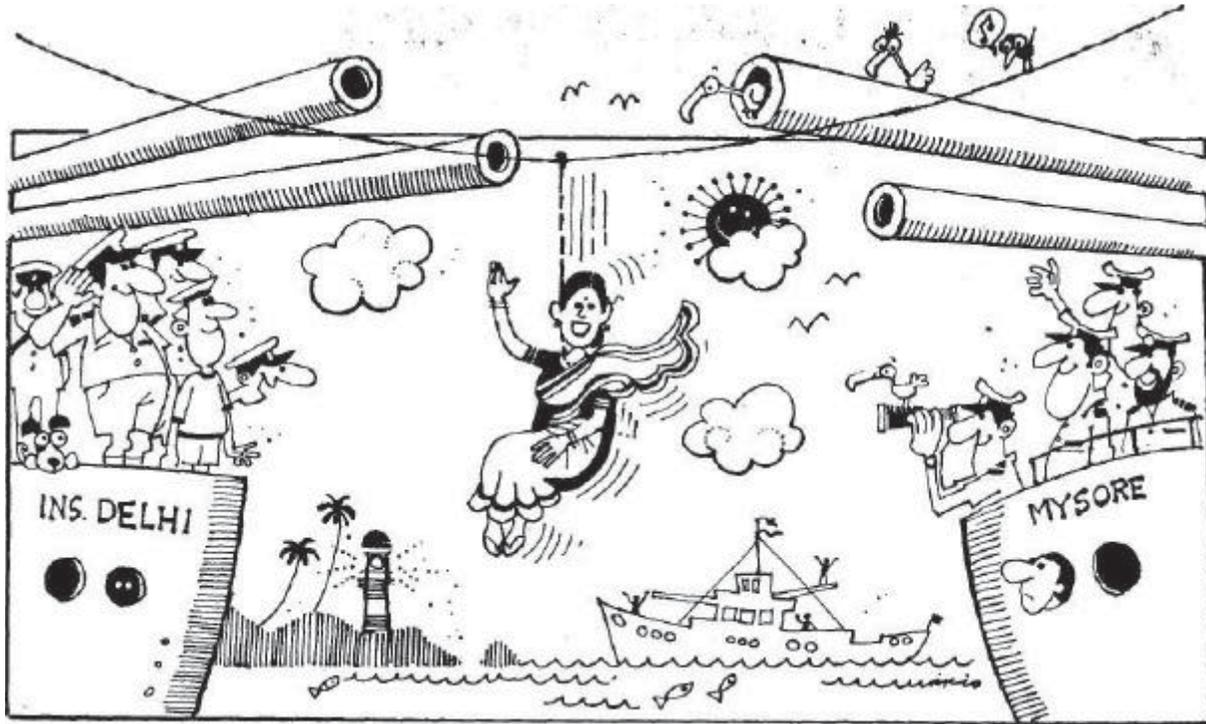


Vice Adinital AD K8tari talndUover as theChief of the Naval Staff !rom Vice Admiral Sir Stephen Carlill on 22 April 1958. With Vice Admiral Katari taking over as the first Indian Chief of the Naval Staff, a newly designed Admiral's Flag was brought into service. The special feature of this flag was the addition

of the 'Dharma Chakra' superimposed 01'1 the centre of the 51. George's *Cross*.



Commissioning of *Kuthar*' in July 1959, with the Commanding Officer Commander SS Sodhi. Also seen are the Chief of Staff to C-IN-C Portsmouth and Captain RF Jesse! -formerly Chief Instructor Navy at the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington.

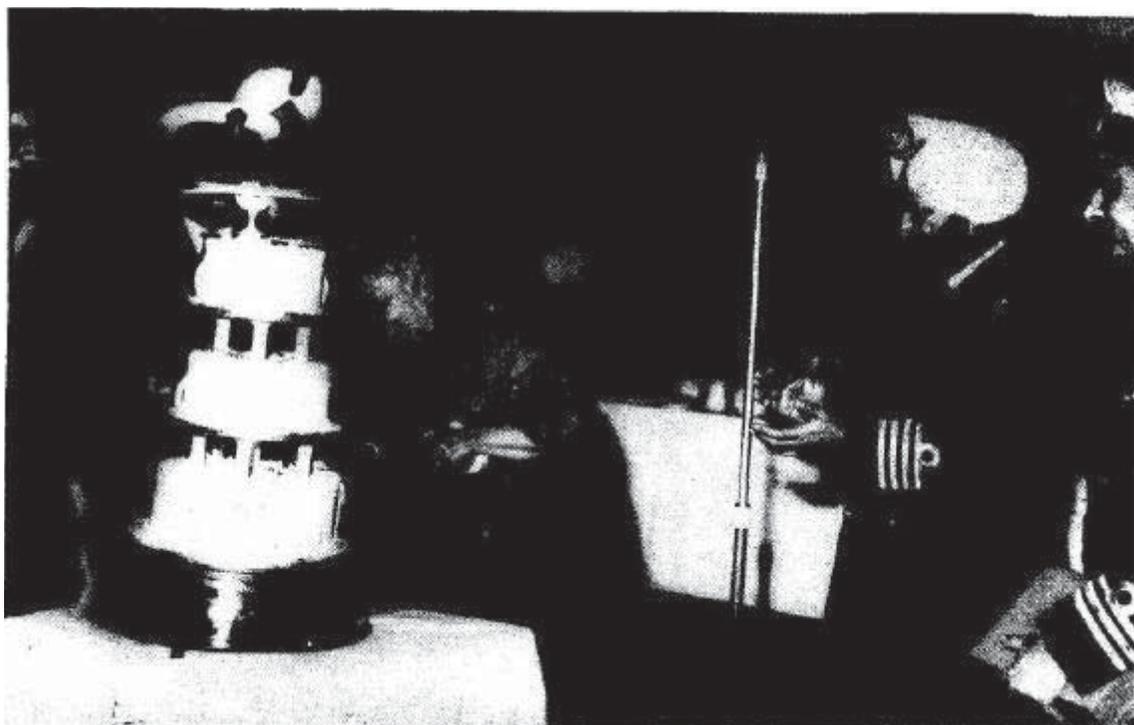


Transfer by Jackstay from **Mysore to/MN - Mrs. Meena** Nagarkar.wife of ComriMnderVVSN^piicar-  
thefirst IncHan eve to bounce across the waves in a bosun's chair in 1959.

*Courtesy MarioMiranda*



Captain VA Kamatfi reading the commissioning warrant of *Trishul*, 13 Jan 1960. Also seen in the picture is Captain RS David the then Indian Naval Advisor, London



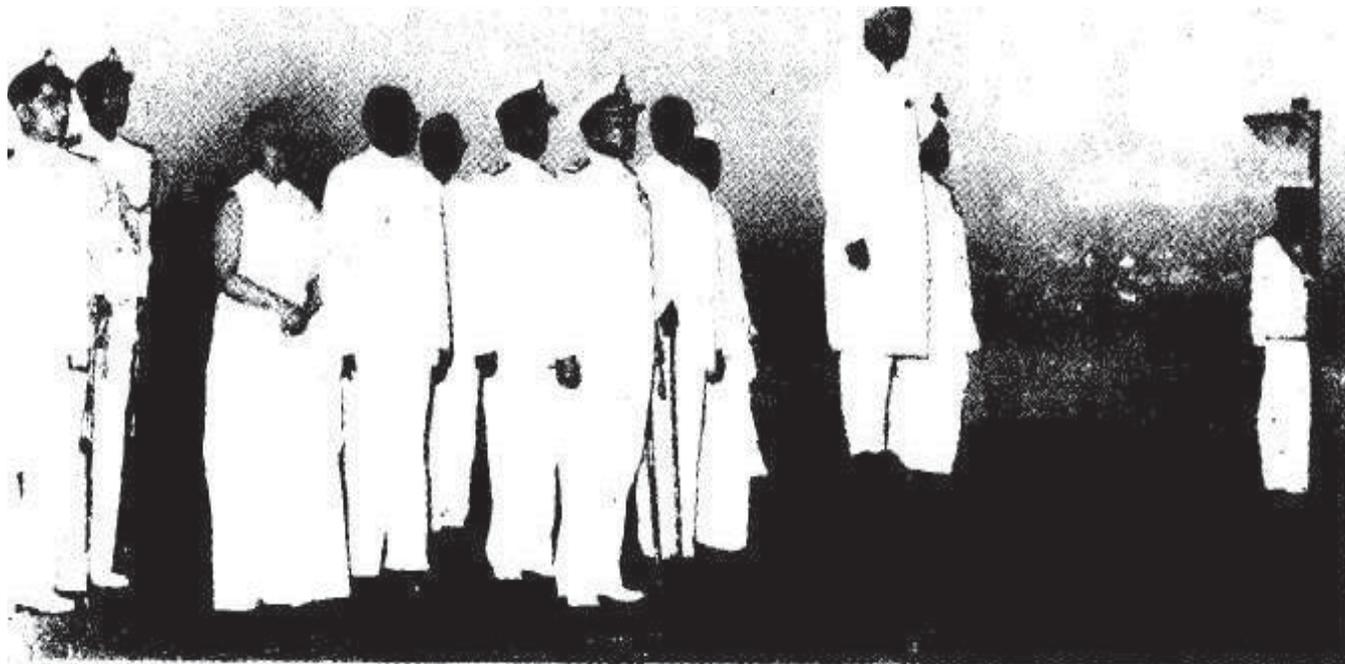
Cutting the commissioning cake on board Vikramaditya

Commissioner in London on

4 Mar 1961. Also seen in the picture are the Commanding Officer, Captain PS Mahindroo and Commander Krtehan Dev.

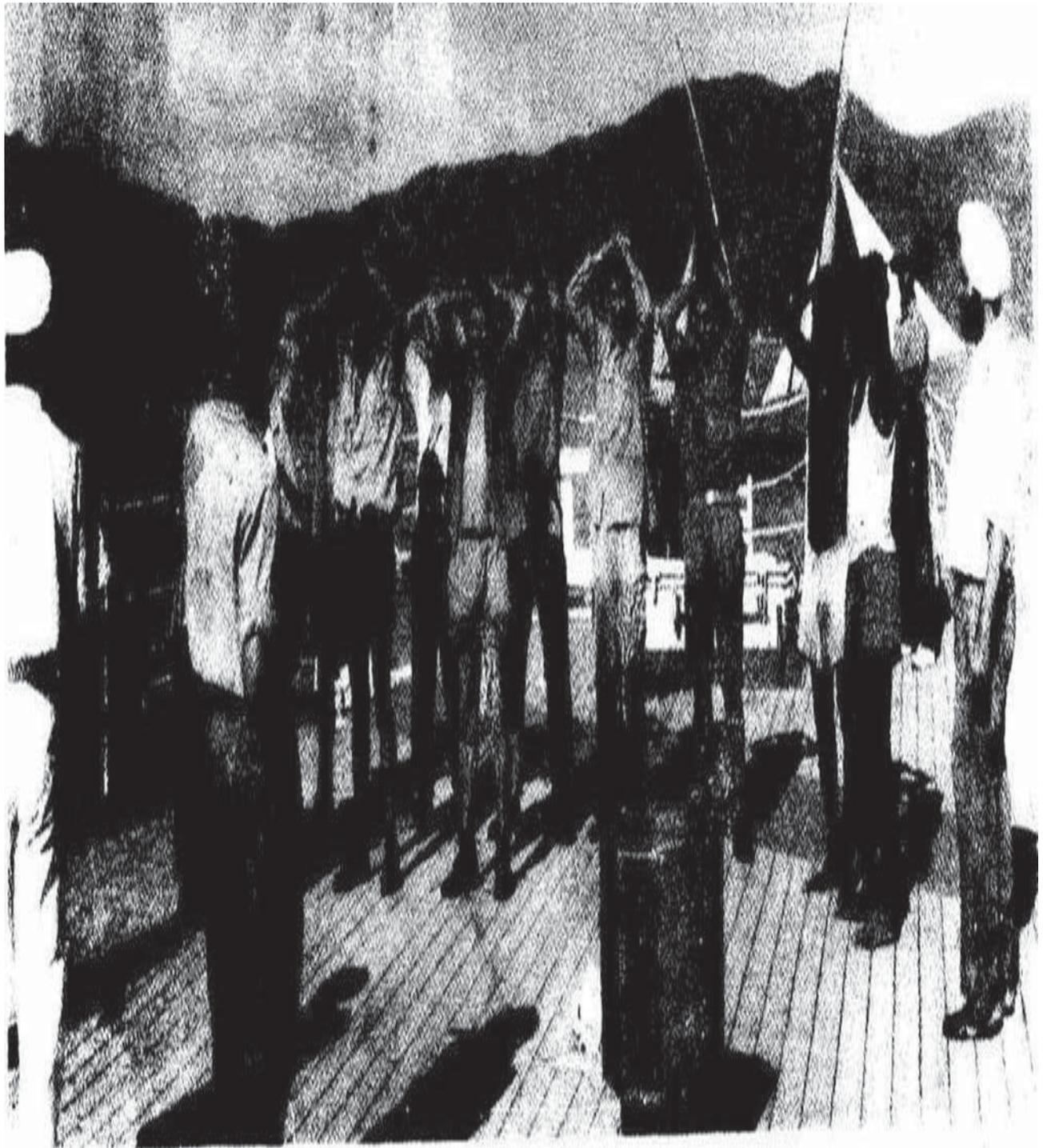


**Lieutenant Commander BR Acharya Squadron Commander 300 Squadron (Sea Hawks) briefing Naval pilots before a practice strike mission at Royal Naval Air Station Brawdy in 1961. Also seen in the picture are Lieutenants RV Singh, A.G. Jog, RH Tahiliani, SY Tipnis, SK Gupta, KASZ Raju and RN Ghosh.**



Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru on board on Vikrants arrival at Bombay on 03 Nov. 1961. Also seen in the picture are Shri VK Krishna Menon, Minister of Defence, Shrimati Vijay Lakshmi Pandit, Shri Raghu Ramiah Minister of State for Defence, Vice Admiral RD Katari, the Chief of the Naval Staff, Rear Admiral BS Soman, Flag Officer Commanding Indian Fleet, Captain PS Mahindroo, Commanding Officer and Lieutenants MB Kunte and MML Saxena.





Meanwhile, Krishna Menon had fixed a date for the invasion and the Indian Army was raring to go. Galbraith came to know of it and persuaded Nehru to postpone action for two more days. Galbraith encouraged Nehru to think that the US would compel the Portuguese Government to agree to leave Goa on the understanding that India would take a generous view of the economic and cultural interests of Portugal in Goa - a commitment which Nehru had no difficulty in giving.

But Galbraith had overestimated his own influence in Washington and with President Kennedy. Kennedy gave no hint to Portugal that, in his opinion, India had a good case. On the other hand, the US State Department indicated active sympathy for the Salazar regime's adamant attitude.

When UN Secretary General U Thant suggested negotiations, Salazar would only say that such negotiations could only be held on the basis of co-existence of India and a Portuguese Goa. The United States was playing a double game. On the one hand it was standing solidly behind Portugal and on the other it was warning India that it wouldn't be good form to attack Goa. Galbraith suggested that India sponsor a resolution on Goa in the UN General Assembly. But only a fool would have fallen for the trap. At this point the US Government came up with another

suggesting that India postpone action for another three months. When this proposal was taken by Galbraith to Nehru, the latter was even then willing to listen. But then Krishna Menon told Nehru that it was too late and that advance parties of the Indian Army had already begun to move.

Madhu Limaye, the well-known parliamentarian and former editor and columnist, played a major role in the Goans' freedom struggle and participated in a *Satyagraha* in Goa in 1954. He was arrested by the Portuguese authorities and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment along with several other freedom fighters from India including N.G. Gore and Tridip Chaudhury, and released on being given amnesty at the intervention of the Pope in 1957. Limaye feels that the three Portuguese enclaves could have been liberated within a few months of India's Independence. He says:

The military action started finally in the midnight of December 17-18 and everything was over by the evening of December 19, 1961. Was such an action really necessary? To me it seems that a small-scale police action, say, by a 'disbanded battalion', would have done the trick in

Goa in 1948. But Nehru then would neither countenance unofficial armed action nor an official one.

About the morality of the use of force, I must say that the state is a state, and as long as it maintains armed forces, it must keep (hem in a state of readiness, and use them both to defend its territory as well as to enforce its birthright. India was precisely doing that in Kashmir and Goa.

Mahatma Gandhi had lent support to the Goan freedom movement from its very beginning. When Lohia was arrested by the Portuguese authorities on June 18,1946, he not only justified Lohia's defiance of the prohibitory orders but also lauded the tatter's 'service to the cause of civil liberty and especially the Goans/ He said that the Portuguese enclaves existed 'on the sufferance of the British government' and once India became free, Goa could not be allowed to exist as a 'separate entity'. He advised the Portuguese to recognise the 'signs of the times' and expressed the hope that Goa would be able to claim the rights of citizenship o f the free India state; He also advised the inhabitants of Goa to shed fear of the foreign power as Indians did and seek the freedom of the enclaves. When the Portuguese Pro -Consul criticised Lohia for having acted against the lustorical truth of the four centuries' and 'troubled the peaceful people of Goa', Gandhi wrote, *I suppose you know that I have visited Mozambique, Delagao and Inham-bane. I did not notice there any government for philanthropic purpose. Indeed, I was astonished to see the distinction that the Government made between Indians and Portuguese and between the Africans and themselves/ He added that the inhabitants of Goa could 'affoid to wait for independence until much greater India has regained it. But no person or group can thus remain without civil liberty without losing self-respect/ Jimaye adds,'Although Gandhi's politics'probably'differed fromhis (Lohia's),yet Lohia, Gandhi said, had commanded his 'admiration' for his having gone to Goa and put his finger on its black spot/*

On August 12,1946, the Congress Working Committee had passed a resolution on Goa asserting that 'Goa has always been and must inevitably continue to be part of India. It must share in the freedom of the Indian people. Lohia had founded the Goa National Congress to organise peaceful resistance and was arrested on September 29,1946 and kept in solitary confinement in the Aguada fort. At his prayer meeting on October 2,1946, Gandhi lauded Lohia's action and praised his learning. His intervention soon secured Lohia's release.

Pakistan too had attempted to have a finger in the Goan pie in 1953 by laying a vague claim to the Portuguese possessions in India. The baggage

**declaration** frn-mc />>\* V~V:~t.-----t -----I..J—r\* 1 >>>- -• -

STATEMENT OF A WITNESS TO THE COURT BELIEVES AS FOLLOWS

Pakistan and an air agreement had been concluded between the two countries in 1958. And what led to serious apprehension was the fact that a seven-member military delegation from Pakistan visited Daman during the second week of December 1961 and a Pakistan Navy ship, *Zulfiqar*, had been sighted a few days earlier leaving Karachi and sailing towards the Konkan coast. During the same period several aircraft were reported to have been flying between Goa and Karachi evacuating the families of Portuguese personnel in the three enclaves. It was, therefore, decided that plans for the liberation of Goa would also have to cater for the contingency of Pakistan joining hands with the Portuguese.

Britain was in an unenviable position. It had recognised the Indians' right to freedom and had withdrawn from the subcontinent in 1947 and was aware of Portugal's intransigence regarding the Portuguese enclaves. And the fact that India, after independence, had become an important member of the Commonwealth while Portugal was Britain's oldest ally, led to the latter assuming an attitude of neutrality by advising India to adopt nonviolent means for liberating Goa, preaching avoidance of provocation to Portugal and supporting the Portuguese proposal of sending international observers to Goa. This was not acceptable to India as it would imply an endorsement of the Portuguese claim of sovereignty over the enclaves. The Portuguese persisted in their demand for the appointment of international observers to 'witness if and how violations of frontier and provocative acts take place' while rejecting all suggestions for negotiations for withdrawal from 'the Portuguese State of India' which they refused to consider as a Portuguese colony in India.

While the United Nations and all major nations were opposed to colonialism and supported the move for freedom of colonies around the globe from foreign rule and while India was advised not to resort to the use of force, attempts to persuade Portugal to withdraw peacefully failed. India had persevered with a nonviolent negotiated course of action for over fourteen years and since there was no change in the Portuguese attitude, it was apparent that a military action was called for.

While addressing the Parliament on December 11, Prime Minister Nehru reiterated that India's patience in regard to Portuguese activities in Goa had finally been exhausted and expressed the hope that Portugal, either on her own initiative or on the device of her friends and allies, 'would accept the natural culmination of the present developments, which is her withdrawal from Goa.' He, however, said that India's policy of solving the Goa question by adopting peaceful means had failed and that 'we have been forced into thinking afresh by the Portuguese - to adopt other methods to solve this problem.

Portugal's persistent refusal to discuss their possessions in India had forced India to resort to armed action. The operation was set to be launched **originally** on December 15, then deferred by a day and then postponed once **again** by another two days with the hope that intense last-ditch diplomatic **efforts** would perhaps achieve a peaceful settlement and cancellation of the **military** operation. But that was not to be and the Rubicon was finally crossed. The Army, Navy and Air Force closed in for the excision of the enclaves from

The operation for the liberation of Goa, Daman and Diu - Operation Vijay - was placed under the control of the Chiefs of Staff Committee at New Delhi whose members were Vice Admiral (later Admiral) R.D. Katari, Chief of the Navkl Staff, General P.N. Thapar, Chief of the Army Staff and Air Marshal AM Engineer, Chief of the Air Staff. Lieutenant General LN. Chaudhuri, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Command, was the Theatre Land Force Commander for Operation Vijay, Major General (later Lieutenant General) KP. Candeth, General Officer Commanding the 17th Infantry Division, in command of the Goa Operation, Rear Admiral (later Admiral) BS. Soman, Flag Officer Commanding the Indian Fleet, as the Theatre Naval Commander and Air Vice Marshal (later Air Marshal) E.W. Pinto, Air Officer Commanding, Operational Command, was the Theatre Air Commander.

At Goa the Army was to move in from two directions, the east and the north, with a decoy entry from the south. The eastern thrust was planned to be made by the 17th Infantry Division along the route from Anmod to MoHem to Ponda; the northern thrust was to be launched by the 50th Infantry Para brigade along the route from Dodamarg to Assonora to Bicholim with a part of this force moving westwards to Mapuca and then southwards to Betim; and the 'decoy' force, titled the 20th Infantry Brigade but actually of a company strength, was to enter from the south along the route from Karwar to Majalito Canacona.

Tactical support to the ground forces was to be provided by the IAF. The IAF force operating from the airfields at Pune and Belgaum whose main task was to gain air supremacy by destroying all aircraft of the Portuguese Air Force, putting the airfield at Dabolim out of action and silencing the wireless station at Dabolim.

The Naval Task Force was to enforce a blockade of the ports of Mormugao and Panjim, neutralise the coast batteries defending these ports and sink or immobilise units of the Portuguese Navy deployed inside Goa harbour or patrolling its sea approaches. An amphibious operation by the Army, i.e., landing of troops, was ruled out as the required number of assault craft were not available, the troops deployed had not been trained in amphibious operations, there was no time available for such training, and it was felt that such an operation did not offer any particular tactical advantage.

For capturing Daman, the 1st Maratha Group was to enter the territory from the direction of Vapi, capture the airfields north of Daman town and then capture the town itself. The IAF was to deploy two aircraft at intervals of two hours to provide air support to the land force and to carry out surveillance of the airfields and prevent their use either for escape or for landing reinforcements. The Navy was to enforce a blockade in the entire sea area off Daman and prevent the ingress and egress of all vessels.

In the absence of assault craft for the capture of Diu, which is separated from the mainland by a narrow creek, 20 Rajput was to cross the creek on improvised rafts and land on the north of the island during the night preceding

the operation, move south-east and capture the airfield and then move eastwards and capture the town and fort of Diu. One company of 4 Madras was to capture Gogla, which is north-east of the citadel of Diu, before the landing by 20 Rajput and to provide covering fire to the troops attacking the fort from the west. The requirement of air support was considered minimal and so only one aircraft was positioned at Jamnagar for the purpose. The Navy was to provide adequate support by deploying a cruiser off the island so that it could provide naval gunfire support to the Army, neutralise the fort and citadel, if necessary, and land an assault or occupation force, if required.

The island of Anjadip was to be captured by the Navy by landing a naval assault force after softening up the island beaches with close range weapons and then providing adequate gunfire support to the assault force.

The Navy was also to deploy its carrier task group in order to be able to use Alize and Seahawk aircraft to carry out reconnaissance of the sea area off Bombay, to prevent any Portuguese warships from reaching within the gun range of Bombay or approaching the Indian coast anywhere else, to carry out strikes on Portuguese warships breaking through the patrol line off Goa or as required by the Flag Officer Commanding the Indian Fleet, to carry out searches of specific sea areas and to provide necessary naval air support to the Army in all the three sectors.

The task of conducting maritime air reconnaissance and providing integral air support to the Navy was assigned to the Air Force and was to be carried out from the Navy's maritime operations room at Bombay. An officer from the Air Force was placed at the headquarters of the Flag Officer, Bombay (FOB, the earlier incarnation of the FOCINC, WNC - Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command) for co-ordinating the maritime reconnaissance operations and two officers were positioned on board *Mysore* and *Delhi* for advising, controlling and directing Air Force strikes against targets in the Goa and Diu sectors and for surveillance of the tactical areas.

A minesweeping force comprising *Karwar*, *Kakinada*, *Cannanore* and *Bimlipatam* was to be kept for minesweeping operations if the approaches were found to have been mined.

A Naval Officer-in-Charge organisation headed by Commodore HA. Agate was placed on board *Dharini*, which was to be positioned close to Marmagao, for taking over the administration of the liberated port on the surrender of the Portuguese. Commodore Agate, who was to take complete charge of Marmagao and Panjim harbours, was to be on the staff of the Military Governor at Panjim but would be responsible to the Chief of the Naval Staff for naval administration.

The tasks assigned to the Navy were scrutinised and gone over with a fine-tooth comb and a detailed Naval Operation Order issued on December 12, 1961. The Flag Officer Commanding the Indian Fleet (FOCIF), Rear Admiral (later Admiral) *BS. Soman*, was to be the Naval Task Force Commander and was to receive necessary orders from Naval Headquarters. The naval operations were to be conducted and controlled through the Maritime Operations Room at Bombay.

On November 30, when the Government of India decided to adopt the military option, only six ships of the Navy were ready and available for operations and the only tanker of the Fleet, *Shakti*, was expected to be ready for operations only on December 14. This, besides the requirement of all available ships to be employed at sea on

D-Day, made it necessary to exercise centralised control over their employment during the period preceding any projected D-Day. As the trend of political thought and the decisions could be made available at short notice only at New Delhi, it was decided to entrust the control of all preparations, deployment and employment of ships, repairs, logistic support and other related tasks till the initial sailing of ships for the projected operation to Naval Headquarters and not to delegate it to the Task Force Commander.

Commander (later Vice Admiral) Nar Pati Datta was appointed a Naval Liaison Officer and was attached to the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Command who had set up his headquarters for the operation, at Belgaum. He was to maintain a wireless link with the Flag Officer Commanding the Indian Fleet who was embarked on *Mysore* and had been designated the Naval Task Force Commander, through the Maritime Operations Room at Bombay. This wireless link was also to be used for all communications between the Flag Officer Commanding the Indian Fleet and the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Command as well as the Air Officer Commanding, Operational Command, both operating from Belgaum. One Army officer and one Air Force officer were attached to the headquarters of the Flag Officer Commanding the Indian Fleet for liaison between the Fleet and the Army and the Air Force Commanders.

### **The Naval Task Force and the Tasks Assigned**

The tasks assigned to the Naval Task Force were, firstly, the establishment of effective control of the seaward approaches to the Portuguese territory of Goa (including the harbour of Marmagao Bay and Enseada da Aguada), Daman and Diu and capture of Anjadip Island and, secondly, the prevention of hostile action by Portuguese warships on Indian territory.

The Task Force organisation was as given below in table 12.1.

As seen in the organisational chart, the Naval Task Force was divided into four task groups - the Surface Action Group comprising the Indian Naval Ships *Mysore*, *Trishul*, *Betwa*, *Beas* and *Cauvery*, the Carrier Task Group comprising the ships *Vikrant*, *Delhi*, *Kuthar*, *Kirpan*, *Khukri* and *Rajput*, the Minesweeping Group comprising the minesweepers *Karwar*, *Kakinada*, *Cannanore* and *Bimlipatam* and the Support Group with only one ship, *Dharini*.

### **Intelligence**

Intelligence regarding Portuguese forces and their activities indicated that the Portuguese frigate *Afonso de Albuquerque* had last been seen anchored about four cables northeast of Anjadip Island and had been shuttling between the island and Goa. Three other ships which were suspected to be warships could probably be in Goa, two of them having been sighted by *Beas* and *Betwa* on December 2 and December 4, and the other located at Vasco as reported by police wireless. There were no warships at Daman and Diu.

The volume of shipping traffic in Goa had been heavy and merchantmen and tankers were arriving and leaving for unknown destinations regularly. Military four-engined aircraft with Portuguese

markings had been observed on reconnaissance flights over Goa and on one such occasion on December 8, a four-engined Skymaster had approached *Vikrant*, which was at sea, and had flown over her at a height of 5,000 feet. The author was serving in *Vikrant* at that time.

There were no confirmed reports on the presence of submarines in the sea area off Goa though *Kuthar*, an antisubmarine frigate had reported a possible submarine contact on a patrol line close to Gothat 0815 hours on December 7. About seven hours later on the same day, *Kuthar* once again had a confirmed contact of a possible submarine and fired one live antisubma-

Table 12.1 Commander Task Force Flag Officer Commanding  
the Indian Fleet - Rear Admiral R.S. Soman

Commander Task Group-1	Commander Task Group-2	Commander Task Group-3	Commander Task Group 4
(Commanding Officer, Mysore Captain D.S.J. Cameroa) D.S.J. Cameroa)	(Commanding Officer, Vikram Captain P.S. Mahindroo) P.S. Mahindroo)	(Senior Officer, 149 Minesweeping Squadron, i.e. Commanding Officer, Karwar - Cdr. H.F. Dubash)	(Commanding Officer, Dharmi Commander K.K. Muthoorji) Commander
Task Unit 1.1 Mysore (Cdr. Task Unit - CO, Mysore Capt. D.S. J. Cameroa)	Task Unit 1.2 Trishul (Cdr. Task Unit Senior Officer 15th Sqn. i.e., CO, Trishul Capt. K.L. Kulkarni)	Task Unit 1.3 Bewus Bes (Cdr. T.J. Kumar) (Cdr. T.J. Kumar) (Cdr. T.J. Kumar) (Cdr. T.J. Kumar)	Task Unit 1.4 Dharmi (Cdr. Task Unit - CO, Dharmi Cdr. K.K. Muthoorji)
Task Unit 2.1 Wirova (Cdr. Task Unit - CO, Wirova - Capt. P.S. Mahindroo)	Task Unit 2.2 Delti (Cdr. Task Unit - CO, Capt. N. Krishnan, DSG)	Task Unit 2.3 Kubhar, Kiryas (Cdr. A.H.E. Simpalidhi) Kubari (Lt. Cdr. R.N. Batra) (Cdr. Task Unit - CO, Kubhar - Cdr. R.S. Malla)	Task Unit 2.4 Rajput (Cdr. Task Unit - CO, Rajput - Capt. I.K. Puri)

<i>Ca</i>	1	10	4x4 inch 4x40 mm	4	1943
<i>Dh</i>	4^	-	-	-	1960
<i>Ka</i>	42	15	1x40 mm 2x20 mm	1	1956
<i>Ka</i>	42	15	1x40 mm 2x20 mm	1	1956
<i>C</i>	42	15	1x40 mm 2x20 mm	1	1956
<i>*k</i>	17	14	1x20 mm	5	1955

The tasks of capturing Anjadip Island, enforcing a blockade of the waters off Goa, neutralising any opposition from Goa to operations from seawards and landing a party of Naval personnel to administer the port of Panjim (Goa) after the Portuguese surrender, were assigned to Task Group 1. Task Group 2 was entrusted with blockading the sea areas off Daman and Diu, providing naval gunfire support and landing parties for the capture of Diu, preventing Portuguese warships from approaching Bombay and providing naval air support for search and strike, whenever necessary. The minesweepers of Task Group 3 were to stand by for sweeping the entrance to Panjim and Marmagao harbours after the termination of hostilities. Task Group 4 would be required to embark personnel for the temporary administration of the captured ports, harbours and territory and to provide logistic support, if required by other ships.

As mentioned earlier, patrolling of the sea area off Goa in pursuance of Operation Chutney had been taken over by *Betwa* and *Beas* on

December 1. Two ships continued to maintain effective surveillance of the area and to report on the movement of ships, operations from Dabolim airfield and the activities ashore.

The initial plans for the naval operations included bombardment of Anjadip Island, neutralisation of the Portuguese coast batteries and a blockade of the entire Goan coast. It was, however, later felt by the planners that it would not really be essential to neutralise the coast batteries and shore bombardment by ships should be avoided as it was not considered necessary. It was, therefore, decided to undertake neutralisation of coast batteries only when fired upon first and to assist the land forces as necessary to enable them to accomplish their task with expedition. The capture of Anjadip Island was considered the primary task for the Naval Task Force as the Portuguese provocative operations had originated in this island. It was initially planned to send in a contingent of the Karwar Armed Police for the occupation of the island after the surrender of the Portuguese garrison. But it was soon realised that Goa was still in Portuguese occupation and the police could move in, if political implications were to be avoided, only after a civil administration had taken over the liberated areas from the military authorities. The landing party or the assault force had, therefore, to be provided by the Army or the Navy.

Since the Army expressed its inability to provide troops trained in amphibious operations as time for training

in such operations was not available, the Navy took on the task. Naval Headquarters felt that 'it is necessary that full naval control is established on Anjadip Island as quickly as possible after H-Hour, by physical occupation of the island by naval personnel.' Captain (later Vice Admiral) K.L. Kulkarni, who was the Commanding Officer of *Trishul* during the operation, recalls that 'the Navy had taken on this job in spite of the fact that lieutenant General J.N. Chaudhuri, Commander of Operation Vijay, had sent a signal to the effect that the use of Naval landing parties against well-entrenched troops was not advisable.' For the capture of the island, *Trishul* was to pass between the northern point of Anjadip and Binge Point at H-Hour keeping as close to Binge Point as navigationally possible. *Trishul* was then to anchor in Binge Bay, covering the Island with her Bofors, and lower her boats while watching for opposition from the island. After one burst on the beaches with close range weapons, the landing party was to be sent in. A motor boat with a light machine gun mounted on its bows and towing a whaler was to be used for the landing party.

%/r. -----.....

----- ^M6» ui war. oenaviour of our personnel is to be exemplary.' It was, however, assumed that there would be little or no resistance from the Portuguese personnel stationed on the island and hence Naval landing parties as opposed to trained Army commandos were considered adequate for the task. Suitable measures were adopted to scotch rumours and to ensure that the Portuguese weren't alerted before the operations began as they hoped that the NATO powers would somehow prevail upon India and international political pressure would force India to abandon the military alternative.

### Preparations Begin

During the preparatory stage it was considered necessary to divert the attention of the general public, the foreign intelligence gathering agencies in India and their ubiquitous 'moles' from the subtle changes in the mobilisation, training, maintenance and ammunition activities of the Naval Task Force. As Captain (later Rear Admiral) D.St. J. Cameron, who was the Commanding Officer of *Mysore* during the operation and Flag Captain to the Flag Officer Commanding the Indian Fleet (the latter, along with his staff, was embarked on the cruiser), reminisces on the preparations made:

As so frequently happens, rumours were going round the ships to the effect that an operation against Goa was in the offing-this may have been triggered off by the fact that the Wps concerned were being given undue attention from the point of seaworthiness and battle-readiness and all this with no projected cruise or exercises in sight.

Therefore, in order to quash the rumours and also to lay a red herring for any possible watchers ashore who might convey the news regarding the departure of ships on an unspecified mission to authorities in Goa, it was decided to take the *Mysore* and some of the ships concerned to sea for exercises covering two days; this was scheduled to be done a few days before 'D minus 2'.

Accordingly, without prior warning, all leave was cancelled and those ashore were recalled and the ships prepared for departure. The ships sailed out of Bombay Harbour at 2130 hours, fully darkened. Exercises were out off Bombay in plain visibility of watchers and passing ships. After spending two nights at sea, the ships returned to harbour in the early hours of the second morning and reverted to normal routine and leave.

Fresh exercise orders were issued and the ships readied for sea on "D minus 2". Once again, with ships darkened, we left harbour at night, hoping that the watchers, if any, would presume that we had proceeded for exercises again.

On clearing Bombay harbour, *Delhi* was detached and directed to proceed independently in execution of her task in support of Army units scheduled to commence operations for the occupation of Diu.

*Mysore*, with the remaining ships in company, set course and speed to arrive off Goa and Anjadip in the early hours of December 18, keeping well outside the shipping lanes.

Shortly after midnight on December 17/18, *Betwa*, *Beas* and *Cauvery* were detached to proceed to their patrol area off Goa in pursuance of the task assigned to them.

*Mysore*, with *Trishul* in company, proceeded to arrive off Anjadip before first light on December 18. These two ships, fully darkened, closed Anjadip Island by radar during the pre-dawn hours of the D-Day. No signs of the ship's presence in the vicinity of the island having been detected were observed.

*Trishul* was detached to proceed to the southeast of the Island and then to send in her landing parties. *Mysore* was to patrol the seaward side of the island and cover *Trishul's* movements by carrying out dose-range bombardment of the western side of the island with her light anti-aircraft Bofor guns. This was in keeping with the directive to use minimum force.

It would appear, however, that this distracting action militated against the operation as it obviously disclosed our presence in the vicinity of the island and alerted the personnel of the island to the possibility of a landing.

The First Salvo is Fired-Portugal's Perfidy

Captain (later Vice Admiral) K.L. Kulkarni, Commanding Officer of *Trishul*, recalls:

At daybreak *Trishul* steamed into Binge Bay and carried out a short bombardment of the area around the beach. As our instructions were to use the least force, we made sure that the bombardment was clear of houses, barracks, the two churches and other structures (subsequent examination showed that excepting for a few tiles accidentally blown off from the roof of the northern church by 40-mm Bofors' fire, no

damage was done to any other building). The whole place, as we entered, was deathly still with no lights or movement of personnel. After the bombardment *Trishul* was manoeuvred to the lee of a small island (Round Island) which was off the southeast extremity of Anjadip and lowered the boats with the landing party led by Lieutenant (later Rear Admiral) Arun Auditto. The first wave which left at about 0715 hours landed at the beach without any opposition and the boats returned to *Trishul* for the second wave. This is when we saw the white flag and men with raised arms on the northern beach. When the second wave, which left at about 0745 hours, was landing, we saw a white flag on the church on the northeast tip of the island. It was after the white flag was hoisted that the second echelon of the landing party reached the island and were fired upon. It was about 0800 hours at that time. When I saw the white flag I was happy but immediately after **they** attacked my second boat, I moved the ship to the centre of **Binge** Bay and bombarded the island with 45 inch high explosive shells, as **well** as with 40-mm Bofor guns. The fire was lifted after about five minutes. It was rather difficult even to bombard as I was not absolutely sure whether my fire would hit my landing party, and therefore the bombardment had to be extremely accurate. I directed most of the fire into the woods behind the buildings on the eastern beaches on the northern side of the island. We had by now landed the entire landing party of 75 men and two officers and the boats were told to lie off.

*Mysore* had meanwhile been engaging other enemy concentrations and installations with her 40-mm Bofor guns and sent a landing party ashore which landed on the beach to act as a link between lieutenant Auditto's landing party and *Trishul*.

### **The Landing Party's Work-Up**

Lieutenant Arun Auditto, who was the officer-in-charge of the Naval landing party was to cover himself with glory during the landing operations, neutralisation of the Portuguese garrison and mopping-up operations on the island despite being wounded by Portuguese gunfire during the landing phase. He provides a graphic account of the Portuguese betrayal of the international convention, their last-ditch efforts to thwart the island's occupation and their unconditional surrender when cornered and finally overwhelmed by superior firepower and clever manoeuvring on the part of the two ships and the landing parties that combed the island. He was later awarded the Naosena Medal (NM) for his valour and devotion to duty and for having 'conducted landfighting operations with imagination, vigour and determination. Auditto reminisces:

It all began in early November 1961 when I, as a young Lieutenant, was undergoing the Long TAS (Torpedo Antisubmarine) Course at Cochin, I was called by Commander H.C. Tarneja, the Officer-in-Charge, TAS School, and was told that the Navy was organising a landing platoon of which I was to be in command and that I was to report to the Gunnery school for further instructions.

The next day when the platoon was mustered in the drill shed of the Gunnery School, Commander (later

Rear Admiral) A.P.S. Bindra, Officer-in-Charge, Gunnery School, stated that the platoon was being raised for a demonstration of land-fighting to the public during the forthcoming Navy Week. There was no mention of the impending Goa Operation.

We started our work-up in earnest which consisted mainly of field training. The bulk of the platoon consisted of Seaman Gunners-sailors who had just passed out of the Boys Training Establishment and were **undergoing** a short gunnery, small arms and parade training course. **WeiOsohad** one demolition section of TAS sailors who had specialised in underwater weapons. It was no easy task to get these young men, who were just about acquiring their sea-legs, to do Army-style crawling. Neither could they really understand the purpose of all this, everything being still shrouded in secrecy,

I realised that none of these sailors had really carried out weapon training whereas here we were carrying Lanchesters, Brens, mortars, grenades, in addition to the good old 303. Furthermore, they were ill-equipped for any land operation and were conspicuous in their blues. I, therefore, sought an interview with the Commanding Officer of Venduruthy (a Naval base at Cochin), Captain (later Vice Admiral) R.N. Batra, to sort out some of these problems. During the discussions I stressed specifically on each and every sailor actually firing various weapons and asked for each one of them to be given confidence in throwing grenades and in wearing khaki uniforms, field dressings, etc. My ministrations were somehow constructed as a tale of woe and I was told that perhaps I was not too keen to do the job and that someone else would be found. Two days later I was reinstated and I must say that all my earlier demands were conceded except that only one field dressing, as against two stipulated, could be provided per person.

After another spell of intensive training including practical firing of all weapons from the beaches around the Naval coast battery at Cochin and exercises by the demolition section at the range at Alway as well as trials for disembarkation from ships by scrambling nets, the platoon was ready to be deployed. Still there was no official news of deployment though rumours were rife about the use of the platoon in connection with the Goa Operation. In fact, the vegetable vendor queried my wife as to when I would be leaving for Goa!

On December 16 the platoon was embarked on board *Trishul* at Cochin with a ceremonious send-off. The next day the ship, along with other ships of the Fleet, was poised off Karwar. This was the first clear indication of the task ahead, which was to capture the Island of Anjadip.

On the eve of 'D-Day', i.e. December 18, the Task Force Commander, Rear Admiral Soman, was transferred by jackstay from *Mysore* to *Trishul* to discuss the plan of action for the assault and capture of Anjadip. I was called to the cabin of the Commanding Officer, Captain K.L. Kulkarni, and I was shown the map and aerial photographs of the island together with the location of the Portuguese garrison and other topographical features and landmarks. There was fairly detailed intelligence on the number of troops as well as their likely disposition as constant surveillance had been maintained from Karwar Head.

After detailed discussions I was informed that as there would be very little opposition - 35 to 40 Portuguese men as against my 75 - it would be best and easiest to land on the main beachhead in **the** northeast. I argued that this may well be suicidal as we would be landing in an open boat and from all indications the garrison **area** would be heavily defended. I suggested landing on a beach about **three** kilometres to the south of the garrison as this would also bring in an element of surprise notwithstanding the fact that this beach was surrounded by the thickly wooded central plateau and would, therefore, be difficult terrain.

The Task Force Commander readily agreed to this plan stating that I, as the officer commanding the platoon, was the best judge. It was, therefore, decided that just prior to dawn next day, beach-softening would be carried out by using the ship's 40-mm Bofor guns immediately followed by the landing at the southern beach in two waves. This was necessitated by the fact that only the ship's cutter (boat) was available for use and hence with its limited carrying capacity, the platoon would have to be split into two. I was to be in **the** first wave and Senior Commissioned Gunner (later Commander) N. Kel-man, a Special Duties Officer of the Gunnery Branch who was my second-in-command, was to be in the second wave. Having wished me and my men the best of luck, the Task Force Commander was jack-stayed back to the flagship. That night the Captain invited me to dine with him and we discussed other details over dinner.

Hands call, i.e., the time to wake up for all on board, on December 18 was at 0500 hours, sunrise being at about 0645 hours, and the whole platoon was mustered in the ship's antisubmarine mortar well. I talked to the men and explained the tactical deployment, especially the first wave which would land and take the brunt of any opposition and thereafter give cover to the second wave as it landed.

On directions from the Captain, each man was given a tot of brandy as we waited in anticipation of action - but for some time nothing happened. The ship continued to circle the island as dawn broke and the bright blue tropical sky lit up with the rising sun - and still nothing happened!

### **The Landing Parry's Moment of Truth**

Auditto continues:

It was after three hours of waiting, i.e., at about 0715 hours, that I was informed that the Portuguese had hoisted a white surrender flag at the mast on the northern end of the island. We were, therefore, ordered to land without any resort to softening up of the enemy defences and in broad daylight with the assurance that 'nothing really would happen as the garrison had already surrendered/

I took charge of the first wave of the assault party from *Trishul* called *Rustum* and we went peacefully towards the beach and I began to believe that the 'surrender business' was indeed true. We landed at the beach, took position around the beach and the boats were sent back to bring the second wave. Fifteen minutes later, the second wave, under the command of Senior Commissioned Gunner N. Kelman, set course to approach the beach at about

0745 hours. Suddenly all hell broke loose as sprays of machine-gun bullets opened up on the boat from Portuguese gun-posts near a pill-box on the south hill top. Kelman, with great presence of mind, continued towards the beach, zigzagging the boat to counter the accuracy of the machine-gun fire. A few minutes later, by the time the boat beached, it had been riddled with bullets. Kelman had been wounded on both his thighs - fortunately only flesh wounds but all the same, seriously. A number of sailors were wounded, some grievously, and a few succumbed to the injuries a little later. The young Seaman Gunner sailors were shocked into inactivity and it took some forceful handling by me to get them out of the boat and to take cover. A little later some white troops were seen digging near the white flag.

As each man had only one field dressing I had to give mine to Kelman and leave him on the beach, while I mustered the force to move north-westwards. The main wireless set had been damaged and the walkie-talkies were out of range of the ship and so we were literally cut off from any help that the ships could render.

I heard later that the machine gun had been silenced by the ship opening up with its 40-mm Bofor guns directed at the Portuguese gun emplacement on the hill where it had been positioned. This, no doubt, saved many lives or else we may have lost the whole of the second wave as well as the boats before they hit the beach.

After regrouping the force I left Kelman in charge to attend to the wounded and to ensure their return to the ship as soon as feasible. Both boats had been holed and were shipping water but managed to return to the ship with the dead and the wounded. The plan of action for me was to get up to the central ridge, proceed north-westwards till we could overlook the main garrison which was then to be surrounded from the rear, i.e., from westward, and thereby cutting off various outlying posts of the enemy and forcing them to surrender.

All our training on the field and with the weapons was now brought into play. A grenade attack on the menacing machine-gun post enabled us not only to take position on the upper reaches of the ridge but also to capture three enemy soldiers at that post. We proceeded northwards under cover of the wild growth and shrubbery. We came under cross-fire from machine-gun posts on the west as well as under very accurate sniper fire from the northern hilltop near the flag-mast. By about noon we had almost reached the objective overlooking the garrison. It was here that we had to cross an open area of about 200 yards where there was hardly any cover. The accurate fire from the hilltop, which was about 200 feet higher than our positions, pinned us down. Two of our men were wounded and one killed outright by a bullet shot which penetrated his helmet. The two-inch mortar was ineffective as the location of the enemy was well concealed in the thick forest.

In order to get a better view of the area and reassess the tactics, I had to move swiftly across ten yards to get behind a tree. Just as I reached the tree a shot hit me on my left upper arm. It caused a deep flesh wound but, like senior Commissioned Gunner Kelman, I was fortunate that it had missed the bone. As I had no field dressing, having given mine to Kelman, one of the men in the rear passed me his dressing which I used effectively to stem the bleeding.

It was at this stage that we succeeded in establishing wireless contact on the walkie-talkie set with *Trishul*,

which was by now circling the island. She told us that a landing party from *Mysore had* also been inducted and landed on the beach. In my opinion this was a wrong thing as we had no communication with the other party and also the other party was dressed in blues (the working dress on board Naval ships at that time), totally untrained and would in fact hazard and consequently impede our action. I informed *Trishul* accordingly but as they were not in contact with the other shore party, they could do nothing. As it came to light later, this party fortunately moved along the coast, in fact they went smack into a machine-gun post near the southern end of the Portuguese garrison, as they were moving in a line-ahead formation, and the first man got hit in his euts and collapsed.

I asked *Trishul* to open up with her 4.5 inch guns on the northwestern hill top, taking particular care not to hit the church there, in order to silence the opposition from the direction. On receiving clear directions from me, *Trishul* then plastered the northern hill and later bombarded hill 212 and its slopes. Thus establishing communication with the ship and obtaining gun support was providential as it enabled us to move down to the garrison and force the surrender of their troops.

By now it was about 1600 hours and as we went down, we came upon the wounded man from the *Mysore's* landing party who was now almost dead. Although we later took him back to the ship, he succumbed to his severe injuries a few hours later.

After the parties from *Trishul* and *Mysore* had withdrawn to the beach, it was decided to bombard the northern part of the island by the cruiser from the south-west and the frigate from the south-east. It was then that the ships' intention became clear to the Portuguese and they decided to surrender and started emerging with their hands over their heads with one of them waving a white cloth. Auditto's Party was instructed by *Trishul* to take over the prisoners of war and bring them onboard the *Mysore* in boats to be sent later. Officers and sailors were sent to other beaches also for taking charge of the surrendering Portuguese soldiers.

Auditto recalls:

Our men then surrounded the barracks area of the Portuguese troops and the church to the north, thereby rounding up the Portuguese troops numbering 35 who at this stage surrendered without any resistance. Thus the operation was successfully concluded.

After the conclusion of the first phase of the mopping-up operations on December 18 during which some more Portuguese troops and Goan civilians were apprehended, the Indian tricolour was hoisted on top of the Flagstaff at 1425 hours on December 18.

In a news item datelined April 11, 1964 at Bombay, the *Indian Express* said: lieutenant Arun Auditto was decorated with the Naosena Medal for 'exceptional devotion to duty' at a ceremony on board the aircraft-carrier, *Vikrant* off the Naval Dockyard, Bombay, on Friday, April 10, 1964.

The award, hitherto presented by the President, was for the first time made by the Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice-

Admiral B5. Soman.

Lieutenant Auditto of *Khukri* was honoured for valour and devotion to duty, displayed during the Goa Operation in December 1961.

Called upon to lead a 75-strong landing party on Anjadip Island under heavy enemy fire, lieutenant Auditto who had no experience in jungle warfare, conducted landfighting operations with imagination, vigour and determination, the citation said.

His calmness and courage inspired the officers and men under his command to go forward in the face of stiff opposition to final victory, the citation added.

A letter from Vice Admiral B.S. Soman, who had by then taken over as the Chief of the Naval Staff, addressed to lieutenant Auditto, read:

I am very pleased to extend to you my heartiest congratulations on the award of the Naosena Medal for the calmness, ingenuity and courage displayed by you during the Anjadip Operations on December 18, 1961.

The Navy is proud of the fine example you set on this occasion and the qualities of leadership you displayed which contributed greatly to the ultimate success of the Operation.

The citation for Senior Commissioned Gunner Kelman, who was awarded the Ashoka Chakra Class n (Kirti Chakra), reads; 'Senior Commissioned gunner N. Kelman was in command of the second assault boat during the landings on December 18, 1961. When the boat was at some distance from the beach, the enemy opened heavy and accurate fire. A number of sailors in the boat were killed and wounded. Kelman was hit by a bullet which went through both thighs. Despite his serious wounds, he displayed exemplary courage, maintained discipline and calm in the boat and continued steadfastly towards the beach. On touching down he jumped ashore encouraging his men and led them to the support of the first wave.

Soon after landing on the Island, Kelman was advised to return to *Trishul*. He, however, made light of his wounds and continued to assist in the conduct of operations throughout the day. It was only when operations had virtually ended and the National Flag was hoisted on the Island that he eventually returned to *Trishul* for medical attention.

The fine example, high quality of leadership and outstanding personal courage displayed by Senior Commissioned gunner N. Kelman, in complete disregard of his personal safety and discomfort, inspired the men under his command and contributed greatly to the victory of the day.

The others decorated were Chief Petty Officer Gunnery Instructor, Ali Mohammed, Ashoka Chakra Class m (Shaurya Chakra); Ordinary Seaman, Samuel Jayaselan Mohandas, Ashoka Chakra Class n, posthumously; Ordinary Seaman Bechan Singh, Ordinary Seaman Bachan Singh and ordinary Seaman Vijendra Pal Singh Tomer, Ashok Chakra Class n, all posthumously; and Able Seaman Jaswant Singh Bawa, Ashoka Chakra Class - m (Shaurya Chakra).

Chief Petty Officer Gunnery Instructor Ali Mohammed was the most experienced member in land-fighting. He was the senior sailor of the first wave to land in Anjadip Island on December 18, 1961. He deployed the men into selected positions to cover the landing of the second wave. When the second boat was at some distance from the beach, it came under heavy fire from positions behind a wall further up the hill.

Mohammed immediately led the first wave as they advanced up the hill against the enemy. On reaching the wall he threw a hand grenade over and was the first to jump over leading his men into action. This prompt action drew off much of the fire opened on the second boat, reduced their casualties and contributed greatly to the successful landing of the second wave.

At about 1500 hours the same day, it was thought that a number of enemy snipers might be concealed in a group of houses close behind the beach. These snipers could be a serious threat to our men and boats engaged in evacuating prisoners on the beach. Chief Petty Officer Mohammed and three sailors carried out a swift and thorough search of these houses and captured 12 armed Portuguese soldiers without firing a shot. -

Chief Petty Officer Ali Mohammed displayed outstanding leadership and great courage and ability on many occasions on this day, often at great personal risk and in complete disregard of his safety.

One of the sailors who made the supreme sacrifice during the Anjadip Operation was Ordinary Seaman Samuel Jayaselan Mohandass, who was cut down by enemy fire after he had silenced several Portuguese gun positions by launching a series of grenade attacks.

The citation for the posthumous award of the Ashoka Chakra Class II to him reads, \*The landings were made in two waves on December 18, 1961. The first wave landed without opposition. The second wave, however, came under heavy fire and stiff enemy opposition continued for most of the day. At one stage the advance of the landing party was halted by heavy and accurate fire from enemy positions concealed in bushes and behind rocks. Ordinary Seaman Mohandass was detailed to approach the hidden enemy positions and silence them by throwing hand-grenades.

Mohandass crawled fearlessly towards the enemy positions under fire. On each occasion of throwing a hand-grenade he was forced to break cover and expose himself to heavy and accurate enemy fire. On one such occasion while throwing a hand-grenade, Ordinary Seaman Mohandass was caught in the enemy fire and was killed in action.

Ordinary Seaman Mohandass, though a young and inexperienced sailor, displayed commendable courage and devotion to duty of the highest order.

Three other sailors, Ordinary Seaman Bechan Singh, Ordinary Seaman Bachan Singh, and Ordinary Seaman Vijendra Pal Singh Tomar, were also members of the assault party that attacked the Portuguese gun positions from where the enemy had opened fire on the boats that landed in the second wave, and made the supreme sacrifice while displaying outstanding courage and devotion to duty of the highest order in keeping with the

highest traditions of the Sen/ice. Out of these, Bechan Singh and Vijendra Pal Singh Tamor received the posthumous award of the Ashoka Chakra Class II (Kirti Chakra) while Bachan Singh received the posthumous award of Ashoka Chakra Class m(Shaurya Chakra).

Able Seaman Jaswant Singh Bawa, was a member of the armedescort accompanying the second wave of the landing party. To quote from the citation for the award of Ashoka Chakra Class HI (Shaurya Chakra) to him for his contribution to the success of the operation during which he was wounded:

Bawa was the Bren Gunner in the bows of the motorboat of *Trishul* which escorted the boat conveying the second wave to the beach during the initial landing on December 18,1961. When the boats were about 75 yards from the beach, the enemy opened heavy and accurate small-arms fire. Bawa was one of the first to be wounded and was shot through the right ankle. Despite his wound, Able Seaman Bawa remained at his post and even while under heavy fire, returned fire on the enemy in defended positions ashore. Bawa continued to provide accurate and effective covering fire for the landing party untill the second wave had landed. '

Bawa's brave deed did much to upset the accuracy of the enemy fire, prevented excessive casualties in the boats and contributed to the successful landing of the second wave. His devotion to duty and outstanding performance under heavy enemy fire are of a high order and in the finest traditions of the service.

The recipients of Mentions in Dispatches were Commander A.F. Col-laco, who led the landing party from Mysore, Surgeon lieutenant T. Suryarao, who was a member of the medical team onboard Mysore, Chief Petty Officer Gunnery Instructor Parkash Chand, who was the coxswain of the motor-boat used in the second wave of the landing operation, and Leading Patrolman Rajendar Singh, who was a member of the landing party in the second wave.

Chief Petty Officer Prakash Chand, one of the awardees of a Mention in Dispatches, a senior Gunnery sailor, who was the coxswain of the motor whaler (the other boat, a motorboat, was coxswained by Petty Officer V.C. Nair) showed great presence of mind when the Portuguese opened fire, and was responsible for saving many lives by taking suitable 'avoiding action'. The moment the Portuguese opened fire, Chand recalls:

I steered my motor whaler awayfrom the motorboat so that the enemy would have two targets to engage and kept dodging the bullets by alternately steering towards and away from the successive bursts of

bullets. When I reached shore, I landed all members of the party safely but the very next moment the boat was riddled with 11 bullets and was grounded by the impact of the burst. I ordered the whaler crew to clear the whaler by pushing it but since the young fellows showed signs of nerves, I jumped out of the whaler, cleared and refloated it and, after jumping back into it, I steered it away from the beach. Meanwhile, the ship's Bofors had opened up and silenced the enemy guns. I then noticed that the motorboat coxswain by Petty Officer Nair had also grounded on rocks and was flooded up to the gunwales. It had three dead and two wounded sailors. *Mysore* now sent a boat under the charge of Commissioned Boatswain Charanjit Singh and, between the two of us, we took the dead and the wounded back to the ships.

### **The Communications Team Lands**

Commander (later Captain) A.F. Collaco, a specialist in Naval Communications, was embarked on *Mysore* as the Fleet Operations officer of the Indian Fleet. He volunteered to lead a communications team from the cruiser ashore and had a major role to play in providing adequate support to the beleaguered landing party from *Trishul* and in mopping up the remnants of the Portuguese garrison after the formal surrender of the Portuguese forces. For displaying raw guts in the face of the enemy, as mentioned earlier, he was later awarded a Mention in Dispatches.

Since he hailed from Goa, Collaco knew a smattering of the Portuguese language and hence was considered the right person for communicating with Portuguese and interrogating the prisoners of war before or after the surrender, if required. Despite the lapse of over a quarter century after the operations, Collaco, now settled in Canada, vividly recalls:

Setting the scene requires a review of the preceding events, the opposing forces and a host of interlinking factors. Perhaps an early introduction may provide the reader with a gauge to judge the authenticity of this narrative of events that took place over 29 years ago.

I had been a DS (member of the Directing Staff) at the Staff College at Wellington and had been in charge of the Tactical School at Cochin for some time when I was appointed Fleet Operations Officer of the Indian Fleet.

The organisation of the Fleet was at that time being revamped and Douggie (Captain D.St.J.) Cameron was on board the *Mysore* as the Flag Captain. Daljit Paintal (Commander, later Sear Admiral, DS. Paintal) was the Fleet Torpedo Antisubmarine Officer, Misra (Commander N.C. Misra) was the Fleet Gunnery Officer, Karbhari (Conv

mander, later Captain, Dara Karbhari) was the Fleet Administration Officer and Dinshaw (Commander Minoo Dinshaw) was the Fleet Communications Officer.

The Fleet's objective was to capture Anjadip and then provide sea support to the Army in Goa. Anjadip was to be a breeze or so it was thought.

It is my recollection that a lot of the orders received by the task force were issued by Naval Headquarters. *Trishul* was supposed to send two landing parties ashore and *Mysore* was supposed to provide all necessary support including fire support.

From its northern end to its southern tip, Anjadip, a small island, is about a kilometre and half long. At its widest parts it must be about 400 metres; a narrow neck is about one-third way down. Along the east coast are about three usable beaches but none on the west; rocky inlets and coves make the west shore a smugglers' paradise. The ground rises sharply from the shore line to about 200 feet. There are places with high grass; coconut trees dot the shore line. The water teems with a kind of stinging fish (sea urchins) that makes swimming to the mainland almost impossible.

Shortly before the operation, I had attended the Naval Commonwealth Planning Conference at Singapore - planning the Joint Exercises off Trincomalee (JET). My Royal Navy colleagues were certain that I knew more about the forthcoming operation than I really did. I was never treated better, wined and dined and questioned. When I learned from them that one of the ships of the Indian Fleet **was** patrolling off Goa, I gave them the impression that I knew all **about** it. The more I smiled knowingly, the more gracious was my host, because a British submarine, heading for the Far East Station, thought it would provide intelligence and kept an eye on what was happening off Goa while occasionally being depth-charged (the CO. of the submarine and I met in Cochin after the whole operation was over and talked about it).

At first light on that December morning (December 18) we closed in on Anjadip. We rounded the southern end after *Trishul* (and *Mysore*) had carried out a preliminary bombardment. We could see the soldiers in their undershirts running to man their posts. *Trishul's* first wave of the landing party landed on the beach under the command of Lieutenant Auditto who was to be awarded the Naosena Medal for his great work that day. He got ashore and climbed to a high point with his men. By this time, the Portuguese soldiers had reached high points on either side of our landing beach and were engaging it, creating havoc with *Trishul's* second landing party. All I can remember is that the boat

which brought back the wounded and the dead to Mysore was awash with blood. Our sailors peering over the side at their comrades were very demoralised. On *Mysore's* bridge, I found the Admiral very worried as he had no news from the first landing party. *Trishul* had no news either as the landing party's wireless had broken down. We could see what was left of the second landing party (about 10 men and an officer) still held down on the beach. I suggested to the Admiral that I, being a Long 'C (a communications specialist), take a communication party ashore to find out what was wrong with Lieutenant Auditto's party and to establish a link with them and with the ships. He reluctantly agreed. On the quarterdeck, a volunteer Communications Team - two wireless operators with backpack radios and two signals sailors with portable Aldis signalling lamps - went ashore. As we were leaving the ship, a Squadron Leader (of the Indian Air Force), who was on board *Mysore* as the Defence Public Relations Officer covering the operation, asked if he could come along and bring a cameraman. The Admiral agreed and he accompanied us throughout the day.

How we got ashore is a mystery to me. First the water men the rocks - the second party seemed to be at a standstill. By this time the cross-fire from above seemed to be petering out and one or two other sailors needed help. I asked Senior Commissioned Gunner Kelman if I could take the remainder of the second landing party while the officer returned to the ship with the wounded. He seemed dazed by the firing and glad to do so. The firing had decreased by now and we started climbing to higher ground in single file. Once on higher ground, we headed northwest. I was ahead of the column and keeping in constant touch with both *Trishul* and *Mysore*. We knew there were Portuguese soldiers around and were as alert as our lives depended on it.

We moved along a rough narrow path, about two feet wide, and I caught a glimpse of lighter-complexioned skins about fifty feet ahead of me. I had a hand-gun which I had never used before and I remember firing it and diving to the left, so did the Squadron Leader and a sailor but the fourth member of our party did not dive fast enough and received a fatal bullet in the stomach which came out from the seat of his pants and gave the impression of being a superficial wound. He fell to the right of the path (the cliff side). Attempts to get him across the path were futile as the path was in the line of fire from both sides. *Mysore* had signalled us that she was going into Karwar with the dead and wounded and would be back as soon as possible. I had managed to get in touch with Lieutenant Auditto's party and acted as a link between it and *Tris/m/*. We were stuck in this position for what seemed like ages. Time was meaningless. The sailors (his name was R. Singh,

I learned later) kept moaning softly. After a while he moved further to the right. We couldn't see him. We didn't see him. We didn't know he had fallen down the steep side and lay dying.

### **Portuguese Capitulation**

After the stalemate, we heard a lot of firing from the north-west of the island and since the firing along the path had stopped, we moved away climbing still further up the hill and heading for the north-west. At a certain height we got in touch with the landing party and acted as a link. They asked *Trishul*, through us, to give them fire support. It is a vivid memory of us on the hill top, *Trishul* out at sea firing away, the Portuguese soldiers running in the direction of the buildings and towards the north-eastern sector, trees being uprooted by *Trishul's* firing, scenic beauty mixed with death and devastation. It was all over soon after that - by the time we reached the north-eastern cover, the firing had stopped. Lieutenant Auditto reported that the Portuguese had given up and were lined up as prisoners on the beach. He returned to *Trishul* and en route picked up R. Singh who was later taken to Karwar but died on the way. I looked at my watch. It was 1500 hours. I had left the ship early in the morning and had not had or **worried** about food. We were so jumpy - a young boy coming down a coconut tree with a fine coconut (for me) almost got shot by a sailor who thought he was a sniper. *Trishul* was left to clean up and establish a presence on the island. Unfortunately she ran aground. The Portuguese soldiers were brought to *Mysore* and also taken to Karwar. I was glad to be alive and see the last of Anjadip but it was not to be.

Meanwhile we heard that the Army was doing very well and had taken Goa and would be reaching the coast within a day or two. *We ate what was between Beas and Cauvery had dealt Afonso de Albuquerque*, the Portuguese frigate, a deadly blow and she lay there in the harbour, aground and crewless less than ten minutes after the fight had started. We went into Marmagao Harbour and made sure no Portuguese soldiers were hiding below decks in the merchant ships. I was so jubilant at being alive, I literally skipped on board these merchantmen.

That night, Commodore H.A. Agate, an old Commanding Officer of mine who was taking over as the first Naval Officer-in-Charge of liberated Goa, gave me the keys to a captured jeep and Toothie Nazareth (Commander Freddie Nazareth, *Mysore's* Dental Officer) and I went all the way inland to visit relatives. We were told that 'the Indians are coming to burn us all', they asked us. The only thing

burning will be these two Indians' tongues after eating your solpotel (a highly spiced Goan delicacy) and drinking your Johnnie Walker', we told them. At least our relatives were reassured but it took quite a bit of Scotch to complete the job. They had much more reassurance and much less Scotch. They could hardly believe that they had become as much Indian as we were. They still felt they were Portuguese subjects.

Intelligence Reports had indicated that a British destroyer (I think it was *Rhytt*) was preparing to leave Singapore and diplomatic pressures were being applied on Britain by her oldest ally, Portugal, to help in recovering her lost colony. We heard that *Khyll* had sailed from Singapore.

Before too long, the Government of India was asked to make an announcement to the hundred or so British residents in Goa that they were safe and that they were free to leave Goa if, when and how they chose. This was broadcast. However, when a request was received for the British ship to enter Goa to embark British citizens, it was not approved. A signal clearly stated that entry into Indian territorial waters would be considered to be an unfriendly act. The ship turned back to Singapore.

### **Mopping up on Anjadip**

On January 2, 1962, after the New Year, Admiral Soman and I talked about affairs at Anjadip. The situation was this. *Trishul* was, for a variety of reasons, not fully operational. A garrison of 50 additional sailors was put on the island under the control of the Commanding Officer of *Trishul*. The garrison had control of the northern half of the island but each night some of the Portuguese soldiers who had refused to surrender, would come out of hiding, cross the narrow neck of land and fire a few rounds of flashless cordite in the general direction of our sailors who returned the fire from three points. Before long there was a real fireworks display when the firing lines of our sailors crossed in the dark. The United Nations had been told that the Goa Operation was history and all was well. However, there were reports reaching the outside world that there was still fighting going on. Portugal wanted the story to be kept alive. If passing merchantmen could report gunfire on Anjadip, it would make news and embarrass the Indian Government. We established two firm objectives for me to accomplish since I had been to the island. They were, first, cleaning up of Anjadip once and for all and, next, not a single life was to be lost.

Next day a Naval aircraft took me to Goa, and a 70-foot motor

launch to Anjadip. The motor launch reminded me of the coastal forces during World War n. The garrison which had been in CO. *Trishul's* command passed into mine. I also had operational command of the motor launch. There was a recently-captured prisoner. He and another Portuguese soldier had tried to make it by swimming to the mainland. He had been stung and exhausted, recaptured, on the beach and the other had died of stings or bites from sea urchins. The prisoner we had, had nearly recovered but his arrogance had also recovered. He demanded that our sailors washed his dirty food dish. His demand was not met, needless to say. He had a smattering of English, so I took him aboard the motor launch, gave him a loud-hailer and we cruised around the island while he advised his friends hiding in the coves to give themselves up. His first Portuguese advice went something like 'these Indian pigs and dogs', at which time I interrupted him with the only Portuguese I knew (which my father would use) 'Vamos pro casa' (let's go home) in a loud stern voice pointing overboard. He smartened up fast. But there were no line-ups of Portuguese soldiers waiting to give themselves up.

That night we had thirty men with automatic weapons and flashlights across the neck of the island so that nobody should cross over from the southern half of the island. There was no shooting that night but we nearly shot up a bunch of wild pigs using the well-guarded route.

We took another cruise around the island in the motor launch and using the loud-hailer warned that I intended setting fire to the island next day. It was obvious that we had been watched and could have been shot at any time. Their objective was to keep the pot boiling without shooting any of us. Our objective was to stop their show as fast as possible to save embarrassment. While walking around the island, I came across our medical officer kneeling by the side of the corpse of a Portuguese soldier. Our sailors dug a grave and I gave him a solemn Christian burial with my prayers. Most of the half dozen houses we found were shacks and even the Church was dilapidated and empty.

Next morning we started at the northernmost point and with the prisoner leading the way using his loudhailer, members of the garrison and I combed at arm's length every cove, every rock, every crevice, burning the brush behind us. The flames, fanned by the wind, made the burning grass a spectacular sight. Wherever the prisoner's voice quivered he inadvertently alerted us of possible trouble. Though there were signs of recent occupation there was no opposition. At the longer of the two caves at the southernmost point, there was rafts and broken oars, some torn clothes and all the signs of a recent pull-out.

After signalling the Admiral, I returned by motor launch to Goa. *Trishul* remained on for a while but there were no more shootings. Anjadip was quiet.

Mopping up the soldiers remaining on the island on December 18 was done by *Triskul* soon after she had opened up with her main armament for the second time. Vice Admiral Kulkarni recalls:

As soon as my second bombardment was started, we saw a\* number of people with their hands raised near the northern church. On lifting the firing, I sent Lieutenant Commander M.N. Neogi, the Supply Officer of *Trishul*, with a small armed party and a megaphone to go near the beach and capture the prisoners. By now the *Trishul* landing parties had swept the island from south to north and by about 1400 hours had hoisted the national flag at the flagstaff point. The *Mysore* and *Trishul* then anchored in the Bay. We sent more personnel ashore with food and water and other things and had carried out a muster of the people. I had found that there were three people short and even though it was getting dark, sent a reconnaissance party to sweep the area in case there were casualties. They recovered the three men. Neogi landed and captured all the prisoners and took them to the *Mysore*. The dead and the wounded were also collected and sent to the *Mysore*. In all there were seven dead and a number of (them injured. By 1600 hours the entire island was in our control. According to the Portuguese, they had one person missing and one man was dead.

At about 1700 hours I landed along with lieutenant (later Admiral and Chief of Naval Staff) L. Ramdas, my Communication Officer, and inspected the night arrangements and went right up to the flagstaff point. On the 19th the funeral of the people who gave their lives was held in Karwar which was attended by the entire Karwar town - really a touching sight worthy of Gods!

During the course of bombardment, the road leading from Karwar to Belgaumoff Binge beach had become an interesting sight - it was lined literally by thousands of people who had come to watch the fun after hearing the noise of bombardment.

I was ordered to go to Marmagao on the 20th where on arrival, we went on board *Mysore* and met Admiral Katari, General Candeth and Mr Vishwanathan, the Home Secretary. We then went to Bombay and, after a day's stay, left for Cochin to return the landing party.

### **The Task Force Commander Reminisces**

As regards the treachery of the Portuguese, their violation of the interna -

tional convention and the resultant heavy loss of life, Admiral Soman says:

The first I heard of the proposed operations was at a meeting in Delhi - I do not remember the date now - to which I had been invited. I had no idea what the meeting was about and when, while waiting outside the Defence Minister's office, Lieutenant General Chaudhuri asked me what were my plans for the operation, I said, 'What operation?' It seemed that he had been associated with the proposal earlier. As you know, a few weeks before the operation, there had been some firing from Anjadip Island on our coastal shipping and, during one of the Defence Minister's visits to Bombay, when I had gone to the airport to meet him, I had casually mentioned to him that it was about time that we put a stop to it before the Navy got further maligned.

At the Defence Minister's meeting I was told that I would be responsible to take Anjadip, starting the operation at daybreak on the morning after the start of the nightlanding operations by the Army and we must take it by the same evening. When I asked what troops were being provided by the Army for the landing, I was told that landing parties would have to be provided by the Fleet from its own resources. The date had already been decided and when asked for, there was not much information available as to the number of Portuguese troops on Anjadip; I was told that there might be about 30 or 40 of them, mostly local Goans. I was also informed that *Delhi*, which was men not a part of the fleet, would be acting independently, under NHQ orders to support the Army for the action at Daman and Diu. Having gone through the amphibious operations course in UK and trained the Army in such operations at Mandapam during World War n, I was somewhat taken aback by the way the operation seemed to have been planned without the association of the Fleet Commander, a specialist in such operations, and that too committing sailors to play the Army role. Of course, Anjadip was a small island, very close to the mainland, and so there was no point in my making an issue of it. But I did mention to the then Chief of the Naval Staff that I should have been associated with the plans earlier.

I called for volunteers from the Fleet to 'play\* Army, selected the officers, and asked them to select their men from amongst the sailors, giving preference to unmarried men, everything else being equal. Landfighting training was organised for the landing parties, both officers and men, at Cochin. At the meeting I had asked for further information on troop strength on Anjadip but till the last day none had been received.

Commenting on the casualties suffered by the Navy at Anjadip, Admiral Soman said, 'I must make it clear that the Naval landings on Anjadip were forced on us though we took it on willingly when the Army said that they could not provide the few soldiers required.'

### **Albuquerque Brought to the Block**

The operations off Goa are vividly described by Vice Admiral (then Commander) R.K.S. Gandhi, who as the Commanding Officer of the *Betwa*, was the main architect of the *Albuquerque's* capitulation. When dawn broke on December 18, *Betwa* and *Beas* were on patrol 13 kilometres off the Goan coast as a part of Operation Chutney. The *Afonso de Albuquerque* was lying at anchor in the Marmagao harbour and opened anti-aircraft fire against IAF aircraft when they appeared overhead. Though her firing appeared to be ineffective, it was obviously a danger and a nuisance. Besides, the 4.7-inch guns mounted on the *Albuquerque* would pose a serious threat to Indian troops when they entered Goa town and hence the ship needed to be silenced, if not neutralised, before she could do any serious damage. " The *Albuquerque* was a frigate drawing 1,788 tons and was armed with four 4.7 inch guns, two 3-inch antiaircraft guns, eight 20-mm antiaircraft guns and four depth-charge throwers. Her turbines could develop a shaft horse-power of 8,000 at a speed of 21 knots and she had a radius of operation of 8,000 nautical miles. The ship was of 1934 vintage and hence was already 27 years old and due for decommissioning.

Admiral Gandhi recalls the success of his Task Group in these words:

In early December 1961, *Betwa* had been put on patrol off Goa in Operation Chutney. The task allotted to *Betwa* was to remain outside the Portuguese territorial waters and shadow the Portuguese frigate *Afonso de Albuquerque*, report its movements and gather any other intelligence. Various ships of the Indian Navy came and went during this period but *Betwa* vacated her patrol station only to fuel once at Bombay.

Just 48 hours before we went into Goa, *Betwa* had a serious gear box leak but the ship's engineers had very smartly plugged this with canvas and epoxy resin.

Orders for Operation Vijay were received about three or four days before the event. The ships allocated to the Goa sector were *Betwa* commanded by me, *Beas* commanded by Commander (later Commodore) T.J. Kunnenkeril and *Cauvery* commanded by Lieutenant Commander (later Commander) S.V. Mahadevan.

*Betwa* divided the Portuguese maritime boundary into three sectors and allocated *Beas* to patrol the northern, *Betwa* took the centre

which was off Goa harbour and *Cauvery* was allotted the southern sector. The ships were ordered to carry out an uncoordinated linear patrol eight miles off land.

On Saturday, December 17, orders were received that Operation Vijay would be executed the following morning at dawn. That night in *Betwa*, orders were issued to prepare for battle and all officers and sailors were instructed to have a bath and put on clean underwear. This is necessary because, if one receives wounds, there is less chance of infection with clean underwear. As *Brttw* had been on patrol for so long off Goa, I had acquired a Portuguese dictionary from a book-seller in Bombay, in case I had to send any message to the Portuguese authorities. As it so happened, when I had to make a signal to *the Albuquerque*, I did this in English.

My Gunnery Officer at that time was Lieutenant (later Vice Admiral) R.P. Sawhney and he and I had discussed in detail the method of fighting the *Albuquerque*. We had agreed that, as the Portuguese ship had open mountings, it would be best to use HE/VT (high explosive (HE) shells fitted with variable time (VT) or proximity fuses which go off when they are a few feet away from the target) in 25 per cent of our armament, as the shrapnel would have the best chance of killing or wounding the gun crews and upper deck personnel. Thus one barrel of the X turret (the ship's rear turret with twin 43-inch guns) was loaded with HE/VT shells for the following day's action. As a result hundreds of shrapnel gashes were seen all over the *Albuquerque* after the operations were over.

On the night before the operation, we saw Goa signal station call us and make a signal to us - it was from the freedom fighters who said that they had been watching *Betwa* for the last few days and wished us best of luck on the following day.

On Sunday, December 18, 1961 at about dawn, we saw four Indian Air Force Canberras approach Dabolim airport from seaward and shortly thereafter huge clouds of dust belled upwards. The IAF had bombed the runway.

(The *Afonso de Albuquerque* had been moving between Anjadip and Marmagao, carrying supplies and reinforcements for the Anjadip garrison and on this morning was seen lying at anchor in Marmagao harbour)

During the course of the day, we heard from the Task Force Commander, who was conducting operations at Anjadip Island, about the treachery of the Portuguese hoisting a white flag and then opening fire on our landing parties. As *Betwa* was steaming up and down the coast of Goa only at a distance of 13 kilometres, we could distinctly see the

*Albuquerque* raising steam and preparing to leave harbour.

At about noon *Betwa* received a signal, which was personal from Admiral Katari, which said, 'Capture me a Portuguese frigate, please'. When I received this signal, I was a little perplexed as the capture of a fighting machine is very difficult especially if it is manned and fought bravely. But I had served intimately with Admiral Katari as his Fleet Operations Officer and knew his mind perfectly. Within a few seconds of getting this order, *Betwa* increased speed to maximum and I made one signal to *Beas* and *Cauvery*. It read: 'Join me. My speed 23 knots. Intend to capture/destroy *Albuquerque*'.

Having made mis signal and received acknowledgement, I headed for Goa harbour at full speed. *Beas* was quite close to me, so I ordered her to follow me and she slid in astern of *Betwa*. As we were entering an unknown harbour and going at high speed and intended to have a gun duel with *Albuquerque* in confined waters, I asked my number one (second in command), lieutenant Commander (later Captain) R.P. Khanna, a specialist in Navigation and Direction and another watch-keeping officer (an officer manning the bridge) to draw 'clearing' bearings on the chart of Goa. Then Khanna went on one wing of the ship's bridge and the other officer on the other wing to ensure that we were in safe navigational waters throughout the battle. A few minutes later, at about 1215 hours, as soon as we could see *Albuquerque* clearly through the many merchant ships which were in the harbour at a range of a little over 7,000 metres, I made a signal to her to say, 'please surrender or I open fire'. This message was made by light and was received by *Albuquerque*.

My gunnery officer, who was on the ship's gun direction platform at the time, reported that his main armament (two twin turrets of 43-inch guns) was ready to engage the enemy. I told him we would give *Albuquerque* three minutes to surrender. During this period we received a message by light from *Albuquerque* to say 'Wait'. I had made up my mind not to wait. As soon as the three minutes by my wrist watch were over, I ordered 'Open fire!' Only those who have been in action and ordered 'open fire' on an enemy can know how exciting this is and, I am sure, my heart beat faster when I uttered that order.

I think our second broadside was a direct hit on the antiaircraft gun director of *Albuquerque*. This director toppled over and fell on to the main director and shrapnel pieces killed, as I came to know later, two sailors and wounded the Captain.

*Albuquerque* now slipped her cable, turned towards the exit and started to move out, opening fire at *Betwa* and *Beas*. Her fire was furious and erratic and mainly short^utldistinctlyremember one shell falling

hardly 25 yards over the bows of *Betwa*. The fire of *Betwa*, particularly the HE/VT shells, was devastating and it looked as if there was a cloudburst of shrapnel over *Albuquerque*. Lieutenant (later Commander) Mani Rawat, who was my Navigator at the time, was in the Operations Room and he reported that on his radar he could see our shells continuously straddling (falling just short of and beyond) *Albuquerque*.

(Since *the Albuquerque* had taken shelter inside the harbour which had a large number of merchant ships, there was the grave danger of some of them being accidentally hit by the shells aimed at the Portuguese frigate. Rather than coming out of the harbour and fighting it out, *the Albuquerque* continued to fire at *Beas and Betwa* and appeared to be trying to move behind a cluster of ships).

As we were going very fast, I had gone too far to the northward and wanted to alter course to starboard to open my 'A' arcs (arcs within which guns can be fired), in order to allow my guns to bear on the target. But my executive Officer, Khanna, vetoed this and said that we were moving into shallower water so that my ship could alter course to port and again come down southward firing all the time. The gun Battle was fought at a mean range of about 6,000 yards.

The whole battle with *Albuquerque* - and I must admit she kept on firing till the last - was about 10 minutes in duration. *Beas*, in the meantime, had also opened fire and there was some confusion over fall of shot, but it did not worry us. *Cauvery* too soon arrived on the scene and took part in the engagement by firing a number of 4 inch salvoes and in fact delivered the coup de grace. After about ten minutes of running battle, it was plainly obvious that *Albuquerque* had had enough, she had been very badly hit was burning amidships, she hoisted a large, very large white flag, she turned back into Goa harbour and beached herself off the Dauna Paula jetty.

When we saw this, the order of cease fire was given and, with my binoculars, I clearly saw the sailors of the *Albuquerque* jumping off the ship and abandoning her. As soon as we stopped firing, I ordered the other two ships to withdraw and we made the necessary signals to Naval Headquarters to say that *Albuquerque* had been destroyed and was now lying sunk in Goa harbour.

We had received a fair amount of duff intelligence from Naval Headquarters. For example, we were told that Pakistani men-of-war would be to interfere with our operations, that a British submarine was in the area, that the Portuguese had four frigates in Goa and that a British frigate was on her way to Goa from the Persian Gulf to evacuate British personnel. As it so happened, only the intelligence on

the submarine and the British frigate was correct, but Naval Headquarters had warned the British man-of-war to keep well clear of the area and assured them it was the Indian (Government's) duty to look after the welfare of British citizens.

Having this intelligence, after the battle, we still remained closed up at action stations, but personnel were allowed to relax at their quarters and action lunch was served. But nothing happened on the *Albuquerque* front thereafter and with that ended the battle of Goa and the next day, the Indian Army entered Panjim.

At about 2000 hours on the night of the action (December 18), *Betwa* was ordered to proceed up north to the Maharashtra-Goa boundary, through which a river flows, where Naval Headquarters' duff intelligence told them that there was a Portuguese frigate and *Betwa* was ordered to investigate and neutralise this. I went up and could find nothing there except a well-illuminated merchant ship, presumably loading iron ore. However, on the radar scan, we saw an object and, before opening blind (radar-assisted) fire on it, I thought I would illuminate this with star shell. The illumination showed nothing and I reported to Naval Headquarters, who asked me to return to Bombay. The funny side of the story is that, when I fired star shell, the police in the village got through on the telephone and informed Bombay that the Portuguese had another frigate there, which was opening fire on them.

So now *Betwa* moved northward full speed towards Bombay. The next day I was told that Talwar, commanded by Commander (later Captain) P.N. Mathur, would rendezvous with me and I should transfer my operation orders for Operation Vijay to her. This was done. When *Betwa* entered Bombay harbour, Commander (later Vice Admiral) V.E.C. Barboza, who was then in command of *Tir*, asked me to proceed through the Naval anchorage where he, as the senior officer, had, in an impromptu gesture, ordered men of all ships to man the ship's side and cheer *Betwa* as she entered harbour. This was a very moving spectacle and *Betwa* enjoyed it thoroughly.

After a couple of days in Bombay, we were ordered back to Goa to give logistic support to the Navy who had established a small Headquarters at Vasco. On reaching Goa I landed and called on the Commanding Officer of *Albuquerque*, Commodore Antonio da Cunha Aragao, who was then in Panjim hospital and had two of his sailors looking after him. I took with me chocolates, flowers and brandy as a gift for the Commodore who was 57 years old. At that time, I was 20 years younger, and I felt very sorry for him. He was sitting up in bed with a big bandage across his chest and very proudly he showed me a piece of my shrapnel which had been extracted from his chest just short

of his heart. This was about three inches in length and it was lying on his bedside table. I picked it up and found it to be as sharp as a razor blade. He could speak broken English and, when I told him who I was, he said to me, 'You are F-139' and I said, 'Yes'. He was indicating, of course the pennant number of *Betwa*. He turned round and he said, 'Hit you', 'Hit you' twice and I told him, 'I am very sorry, you did not hit me'. So he replied and said, 'But why did you make so much smoke?' Then I had to tell him that I was going at full speed and that the diesels of the Type 41 frigate did smoke rather a lot at high speed. I asked him why he did not surrender and he said the Navy never surrenders. He added that his orders from Lisbon were to sink the ship after fighting it out but the Governor General of Goa had countermanded these and said that he was to defend the harbour and when the situation was hopeless, to beach her and wreck the engines! he said he had done his duty. With feeling he added, 'You know, in January (1962) I was to have sailed the ship back to Lisbon - you came one month too soon!!' But my feelings were that we had gone in one month too late.

(Commander T.J. Kunnenkeril, Commanding Officer of *Beas*, also visited the Commanding Officer of the *Albuquerque* when the latter stated that he knew that the Indians would launch the attack on December 18 and that he was waiting for the operations to commence from dawn on that day. He said his ship, besides trying to defend Goa, was transmitting all signals as the wireless station ashore had been put out of action during the early stages of the operation. He added that he had planned to fight till the end but had to beach the *Albuquerque* soon after the commencement of operations because three of his guns had jammed. The Portuguese Captain also told him that as naval officers they had both done their jobs and it was now left to the politicians to do the rest.)

Vice Admiral Gandhi continues:

I then asked him if he would like any message to be passed to his family in Portugal and, having got the address, on return to the ship, on my wireless set, we called up Whitehall W/T and asked him to pass the message, which they did.

Later went and saw the *Albuquerque*. She had been badly battered from the funnel forward and as the fires burned for many days, even the ship's plates were warped; she was gutted badly between decks.

(The *Albuquerque* was aground upright in 10 feet of water on the northern shores of Marmagao harbour. The forward superstructure, especially the bridge, was partially burnt, the quarterdeck had been severely damaged, the after magazine was flooded and two forward

4.7 inch guns had been destroyed)

Many years later, one officer gave me the sword of the Commanding Officer of *Albuquerque* which I presented to Vice admiral M.P. Awati when he was the Commandant of the National Defence Academy, Khadakvasla. The silk battle ensign of *Albuquerque* was given to me about a month after the action by Captain D.St.J. Cameron, Commanding Officer of *Mysore*. This I presented, shortly before my retirement, to the gunnery training establishment at Cochin, *Dronacharya*. (The *Albuquerque's* decrepit hulk lay in Margamao harbour as a derelict for a few months and was repaired and refloated on March 10, 1962. In July 1963 it was proposed to convert her into an oceanographic research ship to be operated by the Navy for the Indian National Committee for Ocean Research (INCOR). It was later decided to convert her into a static accommodation ship for two reasons: first, the ship's oceangoing capabilities had been considerably reduced by her age, state of machinery and equipment and the damages suffered during the engagement with *Betwa*, *Beas* and *Cauvery*, her short 'remaining life' and the excessive cost of conversion; and, next, the INCOR, which had initially shown some interest in the ship had later decided to acquire an oceanographic research vessel from the USSR. It was soon realised that the ship's conversion into a static accommodation ship was also not likely to be cost-effective and, finally, *Albuquerque*, rendered *hors de combat* by the Navy's extremely accurate firepower, was sold to the shipbreakers for Rs. 7.71 lakh on June 5, 1965.)

Some years later, I was told a story by a Minister - I cannot remember which Minister told me this, or it might even have been Panditji himself during some gathering. It goes as follows: That Jawahar-lal Nehru was very much against the Government of India using force to liberate Goa. However, in a Cabinet Meeting, he was pressurised by the other Ministers, particularly Krishna Menon, and he reluctantly agreed to allow the Armed Forces to enter Goa to liberate it. He, however, made one condition, because his conscience would not allow force to be used, he said, 'Please do not tell me the D-Day, otherwise in my talk with someone, I will blurt it out. A truly non-violent human being!

After the surrender ceremony, a party of officers and sailors boarded *toe Albuquerque* and found that the Portuguese had abandoned the ship in a hurry but had left a dead sailor on board. The body was recovered and, in true naval tradition, accorded a sea burial a few days later.

It is to the credit of the Navy's gunners and it speaks volumes for their precision firepower, operate as they do from weapon platforms that roll,

pitch and yaw and resort to high-speed *zigzag* manoeuvres during action, that only one ship other than the *Albuquerque* suffered damage during the operation. *S.S. Ranger*, a Panama-registered ship belonging to Ciamavitna Del-Panamanian, was anchored close to the *Albuquerque* the latter was engaged by the *Betwa* and the *Beas* following which the *Albuquerque* had slipped her cable, got under way and placed herself behind the *Ranger*. Despite the high rate of fire of the armament fitted in the Indian ships, the heat of the battle and the *Ranger* having been positioned in their direct line of fire, only one or two rounds of 45 inch ammunition hit the *Ranger* and caused minor damage to the ship. There was one shell-hole on the port side of her number two hold, one shell-hole in a hatchway and some splinter holes on the upper deck. The damage suffered by the ship was soon repaired locally at Goa through the ship's agents in Marmagao, Murgogoa Namgad-era Ltd., before she sailed for home. No reparations were claimed by the ship's owners or agents.

### The Capture of Diu

On the morning of December 18, the Army made an attempt to enter Diu but encountered stiff resistance from the Portuguese. The Air Force and the Navy were then asked to neutralise all war vessels in the area and soften up the Portuguese defences. As had been planned earlier, *Delhi* arrived at a point 16 kilometres off Diu at 0330 hours on that day, waiting for H-Hour, i.e., 0400 hours, to commence her operations.

Captain (later Vice Admiral) N. Krishnan was the Commanding Officer of *Shivaji*, the Mechanical Training Establishment of the Navy at Lonavla, in 1961 when he was asked by the Naval Chief to take over command of the cruiser. To quote from Vice Admiral Krishnan's recorded reminiscences:

Whilst I was adjusting myself to the new task of running a training college (in *Shivaji*), things were gradually heating up over Goa and the other two Portuguese colonies - Daman and Diu. It was a complete anachronism that a foreign power, thousands of miles away, should hold on to these pockets in the independent subcontinent of India. It was as incredible as it was intolerable that even after 14 years of the British withdrawal, we were tolerating this blight on our motherland. At the meeting of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet that approved the ten-year plan for the Navy's development, Sardar Patel had asked me, 'What about Goa? Can our Fleet push the Portuguese out?' I had replied on behalf of my Admiral, 'Sir, this Fleet can not only take Goa but fight the entire Portuguese Navy if they try to stop us.'

Every time I passed this territory, I used to close the ship as near as possible and bum with indignation, recalling the Sardar's words uttered several years before.

Now (in 1961) we had an ardent and fiery Defence Minister in VJC Krishna Menon, and it looked as though he was going to do something about it.

At a late hour on a cold December night the phone rang in *Shivaji* House (my official residence at Lonavla) and it was the Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Katari calling from New Delhi, who asked me, 'How soon can you take over command of the *Delhi* again?' 'I will be in command of the ship by colours tomorrow' ('colours' is the hoisting of the naval ensign on board naval ships and establishments at 0800 hours every day) I replied.

'Look, I want you to get the ship stored, ammunitioned and fuelled and be ready for sea within two weeks. Can do?' he asked. 'Most certainly, Sir\*', I replied. 'Could I have my old team back, Sir?', I asked.

Yes, I shall ask the Chief of Personnel to get on with it', the Naval Chief said and rang off. (Captain Krishnanhad earlier commanded the *Delhi* for two and half years from the end of 1958).

It will be seen that throughout the conversation, there had been no mention either of Goa or my mission. It was not necessary. I knew and he knew that I knew.

Some virtually incredible things happened in the next seven days. When I arrived on board the *Delhi* at 0700 hours the next morning, my erstwhile Navigator, Todgy<sup>7</sup> Nadkarni (later Admiral J.G. Nadkarni, Chief of the Naval Staff), was there along with my Executive Officer, Commander Freddie Sopher, to receive me. The former had moved in anticipation of orders! Within 48 hours I had most of my crew back and it was delightful to address my ship's company of friendly and grinning faces once again. I exhorted them with most of the very words I used to an entire fleet almost exactly ten years later (i.e., in December 1971). 'Boys!', I said, 'I want this ship fully operational and ready for battle in exactly five days from now. All procedures will be short-cutted. When I say operational, I mean, one hundred per cent fit in all respects. It will mean working day and night. Let it be so. All red tape will be out. Every problem must be solved even if you have to beg, borrow or steal. We have one hundred and twenty hours and I know you can do it.'

By Heavens, how they worked! Any Naval person who reads this will appreciate the enormity of the task in getting a cruiser stored, ammunitioned and fuelled, equipment to be tested, all defects rectified.

For instance, it takes a minimum of three days to embark the full wartime outfit of ammunition in a cruiser and we did it in less than twenty hours, in fact, the Gunnery Officer, Lieutenant Commander (later Commander) LS. Dhindsa, came up to me and said, 'Captain, Sir, we are breaking every rule in the book. Every one is dead tired. Can we not slow down a bit?' He was quite right, of course. Men were carrying on and when too tired, lay down where they were for a bit of rest only to start again and get on with it. I also knew that if we slackened the momentum, we would never be able to work up the zeal and enthusiasm for quite a while. So I told Dhindsa 'What are you worried about, Guns? If something goes wrong, none of us will be here to face any court martial. Leave the worrying to me and get on with it\*'. Immediately after colours on the eighth day, I sent a signal to the Flag Officer Commanding the Indian Fleet, 'Ready in all respects for sea'.

At the briefing, the mission of *Delhi* was spelt out for me. The ship was to proceed off Diu and give 'distant support' to our Army units who would cross over the creek separating Diu from the Indian mainland. I asked what exactly the planners had in mind when talking of 'distant support'<sup>7</sup>. The answer was vague in the extreme, 'We do not have a very clear picture of the state of the defences. Diu has an airfield from which aircraft may operate. They are bound to have coast batteries. It is also possible that there is a submarine threat. They also have motor torpedo boats. So DC/W should remain about 10 miles away from the shore'.

This was absolutely crazy. Why didn't we have enough intelligence regarding Diu's defences? We had had several years to collect all the information regarding this place which was within a stone's throw from our mainland. If there were shore batteries, how were they going to be silenced before the army got across? Had there been no air reconnaissance to find out whether there were aircraft at the enemy airfield? Of what earthly use would I be to the Army, skulking ten miles away? It was perfectly obvious that I could expect no answers to these questions about an impending operation that had been planned in a most woolly-headed and haphazard manner.

Incredibly, *Vikrant*, our latest and newest acquisition, was not taking part in the operation but was going to be deployed somewhere in the middle of the ocean where she would be 'safe'. After giving distant support to the Army, I was to join *Vikramt* and *Delhi* was to give her close support!

It was getting 'curiouser and curiouser' and when my mad hatter's tea party was over, it was a relief to get back on board and set about the task of sailing.

On D-Day, December 18, 1961, at about 0330 hours I arrived off Diu Head to await H-Houx that was scheduled for 0400 hours. Before leaving Bombay, I had embarked an Army officer who, by wireless link, was to liaise between the ship and our Army ashore.

It was pitch dark and at about 0430 hours our radar picked up two echoes on the radar screen which were closing the ship at high speed. This might be the expected torpedo attack. We tracked the boats carefully and let them come to within five miles and then at H-Houx, 05.15 am, opened fire, first illuminating them with star-shells (these are shells burst over the enemy which produce brilliant flares that slowly descend, in the meanwhile illuminating the enemy ships) and identified them as shore patrol craft. On being challenged and called to surrender, the two craft started making off towards the harbour at high speed. I accordingly engaged them and sank one almost immediately and out of hand. The other craft turned tail and raced away back towards harbour. We had drawn first blood.

Soon we could hear gunfire from ashore and evidently the armies were in action against each other. As dawn broke, I saw from the distance that the island was quite flat and the beaches open. At the Eastern end, where our Army was to cross, was a high ground and perched on top was a solidly built citadel from where Portuguese artillery had opened fire to hold up the Indian Army converging on Diu and was offering stiff resistance. Our Liaison Officer communicated with his counterparts ashore. The battalion commander reported that very heavy and well-directed fire was coming from the citadel and the Army's attack was fizzling out and its units were also suffering heavy casualties.

I decided to close in. I said to the Liaison Officer, 'Tell him I am coming in'. I asked my Navigator, 'Pilot, how close can we get to the shore without going aground?' After consulting the chart, Nadkarni said, 'There is enough water about a mile from the town and beach, Sir'. 'Right, draw a line parallel to the beach and a mile away. We will steam along the line and to hell with distant support'.

It was bright daylight by now and I had a grandstand view of what was happening ashore. The citadel looked quite impregnable and the plight of our Jawans was thoroughly unenviable. They were coming under withering rifle and machine-gun fire from the well-ensconced soldiers within the fortress.

We sent a signal to the watch-tower in the citadel, 'Strike your flag immediately and surrender'. In the meantime, I asked the Gunnery Officer to aim at a lighthouse sticking out from the centre of the enclosure of the walled castle. There was obviously no point in firing on time

rocky walls. If we burst high-explosive shells among the defenders, things were bound to happen fast I also wanted to prevent any retaliation from shore defences. A few well-placed shells would be the best dissuasion. Since there were no reply to my signal, we opened up with all our six guns. A broadside of six-inch guns makes a deafening roar and is terrifying at the receiving end.

The very first shots found their target and we saw the incredible spectacle of a whole big lighthouse being lifted clean into the air and disintegrating. I always have believed that if force had to be used, men there should be no pusillanimous or half-hearted measures and preponderant force, used to good effect, would produce the quickest results. In eleven broadsides, we sent some 66 six-inch high explosive shells in to help them make up their minds. Just fifteen minutes later, down came the Portuguese flag that had fluttered there, planted in our country by Vasco da Gama some four and a half centuries ago. And then up went the white flag of surrender. I sent my boat with two of my officers ashore with an Indian national flag and they had the honour of replacing the white flag with our national colours. Since the Army did not move in till the next day, I decided to stay on and patrol the area. It was reported to me that the Portuguese were likely, in sheer anger arising out of frustration, to blow up the airfield installations. We closed the shore off the airfield and set their barracks nearby on fire.

At about 1100 hours the shore patrol craft that had previously retreated into harbour, broke harbour and set fire to herself. In about 20 minutes time she blew up and sank off the harbour entrance.

Sub-Lieutenant (later Commodore) S. Bhandoola was the second-in-command of *Delhi's* landing party at Diu and had the honour of hoisting the Indian tricolour atop the flagstaff on the Portuguese citadel. Bhandoola reminisces: 'The first thing that I vividly remember is that just before we actually got into the operation off Diu, the action at Anjadip had already taken place, and the first reports about casualties suffered by Indian Naval personnel had come in. Immediately on receipt of the news of the results of the Anjadip action, my Commanding Officer, Captain N. Krishnan, Announced to the whole ship's company that not a single man of his ship would step ashore until he had bombarded the Portuguese citadel to neutralise all possible resistance. Coining at the psychological moment that it did, this announcement of the Commanding Officer went along way boosting the morale of the ship's company just before we went into action.

Intelligence reports regarding the resistance expected from the Portuguese had indicated that from the main fort at Diu, which was to

be captured by the Indian Army, there would be very little, if any, resistance and the Army would have no problem in crossing a small creek and marching into the fort to take it over. It had also been reported that the small citadel, which was to be captured by *Delhi*, was unmanned and that all we would have to do would be to send a small landing party and to hoist the Indian tricolour there.

While the Indian Army was in the process of advancing towards the main fort to capture it, without any expected resistance, *Delhi* was moving towards the citadel. Volunteers had been asked for, for the landing party, and against the traditional mother's advice never to volunteer, being very young, full of enthusiasm and totally indiscreet, I had to, but of course, volunteer! lieutenant B5. Ahluwalia, our Gunnery Officer, was the platoon commander of the landing party and I, the only other officer in the party, was the second-in-command. Our plan was that *Delhi* would go close to the citadel and the landing party would go ashore in two or three boats. These boats were to land us on a small beach on the islet. As the citadel was reported to be deserted, the ship would just lie off while the landing party went ashore and hoisted the Indian national flag on the flagstaff there.

It was our guardian angel that was protecting us in the landing party because the ship was still heading south towards the citadel when we got a call from the Army that they had run into heavy opposition while trying to cross the creek and they requested us to bombard the citadel from where they were being shelled by twelve-pounders. Why I say that this call by the Army at this particular juncture was our guardian angel watching over us will become clear as I narrate the events of what happened later.

At this moment the landing party was told to stand down and the ship went into 'State One' for gunnery action. I also happened to be the turret officer of *Delhi's* 'A' Turret, Le., one of the forward 6-inch turrets, and I ran to close up at my action station. The ship turned northward, closed into very short range of the citadel and then did a run parallel to the coast and commenced bombardment of the citadel and the Portuguese airfield in its close vicinity with all three twin turrets of her 6-inch armament firing. I do believe that this bombardment of a shore target by *Delhi* was the first occasion when a unit of the Indian Navy fired her shipborne weapons, after Independence, at an enemy, in anger.

With a number of bombardment runs first firing into the citadel followed by bombardment of the airfield. While bombarding the airfield, one of the targets selected was the air traffic control tower. However, in spite of concerted efforts by the six-inch director, Le., the rotating structure from where gunfire is directed and controlled, we

were unable to hit it. Finally, perhaps feeling that the target was too small to be accurately engaged and hit, the order of 'check, check, check' to cease firing was given. At about 1400 hours, being ordered to report 'state of guns', A turret (the forward turret) reported 'all guns loaded half-cocked' and I requested permission to clear the guns in local control, i.e., from the turret itself. Permission was given and we in the turret locally aimed at the air traffic control tower and fired bomb barrels. You can imagine our elation when, through the turret officer's sight, I saw the tower being hit, soaring into the air, crumbling and then disappearing. I vividly remember this as one of my most glorious moments of that action.

Soon after this, the Army reported that our bombardment had neutralised all resistance by the Portuguese and that they had crossed the creek. A white flag had been hoisted in the citadel and the Army was proceeding to formally accept the surrender by the Portuguese forces at Diu. *Delhi* was asked to send a naval representative to witness the surrender ceremony. Our Captain decided that we still had a task to do which was to hoist the Indian tricolour on the flagstaff in the citadel but that the landing party would first proceed to represent him at the surrender ceremony and thereafter return to the ship so that we could then go south and carry out the small and unglamorous mission of capturing an undefended fort.

Here again our guardian angel was watching over us and this decision to go to the fort only after the surrender ceremony possibly saved the lives of all of us who were in the landing party. Once again the reason why I say this will emerge as I narrate the events that took place hereafter.

The landing party proceeded ashore and the boats that carried us landed us at a landing point very close to the citadel. After landing we marched with our chests out, proud of a victory made possible by the role played by our ship, *De/W. We* had presumed that the Army, having made the signal that they wanted to make about the surrender ceremony, would already be at the citadel. Imagine our surprise when we marched into the fort to find that the Indian Army was nowhere to be seen - they were still making their way towards the citadel. However, the white flag which the Portuguese had hoisted was a genuine indication of their surrender. They had laid down their arms and were congregated in one place in the citadel. So, as it transpired, it was the Indian Navy that was the first to reach the citadel and take it over from the Portuguese. In fact it was Sub-lieutenant Suresh Bhandoola, Indian Navy, that is me, who hoisted the Indian tricolour at the flagstaff in the Portuguese citadel.

Soon thereafter the Army arrived and the formal surrender was signed by the senior Portuguese officer and was accepted by the senior officer of the Indian Army present. It was during this period that Lieutenant Ahluwalia told the Portuguese that *Delhi* had the task of hoisting the Indian flag at the fort and that, immediately after the surrender ceremony, at the citadel, the ship would be proceeding south and, from a point in the close vicinity of the fort, the landing party would proceed by boats to land on the small sandy beach on the islet on which the fort was situated. On hearing this, the senior Portuguese officer was very perturbed and told us that it would be inadvisable for us to undertake this mission in the manner we had planned. He said that, contrary to our intelligence, the fort was not deserted and that there were about ten Portuguese soldiers in it. He also told us that the beach on which we intended to land by boats had been mined and that any landing party endeavouring to capture the fort via the beach would be blown to smithereens. He obviously felt that if this happened we might take it out on him. When we asked him to convey to the senior officer of the fort that the Portuguese forces at Diu had surrendered and that they should also not offer any resistance to us, he stated that he had no communication facilities with the fort. It was, therefore, decided that a platoon of the Indian Army along with a Portuguese officer would proceed to the fort from landwards. Before this platoon entered the fort, the Portuguese officer would verbally tell those in the fort of the surrender so that there would be no chances of any unnecessary bloodshed.

Once again we of *Delhi* were asked to convey to our Commanding Officer a request to lie off the fort to render any assistance, if required. It was at this moment that we realised that the sequence of events which had occurred which resulted in the delay in our landing party proceeding for what we thought was an unopposed and innocuous mission were in fact, perhaps, our guardian angel watching over us! So we went back to our ship and the ship moved south to lie off the islet while the Army moved to the fort making its approach along the shore. Things went as planned and the fort was taken over by the Army without a shot being fired. We saw the Indian tricolour being hoisted on the flagstaff in the fort and heaved a sigh of relief that the mission had been completed. However, it was perhaps a little premature for us to think it was all over and that we could now set course for home after a victorious action because just then we got a call for help from the Indian Army Major who had been assigned the task of capturing the fort. Communications between the ship and the fort were very poor and all we really heard on the ship was that he needed some help

urgently as he had some problem which had something to do with some men who were lost ashore which required the use of a boat. By this time it was about 2200 hours and pitch dark.

Before I narrate the next part in which I was again personally involved, I need to give a clear picture of the location of the fort. As I have said earlier, this fort was located on a small islet, a few hundred yards off the mainland. Between the islet and the mainland there was a patch of rocks of an area of about 20 square yards. When the Army went to the fort from shorewards, it was low tide and they were able to wade across to it. At that time the water around the rocks was only about knee-deep.

Having been through a lot that day and, being off watch, i.e., off duty at that moment, I was down in my cabin getting some sleep when I was shaken up and told that the Captain wanted me on the bridge immediately. When I got to the bridge I was told that our friend, the young Major, had had some trouble but nobody was very clear as to what exactly his problem was. However, the fact that he had taken over the fort made us feel that the problem could not be very serious. It was assumed that he was cut off from the shore as the tide had risen and that he probably needed some help in the form of a boat to get ashore to look for some of his men, with whom he had lost touch. I was directed to get into a whaler and proceed to the fort and render whatever assistance was required. It was certainly not anticipated that we could get involved in any kind of a situation in which we would require to be armed.

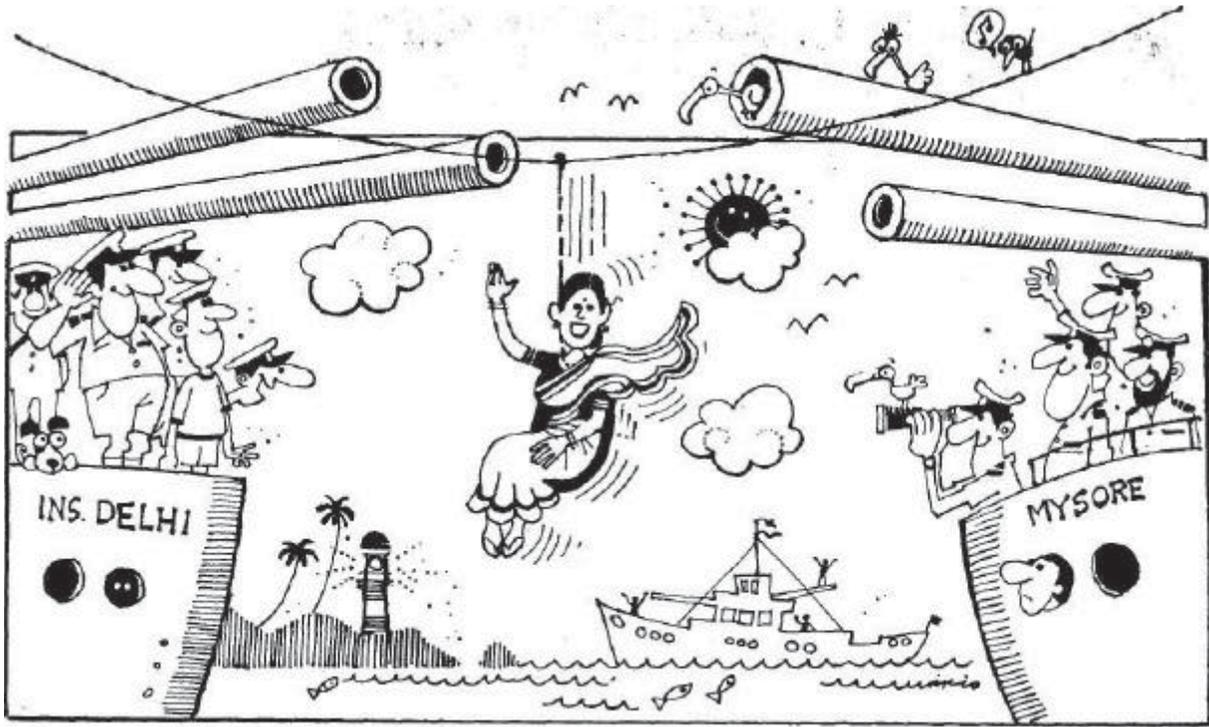
So straight from the bridge I got into the whaler which was manned by the duty watch, i.e., sailors who were on duty at that moment. The boat was lowered, I was given the general direction of the fort and off I went. With me was the duty Petty Officer as the coxswain of the whaler and a crew of five for pulling, i.e., rowing the whaler. Because it was dark it was considered imprudent to use a power boat as we knew the waters between the ship and the fort were rocky. I was directed to feel my way very carefully to the fort. And this is exactly what we did. To help us to pick out the rocks along our path, the ship's 20-inch projector was switched on and in the light of this projector, we could see the sea breaking over the rocks. We moved very cautiously, navigating to avoid running aground, but in spite of all our efforts, we ran aground twice. On each of these occasions we had to get into the water, push the boat clear, and men once again carefully feel our way towards the fort using one of the crew with his oar in the bows to feel for deep enough waters through which we could traverse. And thus we

i^d>ed the f^The Major (a me to the wall and told us that he was not



Commissioning of *Kuthar'* in July 1959, with the Commanding Officer Commander SS Sodhi. Also seen are the Chief of Staff to C-IN-C Portsmouth and Captain RF Jesse! -formerly Chief Instructor Navy at the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington.



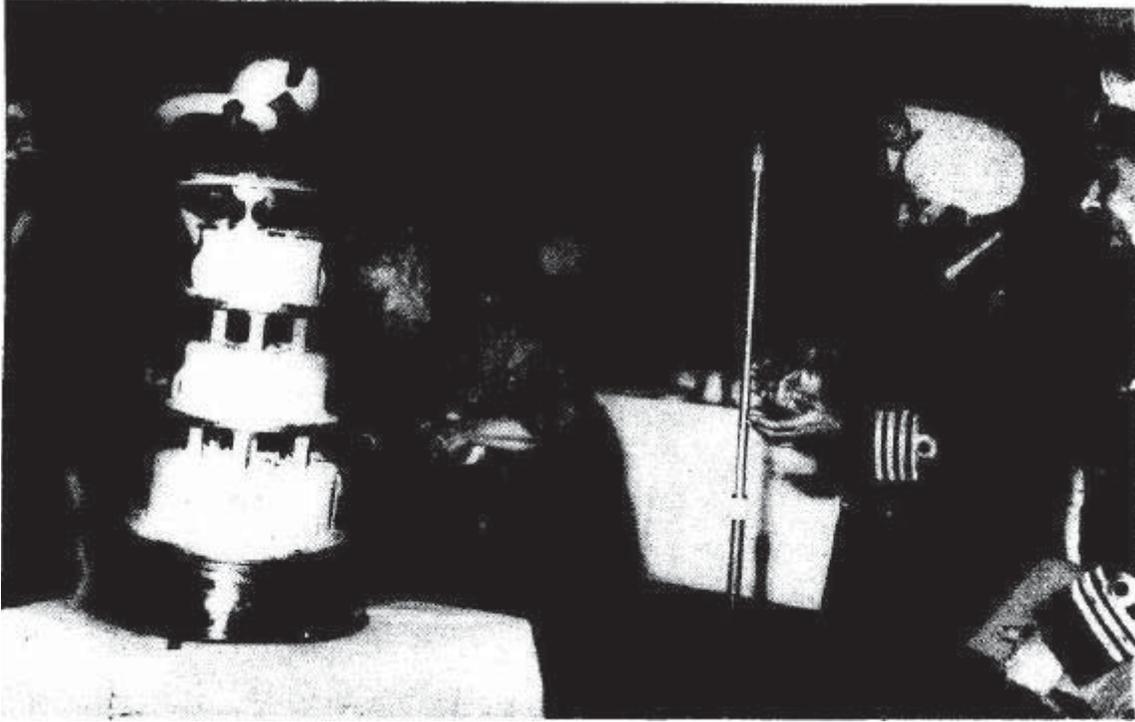


Transfer by Jackstay from **Mysore to/MN - Mrs. Meena** Nagarkar.wife of ComriMnderVVSN^picar-the first InChAn eve to bounce across the waves in a bosun's chair in 1959.

*Courtesy MarioMiranda*



Captain V A Kamatfi reading the commissioning warrant of *Trishul*, 13 Jan 1960. Also seen in the picture is Captain RS David the then Indian Naval Advisor, London.



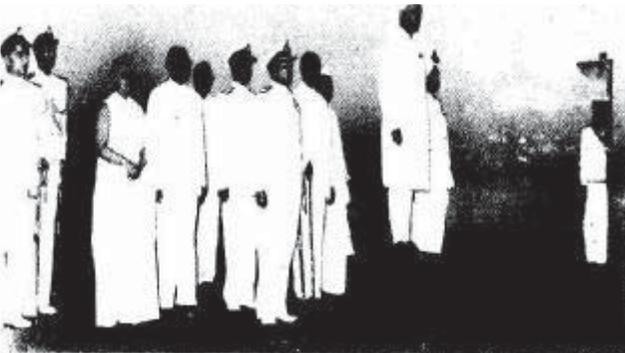
**Cutting the commisstoning cake on board VIknnfty**

**Commissioner in London on**

**4 Mar 1961. Also seen in the picture are the Commanding Officer, Captain PS Mahindroo and  
Commanaer Krtehan Dev.**



**Lieutenant Commander BR Acharya Squadron Commander 300 Squadron (Sea Hawks) briefing Naval pilots before a pra Air Station Brawdy in 1961. Also seen in the picture are Lieutenants RV Singh, A.G. Jog, RH Tahiliani, SY Tipnis, SK**

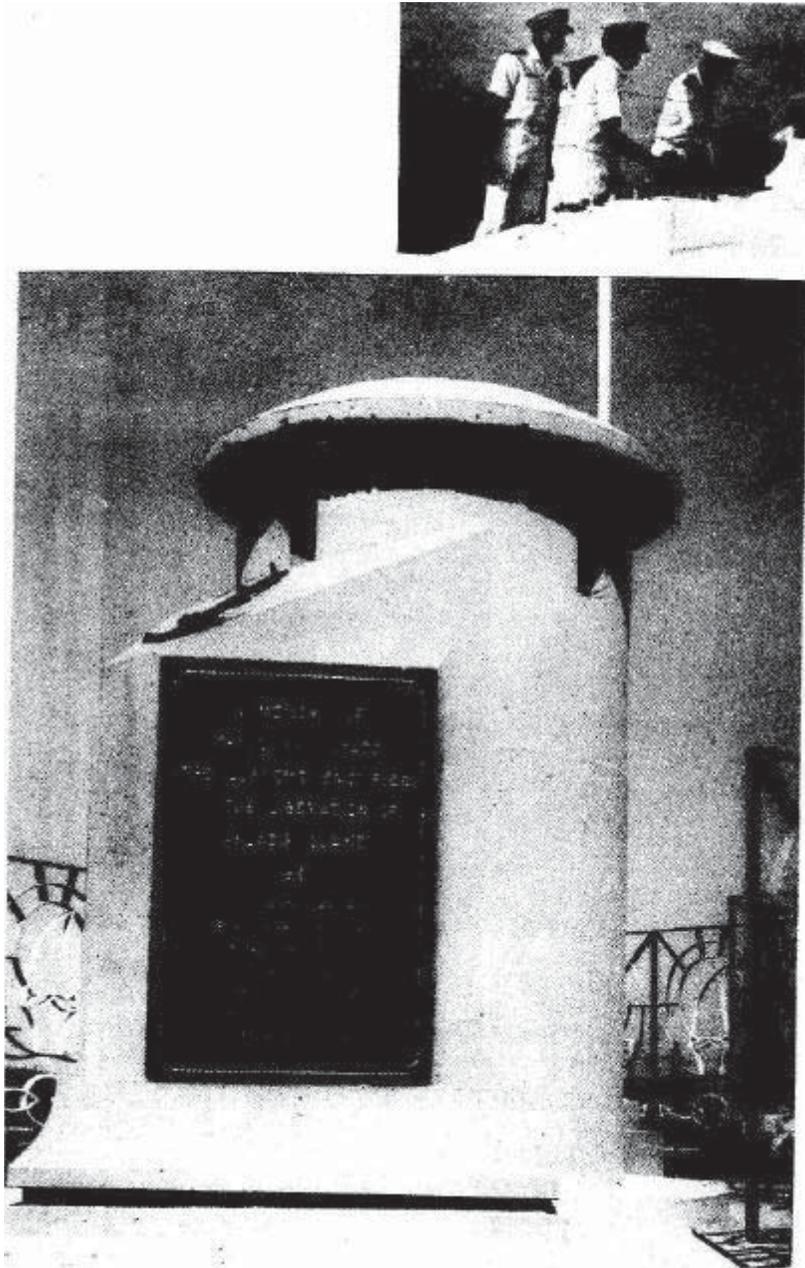


**Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru on board on Vikrants arrival at Bombay on 03 Nov. 1961. Also seen in the picture are Shri VK Krishna Menon, Minister of Defence, Shrimati Vijay Lakshmi Pandit, Shri Raghu Ramiah Minister of State for Defence, Vice Admiral RD Katari, the Chief of the Naval Staff, Rear Admiral BS**

**Soman, Flag Officer Commanding Indian Fleet, Captain PS Mahindroo, Commanding Officer and Lieutenants  
MB Kunte and MML Saxena**



Vice Admiral RD Katari, the Chief of the Naval Staff inspecting the 'remains' of Albuquerque in December 1961 at Goa. Also seen are Commodore HA Agate, the then Naval Officer-in-Charge Goa; the engineer in overalls is Commander TR Dalal.



Monument to the heroes of Anjadip Island - Plaque carries the names of those killed in action in December 1961. Admiral L Ramdas, the Chief of the Naval Staff laying a wreath at the monument. Also seen in the picture is Vice Admiral KASZ Raju, the C-in-C Southern Naval Command.



**Earl Mountbatten of Burma, Admiral of the Fleet on board *Vikrant* in May 1963. Also seen in the picture are Rear Admiral SG Karmarkar, Flag Officer Bombay, Captain N Krishnan Commanding Officer and Mrs. Krishnan.**

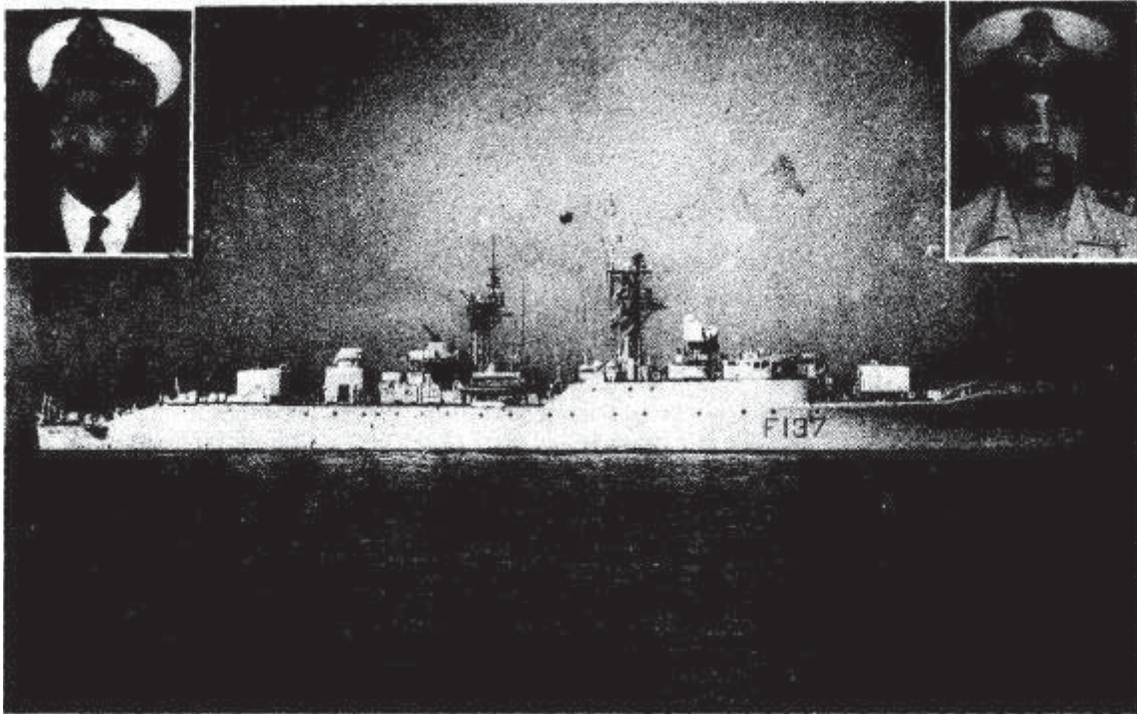


**Commissioning Ceremony of Jarawa (Port Blair) on 15 Feb 1964. The tribals seen are the Jarawas.**



**Defence delegation to USSR in 1964 for exploring naval requirements - missile boats and submarines and other equipment. Seen in the picture are Shri Y.B. Chavan, Defence Minister and leader of the delegation, Mr. Nikita Khrushchev, Mr. T.N. Kaul, Ambassador and Shri H.C. Sarin, Additional Defence Secretary.**

*Photograph: Courtesy Shri H.C. Sarin*



**Type 41 Anti-aircraft frigate INS-beas has the distinction of having being commanded by father and son - Commander (later Commodore) BR Kapoor (inset) and Commander (now Captain) Sanjiv Kapoor (inset).**



Rear Admiral BA Samson, the then  
Vikrant during Exercises at sea 1965

Officer Commar

## *The Three Investigators*

The most famous name in the history of Indian hydrographic surveying is that of **the** Surveying Ship *Investigator*. The first 450-tons sailing vessel *Investigator* **was** employed for surveying duties in the China Sea until she was paid off in 1828. The second *Investigator* a wooden paddle steamer with a 581-tons displacement **was** commissioned in 1881. The third ship to bear the same name was a steel single-screw ship commissioned in 1907. She was continuously employed on surveying duties until 1932 when she was replaced by a fourth ship of the same name, a converted cable-laying vessel, the *Patrick Stewart*. *Kukri*, a river class frigate was converted into a surveying ship and commissioned in 1950 as fifth *Investigator* which was decommissioned in 1974. Photograph shows the sixth *Investigator* (indigenously built) which was commissioned on 11 January 1990, one hundred and sixty two years later. To be secure on land, we must be supreme at sea At his meetings with Members of Parliament from various parties and even in his public statements, Nehru had ruled out military action in Goa. He had, in fact, expected the United States and Britain to advise him in the matter especially because the latter had already compelled the Sultan of Muscat to transfer Gwadar to Pakistan. He had instructed M.C. Chagla, the Indian Ambassador in Washington, to discuss the Goa dilemma with officials of the State Department and to convey to them India's unwillingness to wait indefinitely for the Portuguese enclaves' integration into the Indian Union. "The ultimate solution can only be close association with India, with possibly internal autonomy<sup>7</sup>, Nehru said. He was even prepared to accept 'an interim settlement short of merger of Goa with India' on the lines of the transfer of the French possessions in India, in deference to world opinion in general and American opinion in particular and at the risk of contravening Indian public opinion and his own preferences and commitments.

On the occasion of the silver jubilee of Goa's liberation in 1986, the noted political analyst-commentator, Shri M.V. Kamath, wrote:

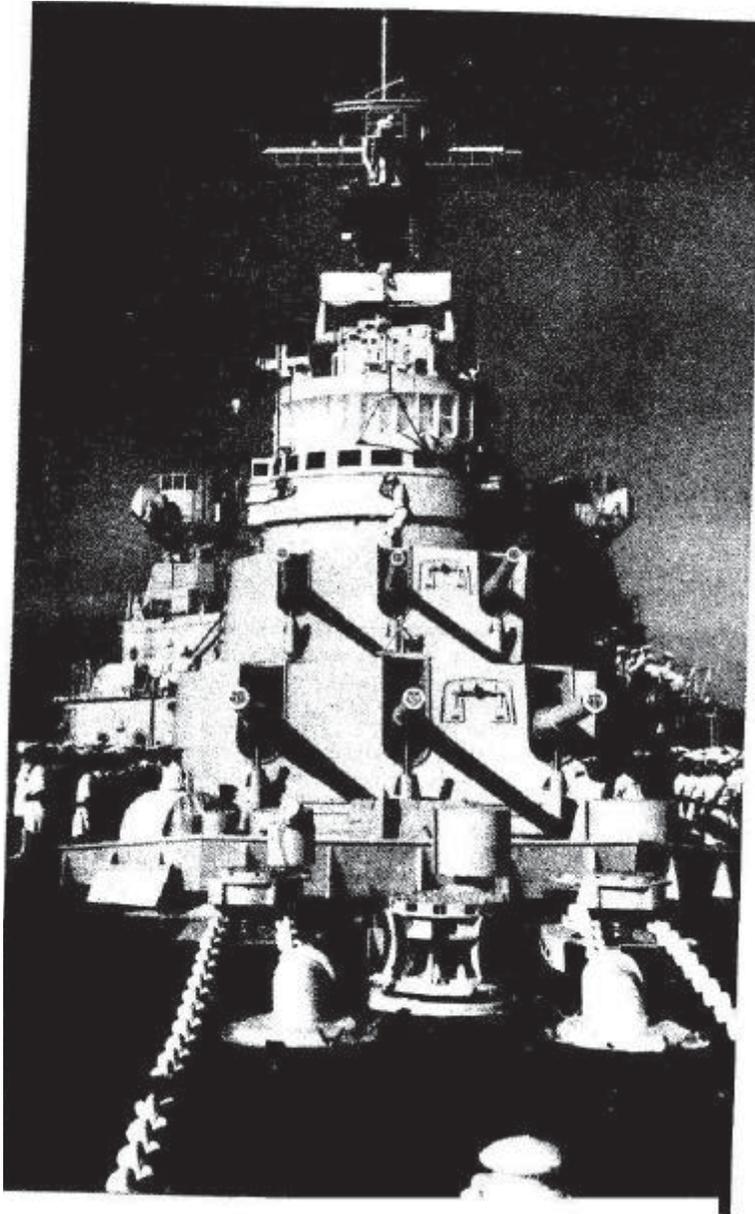
Looking back now it is astonishing to what extent Nehru was willing not to use force out of respect for world opinion, even when he had every right to do so. How would the Western countries have reacted if India had been in occupation, say, of Calais or Hamburg or Liverpool and refused to budge? Would France or Germany or Britain have tolerated it for a moment? And yet, India was a victim of its own nonviolent philosophy. We were being quietly taken for a ride.

Neither Britain nor the United States were of any help. They had their own reasons to embarrass Nehru. Nehru tried to isolate Goa economically, but that only rebounded against India. The boycott re-

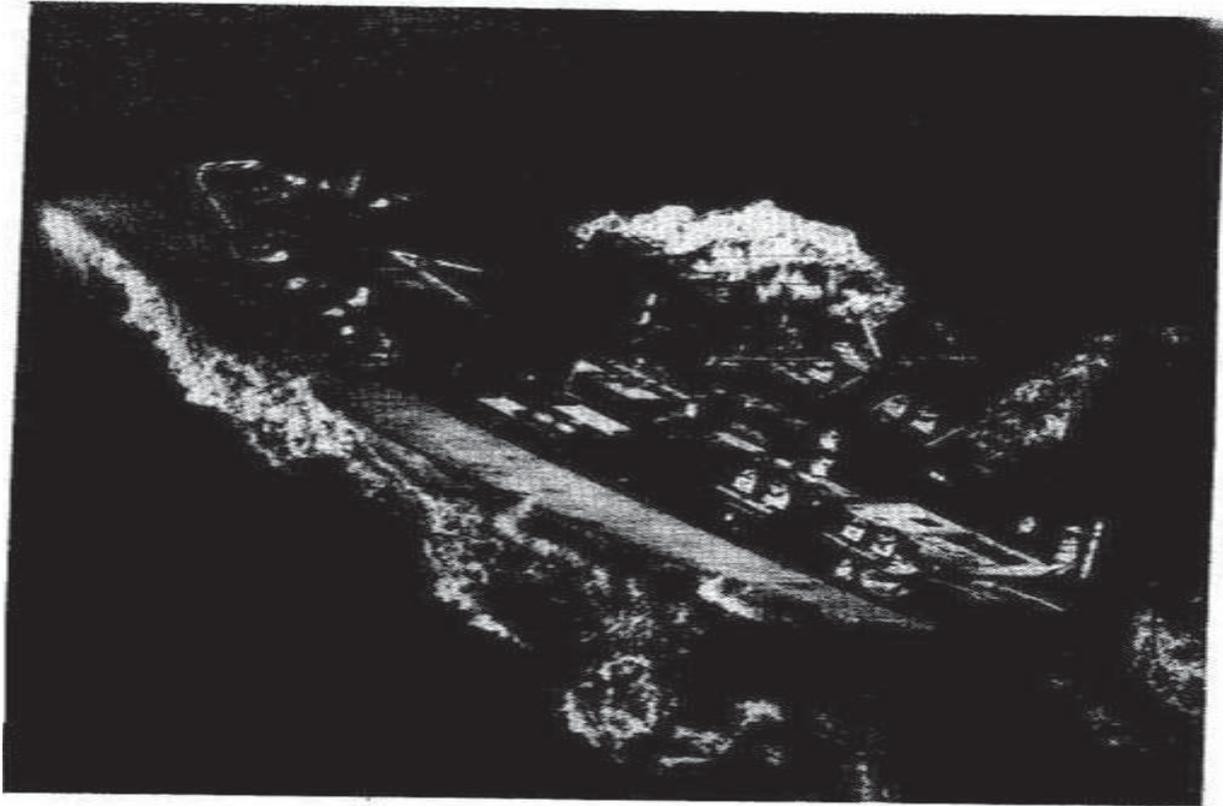
sulted in widespread smuggling while there was no noticeable pressure on Portugal to relent. Had there been an internal revolt in Goa, Nehru could then have with some justification sent his army in. But no such revolt took place.

The Western powers were in no mood to oblige Nehru. At Delhi, there was a new US Ambassador, Kenneth Galbraith. Galbraith was close to Nehru and advised him not to use force in order not to blot his and India's good record in the past. Galbraith urged Nehru to go to the United Nations. But after his Kashmir experience, Nehru was in no mood to fall into that trap. He told Galbraith that his cup was full and beginning to spill over.

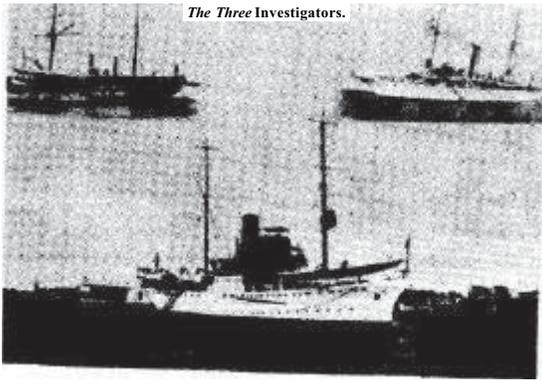
It is amazing to what extent Nehru went to stay away from the military option. He did not want to use force, but, at the same time, he did not want to appear irresolute. He told Britain's Prime Minister,



INS *Mysore*, our second missile cruiser, came into service in 1957 whose commissioning pennant was hoisted on 29th August 1985 — a ship with an illustrious history whose memory will be with us forever — a ship which 'knew no fear' or defeat. =i fWft «?RR



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*The Three Investigators.*

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Meanwhile, Krishna Menon had fixed a date for the invasion and the Indian Army was raring to go. Galbraith came to know of it and persuaded Nehru to postpone action for two more days. Galbraith encouraged Nehru to think that the US would compel the Portuguese Government to agree to leave Goa on the understanding that India would take a generous

view of the economic and cultural interests of Portugal in Goa - a commitment which Nehru had no difficulty in giving.

But Galbraith had overestimated his own influence in Washington and with President Kennedy. Kennedy gave no hint to Portugal that, in his opinion, India had a good case. On the other hand, the US State Department indicated active sympathy for the Salazar regime's adamant attitude.

When UN Secretary General U Thant suggested negotiations, Salazar would only say that such negotiations could only be held on the basis of co-existence of India and a Portuguese Goa. The United States was playing a double game. On the one hand it was standing solidly behind Portugal and on the other it was warning India that it wouldn't be good form to attack Goa. Galbraith suggested that India sponsor a resolution on Goa in the UN General Assembly. But only a fool would have fallen for the trap. At this point the US Government came up with another suggestion that India postpone action for another three months. When this proposal was taken by Galbraith to Nehru, the latter was even then willing to listen. But then Krishna Menon told Nehru that it was too late and that advance parties of the Indian Army had already begun to move.

Madhu Limaye, the well-known parliamentarian and former editor and columnist, played a major role in the Goans' freedom struggle and participated in a *Satyagraha* in Goa in 1954. He was arrested by the Portuguese authorities and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment along with several other freedom fighters from India including N.G. Gore and Tridip Chaudhury, and released on being given amnesty at the intervention of the Pope in 1957. Limaye feels that the three Portuguese enclaves could have been liberated within a few months of India's Independence. He says:

The military action started finally in the midnight of December 17-18 and everything was over by the evening of December 19, 1961. Was such an action really necessary? To me it seems that a small-scale police action, say, by a 'disbanded battalion', would have done the trick in Goa in 1948. But Nehru then would neither countenance unofficial armed action nor an official one.

About the morality of the use of force, I must say that the state is a state, and as long as it maintains armed forces, it must keep them in a state of readiness, and use them both to defend its territory as well as to enforce its birthright. India was precisely doing that in Kashmir and Goa.

Mahatma Gandhi had lent support to the Goan freedom movement from its very beginning. When Lohia was arrested by the Portuguese authorities on June 18, 1946, he not only justified Lohia's defiance of the prohibitory orders but also lauded the latter's 'service to the cause of civil liberty and especially the Goans'. He said that the Portuguese enclaves existed 'on the sufferance of the British government' and once India became free, Goa could not be allowed to exist as a 'separate entity'. He advised the Portuguese to recognise the 'signs of the times' and expressed the hope that Goa would be able to claim the rights of citizenship of the free India state; He also advised the inhabitants of Goa to shed fear of the foreign power as Indians did and seek the freedom of the enclaves. When the Portuguese Pro-Consul criticised Lohia for having acted against the historical truth of the four centuries' and 'troubled the peaceful people of Goa', Gandhi wrote, *I suppose you know that I have visited Mozambique, Delagao and Inham-bane. I did not notice there any government for*

philanthropic purpose. Indeed, I was astonished to see the distinction that the Government made between Indians and Portuguese and between the Africans and themselves/ He added that the inhabitants of Goa could 'afford to wait for independence until much greater India has regained it. But no person or group can thus remain without civil liberty without losing self-respect/ Iimaye adds,'Although Gandhi's politics'probably'differed fromhis (Lohia's),yet Lohia, Gandhi said, had commanded his 'admiration' for his having gone to Goa and put his finger on its black spot/

On August 12,1946, the Congress Working Committee had passed a resolution on Goa asserting that 'Goa has always been and must inevitably continue to be part of India. It must share in the freedom of the Indian people. Lohia had founded the Goa National Congress to organise peaceful resistance and was arrested on September 29,1946 and kept in solitary confinement in the Aguada fort. At his prayer meeting on October 2,1946, Gandhi lauded Lohia's action and praised his learning. His intervention soon secured Lohia's release.

Pakistan too had attempted to have a finger in the Goan pie in 1953 by laying a vague claim to the Portuguese possessions in India. The baggage

declaration frn-mc />>\* V~V:~t.——t-----I..J—r\* ----- 1 >>>- -• -

-----~~THE GOAN ENCLAVES TO BE GOAN ENCLAVES AS PORTUGUESE~~

Pakistan and an air agreement had been concluded between the two countries in 1958. And what led to serious apprehension was the fact that a seven-member military delegation fromPakis tan visited Daman during the second week of December 1961 and a Pakistan Navy ship, *Zulfiquar*, had been sighted a few days earlier leaving Karachi and sailing towards the Konkan coast. During the same period several aircraft were reported to have been flying between Goa and Karachi evacuating the families of Portuguese personnel in the three enclaves. It was, therefore, decided that plans for the liberation of Goa would also have to cater for the contingency of Pakistan joining hands with the Portuguese.

Britain was in an unenviable position. It had recognised the Indians' right to freedom and had withdrawn from the subcontinent in 1947 and was aware of Portugal's intransigence regarding the Portuguese enclaves. And the fact that India, after independence, had become an important member of the Commonwealth while Portugal was Britain's oldest ally, led to the latter assuming an attitude of neutrality by advising India to adopt nonviolent means for liberating Goa, preaching avoidance of provocation to Portugal and supporting the Portuguese proposal of sending international observers to Goa. This was not acceptable to India as it would imply an endorsement of the Portuguese claim of sovereignty over the enclaves. The Portuguese persisted in their demand for the appointment of international observers to 'witness if and how violations of frontier and provocative acts take place' while rejecting all suggestions for negotiations for withdrawal from 'the Portuguese State of India' which they refused to consider as a Portuguese colony in India.

While the United Nations and all major nations were opposed to colonialism and supported the move for freedom of colonies around the globe from foreign rule and while India was advised not to resort to the use of force, attempts to persuade Portugal to withdraw peacefully failed. India had persevered with a nonviolent negotiated course of action

for over fourteen years and since there was no change in the Portuguese attitude, it was apparent that a military action was called for.

While addressing the Parliament on December 11, Prime Minister Nehru reiterated that India's patience in regard to Portuguese activities in Goa had finally been exhausted and expressed the hope that Portugal, either on her own initiative or on the device of her friends and allies, 'would accept the natural culmination of the present developments, which is her withdrawal from Goa.' He, however, said that India's policy of solving the Goa question by adopting peaceful means had failed and that 'we have been forced into thinking afresh by the Portuguese - to adopt other methods to solve this problem.

Portugal's persistent refusal to discuss their possessions in India had forced India to resort to armed action. The operation was set to be launched **originally** on December 15, then deferred by a day and then postponed once **again** another two days with the hope that intense last-ditch diplomatic **efforts** would perhaps achieve a peaceful settlement and cancellation of the **military** operation. But that was not to be and the Rubicon was finally crossed. The Army, Navy and Air Force closed in for the excision

pustules from India's visage in the early hours of D-day, between 18, 1961.

### **The Action Plan**

The operation for the liberation of Goa, Daman and Diu - Operation Vijay - was placed under the control of the Chiefs of Staff Committee at New Delhi whose members were Vice Admiral (later Admiral) R.D. Katari, Chief of the Naval Staff, General P.N. Thapar, Chief of the Army Staff and Air Marshal *AM* Engineer, Chief of the Air Staff. Lieutenant General LN. Chaudhuri, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Command, was the Theatre Land Force Commander for Operation Vijay, Major General (later Lieutenant General) KP. Candeth, General Officer Commanding the 17th Infantry Division, in command of the Goa Operation, Rear Admiral (later Admiral) *BS*. Soman, Flag Officer Commanding the Indian Fleet, as the Theatre Naval Commander and Air Vice Marshal (later Air Marshal) E.W. Pinto, Air Officer Commanding, Operational Command, was the Theatre Air Commander.

At Goa the Army was to move in from two directions, the east and the north, with decoy entry from the south. The eastern thrust was planned to be made by the 17th Infantry Division along the route from Anmod to MoHem to Ponda; the northern thrust was to be launched by the 50th Infantry Para brigade along the route from Dodamarg to Assonora to Bicholim with a part of this force moving westwards to Mapuca and then southwards to Betim; and the 'decoy' force, titled the 20th Infantry Brigade but actually of a company strength, was to enter from the south along the route from Karwar to Majalito Canacona.

Tactical support to ground forces was to be provided by the Indian Air Force operating from the Melsat Pune and Belgaum whose main task was to gain air supremacy by destroying all aircraft of the Portuguese Air Force, putting the airfield at Dabolim out of action and silencing the wireless station at Dabolim.

The Naval Task Force was to enforce a blockade of the ports of Marmagao and Panjim, neutralise the coast batteries defending these ports and sink or immobilise units of the Portuguese Navy deployed inside Goa harbour or patrolling its sea approaches. An amphibious operation by the Army, i.e., landing of troops, was ruled out as the required number of assault craft were not available, the troops deployed had not been trained in amphibious operations, there was no time available for such training, and it was felt that such an operation did not offer any particular tactical advantage.

For capturing Daman, the 1st Maratha Group was to enter the territory from the direction of Vapi, capture the airfields north of Daman town and then capture the town itself. The IAF was to deploy two aircraft at intervals of two hours to provide air support to the land force and to carry out surveillance of the airfields and prevent their use either for escape or for landing reinforcements. The Navy was to enforce a blockade in the entire sea area off Daman and prevent the ingress and egress of all vessels.

In the absence of assault craft for the capture of Diu, which is separated from the mainland by a narrow creek, 20 Rajput was to cross the creek on improvised rafts and land on the north of the island during the night preceding the operation, move south-east and capture the airfield and then move eastwards and capture the town and fort of Diu. One company of 4 Madras was to capture Gogla, which is north-east of the citadel of Diu, before the landing by 20 Rajput and to provide covering fire to the troops attacking the fort from the west. The requirement of air support was considered minimal and so only one aircraft was positioned at Jamnagar for the purpose. The Navy was to provide adequate support by deploying a cruiser off the island so that it could provide naval gunfire support to the Army, neutralise the fort and citadel, if necessary, and land an assault or occupation force, if required.

The island of Anjadip was to be captured by the Navy by landing a naval assault force after softening up the island beaches with close range weapons and then providing adequate gunfire support to the assault force.

The Navy was also to deploy its carrier task group in order to be able to use Alize and Seahawk aircraft to carry out reconnaissance of the sea area off Bombay, to prevent any Portuguese warships from reaching within the gun range of Bombay or approaching the Indian coast anywhere else, to carry out strikes on Portuguese warships breaking through the patrol line off Goa or as required by the Flag Officer Commanding the Indian Fleet, to carry out searches of specific sea areas and to provide necessary naval air support to the Army in all the three sectors.

The task of conducting maritime air reconnaissance and providing integral air support to the Navy was assigned to the Air Force and was to be carried out from the Navy's maritime operations room at Bombay. An officer from the Air Force was placed at the headquarters of the Flag Officer, Bombay (FOB, the earlier incarnation of the FOCINC, WNC - Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command) for co-ordinating the maritime reconnaissance operations and two officers were positioned on board *Mysore* and *Delhi* for advising, controlling and directing Air Force strikes against targets in the Goa and Diu sectors and for surveillance of the tactical areas.

A minesweeping force comprising *Karwar*, *Kakinada*, *Cannanore* and *Bimlipatam* was to be kept for minesweeping operations if the approaches were found to have been mined.

A Naval Officer-in-Charge organisation headed by Commodore HA. Agate was placed on board *Dharini*, which was to

be positioned close to Marmagao, for taking over the administration of the liberated port on the surrender of the Portuguese. Commodore Agate, who was to take complete charge of Marmagao and Panjim harbours, was to be on the staff of the Military Governor at Panjim but would be responsible to the Chief of the Naval Staff for naval administration.

The tasks assigned to the Navy were scrutinised and gone over with a fine-tooth comb and a detailed Naval Operation Order issued on December 12, 1961. The Flag Officer Commanding the Indian Fleet (FOCIF), Rear Admiral (later Admiral) *BS. Soman*, was to be the Naval Task Force Commander and was to receive necessary orders from Naval Headquarters. The naval operations were to be conducted and controlled through the Maritime Operations Room at Bombay.

On November 30, when the Government of India decided to adopt the military option, only six ships of the Navy were ready and available for operations and the only tanker of the Fleet, *Shakti*, was expected to be ready for operations only on December 14. This, besides the requirement of all available ships to be employed at sea on D-Day, made it necessary to exercise centralised control over their employment during the period preceding any projected D-Day. As the trend of political thought and the decisions could be made available at short notice only at New Delhi, it was decided to entrust the control of all preparations, deployment and employment of ships, repairs, logistic support and other related tasks till the initial sailing of ships for the projected operation to Naval Headquarters and not to delegate it to the Task Force Commander.

Commander (later Vice Admiral) Nar Pati Datta was appointed a Naval Liaison Officer and was attached to the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Command who had set up his headquarters for the operation, at Belgaum. He was to maintain a wireless link with the Flag Officer Commanding the Indian Fleet who was embarked on *Mysore* and had been designated the Naval Task Force Commander, through the Maritime Operations Room at Bombay. This wiretap link was also to be used for all communications between the Flag Officer Commanding the Indian Fleet and the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Command as well as the Air Officer Commanding, Operational Command, both operating from Belgaum. One Army officer and one Air Force officer were attached to the headquarters of the Flag Officer Commanding the Indian Fleet for liaison between the Fleet and the Army and the Air Force Commanders.

### **The Naval Task Force and the Tasks Assigned**

The tasks assigned to the Naval Task Force were, firstly, the establishment of effective control of the seaward approaches to the Portuguese territory of Goa (including the harbour of Marmagao Bay and Enseada da Aguada), Daman and Diu and capture of Anjadip Island and, secondly, the prevention of hostile action by Portuguese warships on Indian territory.

The Task Force organisation was as given below in table 12.1.

As seen in the organisational chart, the Naval Task Force was divided into four task groups - the Surface Action Group comprising the Indian Naval Ships *Mysore*, *Trishul*, *Betwa*, *Beas* and *Cauvery*, the Carrier Task Group comprising the ships *Vikrant*, *Delhi*, *Kuthar*, *Kirpan*, *Khukri* and *Rajput*, the Minesweeping Group comprising the minesweepers *Karwar*, *Kakinada*, *Cannanore* and *Bimlipatam* and the Support Group with only one ship, *Dharini*.

## Intelligence

Intelligence regarding Portuguese forces and their activities indicated that the Portuguese frigate *Afonso tie Albuquerque* had last been seen anchored about four cables northeast of Anjadip Island and had been shuttling between the island and Goa. Three other ships which were suspected to be warships could probably be in Goa, two of them having been sighted by *Beas* and *Betwa* on December 2 and December 4, and the other located at Vasco as reported by police wireless. There were no warships at Daman and Diu.

The volume of shipping traffic in Goa had been heavy and merchantmen and tankers were arriving and leaving for unknown destinations regularly. Military four-engined aircraft with Portuguese markings had been observed on reconnaissance flights over Goa and on one such occasion on December 8, a four-engined Skymaster had approached *Vikrant*, which was at sea, and had flown over her at a height of 5,000 feet. The author was serving in *Vikrant* at that time.

There were no confirmed reports on the presence of submarines in the sea area off Goa though *Kuthar*, an antisubmarine frigate had reported a possible submarine contact on a patrol line close to Gothat 0815 hours on December 7. About seven hours later on the same day, *Kuthar* one again had a confirmed contact of a possible submarine and fired one live antisubma-

**Table 12.1 Commander Task Force Flag Officer Commanding  
the Indian Fleet - Rear Admiral B.S. Soman**

Commander Task Group-1		Commander Task Group-2		Commander Task Group-3		Commander Task Group-4	
(Commanding Officer, Mysore - Captain D.St.J. Cameron) D.St.J. Cameron)		(Commanding Officer, Vikrant - Captain P.S. Mahindroo) P.S. Mahindroo)		(Senior Officer, 149 Minesweeping Squadron, i.e. Commanding Officer, Karwar - Cdr. H.F. Dubash)		(Commanding Officer, Dharini Commander K.K. Mukherji)	
Task Unit 1.1	Task Unit 1.2	Task Unit 1.3	Task Unit 3.1	Task Unit 3.2	Task Unit 4.1		
Mysore (Cdr. Task Unit - CO, Mysore Capt. D.St. J. Cameron)	Trikut (Cdr. Task Unit - Senior Officer 15th Frigate Sqn, i.e., CO, Trikut Capt. K.L. Kulkarni)	Betwa Beas (Cdr. T.J. Kunnenkeril) Casvary (Lt. Cdr. S.V. Mahadevan) (Cdr. Task Unit - CO, Betwa Cdr. R.K.S. Ghosh)	Karwar Kakinada (Lt. Cdr. D.B. Mohindra) Cannanore (Lt. Cdr. A.K. Lt. Kaul) (Cdr. Task Unit - CO, Karwar Cdr. H.F. Dubash)	Bimlipatam (Cdr. Task Unit - CO, Bimlipatam - V.K. Kochhar)	Dharini (Cdr. Task Unit - CO, Dharini - Cdr. K.K. Mukherji)		
Task Unit 2.1	Task Unit 2.2	Task Unit 2.3	Task Unit 2.4				
Vikrant (Cdr. Task Unit - CO, Vikrant - Capt. P.S. Mahindroo)	Delhi (Cdr. Task Unit - CO, Capt. N. Krishnan, DSC)	Delhi - Kuthar, Kirpan (Cdr. A.H.R. Sirajuddin) Khasri (Lt. Cdr. R.N. Batra) (Cdr. Task Unit - CO, Kuthar - Cdr. R.S. Malik)	Rajput (Cdr. Task Unit - CO, Rajput - Capt. I.K. Puri)				

...^\_..«v» uiai me rorcuguese garrison on

Anjadip island had been reinforced. There were also unconfirmed reports that the entrance to Marmagao and Enseada da Aguada and the approaches to the landing beaches on Anjadip island had been mined.

**The Task Force's Curriculum Vitae**

The displacement, speed, weapon, package, horse power and certain other features of the ships taking part in the operation were:

**J**

**Table 12JZ. Curriculum Vitae of the Task Force**

Name of the Ship	Displacement (tons)	Maximum Speed (Kts.)	Armament	Brake/ Year of		Air- Torpedo		
				Shaft Horse Power	Commissioning	craft Tubes		
1	2	3		5	6	7	8	
Vikrant	19,500	24.5		40,000	1961	21	-	15x40 nun
Mysore	10,040	31.5		72,500	1957	-	-	9x6inch
Delhi	9,740	30		14,000	1948			8x4inch
Raiput	7,474	30		90,000	1949			12x40 mm
			14x40 mm					
			4x4.7inch					
			4x40 mm 4 Depth					8x21inch
2,5	30		Charge Thro were					
57	+		2x45 inch	30/430	1960			
2,51	25		4x40 mm 2 Limbo					
5	25		4x45 inch	12,380	1960			
2,51	27		4x40 mm 1 Squid					
5	8		(Antisubmarine)					
1/45	27		4x45 inch	12^0	1960			
6	8		4x40 mm 1 Squid					
			(Antisubmarine)					
			2 limbo	15,000	1959			
			(Antisubmarine)					
			3x40 mm					
			2 Limbo	15,000	1959			
			(Antisubmarine)					
			3x40 mm					
			2 Limbo	15,000	1958			

(Antisubmarine)

3x40 mm

<i>Cau</i>	107	10	4x4 inch 4x40 mm	43	1943
<i>Dha</i>	42	-	-	—	1960
<i>Kar</i>	125	15	1x40 mm 2x20 mm	17	1956
<i>Kakh</i>	125	15	1x40 mm 2x20 mm	17	1956
<i>Cmn</i>	425	15	1x40 mm 2x20 mm	12	1956
*k*	170	14	1x20 mm	55	1955

The tasks of capturing Anjadip Island, enforcing a blockade of the waters off Goa, neutralising any opposition from Goa to operations from seawards and landing a party of Naval personnel to administer the port of Panjim (Goa) after the Portuguese surrender, were assigned to Task Group 1. Task Group 2 was entrusted with blockading the sea areas off Daman and Diu, providing naval gunfire support and landing parties for the capture of Diu, preventing Portuguese warships from approaching Bombay and providing naval air support for search and strike, whenever necessary. The minesweepers of Task Group 3 were to stand by for sweeping the entrance to Panjim and Marmagao harbours after the termination of hostilities. Task Group 4 would be required to embark personnel for the temporary administration of the captured ports, harbours and territory and to provide logistic support, if required by other ships.

As mentioned earlier, patrolling of the sea area off Goa in pursuance of Operation Chutney had been taken over by *Betwa and Beas* on December 1. The two ships continued to maintain effective surveillance of the area and to report on the movement of ships, operations from Dabolim airfield and the activities ashore.

The initial plans for the naval operations included bombardment of Anjadip Island, neutralisation of the Portuguese coast batteries and a blockade of the entire Goan coast. It was, however, later felt by the planners that it would not really be essential to neutralise the coast batteries and shore bombardment by ships should be avoided as it was not considered necessary. It was, therefore, decided to undertake neutralisation of coast batteries only when fired upon first and to assist the land forces as necessary to enable them to accomplish their task with expedition.

The capture of Anjadip Island was considered the primary task for the Naval Task Force as the Portuguese provocative operations had originated in this island. It was initially planned to send in a contingent of the Karwar Armed Police for the occupation of the island after the surrender of the Portuguese garrison. But it was soon realised that Goa was still in Portuguese occupation and the police could move in, if political implications were to be

avoided, only after a civil administration had taken over the liberated areas from the military authorities. The landing party or the assault force had, therefore, to be provided by the Army or the Navy. Since the Army expressed its inability to provide troops trained in amphibious operations as time for training in such operations was not available, the Navy took on the task. Naval Headquarters felt that 'it is necessary that full naval control is established on Anjadip Island as quickly as possible after H-Hour, by physical occupation of the island by naval personnel.' Captain (later Vice Admiral) K.L. Kulkarni, who was the Commanding Officer of *Trishul* during the operation, recalls that 'the Navy had taken on this job in spite of the fact that lieutenant General J.N. Chaudhuri, Commander of Operation Vijay, had sent a signal to the effect that the use of Naval landing parties against well-entrenched troops was not advisable.' For the capture of the island, *Trishul* was to pass between the northern point of Anjadip and Binge Point at H-Hour keeping as close to Binge Point as navigationally possible. *Trishul* was then to anchor in Binge Bay, covering the Island with her Bofors, and lower her boats while watching for opposition from the island. After one burst on the beaches with close range weapons, the landing party was to be sent in. A motor boat with a light machine gun mounted on its bows and towing a whaler was to be used for the landing party.

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----- ^M6» ui war. behaviour of our personnel is to be exemplary.' It was, however, assumed that there would be little or no resistance from the Portuguese personnel stationed on the island and hence Naval landing parties as opposed to trained Army commandos were considered adequate for the task. Suitable measures were adopted to scotch rumours and to ensure that the Portuguese weren't alerted before the operations began as they hoped that the NATO powers would somehow prevail upon India and international political pressure would force India to abandon the military alternative.

### **Preparations Begin**

During the preparatory stage it was considered necessary to divert the attention of the general public, the foreign intelligence gathering agencies in India and their ubiquitous 'moles' from the subtle changes in the mobilisation, training, maintenance and ammunition activities of the Naval Task Force. As Captain (later Rear Admiral) D.St. J. Cameron, who was the Commanding Officer of *Mysore* during the operation and Flag Captain to the Flag Officer Commanding the Indian Fleet (the latter, along with his staff, was embarked on the cruiser), reminisces on the preparations made:

As so frequently happens, rumours were going round the ships to the effect that an operation against Goa was in the offing-this may have been triggered off by the fact that the Wps concerned were being given undue attention from the point of seaworthiness and battle-readiness and all this with no projected cruise or exercises in sight.

Therefore, in order to quash the rumours and also to lay a red herring for any possible watchers ashore who might convey the news regarding the departure of ships on an unspecified mission to authorities in Goa, it

was decided to take the *Mysore* and some of the ships concerned to sea for exercises covering two days; this was scheduled to be done a few days before 'D minus 2'.

Accordingly, without prior warning, all leave was cancelled and those ashore were recalled and the ships prepared for departure. The ships sailed out of Bombay Harbour at 2130 hours, fully darkened. Exercises were out off Bombay in plain visibility of watchers and passing ships. After spending two nights at sea, the ships returned to harbour in the early hours of the second morning and reverted to normal routine and leave.

Fresh exercise orders were issued and the ships readied for sea on "D minus 2'. Once again, with ships darkened, we left harbour at night, hoping that the watchers, if any, would presume that we had proceeded for exercises again.

On clearing Bombay harbour, Delhi was detached and directed to proceed independently in execution of her task in support of Army units scheduled to commence operations for the occupation of Diu.

*Mysore*, with the remaining ships in company, set course and speed to arrive off Goa and Anjadip in the early hours of December 18, keeping well outside the shipping lanes.

Shortly after midnight on December 17/18, *Betwa*, *Beas* and *Cauvery* were detached to proceed to their patrol area off Goa in pursuance of the task assigned to them.

*Mysore*, with *Trishul* in company, proceeded to arrive off Anjadip before first light on December 18. These two ships, fully darkened, closed Anjadip Island by radar during the pre-dawn hours of the D-Day. No signs of the ship's presence in the vicinity of the island having been detected were observed.

*Trishul* was detached to proceed to the southeast of the Island and then to send in her landing parties. *Mysore* was to patrol the seaward side of the island and cover *Trishul's* movements by carrying out dose-range bombardment of the western side of the island with her light anti-aircraft Bofor guns. This was in keeping with the directive to use minimum force.

It would appear, however, that this distracting action militated against the operation as it obviously disclosed our presence in the vicinity of the island and alerted the personnel of the island to the possibility of a landing.

### **The First Salvo is Fired-Portugal's Perfidy**

Captain (later Vice Admiral) K.L. Kulkarni, Commanding Officer of *Trishul*, recalls:

At daybreak *Trishul* steamed into Binge Bay and carried out a short bombardment of the area around the beach. As our instructions were to use the least force, we made sure that the bombardment was clear of houses, barracks, the two churches and other structures (subsequent examination showed that excepting for a few tiles accidentally blown off from the roof of the northern church by 40-mm Bofors' fire, no damage was done to any other building). The whole place, as we entered, was deathly still with no lights or movement of personnel. After the bombardment *Trishul* was manoeuvred to the lee of a small island (Round Island) which was off the southeast extremity of Anjadip and lowered the boats with the landing party led by Lieutenant (later Rear Admiral)

Arun Auditto. The first wave which left at about 0715 hours landed at the beach without any opposition and the boats returned to *Trishul* for the second wave. This is when we saw the white flag and men with raised arms on the northern beach. When the second wave, which left at about 0745 hours, was landing, we saw a white flag on the church on the northeast tip of the island. It was after the white flag was hoisted that the second echelon of the landing party reached the island and were fired upon. It was about 0800 hours at that time. When I saw the white flag I was happy but immediately after **they** attacked my second boat, I moved the ship to the centre of **Binge** Bay and bombarded the island with 45 inch high explosive shells, as **well** as with 40-mm Bofor guns. The fire was lifted after about five minutes. It was rather difficult even to bombard as I was not absolutely sure whether my fire would hit my landing party, and therefore the bombardment had to be extremely accurate. I directed most of the fire into the woods behind the buildings on the eastern beaches on the northern side of the island. We had by now landed the entire landing party of 75 men and two officers and the boats were told to lie off.

*Mysore* had meanwhile been engaging other enemy concentrations and installations with her 40-mm Bofor guns and sent a landing party ashore which landed on the beach to act as a link between lieutenant Auditto's landing party and *Trishul*.

### The Landing Party's Work-Up

Lieutenant Arun Auditto, who was the officer-in-charge of the Naval landing party was to cover himself with glory during the landing operations, neutralisation of the Portuguese garrison and mopping-up operations on the island despite being wounded by Portuguese gunfire during the landing phase. He provides a graphic account of the Portuguese betrayal of the international convention, their last-ditch efforts to thwart the island's occupation and their unconditional surrender when cornered and finally overwhelmed by superior firepower and clever manoeuvring on the part of the two ships and the landing parties that combed the island. He was later awarded the Naosena Medal (NM) for his valour and devotion to duty and for having 'conducted land fighting operations with imagination, vigour and determination. Auditto reminisces:

It all began in early November 1961 when I, as a young Lieutenant, was undergoing the Long TAS (Torpedo Antisubmarine) Course at Cochin, I was called by Commander H.C. Tarneja, the Officer-in-Charge, TAS School, and was told that the Navy was organising a landing platoon of which I was to be in command and that I was to report to the Gunnery school for further instructions.

The next day when the platoon was mustered in the drill shed of the Gunnery School, Commander (later Rear Admiral) A.P.S. Bindra, Officer-in-Charge, Gunnery School, stated that the platoon was being raised for a demonstration of land-fighting to the public during the forthcoming Navy Week. There was no mention of the impending Goa Operation.

We started our work-up in earnest which consisted mainly of field training. The bulk of the platoon consisted of Seaman Gunners-sailors who had just passed out of the Boys Training Establishment and were **undergoing** a short gunnery, small arms and parade training course. **We also had** one demolition section of TAS sailors who had

specialised > 5 m underwater weapons. It was no easy task to get these young men,

who were just about acquiring their sea-legs, to do Army-style crawling. Neither could they really understand the purpose of all this, everything being still shrouded in secrecy,

I realised that none of these sailors had really carried out weapon training whereas here we were carrying Lanchesters, Brens, mortars, grenades, in addition to the good old 303. Furthermore, they were ill-equipped for any land operation and were conspicuous in their blues. I, therefore, sought an interview with the Commanding Officer of Venduruthy (a Naval base at Cochin), Captain (later Vice Admiral) R.N. Batra, to sort out some of these problems. During the discussions I stressed specifically on each and every sailor actually firing various weapons and asked for each one of them to be given confidence in throwing grenades and in wearing khaki uniforms, field dressings, etc. My ministrations were somehow constructed as a tale of woe and I was told that perhaps I was not too keen to do the job and that someone else would be found. Two days later I was reinstated and I must say that all my earlier demands were conceded except that only one field dressing, as against two stipulated, could be provided per person.

After another spell of intensive training including practical firing of all weapons from the beaches around the Naval coast battery at Cochin and exercises by the demolition section at the range at Alwaye as well as trials for disembarkation from ships by scrambling nets, the platoon was ready to be deployed. Still there was no official news of deployment though rumours were rife about the use of the platoon in connection with the Goa Operation. In fact, the vegetable vendor queried my wife as to when I would be leaving for Goa!

On December 16 the platoon was embarked on board *Trishul* at Cochin with a ceremonious send-off. The next day the ship, along with other ships of the Fleet, was poised off Karwar. This was the first clear indication of the task ahead, which was to capture the Island of Anjadip.

On the eve of 'D-Day', i.e. December 18, the Task Force Commander, Rear Admiral Soman, was transferred by jackstay from *Mysore* to *Trishul* to discuss the plan of action for the assault and capture of Anjadip. I was called to the cabin of the Commanding Officer, Captain K.L. Kulkarni, and I was shown the map and aerial photographs of the island together with the location of the Portuguese garrison and other topographical features and landmarks. There was fairly detailed intelligence on the number of troops as well as their likely disposition as constant surveillance had been maintained from Karwar Head.

After detailed discussions I was informed that as there would be very little opposition - 35 to 40 Portuguese men as against my 75 - it would be best and easiest to land on the main beachhead in **the** northeast. I argued that this may well be suicidal as we would be landing in an open boat and from all indications the garrison **area** would be heavily defended. I suggested landing on a beach about **three** kilometres to the south of the garrison as this would also bring in an element of surprise notwithstanding the fact that this beach was surrounded by the thickly wooded central plateau and would, therefore, be difficult terrain.

The Task Force Commander readily agreed to this plan stating that I, as the officer commanding the

platoon, was the best judge. It was, therefore, decided that just prior to dawn next day, beach-softening would be carried out by using the ship's 40-mm Bofor guns immediately followed by the landing at the southern beach in two waves. This was necessitated by the fact that only the ship's cutter (boat) was available for use and hence with its limited carrying capacity, the platoon would have to be split into two. I was to be in **the** first wave and Senior Commissioned Gunner (later Commander) N. Kel-man, a Special Duties Officer of the Gunnery Branch who was my second-in-command, was to be in the second wave. Having wished me and my men the best of luck, the Task Force Commander was jack-stayed back to the flagship. That night the Captain invited me to dine with him and we discussed other details over dinner.

Hands call, i.e., the time to wake up for all on board, on December 18 was at 0500 hours, sunrise being at about 0645 hours, and the whole platoon was mustered in the ship's antisubmarine mortar well. I talked to the men and explained the tactical deployment, especially the first wave which would land and take the brunt of any opposition and thereafter give cover to the second wave as it landed.

On directions from the Captain, each man was given a tot of brandy as we waited in anticipation of action - but for some time nothing happened. The ship continued to circle the island as dawn broke and the bright blue tropical sky lit up with the rising sun - and still nothing happened!

### **The Landing Parry's Moment of Truth**

Auditto continues:

It was after three hours of waiting, i.e., at about 0715 hours, that I was informed that the Portuguese had hoisted a white surrender flag at the mast on the northern end of the island. We were, therefore, ordered to land without any resort to softening up of the enemy defences and in broad daylight with the assurance that 'nothing really would happen as the garrison had already surrendered/ I took charge of the first wave of the assault party from *Trishul* called *Rustum* and we went peacefully towards the beach and I began to believe that the 'surrender business' was indeed true. We landed at the beach, took position around the beach and the boats were sent back to bring the second wave. Fifteen minutes later, the second wave, under the command of Senior Commissioned Gunner N. Kelman, set course to approach the beach at about 0745 hours. Suddenly all hell broke loose as sprays of machine-gun bullets opened up on the boat from Portuguese gun-posts near a pill-box on the south hill top. Kelman, with great presence of mind, continued towards the beach, zigzagging the boat to counter the accuracy of the machine-gun fire. A few minutes later, by the time the boat beached, it had been riddled with bullets. Kelman had been wounded on both his thighs - fortunately only flesh wounds but all the same, seriously. A number of sailors were wounded, some grievously, and a few succumbed to the injuries a little later. The young Seaman Gunner sailors were shocked into inactivity and it took some forceful handling by me to get them out of the boat and to take cover. A little later some white troops were seen digging near the white flag.

As each man had only one field dressing I had to give mine to Kelman and leave him on the beach, while I mustered the force to move north-westwards. The main wireless set had been damaged and the walkie-talkies were out of range of the

ship and so we were literally cut off from any help that the ships could render.

I heard later that the machine gun had been silenced by the ship opening up with its 40-mm Bofor guns directed at the Portuguese gun emplacement on the hill where it had been positioned. This, no doubt, saved many lives or else we may have lost the whole of the second wave as well as the boats before they hit the beach.

After regrouping the force I left Kelman in charge to attend to the wounded and to ensure their return to the ship as soon as feasible. Both boats had been holed and were shipping water but managed to return to the ship with the dead and the wounded. The plan of action for me was to get up to the central ridge, proceed north-westwards till we could overlook the main garrison which was then to be surrounded from the rear, i.e., from westward, and thereby cutting off various outlying posts of the enemy and forcing them to surrender.

All our training on the field and with the weapons was now brought into play. A grenade attack on the menacing machine-gun post enabled us not only to take position on the upper reaches of the ridge but also to capture three enemy soldiers at that post. We proceeded northwards under cover of the wild growth and shrubbery. We came under cross-fire from machine-gun posts on the west as well as under very accurate sniper fire from the northern hilltop near the flag-mast. By about noon we had almost reached the objective overlooking the garrison. It was here that we had to cross an open area of about 200 yards where there was hardly any cover. The accurate fire from the hilltop, which was about 200 feet higher than our positions, pinned us down. Two of our men were wounded and one killed outright by a bullet shot which penetrated his helmet. The two-inch mortar was ineffective as the location of the enemy was well concealed in the thick forest.

In order to get a better view of the area and reassess the tactics, I had to move swiftly across ten yards to get behind a tree. Just as I reached the tree a shot hit me on my left upper arm. It caused a deep flesh wound but, like senior Commissioned Gunner Kelman, I was fortunate that it had missed the bone. As I had no field dressing, having given mine to Kelman, one of the men in the rear passed me his dressing which I used effectively to stem the bleeding.

It was at this stage that we succeeded in establishing wireless contact on the walkie-talkie set with *Trishul*, which was by now circling the island. She told us that a landing party from *Mysore* had also been inducted and landed on the beach. In my opinion this was a wrong thing as we had no communication with the other party and also the other party was dressed in blues (the working dress on board Naval ships at that time), totally untrained and would in fact hazard and consequently impede our action. I informed *Trishul* accordingly but as they were not in contact with the other shore party, they could do nothing. As it came to light later, this party fortunately moved along the coast, in fact they went smack into a machine-gun post near the southern end of the Portuguese garrison, as they were moving in a line-ahead formation, and the first man got hit in his euts and collapsed.

I asked *Trishul* to open up with her 4.5 inch guns on the northwestern hill top, taking particular care not to hit the church there, in order to silence the opposition from the direction. On receiving clear directions from me, *Trishul* then plastered the northern hill and later bombarded hill 212 and its slopes. Thus establishing communication with the ship and obtaining gun support was providential as it enabled us to move down to the garrison and force the surrender of their troops.

By now it was about 1600 hours and as we went down, we came upon the wounded man from the *Mysore's* landing

party who was now almost dead. Although we later took him back to the ship, he succumbed to his severe injuries a few hours later.

After the parties from *Trishul* and *Mysore* had withdrawn to the beach, it was decided to bombard the northern part of the island by the cruiser from the south-west and the frigate from the south-east. It was then that the ships' intention became clear to the Portuguese and they decided to surrender and started emerging with their hands over their heads with one of them waving a white cloth. Auditto's Party was instructed by *Trishul* to take over the prisoners of war and bring them onboard the *Mysore* in boats to be sent later. Officers and sailors were sent to other beaches also for taking charge of the surrendering Portuguese soldiers.

Auditto recalls:

Our men then surrounded the barracks area of the Portuguese troops and the church to the north, thereby rounding up the Portuguese troops numbering 35 who at this stage surrendered without any resistance. Thus the operation was successfully concluded.

After the conclusion of the first phase of the mopping-up operations on December 18 during which some more Portuguese troops and Goan civilians were apprehended, the Indian tricolour was hoisted on top of the Flagstaff at 1425 hours on December 18.

In a news item datelined April 11, 1964 at Bombay, the *Indian Express* said: lieutenant Arun Auditto was decorated with the Naosena Medal for 'exceptional devotion to duty' at a ceremony on board the aircraft-carrier, *Vikrant* off the Naval Dockyard, Bombay, on Friday, April 10, 1964.

The award, hitherto presented by the President, was for the first time made by the Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice-Admiral B.S. Soman. Lieutenant Auditto of *Khukri* was honoured for valour and devotion to duty, displayed during the Goa Operation in December 1961.

Called upon to lead a 75-strong landing party on Anjadip Island under heavy enemy fire, lieutenant Auditto who had no experience in jungle warfare, conducted landfighting operations with imagination, vigour and determination, the citation said.

His calmness and courage inspired the officers and men under his command to go forward in the face of stiff opposition to final victory, the citation added.

A letter from Vice Admiral B.S. Soman, who had by then taken over as the Chief of the Naval Staff, addressed to lieutenant Auditto, read:

I am very pleased to extend to you my heartiest congratulations on the

award of the Naosena Medal for the calmness, ingenuity and courage displayed by you during the Anjadip Operations on December 18, 1961.

The Navy is proud of the fine example you set on this occasion and the qualities of leadership you displayed which contributed greatly to the ultimate success of the Operation.

The citation for Senior Commissioned Gunner Kelman, who was awarded the Ashoka Chakra Class n (Kirti Chakra), reads; 'Senior Commissioned gunner N. Kelman was in command of the second assault boat during the landings on December 18,1961. When the boat was at some distance from the beach, the enemy opened heavy and accurate fire. A number of sailors in the boat were killed and wounded. Kelman was hit by a bullet which went through both thighs. Despite his serious wounds, he displayed exemplary courage, maintained discipline and calm in the boat and continued steadfastly towards the beach. On touching down he jumped ashore encouraging his men and led them to the support of the first wave.

Soon after landing on the Island, Kelman was advised to return to *Trishul*. He, however, made light of his wounds and continued to assist in the conduct of operations throughout the day. It was only when operations had virtually ended and the National Flag was hoisted on the Island that he eventually returned to *Trishul* for medical attention.

The fine example, high quality of leadership and outstanding personal courage displayed by Senior Commissioned gunner N. Kelman, in complete disregard of his personal safety and discomfort, inspired the men under his command and contributed greatly to the victory of the day.

The others decorated were Chief Petty Officer Gunnery Instructor, Ali Mohammed, Ashoka Chakra Class m (Shaurya Chakra); Ordinary Seaman, Samuel Jayaselan Mohandas, Ashoka Chakra Class n, posthumously; Ordinary Seaman Bechan Singh, Ordinary Seaman Bachan Singh and ordinary Seaman Vijendra Pal Singh Tomer, Ashok Chakra Class n, all posthumously; and Able Seaman Jaswant Singh Bawa, Ashoka Chakra Class - m (Shaurya Chakra).

Chief Petty Officer Gunnery Instructor Ali Mohammed was the most experienced member in land-fighting. He was the senior sailor of the first wave to land in Anjadip Island on December 18, 1961. He deployed the men into selected positions to cover the landing of the second wave. When the second boat was at some distance from the beach, it came under heavy fire from positions behind a wall further up the hill.

Mohammed immediately led the first wave as they advanced up the hill against the enemy. On reaching the wall he threw a hand grenade over and was the first to jump over leading his men into action. This prompt action drew off much of the fire opened on the second boat, reduced their casualties and contributed greatly to the successful landing of the second wave.

At about 1500 hours the same day, it was thought that a number of enemy snipers might be concealed in a group of houses close behind the beach. These snipers could be a serious threat to our men and boats engaged in evacuating prisoners on the beach. Chief Petty Officer Mohammed and three sailors carried out a swift and thorough search of these houses and captured 12 armed Portuguese soldiers without firing a shot. -

Chief Petty Officer Ali Mohammed displayed outstanding leadership and great courage and ability on many occasions on this day, often at great personal risk and in complete disregard of his safety.

One of the sailors who made the supreme sacrifice during the Anjadip Operation was Ordinary Seaman Samuel Jayaselan Mohandass, who was cut down by enemy fire after he had silenced several Portuguese gun positions by launching a series of grenade attacks.

The citation for the posthumous award of the Ashoka Chakra Class II to him reads, \*The landings were made in two waves on December 18, 1961. The first wave landed without opposition. The second wave, however, came under heavy fire and stiff enemy opposition continued for most of the day. At one stage the advance of the landing party was halted by heavy and accurate fire from enemy positions concealed in bushes and behind rocks. Ordinary Seaman Mohandass was detailed to approach the hidden enemy positions and silence them by throwing hand-grenades.

Mohandass crawled fearlessly towards the enemy positions under fire. On each occasion of throwing a hand-grenade he was forced to break cover and expose himself to heavy and accurate enemy fire. On one such occasion while throwing a hand-grenade, Ordinary Seaman Mohandass was caught in the enemy fire and was killed in action.

Ordinary Seaman Mohandass, though a young and inexperienced sailor, displayed commendable courage and devotion to duty of the highest order.

Three other sailors, Ordinary Seaman Bechan Singh, Ordinary Seaman Bachan Singh, and Ordinary Seaman Vijendra Pal Singh Tomar, were also members of the assault party that attacked the Portuguese gun positions from where the enemy had opened fire on the boats that landed in the second wave, and made the supreme sacrifice while displaying outstanding courage and devotion to duty of the highest order in keeping with the highest traditions of the Service. Out of these, Bechan Singh and Vijendra Pal Singh Tomar received the posthumous award of the Ashoka Chakra Class II (Kirti Chakra) while Bachan Singh received the posthumous award of Ashoka Chakra Class III (Shaurya Chakra).

Able Seaman Jaswant Singh Bawa, was a member of the armed escort accompanying the second wave of the landing party. To quote from the citation for the award of Ashoka Chakra Class III (Shaurya Chakra) to him for his contribution to the success of the operation during which he was wounded:

Bawa was the Bren Gunner in the bows of the motorboat of *Trishul* which escorted the boat conveying the second wave to the beach during the initial landing on December 18, 1961. When the boats were about 75 yards from the beach, the enemy opened heavy and accurate small-arms fire. Bawa was one of the first to be wounded and was shot through the right ankle. Despite his wound, Able Seaman Bawa remained at his post and even while under heavy fire, returned fire on the enemy in defended positions ashore. Bawa continued to provide accurate and effective covering fire for the landing party until the second wave had landed.

Bawa's brave deed did much to upset the accuracy of the enemy fire, prevented excessive casualties in the boats and contributed to the successful landing of the second wave. His devotion to duty and outstanding performance

under heavy enemy fire are of a high order and in the finest traditions of the service.

The recipients of Mentions in Dispatches were Commander A.F. Col-laco, who led the landing party from Mysore, Surgeon lieutenant T. Suryarao, who was a member of the medical team onboard Mysore, Chief Petty Officer Gunnery Instructor Parkash Chand, who was the coxswain of the motor-boat used in the second wave of the landing operation, and Leading Patrolman Rajendar Singh, who was a member of the landing party in the second wave.

Chief Petty Officer Prakash Chand, one of the awardees of a Mention in Dispatches, a senior Gunnery sailor, who was the coxswain of the motor whaler (the other boat, a motorboat, was coxswained by Petty Officer V.C. Nair) showed great presence of mind when the Portuguese opened fire, and was responsible for saving many lives by taking suitable 'avoiding action'. The moment the Portuguese opened fire, Chand recalls:

I steered my motor whaler away from the motorboat so that the enemy would have two targets to engage and kept dodging the bullets by alternately steering towards and away from the successive bursts of

bullets. When I reached shore, I landed all members of the party safely but the very next moment the boat was riddled with 11 bullets and was grounded by the impact of the burst. I ordered the whaler crew to clear the whaler by pushing it but since the young fellows showed signs of nerves, I jumped out of the whaler, cleared and refloated it and, after jumping back into it, I steered it away from the beach. Meanwhile, the ship's Bofors had opened up and silenced the enemy guns. I then noticed that the motorboat coxswained by Petty Officer Nair had also grounded on rocks and was flooded up to the gunwales. It had three dead and two wounded sailors. *Mysore* now sent a boat under the charge of Commissioned Boatswain Charanjit Singh and, between the two of us, we took the dead and the wounded back to the ships.

### **The Communications Team Lands**

Commander (later Captain) A.F. Collaco, a specialist in Naval Communications, was embarked on *Mysore* as the Heet Operations officer of the Indian Fleet. He volunteered to lead a communications team from the cruiser ashore and had a major role to play in providing adequate support to the beleaguered landing party from *Trishul* and in mopping up the remnants of the Portuguese garrison after the formal surrender of the Portuguese forces. For displaying raw guts in the face of the enemy, as mentioned earlier, he was later awarded a Mention in Dispatches.

Since he hailed from Goa, Collaco knew a smattering of the Portuguese language and hence was considered the right person for communicating with Portuguese and interrogating the prisoners of war before or after the surrender, if required. Despite the lapse of over a quarter century after the operations, Collaco, now settled in Canada, vividly recalls:

Setting the scene requires a review of the preceding events, the opposing forces and a host of interlinking factors. Perhaps an early introduction may provide the reader with a gauge to judge the authenticity of this narrative of events that took place over 29 years ago.

I had been a DS (member of the Directing Staff) at the Staff College at Wellington and had been in charge of the Tactical School at Cochin for some time when I was appointed Fleet Operations Officer of the Indian Fleet.

The organisation of the Fleet was at that time being revamped and Duggie (Captain D.St.J.) Cameron was on board the *Mysore* as the Flag Captain. Daljit Paintal (Commander, later Rear Admiral, DS. Paintal) was the Fleet Torpedo Antisubmarine Officer, Misra (Commander N.C. Misra) was the Fleet Gunnery Officer, Karbhari (Commander, later Captain, Dara Karbhari) was the Fleet Administration Officer and Dinshaw (Commander Mino Dinshaw) was the Fleet Communications Officer.

The Fleet's objective was to capture Anjadip and then provide sea support to the Army in Goa. Anjadip was to be a breeze or so it was thought.

It is my recollection that a lot of the orders received by the task force were issued by Naval Headquarters. *Trishul* was supposed to send two landing parties ashore and *Mysore* was supposed to provide all necessary support including fire support.

From its northern end to its southern tip, Anjadip, a small island, is about a kilometre and half long. At its widest parts it must be about 400 metres; a narrow neck is about one-third way down. Along the east coast are about three usable beaches but none on the west; rocky inlets and coves make the west shore a smugglers' paradise. The ground rises sharply from the shore line to about 200 feet. There are places with high grass; coconut trees dot the shore line. The water teems with a kind of stinging fish (sea urchins) that makes swimming to the mainland almost impossible.

Shortly before the operation, I had attended the Naval Commonwealth Planning Conference at Singapore - planning the Joint Exercises off Trincomalee (JET). My Royal Navy colleagues were certain that I knew more about the forthcoming operation than I really did. I was never treated better, wined and dined and questioned. When I learned from them that one of the ships of the Indian Fleet was patrolling off Goa, I gave them the impression that I knew all about it. The more I smiled knowingly, the more gracious was my host, because a British submarine, heading for the Far East Station, thought it would provide intelligence and kept an eye on what was happening off Goa while occasionally being depth-charged (the CO. of the submarine and I met in Cochin after the whole operation was over and talked about it).

At first light on that December morning (December 18) we closed in on Anjadip. We rounded the southern end after *Trishul* (and *Mysore*) had carried out a preliminary bombardment. We could see the soldiers in their undershirts running to man their posts. *Trishul's* first wave of the landing party landed on the beach under the command of Lieutenant Auditto who was to be awarded the Naosena Medal for his great work that day. He got ashore and climbed to a high point with his men. By this time, the Portuguese soldiers had reached high points on either side of our landing beach and were engaging it, creating havoc with *Trishul's* second landing party. All I can remember is that the boat

which brought back the wounded and the dead to *Mysore* was awash with blood. Our sailors peering over the side at their comrades were very demoralised. On *Mysore's* bridge, I found the Admiral very worried as he had no news from the first landing party. *Trishul* had no news either as the landing party's wireless had broken down. We could see

what was left of the second landing party (about 10 men and an officer) still held down on the beach. I suggested to the Admiral that I, being a Long 'C (a communications specialist), take a communication party ashore to find out what was wrong with Lieutenant Auditto's party and to establish a link with them and with the ships. He reluctantly agreed. On the quarterdeck, a volunteer Communications Team - two wireless operators with backpack radios and two signals sailors with portable Aldis signalling lamps - went ashore. As we were leaving the ship, a Squadron Leader (of the Indian Air Force), who was on board *Mysore* as the Defence Public Relations Officer covering the operation, asked if he could come along and bring a cameraman. The Admiral agreed and he accompanied us throughout the day.

How we got ashore is a mystery to me. First the water men the rocks - the second party seemed to be at a standstill. By this time the cross-fire from above seemed to be petering out and one or two other sailors needed help. I asked Senior Commissioned Gunner Kelman if I could take the remainder of the second landing party while the officer returned to the ship with the wounded. He seemed dazed by the firing and glad to do so. The firing had decreased by now and we started climbing to higher ground in single file. Once on higher ground, we headed northwest. I was ahead of the column and keeping in constant touch with both *Trishul* and *Mysore*. We knew there were Portuguese soldiers around and were as alert as our lives depended on it.

We moved along a rough narrow path, about two feet wide, and I caught a glimpse of lighter-complexioned skins about fifty feet ahead of me. I had a hand-gun which I had never used before and I remember firing it and diving to the left, so did the Squadron Leader and a sailor but the fourth member of our party did not dive fast enough and received a fatal bullet in the stomach which came out from the seat of his pants and gave the impression of being a superficial wound. He fell to the right of the path (the cliff side). Attempts to get him across the path were futile as the path was in the line of fire from both sides. *Mysore* had signalled us that she was going into Karwar with the dead and wounded and would be back as soon as possible. I had managed to get in touch with Lieutenant Auditto's party and acted as a link between it and *Trishul*. We were stuck in this position for what seemed like ages. Time was meaningless. The sailor (his name was R. Singh, I learned later) kept moaning softly. After a while he moved further to the right. We couldn't see him. We didn't see him. We didn't know he had fallen down the steep side and lay dying.

## **Portuguese Capitulation**

After this stalemate, we heard a lot of firing from the north-west of the island and since the firing along the path had stopped, we moved away climbing still further up the hill and heading for the north-west. At a certain height we got in touch with the landing party and acted as a link. They asked *Trishul*, through us, to give them fire support. It is a vivid memory of us on the hill top, *Trishul* out at sea firing away, the Portuguese soldiers running in the direction of the buildings and towards the north-eastern sector, trees being uprooted by *Trishul's* firing, scenic beauty mixed with death and devastation. It was all over soon after that - by the time we reached the north-eastern cover, the firing had stopped. Lieutenant Auditto reported that the Portuguese had

given up and were lined up as prisoners on the beach. He returned to *Trishul* and en route picked up R. Singh who was later taken to Karwar but died on the way. I looked at my watch. It was 1500 hours. I had left the ship early in the morning and had not had or **worried** about food. We were so jumpy - a young boy coming down a coconut tree with a fine coconut (for me) almost got shot by a sailor who thought he was a sniper. *Trishul* was left to clean up and establish a presence on the bland. Unfortunately she ran aground. The Portuguese soldiers were brought to *Mysore* and also taken to Karwar. I was glad to be alive and see the last of Anjadip but it was not to be.

Meanwhile we heard that the Army was doing very well and had taken Goa and would be reaching the coast within a day or two. We *ateoheatd hatBetw,BeasemdCauveryhaddealtAfonso deAlbuquerque*, the Portuguese frigate, a deadly blow and she lay there in the harbour, aground and crewless less than ten minutes after the fight had started. We went into Marmagao Harbour and made sure no Portuguese soldiers were hiding below decks in the merchant ships. I was so jubilant at being alive, I literally skipped on board these merchantmen.

That night, Commodore H~A. Agate, an old Commanding Officer of mine who was taking over as the first Naval Officer-in-Charge of liberated Goa, gave me the keys to a captured jeep and Toothie' Nazareth (Commander Freddie Nazareth, *Mysore's* Dental Officer) and I went all the way inland to visit relatives. We were told that 'the Indians are coming to burn us all', they asked us. The only thing burning will be these two Indians' tongues after eating your solpotel (a highly spiced Goan delicacy) and drinking your Johnnie Walker', we told them. At least our relatives were reassured but it took quite a bit of Scotch to complete the job. They had much more reassurance and much less Scotch. They could hardly believe that they had become as much Indian as we were. They still felt they were Portuguese subjects.

Intelligence Reports had indicated that a British destroyer (I think it was *Rhytt*) was preparing to leave Singapore and diplomatic pressures were being applied on Britain by her oldest ally, Portugal, to help in recovering her lost colony. We heard that *Khyll* had sailed from Singapore.

Before too long, the Government of India was asked to make an announcement to the hundred or so British residents in Goa that they were safe and that they were free to leave Goa if, when and how they chose. This was broadcast. However, when a request was received for the British ship to enter Goa to embark British citizens, it was not approved. A signal clearly stated that entry into Indian territorial waters would be considered to be an unfriendly act. The ship turned back to Singapore.

## **Mopping up on Anjadip**

On January 2, 1962, after the New Year, Admiral Soman and I talked about affairs at Anjadip. The situation was this. *Trishul* was, for a variety of reasons, not fully operational. A garrison of 50 additional sailors was put on the island under the control of the Commanding Officer of *Trishul*. The garrison had control of the northern half of the island but each night some of the Portuguese soldiers who had refused to surrender, would come out of hiding, cross the narrow neck of land and fire a few rounds of flashless cordite in the general direction of our

sailors who returned the fire from three points. Before long there was a real fireworks display when the firing lines of our sailors crossed in the dark. The United Nations had been told that the Goa Operation was history and all was well. However, there were reports reaching the outside world that there was still fighting going on. Portugal wanted the story to be kept alive. If passing merchantmen could report gunfire on Anjadip, it would make news and embarrass the Indian Government. We established two firm objectives for me to accomplish since I had been to the island. They were, first, cleaning up of Anjadip once and for all and, next, not a single life was to be lost.

Next day a Naval aircraft took me to Goa, and a 70-foot motor launch to Anjadip. The motor launch reminded me of the coastal forces during World War II. The garrison which had been in CO. *Trishul's* command passed into mine. I also had operational command of the motor launch. There was a recently-captured prisoner. He and another Portuguese soldier had tried to make it by swimming to the mainland. He had been stung and exhausted, recaptured, on the beach and the other had died of stings or bites from sea urchins. The prisoner we had, had nearly recovered but his arrogance had also recovered. He demanded that our sailors wash his dirty food dish. His demand was not met, needless to say. He had a smattering of English, so I took him aboard the motor launch, gave him a loud-hailer and we cruised around the island while he advised his friends hiding in the coves to give themselves up. His first Portuguese advice went something like 'these Indian pigs and dogs', at which time I interrupted him with the only Portuguese I knew (which my father would use) 'Vamos pro casa' (let's go home) in a loud stern voice pointing overboard. He smartened up fast. But there were no line-ups of Portuguese soldiers waiting to give themselves up.

That night we had thirty men with automatic weapons and flashlights across the neck of the island so that nobody should cross over from the southern half of the island. There was no shooting that night but we nearly shot up a bunch of wild pigs using the well-guarded route.

We took another cruise around the island in the motor launch and using the loud-hailer warned that I intended setting fire to the island next day. It was obvious that we had been watched and could have been shot at any time. Their objective was to keep the pot boiling without shooting any of us. Our objective was to stop their show as fast as possible to save embarrassment. While walking around the island, I came across our medical officer kneeling by the side of the corpse of a Portuguese soldier. Our sailors dug a grave and I gave him a solemn Christian burial with my prayers. Most of the half dozen houses we found were shacks and even the Church was dilapidated and empty.

Next morning we started at the northernmost point and with the prisoner leading the way using his loud hailer, members of the garrison and I combed at arm's length every cove, every rock, every crevice, burning the brush behind us. The flames, fanned by the wind, made the burning grass a spectacular sight. Wherever the prisoner's voice quivered he inadvertently alerted us of possible trouble. Though there were signs of recent occupation there was no opposition. At the longer of the two caves at the southernmost point, there was rafts and broken oars, some torn clothes and all the signs of a recent pull-out.

After signalling the Admiral, I returned by motor launch to Goa. *Trishul* remained on for a while but there were no more shootings. Anjadip was quiet.

Mopping up the soldiers remaining on the island on December 18 was done by *Triskul* soon after she had opened up with her main armament for the second time. Vice Admiral Kulkarni recalls:

As soon as my second bombardment was started, we saw a\* number of people with their hands raised near the northern church. On lifting the firing, I sent Lieutenant Commander M.N. Neogi, the Supply Officer of *Trishul*, with a small armed party and a megaphone to go near the beach and capture the prisoners. By now the *Trishul* landing parties had swept the island from south to north and by about 1400 hours had hoisted the national flag at the flagstaff point. The *Mysore* and *Trishul* then anchored in the Bay. We sent more personnel ashore with food and water and other things and had carried out a muster of the people. I had found that there were three people short and even though it was getting dark, sent a reconnaissance party to sweep the area in case there were casualties. They recovered the three men. Neogi landed and captured all the prisoners and took them to the *Mysore*. The dead and the wounded were also collected and sent to the *Mysore*. In all there were seven dead and a number of (them injured. By 1600 hours the entire island was in our control. According to the Portuguese, they had one person missing and one man was dead.

At about 1700 hours I landed along with lieutenant (later Admiral and Chief of Naval Staff) L. Ramdas, my Communication Officer, and inspected the night arrangements and went right up to the flagstaff point. On the 19th the funeral of the people who gave their lives was held in Karwar which was attended by the entire Karwar town - really a touching sight worthy of Gods!

During the course of bombardment, the road leading from Karwar to Belgaum off Binge beach had become an interesting sight - it was lined literally by thousands of people who had come to watch the fun after hearing the noise of bombardment.

I was ordered to go to Marmagao on the 20th where on arrival, we went on board *Mysore* and met Admiral Katari, General Candeth and Mr Vishwanathan, the Home Secretary. We then went to Bombay and, after a day's stay, left for Cochin to return the landing party.

### **The Task Force Commander Reminisces**

As regards the treachery of the Portuguese, their violation of the international convention and the resultant heavy loss of life, Admiral Soman says:

The first I heard of the proposed operations was at a meeting in Delhi - I do not remember the date now - to which I had been invited. I had no idea what the meeting was about and when, while waiting outside the Defence Minister's office, Lieutenant General Chaudhuri asked me what were my plans for the operation, I said, 'What operation?' It seemed that he had been associated with the proposal earlier. As you know, a few weeks before the operation, there had been some firing from Anjadip Island on our coastal shipping and, during one of the

Defence Minister's visits to Bombay, when I had gone to the airport to meet him, I had casually mentioned to him that it was about time that we put a stop to it before the Navy got further maligned.

At the Defence Minister's meeting I was told that I would be responsible to take Anjadip, starting the operation at daybreak on the morning after the start of the nightlanding operations by the Army and we must take it by the same evening. When I asked what troops were being provided by the Army for the landing, I was told that landing parties would have to be provided by the Fleet from its own resources. The date had already been decided and when asked for, there was not much information available as to the number of Portuguese troops on Anjadip; I was told that there might be about 30 or 40 of them, mostly local Goans. I was also informed that *Delhi*, which was men not a part of the fleet, would be acting independently, under NHQ orders to support the Army for the action at Daman and Diu. Having gone through the amphibious operations course in UK and trained the Army in such operations at Mandapam during World War n, I was somewhat taken aback by the way the operation seemed to have been planned without the association of the Fleet Commander, a specialist in such operations, and that too committing sailors to play the Army role. Of course, Anjadip was a small island, very close to the mainland, and so there was no point in my making an issue of it. But I did mention to the then Chief of the Naval Staff that I should have been associated with the plans earlier.

I called for volunteers from the Fleet to 'play\* Army, selected the officers, and asked them to select their men from amongst the sailors, giving preference to unmarried men, everything else being equal. Landfighting training was organised for the landing parties, both officers and men, at Cochin. At the meeting I had asked for further information on troop strength on Anjadip but till the last day none had been received.

Commenting on the casualties suffered by the Navy at Anjadip, Admiral Soman said, 'I must make it clear that the Naval landings on Anjadip were forced on us though we took it on willingly when the Army said that they could not provide the few soldiers required.'

### **Albuquerque Brought to the Block**

The operations off Goa are vividly described by Vice Admiral (then Commander) *R.K.S. Gandhi*, who as the Commanding Officer of the *Betwa*, was the main architect of the *Albuquerque's* capitulation. When dawn broke on December 18, *Betiva* and *Beas* were on patrol 13 kilometres off the Goan coast as a part of Operation Chutney. The *Afortso de Albuquerque* was lying at anchor in the Marmagao harbour and opened anti-aircraft fire against IAF aircraft when they appeared overhead. Though her firing appeared to be ineffective, it was obviously a danger and a nuisance. Besides, the 4.7-inch guns mounted on the *Albuquerque* would pose a serious threat to Indian troops when they entered Goa town and hence the ship needed to be silenced, if not neutralised, before she could do any serious damage. " The *Albuquerque* was a frigate drawing 1,788 tons and was armed with four 4.7 inch guns, two 3-inch antiaircraft guns, eight 20-mm antiaircraft guns and four depth-charge throwers. Her turbines could develop a shaft horse-power of 8,000 at a speed of 21 knots and shehada radius of operation of 8,000 nautical miles. The ship was of 1934 vintage and hence was already 27 years old and due for decommissioning.

Admiral Gandhi recalls the success of his Task Group in these words:

In early December 1961, *Betwa* had been put on patrol off Goa in Operation Chutney. The task allotted to *Betwa* was to remain outside the Portuguese territorial waters and shadow the Portuguese frigate *Afonso de Albuquerque*, report its movements and gather any other intelligence. Various ships of the Indian Navy came and went during this period but *Betwa* vacated her patrol station only to fuel once at Bombay.

Just 48 hours before we went into Goa, *Betwa* had a serious gear box leak but the ship's engineers had very smartly plugged this with canvas and epoxy resin.

Orders for Operation Vijay were received about three or four days before the event. The ships allocated to the Goa sector were *Betwa* commanded by me, *Beas* commanded by Commander (later Commodore) T.J. Kunnenkeril and *Cauvery* commanded by Lieutenant Commander (later Commander) S.V. Mahadevan.

*Betwa* divided the Portuguese maritime boundary into three sectors and allocated *Beas* to patrol the northern, *Betwa* took the centre which was off Goa harbour and *Cauvery* was allotted the southern sector. The ships were ordered to carry out an uncoordinated linear patrol eight miles off land.

On Saturday, December 17, orders were received that Operation Vijay would be executed the following morning at dawn. That night in *Betwa*, orders were issued to prepare for battle and all officers and sailors were instructed to have a bath and put on clean underwear. This is necessary because, if one receives wounds, there is less chance of infection with clean underwear. As *Betwa* had been on patrol for so long off Goa, I had acquired a Portuguese dictionary from a book-seller in Bombay, in case I had to send any message to the Portuguese authorities. As it so happened, when I had to make a signal to *the Albuquerque*, I did this in English.

My Gunnery Officer at that time was Lieutenant (later Vice Admiral) R.P. Sawhney and he had discussed in detail the method of fighting the *Albuquerque*. We had agreed that, as the Portuguese ship had open mountings, it would be best to use HE/VT (high explosive (HE) shells fitted with variable time (VT) or proximity fuses which go off when they are a few feet away from the target) in 25 per cent of our armament, as the shrapnel would have the best chance of killing or wounding the gun crews and upper deck personnel. Thus one barrel of the X turret (the ship's rear turret with twin 43-inch guns) was loaded with HE/VT shells for the following day's action. As a result hundreds of shrapnel gashes were seen all over the *Albuquerque* after the operations were over.

On the night before the operation, we saw Goa signal station call us and make a signal to us - it was from the freedom fighters who said that they had been watching *Betwa* for the last few days and wished us best of luck on the following day.

On Sunday, December 18, 1961 at about dawn, we saw four Indian Air Force Canberras approach Dabolim airport from seaward and shortly thereafter huge clouds of dust belled upwards. The IAF had bombed the runway.

(The *Afonso de Albuquerque* had been moving between Anjadip and Marmagao, carrying supplies and reinforcements for the Anjadip garrison and on this morning was seen lying at anchor in Marmagao harbour)

During the course of the day, we heard from the Task Force Commander, who was conducting operations at Anjadip Island, about the treachery of the Portuguese hoisting a white flag then opening fire on our landing parties.

As *Betwa* was steaming up and down the coast of Goa only at a distance of 13 kilometres, we could distinctly see the ***Albuquerque* raising steam and preparing to leave harbour.**

At about noon *Betwa* received a signal, which was personal from Admiral Katari, which said, 'Capture me a Portuguese frigate, please'. When I received this signal, I was a little perplexed as the capture of a fighting machine is very difficult especially if it is manned and fought bravely. But I had served intimately with Admiral Katari as his Fleet Operations Officer and knew his mind perfectly. Within a few seconds of getting this order, *Betwa* increased speed to maximum and I made one signal to *Beas* and *Cauvery*. It read: 'Join me. My speed 23 knots. Intend to capture/destroy *Albuquerque*'.

Having made mis signal and received acknowledgement, I headed for Goa harbour at full speed. *Beas* was quite close to me, so I ordered her to follow me and she slid in astern of *Betwa*. As we were entering an unknown harbour and going at high speed and intended to have a gun duel with *Albuquerque* in confined waters, I asked my number one (second in command), lieutenant Commander (later Captain) R.P. Khanna, a specialist in Navigation and Direction and another watch-keeping officer (an officer manning the bridge) to draw 'clearing' bearings on the chart of Goa. Then Khanna went on one wing of the ship's bridge and the other officer on the other wing to ensure that we were in safe navigational waters throughout the battle. A few minutes later, at about 1215 hours, as soon as we could see *Albuquerque* clearly through the many merchant ships which were in the harbour at a range of a little over 7,000 metres, I made a signal to her to say, 'please surrender or I open fire'. This message was made by light and was received by *Albuquerque*.

My gunnery officer, who was on the ship's gun direction platform at the time, reported that his main armament (two twin turrets of 43-inch guns) was ready to engage the enemy. I told him we would give *Albuquerque* three minutes to surrender. During this period we received a message by light from *Albuquerque* to say 'Wait'. I had made up my mind not to wait. As soon as the three minutes by my wrist watch were over, I ordered 'Open fire!' Only those who have been in action and ordered 'open fire' on an enemy can know how exciting this is and, I am sure, my heart beat faster when I uttered that order.

I think our second broadside was a direct hit on the antiaircraft gun director of *Albuquerque*. This director toppled over and fell on to the main director and shrapnel pieces killed, as I came to know later, two sailors and wounded the Captain.

*Albuquerque* now slipped her cable, turned towards the exit and started to move out, opening fire at *Betwa* and *Beas*. Her fire was furious and erratic and mainly short<sup>^</sup>utldistinctlyremember one shell falling hardly 25 yards over the bows of *Betwa*. The fire of *Betwa*, particularly the HE/VT shells, was devastating and it looked as if there was a cloudburst of shrapnel over *Albuquerque*. Lieutenant (later Commander) Mani Rawat, who was my Navigator at the time, was in the Operations Room and he reported that on his radar he could see our shells continuously straddling (falling just short of and beyond) *Albuquerque*.

(Since *theAlbuquerque* had taken shelter inside the harbour which had a large number of merchant ships, there was the grave danger of some of them being accidentally hit by the shells aimed at the Portuguese frigate. Rather than coming out of the harbour and fighting it out, the *Albuquerque* continued to fire at *Beas* and *Betwa* and appeared to be trying to move behind a cluster of ships).

As we were going very fast, I had gone too far to the northward and wanted to alter course to starboard to open my 'A' arcs (arcs within which guns can be fired), in order to allow my guns to bear on the target. But my executive Officer,

Khanna, vetoed this and said that we were moving into shallower water so that my ship could alter course to port and again come down southward firing all the time. The gun Battle was fought at a mean range of about 6,000 yards.

The whole battle with *Albuquerque* - and I must admit she kept on firing till the last - was about 10 minutes in duration. *Beas*, in the meantime, had also opened fire and there was some confusion over fall of shot, but it did not worry us. *Cauvery* too soon arrived on the scene and took part in the engagement by firing a number of 4-inch salvoes and in fact delivered the coup de grace. After about ten minutes of running battle, it was plainly obvious that *A2&M* had had enough, she had been very badly hit was burning amidships, she hoisted a large, very large white flag, she turned back into Goa harbour and beached herself off the Dauna Paula jetty.

When we saw this, the order of cease fire was given and, with my binoculars, I clearly saw the sailors of the *Albuquerque* jumping off the ship and abandoning her. As soon as we stopped firing, I ordered the other two ships to withdraw and we made the necessary signals to Naval Headquarters to say that *Albuquerque* had been destroyed and was now lying sunk in Goa harbour.

We had received a fair amount of duff intelligence from Naval Headquarters. For example, we were told that Pakistani men-of-war would be likely to interfere with our operations, that a British submarine was in the area, that the Portuguese had four frigates in Goa and that a British frigate was on her way to Goa from the Persian Gulf to evacuate British personnel. As it so happened, only the intelligence on the submarine and British frigate was correct, but Naval Headquarters had warned the British man-of-war to keep well clear of the area and assured them it was the Indian Government's duty to look after the welfare of British citizens.

Having this intelligence, after the battle, we still remained closed up at action stations, but personnel were allowed to relax at their quarters and action lunch was served. But nothing happened on the *Albuquerque* front thereafter and with that ended the battle of Goa and the next day, the Indian Army entered Panjim.

At about 2000 hours on the night of the action (December 18), *Betwa* was ordered to proceed up north to the Maharashtra-Goa boundary, through which a river flows, where Naval Headquarters' duff intelligence told them that there was a Portuguese frigate and *Betwa* was ordered to investigate and neutralise this. I went up and could find nothing there except a well-illuminated merchant ship, presumably loading iron ore. However, on the radar scan, we saw an object and, before opening blind (radar-assisted) fire on it, I thought I would illuminate this with star shell. The illumination showed nothing and I reported to Naval Headquarters, who asked me to return to Bombay. The funny side of the story is that, when I fired star shell, the police in the village got through on the telephone and informed Bombay that the Portuguese had another frigate there, which was opening fire on them.

So now *Brfaw* moved northward full speed towards Bombay. The next day I was told that *Talwar*, commanded by Commander (later Captain) P.N. Mathur, would rendezvous with me and I should transfer my operation orders for Operation Vijay to her. This was done. When *Betwa* entered Bombay harbour, Commander (later Vice Admiral) V.E.C. Barboza, who was then in command of *Tir*, asked me to proceed through the Naval anchorage where he, as the senior officer, had, in an impromptu gesture, ordered men of all ships to man the ship's side and cheer *Betwa* as she entered harbour. This was a very moving spectacle and *Betwa* enjoyed it thoroughly.

After a couple of days in Bombay, we were ordered back to Goa to give logistic support to the Navy who had established a small Headquarters at Vasco. On reaching Goa) I landed and called on the Commanding Officer of *Albuquerque*, Commodore Antonio da Cunha Aragao, who was then in Panjim hospital and had two of his sailors looking after him. I took with me chocolates, flowers and brandy as a gift for the Commodore who was 57 years old. At that time, I was 20 years younger, and I felt very sorry for him. He was sitting up in bed with a big bandage across his chest and very proudly he showed me a piece of my shrapnel which had been extracted from his chest just short of his heart. This was about three inches in length and it was lying on his bedside table. I picked it up and found it to be as sharp as a razor blade. He could speak broken English and, when I told him who I was, he said to me, 'You are F-139' and I said, 'Yes'. He was indicating, of course the pennant number of *Betwa*. He turned round and he said, 'I hit you', 'I hit you' twice and I told him, 'I am very sorry, you did not hit me'. So he replied and said, 'But why did you make so much smoke?' Then I had to tell him that I was going at full speed and that the diesels of the Type 41 frigate did smoke rather a lot at high speed. I asked him why he did not surrender and he said the Navy never surrenders. He added that his orders from Lisbon were to sink the ship after fighting it out but the Governor General of Goa had countermanded these and said that he was to defend the harbour and when the situation was hopeless, to beach her and wreck the engines! he said he had done his duty. With feeling he added, 'You know, in January (1962) I was to have sailed the ship back to Lisbon - you came one month too soon!!' But my feelings were that we had gone in one month too late.

(Commander T.J. Kunnenkeril, Commanding Officer of *Beas*, also visited the Commanding Officer of the *Albuquerque* when the latter stated that he knew that the Indians would launch the attack on December 18 and that he was waiting for the operations to commence from dawn on that day-He said his ship, besides trying to defend Goa, was transmitting all signals as the wireless station ashore had been put out of action during the early stages of the operation. He added that he had planned to fight till the end but had to beach the *Albuquerque* soon after the commencement of operations because three of his guns had jammed. The Portuguese Captain also told him that as naval officers they had both done their jobs and it was now left to the politicians to do the rest.)

Vice Admiral Gandhi continues:

I then asked him if he would like any message to be passed to his family in Portugal and, having got the address, on return to the ship, on my wireless set, we called up Whitehall W/T and asked him to pass the message, which they did.

Later went and saw the *Albuquerque*. She had been badly battered from the funnel forward and as the fires burned for many days, even the ship's plates were warped; she was gutted badly between decks.

(The *Albuquerque* was aground upright in 10 feet of water on the northern shores of Marmagao harbour. The forward superstructure, especially the bridge, was partially burnt, the quarterdeck had been severely damaged, the after magazine was flooded and two forward 4.7 inch guns had been destroyed)

Many years later, one officer gave me the sword of the Commanding Officer of *Albuquerque* which I presented to Vice admiral M.P. Awati when he was the Commandant of the National Defence Academy, Khadakvasla. The silk

battle ensign of *Albuquerque* was given to me about a month after the action by Captain D.St.J. Cameron, Commanding Officer of *Mysore*. This I presented, shortly before my retirement, to the gunnery training establishment at Cochin, *Dronacharya*. (The *Albuquerque's* decrepit hulk lay in Margamao harbour as a derelict for a few months and was repaired and refloated on March 10, 1962. In July 1963 it was proposed to convert her into an oceanographic research ship to be operated by the Navy for the Indian National Committee for Ocean Research (INCOR). It was later decided to convert her into a static accommodation ship for two reasons: first, the ship's oceangoing capabilities had been considerably reduced by her age, state of machinery and equipment and the damages suffered during the engagement with *Betwa*, *Beas* and *Cauvery*, her short 'remaining life' and the excessive cost of conversion; and, next, the INCOR, which had initially shown some interest in the ship had later decided to acquire an oceanographic research vessel from the USSR. It was soon realised that the ship's conversion into a static accommodation ship was also not likely to be cost-effective and, finally, *Albuquerque*, rendered *hors de combat* by the Navy's extremely accurate firepower, was sold to the shipbreakers for Rs. 7.71 lakh on June 5, 1965.)

Some years later, I was told a story by a Minister - I cannot remember which Minister told me this, or it might even have been Panditji himself during some gathering. It goes as follows: That Jawahar-lal Nehru was very much against the Government of India using force to liberate Goa. However, in a Cabinet Meeting, he was pressurised by the other Ministers, particularly Krishna Menon, and he reluctantly agreed to allow the Armed Forces to enter Goa to liberate it. He, however, made one condition, because his conscience would not allow force to be used, he said, 'Please do not tell me the D-Day, otherwise in my talk with someone, I will blurt it out. A truly non-violent human being!

After the surrender ceremony, a party of officers and sailors boarded *the Albuquerque* and found that the Portuguese had abandoned the ship in a hurry but had left a dead sailor on board. The body was recovered and, in true naval tradition, accorded a sea burial a few days later.

It is to the credit of the Navy's gunners and it speaks volumes for their precision firepower, operate as they do from weapon platforms that roll,

pitch and yaw and resort to high-speed *zigzag* manoeuvres during action, that only one ship other than the *Albuquerque* suffered damage during the operation. *S.S. Ranger*, a Panama-registered ship belonging to Ciamavitna Del-Panamanian, was anchored close to the *Albuquerque* when the latter was engaged by the *Betwa* and the *Beas* following which the *Albuquerque* had slipped her cable, got under way and placed herself behind the *Ranger*. Despite the high rate of fire of the armament fitted in the Indian ships, the heat of the battle and the *Ranger* having been positioned in their direct line of fire, only one or two rounds of 45 inch ammunition hit the *Ranger* and caused minor damage to the ship. There was one shell-hole on the port side of her number two hold, one shell-hole in a hatchway and some splinter holes on the upper deck. The damage suffered by the ship was soon repaired locally at Goa through the ship's agents in Marmagao, Murgogoa Namgad-era Ltd., before she sailed for home. No reparations were claimed by the ship's owners or agents.

## The Capture of Diu

On the morning of December 18, the Army made an attempt to enter Diu but encountered stiff resistance from the Portuguese.

The Air Force and the Navy were then asked to neutralise all war vessels in the area and soften up the Portuguese defences. As had been planned earlier, *Delhi* arrived at a point 16 kilometres off Diu at 0330 hours on that day, waiting for H-Hour, i.e., 0400 hours, to commence her operations.

Captain (later Vice Admiral) N. Krishnan was the Commanding Officer of *Shivaji*, the Mechanical Training Establishment of the Navy at Lo-navla, in 1961 when he was asked by the Naval Chief to take over command of the cruiser. To quote from Vice Admiral Krishnan's recorded reminiscences:

Whilst I was adjusting myself to the new task of running a training college (in *Shivaji*), things were gradually heating up over Goa and the other two Portuguese colonies - Daman and Diu. It was a complete anachronism that a foreign power, thousands of miles away, should hold on to these pockets in the independent subcontinent of India. It was as incredible as it was intolerable that even after 14 years of the British withdrawal, we were tolerating this blight on our motherland. At the meeting of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet that approved the ten-year plan for the Navy's development, Sardar Patel had asked me, 'What about Goa? Can our Fleet push the Portuguese out?' I had replied on behalf of my Admiral, 'Sir, this Fleet can not only take Goa but fight the entire Portuguese Navy if they try to stop us.'

Every time I passed this territory, I used to close the ship as near as possible and bum with indignation, recalling the Sardar's words uttered several years before.

Now (in 1961) we had an ardent and fiery Defence Minister in VJC Krishna Menon, and it looked as though he was going to do something about it.

At a late hour on a cold December night the phone rang in *Shivaji* House (my official residence at Lonavla) and it was the Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Katari calling from New Delhi, who asked me, 'How soon can you take over command of the *Delhi* again?' 'I will be in command of the ship by colours tomorrow' ('colours' is the hoisting of the naval ensign on board naval ships and establishments at 0800 hours every day) I replied.

'Look, I want you to get the ship stored, ammunitioned and fuelled and be ready for sea within two weeks. Can you do?' he asked. 'Most certainly, Sir', I replied. 'Could I have my old team back, Sir?', I asked.

Yes, I shall ask the Chief of Personnel to get on with it', the Naval Chief said and rang off. (Captain Krishnan had earlier commanded the *Delhi* for two and half years from the end of 1958).

It will be seen that throughout the conversation, there had been no mention either of Goa or my mission. It was not necessary. I knew and he knew that I knew.

Some virtually incredible things happened in the next seven days. When I arrived on board the *Delhi* at 0700 hours the next morning, my erstwhile Navigator, Todgy<sup>7</sup> Nadkarni (later Admiral J.G. Nadkarni, Chief of the Naval Staff), was there along with my Executive Officer, Commander Freddie Sopher, to receive me. The former had moved in anticipation of orders! Within 48 hours I had most of my crew back and it was delightful to address my ship's company of friendly and grinning faces once again. I exhorted them with most of the very words I used to an entire fleet almost exactly ten years later (Le., in December 1971). 'Boys!', I said, 'I want this ship fully operational and ready for battle in exactly five days from now. All procedures will be short-cutted. When I say operational, I mean, one hundred per cent fit in all respects. It will

mean working day and night. Let it be so. All red tape will be out. Every problem must be solved even if you have to beg, borrow or steal. We have one hundred and twenty hours and I know you can do it.'

By Heavens, how they worked! Any Naval person who reads this will appreciate the enormity of the task in getting a cruiser stored, am-murdtionedandnieUed,aUequirnnentto be tested, all defects rectified.

For instance, it takes a minimum of three days to embark the full wartime outfit of ammunition in a cruiser and we did it in less than twenty hours, in fact, the Gunnery Officer, Lieutenant Commander (later Commander) LS. Dhindsa, came up to me and said, 'Captain, Sir, we are breaking every rule in the book. Every one is dead tired. Can we not slow down a bit?' He was quite right, of course. Men were carrying on and when too tired, lay down where they were for a bit of rest only to start again and get on with it. I also knew that if we slackened the momentum, we would never be able to work up the zeal and enthusiasm for quite a while. So I told Dhindsa 'What are you worried about, Guns? If something goes wrong, none of us will be here to face any court martial. Leave the worrying to me and get on with it'. Immediately after colours on the eighth day, I sent a signal to the Flag Officer Commanding the Indian Fleet, 'Ready in all respects for sea'.

At the briefing, the mission of *Delhi* was spelt out for me. The ship was to proceed off Diu and give 'distant support' to our Army units who would cross over the creek separating Diu from the Indian mainland. I asked what exactly the planners had in mind when talking of 'distant support'<sup>7</sup>. The answer was vague in the extreme, 'We do not have a very clear picture of the state of the defences. Diu has an airfield from which aircraft may operate. They are bound to have coast batteries. It is also possible that there is a submarine threat. They also have motor torpedo boats. So we should remain about 10 miles away from the shore'.

This was absolutely crazy. Why didn't we have enough intelligence regarding Diu's defences? We had had several years to collect all the information regarding this place which was within a stone's throw from our mainland. If there were shore batteries, how were they going to be silenced before the army got across? Had there been no air reconnaissance to find out whether there were aircraft at the enemy airfield? Of what earthly use would I be to the Army, skulking ten miles away? It was perfectly obvious that I could expect no answers to these questions about an impending operation that had been planned in a most woolly-headed and haphazard manner.

Incredibly, *Vikrant*, our latest and newest acquisition, was not taking part in the operation but was going to be deployed somewhere in the middle of the ocean where she would be 'safe'. After giving distant support to the Army, I was to join *Vikrant* and *Delhi* was to give her close support!

It was getting 'curiouser and curiouser' and when me 'mad hatter's' tea party was over, it was a relief to get back on board and set about the task of sailing.

On D-Day, December 18, 1961, at about 0330 hours I arrived off Diu Head to await H-Houx that was scheduled for 0400 hours. Before leaving Bombay, I had embarked an Army officer who, by wireless link, was to liaise between the ship and our Army ashore.

It was pitch dark and at about 0430 hours our radar picked up two echoes on the radar screen which were closing the ship at high speed. This might be the expected torpedo attack. We tracked the boats carefully and let them come to within five miles and then at H-Houx, 05.15 am, opened fire, first illuminating them with star-shells (these are shells that burst over the enemy which produce brilliant flares that slowly descend, in the meanwhile illuminating the enemy ships) and identified them as shore patrol craft. On being challenged and called to surrender, the two craft started making off towards the harbour at high speed. I accordingly engaged them and sank one almost immediately and out of hand. The other craft turned tail and raced away back towards harbour. We had drawn first blood.

Soon we could hear gunfire from ashore and evidently the armies were in action against each other. As dawn broke, I saw from the distance that the island was quite flat and the beaches open. At the Eastern end, where our Army was to cross, was a high ground and perched on top was a solidly built citadel from where Portuguese artillery had opened fire to hold up the Indian Army converging on Diu and was offering stiff resistance.

Our Liaison Officer communicated with his counterparts ashore. The battalion commander reported that very heavy and well-directed fire was coming from the citadel and the Army's attack was fizzling out and its units were also suffering heavy casualties.

I decided to close in. I said to the Liaison Officer, 'Tell him I am coming in'. I asked my Navigator, 'Pilot, how close can we get to the shore without going aground?' After consulting the chart, Nadkarni said, 'There is enough water about a mile from the town and beach, Sir'. 'Right, draw a line parallel to the beach and a mile away. We will steam along the line and to hell with distant support'.

It was bright daylight by now and I had a grandstand view of what was happening ashore. The citadel looked quite impregnable and the plight of our Jawans was thoroughly unenviable. They were coming under withering rifle and machine-gun fire from the well-ensconced soldiers within the fortress.

We sent a signal to the watch-tower in the citadel, 'Strike your flag immediately and surrender'. In the meantime, I asked the Gunnery Officer to aim at a lighthouse sticking out from the centre of the enclosure of the walled castle. There was obviously no point in firing on the

rocky walls. If we burst high-explosive shells among the defenders, things were bound to happen fast. I also wanted to prevent any retaliation from shore defences. A few well-placed shells would be the best dissuasion.

Since there was no reply to my signal, we opened up with all our six guns. A broadside of six-inch guns makes a deafening roar and is terrifying at the receiving end.

The very first shots found their target and we saw the incredible spectacle of a whole big lighthouse being lifted clean into the air and disintegrating. I always have believed that if force had to be used, men there should be no pusillanimous or half-hearted measures and preponderant force, used to good effect, would produce the quickest results. In eleven broadsides, we sent some 66 six-inch high explosive shells in to help them make up their minds. Just fifteen minutes later,

down came the Portuguese flag that had fluttered there, planted in our country by Vasco da Gama some four and a half centuries ago. And then up went the white flag of surrender. I sent my boat with two of my officers ashore with an Indian national flag and they had the honour of replacing the white flag with our national colours. Since the Army did not move in till the next day, I decided to stay on and patrol the area. It was reported to me that the Portuguese were likely, in sheer anger arising out of frustration, to blow up the airfield installations. We closed the shore off the airfield and set their barracks nearby on fire.

At about 1100 hours the shore patrol craft that had previously retreated into harbour, broke harbour and set fire to herself. In about 20 minutes time she blew up and sank off the harbour entrance.

Sub-Lieutenant (later Commodore) S. Bhandoola was the second-in-command of *Delhi's* landing party at Diu and had the honour of hoisting the Indian tricolour atop the flagstaff on the Portuguese citadel. Bhandoola reminisces: 'The first thing that I vividly remember is that just before we actually got into the operation off Diu, the action at Anjadip had already taken place, and the first reports about casualties suffered by Indian Naval personnel had come in. Immediately on receipt of the news of the results of the Anjadip action, my Commanding Officer, Captain N. Krishnan, Announced to the whole ship's company that not a single man of his ship would step ashore until he had bombarded the Portuguese citadel to neutralise all possible resistance. Coining at the psychological moment that it did, this announcement of the Commanding Officer went along way boosting the morale of the ship's company just before we went into action.

Intelligence reports regarding the resistance expected from the Portuguese had indicated that from the main fort at Diu, which was to be captured by the Indian Army, there would be very little, if any, resistance and the Army would have no problem in crossing a small creek and marching into the fort to take it over. It had also been reported that the small citadel, which was to be captured by *Delhi*, was unmanned and that all we would have to do would be to send a small landing party and to hoist the Indian tricolour there.

While the Indian Army was in the process of advancing towards the main fort to capture it, without any expected resistance, *Delhi* was moving towards the citadel. Volunteers had been asked for, for the landing party, and against the traditional mother's advice never to volunteer, being very young, full of enthusiasm and totally indiscreet, I had to, but of course, volunteer! Lieutenant B5. Ahluwalia, our Gunnery Officer, was the platoon commander of the landing party and I, the only other officer in the party, was the second-in-command. Our plan was that *Delhi* would go close to the citadel and the landing party would go ashore in two or three boats. These boats were to land us on a small beach on the islet. As the citadel was reported to be deserted, the ship would just lie off while the landing party went ashore and hoisted the Indian national flag on the flagstaff there.

It was our guardian angel that was protecting us in the landing party because the ship was still heading south towards the citadel when we got a call from the Army that they had run into heavy opposition while trying to cross the creek and they requested us to bombard the citadel from where they were being shelled by twelve-pounders. Why I say that this call by the Army at this particular juncture was our guardian angel watching over us will become clear as I narrate the events of what happened later.

At this moment the landing party was told to stand down and the ship went into 'State One' for gunnery action. I also happened to be the turret officer of *Delhi's* 'A' Turret, Le., one of the forward 6-inch turrets, and I ran to close up at my action station. The ship turned northward, closed into very short range of the citadel and then did run parallel to the coast and commenced bombardment of the citadel and the Portuguese airfield in its close vicinity with all three twin turrets of her 6-inch armament firing. I do believe that this bombardment of a shore target by *Delhi* was the first occasion when a unit of the Indian Navy fired her shipborne weapons, after Independence, at an enemy, in anger.

With a number of bombardment runs, first firing into the citadel followed by bombardment of the airfield. While bombarding the airfield, one of the targets selected was the air traffic control tower. However, in spite of concerted efforts by the six-inch director, Le., the rotating structure from where gunfire is directed and controlled, we were unable to hit it. Finally, perhaps feeling that the target was too small to be accurately engaged and hit, the order of 'check, check, check' to cease firing was given. At about 1400 hours, being ordered to report 'state of guns', A turret (the forward turret) reported 'all guns loaded half-cocked' and I requested permission to clear the guns in local control, Le., from the turret itself. Permission was given and we in the turret locally aimed at the air traffic control tower and fired both barrels. You can imagine our elation when, through the turret officer's sight, I saw the tower being hit, soaring into the air, crumbling and then disappearing. I vividly remember this as one of my most glorious moments of that action.

Soon after this, the Army reported that our bombardment had neutralised all resistance by the Portuguese and that they had crossed the creek. A white flag had been hoisted in the citadel and the Army was proceeding to formally accept the surrender by the Portuguese forces at Diu. *Delhi* was asked to send a naval representative to witness the surrender ceremony. Our Captain decided that we still had a task to do which was to hoist the Indian tricolour on the flagstaff in the citadel but that the landing party would first proceed to represent him at the surrender ceremony and thereafter return to the ship so that we could then go south and carry out the small and unglamorous mission of capturing an undefended fort.

Here again our guardian angel was watching over us and this decision to go to the fort only after the surrender ceremony possibly saved the lives of all of us who were in the landing party. Once again the reason why I say this will emerge as I narrate the events that took place hereafter.

The landing party proceeded ashore and the boats that carried us landed us at a landing point very close to the citadel. After landing we marched with our chests out, proud of a victory made possible by the role played by our ship, *De/W*. We had presumed that the Army, having made the signal that they wanted to make about the surrender ceremony, would already be at the citadel. Imagine our surprise when we marched into the fort to find that the Indian Army was nowhere to be seen - they were still making their way towards the citadel. However, the white flag which the Portuguese had hoisted was a genuine indication of their surrender. They had laid down their arms and were congregated in one place in the citadel. So, as it transpired, it was the Indian Navy that was the first to reach the citadel and take it over from the Portuguese. In fact it was Sub-lieutenant Suresh Bhandoola, Indian Navy, that is me, who hoisted the Indian tricolour at the flagstaff in the Portuguese citadel.

Soon thereafter the Army arrived and the formal surrender was signed by the senior Portuguese officer and was accepted by the senior officer of the Indian Army present. It was during this period that Lieutenant Ahluwalia told the Portuguese

that *Delhi* had the task of hoisting the Indian flag at the fort and that, immediately after the surrender ceremony, at the citadel, the ship would be proceeding south and, from a point in the close vicinity of the fort, the landing party would proceed by boats to land on the small sandy beach on the islet on which the fort was situated. On hearing this, the senior Portuguese officer was very perturbed and told us that it would be inadvisable for us to undertake this mission in the manner we had planned. He said that, contrary to our intelligence, the fort was not deserted and that there were about ten Portuguese soldiers in it. He also told us that the beach on which we intended to land by boats had been mined and that any landing party endeavouring to capture the fort via the beach would be blown to smithereens. He obviously felt that if this happened we might take it out on him. When we asked him to convey to the senior officer of the fort that the Portuguese forces at Diu had surrendered and that they should also not offer any resistance to us, he stated that he had no communication facilities with the fort. It was, therefore, decided that a platoon of the Indian Army along with a Portuguese officer would proceed to the fort from landwards. Before this platoon entered the fort, the Portuguese officer would verbally tell those in the fort of the surrender so that there would be no chances of any unnecessary bloodshed.

Once again we of *Delhi* were asked to convey to our Commanding Officer a request to lie off the fort to render any assistance, if required. It was at this moment that we realised that the sequence of events which had occurred which resulted in the delay in our landing party proceeding for what we thought was an unopposed and innocuous mission were in fact, perhaps, our guardian angel watching over us! So we went back to our ship and the ship moved south to lie off the islet while the Army moved to the fort making its approach along the shore. Things went as planned and the fort was taken over by the Army without a shot being fired. We saw the Indian tricolour being hoisted on the flagstaff in the fort and heaved a sigh of relief that the mission had been completed. However, it was perhaps a little premature for us to think it was all over and that we could now set course for home after a victorious action because just then we got a call for help from the Indian Army Major who had been assigned the task of capturing the fort. Communications between the ship and the fort were very poor and all we really heard on the ship was that he needed some help urgently as he had some problem which had something to do with some men who were lost ashore which required the use of a boat. By this time it was about 2200 hours and pitch dark.

Before I narrate the next part in which I was again personally involved, I need to give a clear picture of the location of the fort. As I have said earlier, this fort was located on a small islet, a few hundred yards off the mainland. Between the islet and the mainland there was a patch of rocks of an area of about 20 square yards. When the Army went to the fort from shorewards, it was low tide and they were able to wade across to it. At that time the water around the rocks was only about knee-deep.

Having been through a lot that day and, being off watch, i.e., off duty at that moment, I was down in my cabin getting some sleep when I was shaken up and told that the Captain wanted me on the bridge immediately. When I got to the bridge I was told that our friend, the young Major, had had some trouble but nobody was very clear as to what exactly his problem was. However, the fact that he had taken over the fort made us feel that the problem could not be very serious. It was assumed that he was cut off from the shore as the tide had risen and that he probably needed some help in the form of a boat to get ashore to look for some of his men, with whom he had lost touch. I was directed to get into a whaler and proceed to the fort

and render whatever assistance was required. It was certainly not anticipated that we could get involved in any kind of a situation in which we would require to be armed.

So straight from the bridge I got into the whaler which was manned by the duty watch, i.e., sailors who were on duty at that moment. The boat was lowered, I was given the general direction of the fort and off I went. With me was the duty Petty Officer as the coxswain of the whaler and a crew of five for pulling, i.e., rowing the whaler. Because it was dark it was considered imprudent to use a power boat as we knew the waters between the ship and the fort were rocky. I was directed to feel my way very carefully to the fort. And this is exactly what we did. To help us to pick out the rocks along our path, the ship's 20-inch projector was switched on and in the light of this projector, we could see the sea breaking over the rocks. We moved very cautiously, navigating to avoid running aground, but in spite of all our efforts, we ran aground twice. On each of these occasions we had to get into the water, push the boat clear, and men once again carefully feel our way towards the fort using one of the crew with his oar in the bows to feel for deep enough waters through which we could traverse. And thus we

i^d>ed the f^The Major (a meto the wall and told us that he was not sure where the boat could land. He then explained his problem to me.

After entering the fort and taking the Portuguese soldiers prisoner, he had the brilliant idea of keeping them out of mischief by making them wade across to the rocks and keeping them there under guard of two armed Indian Army jawans. This was to give him a chance to carry out a thorough search of the fort to ensure that all the Portuguese who were there had in fact been captured and taken prisoner. The logic of putting them on these rocks and not locking them up in a cell or a room in the fort while the search was being conducted is beyond my comprehension; but then it often happens that the logic of the foot-soldier is difficult for a sailor to appreciate!

Anyway, this typical Infantry Officer probably knew little about the tides. While he was conducting a search of the fort, the tide was rising and the sun was setting. When he had finished his search and he looked towards the rocks to give a signal to his men to bring the Portuguese prisoners back to the fort, to his horror he found that there were no rocks and no men. They had just disappeared. In panic; or perhaps it is wrong for me to use such a word, so shall I say, with grave concern, he called up the ship and asked us to send help immediately as he had lost a couple of men and eleven Portuguese prisoners of war.

He then told me that he was sending one of his jawans with us in the boat and that this man would swim out from the fort to the boat. He requested us to try and locate his men and the Portuguese prisoners.

It did not require a genius to appreciate what exactly had happened. When the tide started to rise, the men on the rocks realised it as soon as their feet started getting wet and had promptly waded ashore. The doubt in my mind was only whether in the process of this crossing the two jawans, who were guarding the Portuguese prisoners, could have been overpowered as they were outnumbered. In any event we soon had the Army jawan sent by the Major with us in the boat and headed for shore. As we neared the shore we stopped and the Army jawan and I got into the water and waded ashore. The thought that the weapons of the two jawans in charge of the prisoners of war could be in the hands of the Portuguese was very much in my mind. So I stopped while still in the water and asked the jawan with me whether he knew the names of the jawans who had been guarding the Portuguese prisoners. On getting

an affirmative reply, I asked him to crouch down in the water with me so that just our heads were above the water and then told him to call out to his comrades.

At the top of his voice the jawan shouted 'O Banta Singhl'. Immediately after this we heard movement behind an outcrop of rocks but for a few seconds there was no reply. It was in these few seconds that I really knew fear, expecting at any moment to be hit by a bullet. And then a man stood up behind the rocks and replied 'Hanh, ki hai?' My relief at hearing these words in Punjabi cannot be described! Suffice it to say that I breathed again on hearing these words and we waded out of the water to meet Lance Naik Banta Singh. He told us that all was well; when the tide started rising they had realised it and knowing that there were no boats in the fort, had waded ashore, remaining in control throughout. Very close to the point where they emerged from the water they had found a deserted police post and had locked up the Portuguese prisoners there. The second soldier was even then standing guard outside the room where they were locked up.

So we went back to the fort and on getting close found that there was no way that we could get out of the boat and into the fort without getting into the water. So I decided that we would go the way the soldier had come. But when I was about to step into the water, this jawan refused to let me get myself wet and insisted on carrying me on his shoulders to the point from where we could get into the fort. The point I am trying to make is that having lived through a moment of fear together, a sudden and very strong feeling of comradeship had built up between us and this was his way of showing it.

Inside the fort I met the young Major and told him that all was well ashore and that he need not worry. He was very relieved and profusely thankful. I bade him farewell and returned to the boat. Once again my comrade, the jawan who had been ashore with me, insisted on carrying me back to the boat and no amount of protesting by me could dissuade him. I had of course in the meantime called up the ship and informed them that all was well.

We returned to the ship the way we had come, the only difference was that this time the strong light from the 20-inch projector, which had been such a help on our outward journey, was blinding us. We tried very hard to tell the ship on our walkie talkie to switch off the light but, communications being what they were, we just could not get the message through. As a result, whereas we had run aground only twice on our way to the fort, we ran aground five times on our way back. Anyway we reached the ship without any major mishaps and our arrival back spelt the end of our mission during the Goa operations.

Panikota, a small island 16 kilometres east-northeast of Diu, had been fortified by the Portuguese with a fort which was manned by a few soldiers. By the evening of December 19, this island had also been captured and one Portuguese officer and 12 soldiers taken prisoner.

## **Lessons Learnt**

Operation Vijay was the second major operation after Independence in which all three Services participated, the first having been the Junagadh Operation in 1947. While the Operation was conducted as planned and the Portuguese surrendered within 40 hours of its commencement, there were some minor lacunae which needed to be looked into for improving the Navy's operational efficiency. Some of these lacunae and the lessons learnt were brought out at a debrief held after the

operations, the more important of them being: the incapability of the Navy to fit out a landing party at short notice; the need for landing parties to be apprised of the nature of the terrain on which they would be required to land; lack of adequate training especially to operate under cover of darkness; requirement for a permanent Naval commando force; suitable landing craft should have been used for the landing operations; the platoon designated for the capture of Anjadip Island should have landed in one wave; modern weapons and equipment should be provided to landing parties; cumbersome and out-moded portable wireless communication sets slowed up the overrunning of the Portuguese garrison on Anjadip and the subsequent bombardment and should be replaced; the element of surprise had been jeopardised by *Tir* which had circled the island at close range and carried out mine detections sweep a few days before the commencement of the operation; a landing party should include a medical team for rendering first-aid and for resuscitating the seriously wounded; Naval and Indian Air Force aircraft should operate in clearly defined sectors to facilitate identification and should not stray into lanes used by aircraft of international or domestic airlines as far as possible; whenever aircraft from the two Services are likely to operate in the same area, separate flying sectors should be allotted to each Service (when an Alize aircraft of the Indian Navy entered the air defence zone over Bombay during the operation, it could not be identified by the Sector Operation Centre as no common Interrogation Friend or Foe (IFF) equipment had been fitted on the aircraft; similarly, when IAF aircraft were flying close to *Vikrant*, the carrier immediately scrambled her combat air patrol, thus frittering away precious resources because inter-Service IFF equipment had not been installed and operational sectors had not been clearly defined); inadequate and inaccurate intelligence led to the strength of the enemy being overestimated in most cases and to the embarkation of the Flag Officer Commanding the Indian Fleet on *Mysore* for conducting the operation though his flagship was *Vikrant*.

At the beginning of December 1961 a large number of ships were undergoing major or minor refit at the Naval Dockyard at Bombay. Some of these ships needed to be drydocked, some needed replacement of gun barrels and extensive repairs to their gun turrets, weapon control systems and aircraft landing equipment and some needed installation of new gun mountings, essential repairs to propulsion equipment and surveillance devices used for detection and tracking of targets in all three elements. Besides rectifying these defects, these ships were required to embark stores, fuel and ammunition, conduct trials of machinery and equipment and work up the personnel to a high pitch of operational efficiency by conducting exercises at sea off Bombay before they could be deployed for their assigned tasks. In the normal course, this would have taken at least a couple of months (four months in the case of *Delhi*) but as soon as it was known that the Navy was likely to go into action by the middle of December 1961, the Naval Dockyard, the Naval Store Depot, the Naval Armament Depot and their ancillary organisations rose to the occasion and completed the task well before D-Day. A remarkable feature of their feat was that out of the sixteen ships that were to constitute the Naval Task Force, as many as twelve - *Vikrant*, *Mysore*, *Delhi*, *Cauvery*, *Rajput*, *Khukri*, *Kutnar*, *Trishul*, *Talwar*, *Dharini* *Beas* and *Bimlipatam* - were with the Dockyard for major or minor repairs at the beginning of December 1961 but all had been rendered fully operational with all stores and ammunition embarked by December 16, 1961.

In a letter written to all Naval Commands, Admiral R.D. Katari, the Chief of the Naval Staff, wrote on January 2, 1962:

I have now had a chance to review in retrospect the events and preparations leading up to the very successful role that the ships of the Fleet played in the recent operations. It is quite clear that the success that attended the operations would

not have been possible were it not for the devoted efforts and extremely hard work put in by the large number of people involved in getting the ships ready for operations. It is with great pleasure and satisfaction that I have learnt that such efforts had come forth in ample measure from all quarters, be they from the staff, the dockyard, the Naval Stores, the Spare Parts Distribution Centre, the Naval Armament Stores, Organisation, or the barracks and training establishments.

I would like to quote one example which, in my opinion, epitomises the splendid spirit of devotion. I refer to *Delhi* which was in an advanced state of a major refit when the order was given to prepare her for operational duties. In less than three weeks, she was able to fire her main armament with success. The credit that the officers and men of the ship received for this must be shared equally by those who got her ready in such record time

On January 10, 1962, a few weeks after the operation, Lieutenant General Chaudhuri wrote to Captain Krishnan,

I would particularly like to thank you for the help you gave us while commanding *Delhi*. You really saved the situation. In a postscript on February 8, 1962, General Chaudhuri added, 'I think I have thanked you for the excellent work that you did in helping the Army at Diu but, just in case I had not, let me assure you that without the presence of yourself and *Delhi* things would have been much more sticky.' In a message to his men, Lieutenant General Chaudhuri said, 'I have sent thanks on behalf of us all to the Navy and Air Force whose active cooperation made our task so much easier.'

## Casualties

The number of casualties suffered by the two ships, *Mysore* and *Trishul*, and the Portuguese garrison at Anjadip and the Portuguese taken prisoner is given below:

Table 12.2. Casualties suffered at Anjadip

	<i>Officers</i>	<i>Sailors</i>
<i>Indian Casualties</i>		
Killed		7
Wounded	2	17
Total	2	24
<i>Portuguese Casualties</i>		
Killed		6»
Wounded		4
Total		10
* In addition, the dead body of one Portuguese sailor was discovered board <i>the Albuquerque</i> when the ship was boarded after the operation.		
<i>Prisoners taken</i>		
Portuguese		15
Goan		8
Total		23

A memorial was later erected at the Flagstaff Point on Anjadip Island to commemorate those sailors of the Indian Navy who made the supreme sacrifice for the liberation of the Portuguese Possessions.

As regards the casualties suffered by both sides on all four fronts, Goa, Daman, Diu and Anjadip Island, the figures were;

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*Indian Casualties*

Killed	22 (plus one killed in an
Wounded	54 (plus five injured in an accident)
Total	76

*Portuguese Casualties*

Killed	30
Wounded	57
Total	87

*Prisoner of War*

Portuguese soldiers	3,301
Portuguese policemen	9
Goan soldiers	1,508
Goan policemen	268
Civilian personnel	8
Total	5,094

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At 1400 hours on December 19, 1961, General Manuel Antonio Vassalo e Silva, Commander-in-Chief of the 'independent Tenitoial Command of Portuguese India', who was headquartered at Vasco da Gama, had sent a request for a cease-fire to the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Armed Forces which read, 'According to the annexed communication sent to you, and with the powers given to me by the commanding letter of Portuguese Central Government, I request you to cease fire between our forces from this moment.'

In an official statement issued along with the request for ceasefire, General e Silva had said:

jgao-hnaistrongholdofour defence as a base the occupation of our forces of positions that put Vasco da Gama city protected of the aerial, naval and ground fire of the enemy and of the inevitable consequences of nearby fights and having yet been considered the big difference between the forces and the resources they had mat does not allow myself to proceed the fight without great sacrifice ©f the lives of me inhabitants of Vasco da Gama, I decided with my spirit well constrained and my patriotism well present, get in touch With the enemy, when his approach makes endanger the whole population of that city, that I wish to preserve, in order to get mem according to my powers given by the command letter. In this way I order to all my forces to cease fire.

I want to emphasise (sic) the calm and order the way of all population of this province since the invasion begun following the one always showed before.

In mis moment I salute already dead in the camp of honour.

And, finally, in the instrument of surrender signed at 2030 hours on December 19, 1961 and accepted by Brigadier JCS. Dhillon, General e Silva said, *I*, General Manuel Antonio Vassalo e Silva, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Portuguese state of India, offer in my capacity as the Commander-in-Chief, unconditional surrender of the

Armed Forces in Goa at 2030 hours on December 19, 1961.'

By the evening of December 19, the three Services of the Armed Forces of India, which had combined their diverse skills in the three unique fabric of decisive victory, had enforced the elements to 'within a period of dramatic: entire country.

### Picking up the Pieces

On December 22 Commodore H.A. Agate took over the naval administration of the Portuguese enclaves of Goa, Daman and Diu and was designated Naval Officer-in-Charge, Goa. He was responsible for all land areas of the erstwhile Portuguese colony and offshore islands including Anjadip and the sea area between the parallels of latitude of 14°43' North and 15°43' North and between the meridian of 77°00' East and the Indian mainland coast.

Speaking to newsmen at Delhi on December 19, Prime Minister Nehru said, 'This operation, small as it was, deserves attention from the point of view of efficiency of our Defence Services and their close co-ordination with one another.'

Shri V.K. Krishna Menon, Defence Minister, complimented the three Services for the 'swift and bloodless' operation conducted with consummate skill and said, 'The unfinished part of the Indian revolution was completed this morning when the Indian Defence Services took over Goa, Daman and Diu and hoisted the Indian flag on our soil. We waited for years, we argued and gave opportunities for a settlement, but were then forced to adopt means which were not of our choice.' He reiterated the Indian stand to say, 'We have not violated anybody's integrity and we have not attacked Portugal, and added that Goa being an integral part of India's own soil, armed action had to be resorted to for its liberation since all efforts to negotiate a peaceful settlement had failed, in a report filed on December 19, 1961 (*The Statesman*, December 20,

1961) the Press Trust of India said: -

Mr. Menon asked Portugal and her friends why they had not thought of lodging a complaint with the UN all these days if they were serious about a negotiated settlement. -'

India did not have any quarrel with the world powers' attitude or the resolution seeking to condemn India in the UN 'we will answer them. But we do hope that some of our friends would take a dose of the medicine that they prescribe for us.'

He told the nation and the world, 'We have not violated either the spirit or the words of the UN Charter in taking this action. The UN had decided that colonies could not survive. India had only lived up to this.'

### Western Nation's For a React

India's armed action for the liberation of the Portuguese enclaves was hailed by all anti-colonial powers and countries which were still under foreign rule. The Western countries, however, bitterly and severely criticised India's action because India had been 'preaching the philosophy of non-violence' to the rest of the world.

On December 19, as had been expected, the Western countries, led by the USA, introduced a resolution in the UN Security Council denouncing India's action and seeking the withdrawal of Indian Forces to the positions held on December 17. The resolution received seven votes in favour and four against but was vetoed by the Soviet Union, thus frustrating the bid of the NATO powers, the most vociferous of whom were the UK, France and Turkey, to reverse the course of events in Goa and have the three enclaves delivered intact back to another NATO power, Portugal. Three other nations that voted against the four-power motion were Sri Lanka, the United Arab Republic and Liberia. India's most spirited defender was the Sri Lanka delegate, Shri Malasekara, who used incisive arguments and great oratory to stress that what India had done could by no stretch of imagination be called aggression for the simple reason that a country could not be charged with invading her own territory. It was also pointed out that asking India to withdraw from Goa, the Western powers were only to pay India back for her stand on the Suez, Bizerta and Cuba.

The most intemperate expression of disapproval of action, however, came from unexpected quarters - President Kennedy of the USA is reported to have said of Prime Minister Nehru finding a priest in a brothel'.

In a message sent to Prime Minister Nehru on December 22, the Soviet Prime Minister, Nikita Khrushchev, congratulated him and the people of India on the liberation of the Portuguese-occupied territory and their reunification with the motherland. He said, 'The resolute actions of the Indian Government to do away with seats of colonialism in its territory was absolutely lawful and justified... the step taken by the Indian Government is a big contribution to the cause of the people's noble struggle for complete and undelayed liquidation of the disgraceful colonial system.'

In a statement on the liberation of the three enclaves, the Government of the People's Republic of China said that the action of the Indian Government to recover Goa reflected the just demand of the Indian people. It said, 'Goa is an inalienable part of Indian territory. To oppose colonialism and safeguard national independence and the unity of their country, the Indian people have for a long time been demanding the recovery of Goa and have waged an unremitting struggle for this purpose,' and the liberation of the territory was a fitting finale to the struggle.

Shri C.S. Jha, who was India's Permanent Representative at the United Nations at that time had to face the brunt of the anti-Indian onslaught launched by the Western nations. For this, wrote Jha in a feature entitled *Exceeding One's Brief* published in *The Hindustan Times* on February 14, 1987,

I had no brief from the Government. Fragmentary news was coming in on the teleprinter according to which the Defence Minister Mr. V.K. Krishna Menon, was emphasising in his statements that the Portuguese troops had opened fire on the Indian Army who had been obliged to enter Goa. There were elements of a brief here, but knowing the mood of the Council members and having read the screeching headlines in American papers accusing India of having committed aggression, I knew that this line would be totally unconvincing. I had, therefore, to brief myself. I defended our action on the ground that it was in fulfilment of a pledge to rid the country of colonial rule, that this pledge pre-dated the UN Charter and would have to be fulfilled, 'Charter or no Charter, Council or no Council.' I also argued that colonial rule was born of aggression, and could not thereafter be declared legitimate. This line of argument gained the unanimous support of the Afro-Asian countries and frustrated a US move to take the Goa issue to the General

Assembly under the 'uniting for peace' resolution.

There were several demonstrations in Portugal against Britain for its failure to prevent India from entering Goa and Dr. Salazar even threatened to withdraw from the United Nations as a protest against Britain's inaction leading to the loss of the Portuguese *lebensraum*. An effective counter to his fulminations was provided by Captain S.N. Roskill, the noted naval historian and author of *The War at Sea*, who in a letter to *The Times*, London said-It is pertinent to remind our Portuguese friends that they did not rush to Britain's aid in 1939, nor even in 1940 when we stood alone against Hitler and Mussolini and sorely needed the use of the naval and air bases on the coast of Portugal. Furthermore, it took two years of patient - many people at that time felt far too patient - negotiations with Dr Salazar before, on August 18,1943, he signed an agreement permitting us to use bases in the Azores, from which the Central Atlantic could be cleared of U-boats. And even then so many difficulties were produced by the Portuguese Government regarding American participation in those facilities that it was not until October 1943, that the agreement became effective. Portugal, had she stood by the alliance in our time of realneed, could have saved us enormous shipping losses - after the end of 1942 at negligible risk to herself.

It could also be mentioned that during World War II, Goa was used by the Axis powers for logistic support and for transmitting intelligence on Allied shipping in the South Asian theatre which led to the sinking of several merchantmen by German and Japanese submarines. Two German merchantmen of Hansa Line were specially fitted with powerful transmitters and receivers and it was the German plan that on declaration of hostilities these would enter Goa harbour in order to carry out espionage from the Indian subcontinent. The Germans had already planted a 'mole' - an Indian official in the Ministry of Shipping and Transport at Bombay, who used to come to Goa regularly to deliver information on movements of Allied convoys; this information was regularly delivered by him to the German Consulate at Panaji. Eventually, an intrepid band of British territorials, interestingly called the Calcutta Light Brigade, assembled at Calcutta and went by sea in a leaky, ancient dredger to Goa, entered the harbour and, without losing a hair or drop of blood, destroyed the two German merchantmen and also an Italian ship which was there at that time. So much for Portugal's neutrality!

This author met Professor J.K. Galbraith during the latter's visit to India in February 1987 and enquired whether, from hindsight, his views on Goa and the developments associated with its liberation, had undergone any change after the lapse of a little over 25 years. Professor Galbraith said:

My policy at that time, as frequently happened, differed somewhat from that of the State Department at Washington and the India Government. I would always, to the greatest extent possible, resist the use of force and it was my feeling that the Portuguese Empire, as we later discovered, was a fragile thing. I did not like to seek any alliance with Salazar, the Dictator and so I urged the American policy of pressing Portugal to make concessions on Goa, Daman and Diu, an anachronism which should have passed to India, and I urged the Indian Government to be patient, allow six months, eight months, a year for such pressure to be brought to bear. Well, my policy was not companionable either in Washington or in New Delhi. New Delhi was anxious to get the matter settled which is understandable. Goa had eventually to come to India, there was no question about it. It was an anachronism and Washington, as usual, was worried about the bases in the Azores and its ancient alliance with Portugal. Some officials

there, led by George Ball, the ablest man in the State Department under Kennedy, were on my side but it wasn't enough to carry the day. The tendency was not to bring direct pressure to bear on the Portuguese - may be, it would not have worked but that was my hope at that time. I have just been to Goa for a few days and I think that history has justified the course that was taken there.

There was very little bloodshed (during Goa's liberation). On the morning of the operation my military attaches - my naval attache and my army attache - who were on close terms and in close touch with their Indian colleagues, had a briefing at the Embassy at which they showed how the deployment was around Goa, around the Goa region and how the operation was being conducted. This they had been told by their Indian counterparts and gave their estimate that the operation would be over in another couple of weeks. After they had finished, I gave my estimate based on the fact that Portugal was using African troops, who would not be a formidable enemy. I gave my estimate that it would be over by late afternoon. For all practical purposes it was and my reputation as a military analyst was never higher!

As it happened the troops in Goa were both African as well as white Portuguese.

Asked why he had suggested that the matter be taken to the United Nations, the Professor said that he wanted the United Nations to bring direct pressure to bear on Dr. Salazar and the Portuguese. He said:

I concede that these three anachronisms should have been in the Indian Union, and were the surviving remnants of the age of colonialism. The French Empire had gone, the American possessions in the Philippines and Puerto Rico had either gone or drastically altered and of course the British. Why not Portugal? So I was impressed with the fragility or the fragile character of their position and of course that was evident only a few years later when they surrendered peacefully in Mozambique and Angola which were a hundred times more important than Goa.

As regards Prime Minister Nehru, he said, 'My impression was that Nehru was sympathetic to my point of view in a certain measure and he was also patient but he was also subject to the general impatience of India/ He added that he had requested the Indian Government to postpone exercising the military option by six months because he felt that he would be able to find a peaceful solution within that period. 'May be the thing to do was to have a quick solution but I have always opposed the use of force whenever possible and I was so motivated at that time and still am.'

Professor Galbraith summed up the discussion by expressing his satisfaction at the operation having been swift and decisive. The casualties were minimum. I am in favour of all wars being like the war between India and Portugal - peaceful and quickly over.'

### Jewels Restored

The last of the 'jewels in the Portuguese Crown' were thus restored to their rightful owners in a swift and skilful operation lasting less than 40 hours and the Portuguese bastilles were excised by scalpels that had been carefully honed for the purpose. And from the way the Portuguese went about preparing for defending the enclaves despite adequate prior knowledge of the impending action and their awareness of the reality of the march of time, it seemed as if they were firm believers in euthanasia.