(1) The First Siege to Make Diu Free from Portuguese Power, 1538.

After Bahadur Shah's death, in February 1537, the Grand Signior from Constantinople sent a large amount of armada under his captain Sulaiman Pasha al-Khadim. He was the Governor of Egypt. Before his death, Bahadur Shah had invited the Turk. This naval attack on the Fort of Diu was led under the command of Khudawand Khan and others. The history of this siege of Diu will be narrated in this chapter.

In 1508, Mahmud Begada's reign, the great struggle was between Portuguese Power and Gujarat Sultanate for the mastery of the Arabian Sea. That war was fought under the Mamluk Sultans of Egypt and their admiral Amir Husain. But now the Egyptian Kingdom had been incorporated in Turkish Empire. The Sulaiman was an ambitious ruler and he had great designs for the conquest of Persia and India. [1] Gujarat was considered a disturbed state, when Nuno returned from Diu to Goa in February 1537. Diu was not

fully protected but Ali Khan stationed on the outskirts of the town, cut off the supply for Diu. In July 1537, a peace was concluded to achieve protection. On 13th February Nuno again reached Diu to do his job necessary for the safety of the Fort Diu. A Venetian named Duarte Catanho who sailed from Ormuz to Diu, brought information which created extraordinary excitement among the Portuguese people. The Venetian was believed to be a channel of communication between the King of Portugal and Turkey, and at the end he was imprisoned. The heavy preparation of a fleet was made at Suez. The town of Shahrin, the Hadramant was a favorite resort of the Portuguese pirates. At such more intelligent were reserved as pilots for the fleet destined for India. Many galley slaves were ready. Khwaja Safar whom Portuguese had put in charge of Diu city secretly sent his family and followed himself on 27th April, 1538. The Sultan made him the Governor of Surat.

The King of Portugal was assured that due to death of Bahadur Shah, Turk had to suspend his preparations and consequently no reinforcements were sent to India. But the news brought by Catanho was a factual matter and was confirmed in a curious way. No indigenous sources are available yet, but the Portuguese sources and other sources have detailed historical account of the freedom fight. Denison Ross and M.L.Dames have gathered detailed history of this expedition under Sulaiman Pasha-al-Khadim. After his return from Yamen, he was asked to
prepare for the Grand Fleet at Suez. He held the post of Governor of Egypt down to the time of his departure for India on 15th June, 1538. [2,3]

A Turkish manuscript in the British Museum throws light on the Sultan's invitation to Gujarat for Sulaiman Pasha. The following are the instructions "You are the Beglerbeg of Egypt, Sulaiman Pasha, immediately on receipt of my orders will get ready and baggage and make preparations in Suez for holy war....". Pasha decided to equip the fleet at his own cost though in the end he seized properties from others.[4]

He took vessels armed with powerful artillery, an armed force of 7000 Turk soldiers, 1500 slaves and others. A venetian named Francisco commanded ten galleys and 800 free christians. Sulaiman Pasha was 82 year old and such a fat man to lift him from a seat. He was cruel and unscrupulous. He sailed with terror to other ports of Red sea. He reached Aden on 3rd August and it was taken the nobles and ruler Shaikh Amir were sacked. The Turkish fleet arrived Diu on 4th September, 1538. His

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fleet was scattered in a storm and his four vessels were wrecked on the way. The Gujarat generals had not co-operated due to his cruelty. On arrival his troops started to plunder and murder in the town of Gujarat. Safar, in charge of the Diu was transferred to Surat and he obtained the title of Khudawand Khan. Silveira was at Diu as in charge of Fort Diu. He made all the preparation to face the situation. In the port he kept 800 Portuguese soldiers. There total 3000 persons including women, children and slaves. Portuguese with their handier and more quickly loaded weapons considered themselves superior.[5,6]

The weak point in this combined attack now threatened sovereigns of Diu. Pasha intended to establish Turkish rule with himself as head of administration, while Safar on the other hand was ready to allow anything in his power if Diu was liberated. Alikhan wanted Diu as part of Gujarat as he wanted Portuguese out and not favored any disturbance of Turk in city administration.

(ii) First Attack made by Alamkhan and Safar

Alam Khan and Safar made their first attack with 15000 strong soldiers and captured the North Shore of the narrow strait

passage which separate the Diu island on the Peninsula. Silveira was aware of the fact that he could not dream to hold on Diu town as he had a small troop. On 9th August he retreated in some confusion into the fort though he was obliged thereby to abandon several ships and suffer considerable loss in artillery and munitions. The generals of Sultan took possession of the city and began a regular siege of the fort. Yet the fleet had not arrived at Diu.[7,8]

The Portuguese fort at Diu on the western side is occupied by town. The suburb of Gogla separates Kathiawad peninsula, was defended by Portuguese Captain Franscisco Pacheco with sixty four soldiers. Khwaja Safar attacked it and Pacheo was not able to hold it longer. After the surrender of the Portuguese under Pacheo they were allowed to go without arms and they were sent into galleys which were captured by the Pasha force. Pasha broke the agreement and sent all of them along with other slaves of the galleys. Alikhan with his forces did not leave the proximity of Diu, but with drew from active co-operation in the siege. Sulaiman landed some modern and heavy artillery for Safar to place in position and he went to


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Jafarabad, he returned Diu on 24th Sept. During this time D. Garcia de Noronha reached Goa to become Viceroy to supersede Nuno. Sulaiman sent a message to Silveira. But the Captain of the Fort Silveira replied that he and his men would fight to the end. Sulaiman did not try to destroy the Portuguese fleet, but he attacked on strongly Fortified Diu. The two bastions of the fortress where the enemy could bring troops to bear with the greatest effect were known as Garcia de Sa’s and St. Thomas. The Gogala outwork was held by a weak force and the fortress and isolated fort were strong force. Turkish fleet returned on 28th Sept., 1538, after fitting artillery passed in single file led by Yusuf Ahmad. The garrison suffered from their own firing far more severely than from that of the enemy due to mixture of artillery powder was not proper. The burst killed several of their own men. The Turkish galleys were not sufficient. In this siege inefficiency of Turkish galleys was marked, which failed to blockade.

On 4th Oct, The Turks had erected and armed six batteries at distances from 60 to 150 paces from the land face of the fort and some of the guns were able to fire 60 to 100 lbs weight. This powerful artillery mastered that of the Portuguese. The fire was opened on 5th October, 1538. The fight raged down in all through the month. Driven to construct inner lines of defense as each wall was in turn battered down. At last the Portuguese only could keep about third part of the original
bastion, the breach was narrow and at the foot the defenders lighted a large fire as an extra impediment to stormers. The Portuguese over their low breast-wall kept it together with long hooks, the enemy on their side used hooks to scatter it. Two opposite hooks would grapple and develop a grim struggle, either side trying to pull the other into the flames. At the same time, an attempt was made to storm the breach. But Portuguese were able to construct inner lines of defense and carry on the resistance with diminishing numbers and resources. On 29th and 30th Oct., 1538 several attacks were made by combined forces of Turks and but 700 were killed and about 1000 wounded. On 3rd Nov the news came at Portuguese troops that Menezes was going to arrive to help them at Diu, with 5000 soldiers and 150 ships.

(iii) Individual Heroism of Portuguese People:

The individual heroic acts of men and women are sought by Portuguese authors are noteworthy. There is a story of one Foriseca who fought on with his left arm after his right arm had been cut by a musket ball. Penteado got thrice wound and was carried to the Surgeon. The women in people the fort also took considerable part in the heroic act. [9, 10] They fetched water, stones nursing, dressing the sick. Donna Isabel and the

Surgeon's wife Anne Fernandez were among the active participants of all activities of war. They excelled the men in courage, the women in the garrison did not fall behind them in cruelty.

Attack on the fort placed the defenders in straits. Antonio da Silveria was forced to send the message to the Viceroy to inform him of his dangerous position. Their enemy's fire was now so heavy that the bastion of S.Thome was levelled to the ground. They transferred their attention to a cuirass near the sea under the charge of F.Velho was soon demolished, Lopo de Sousa not long after met with similar fate. The church was also the new target, the enemy's attack.

Three catures arrived from Goa, with manpower of 36 to the joy of garrison in the Diu Fort, these catures also thought the news of Viceroy's coming soon on 29th October, 26 boats of enemy were repulsed by the Portuguese forces after an engagement of two hours.

On 30th October 1538, at morning several vessels made an attempt to enter the river and having clear object to attack main Fort by land, and at this show of boats was only the purpose of diverting attention to an opposite direction. 1000 rumes made a furious attack on the bastion, which was defended by eighty Portuguese. The defenders gave good account presenting a heavy
loss. The enemy forces returned to the attack with reinforcements of 2000 men, were met the another repulse. Again afresh assault was made, but similar fate was met with them. In this war, 700 more killed and 1000 were wounded before noon had been.

Safar and his commanders now made new preparations for another attack with a large force. Antonio De Silveira sent a message to the Viceroy requesting assistance strengthened the various posts, more particularly one of the bastions, which was open and unprotected. The bastion in question was attacked by Safar with 700 men with ladders, but was defeated with considerable loss. Again Safar's forces attack the bastion, and this time with it. Silveira rallied his men, who were also encouraged by the women in forts. The Portuguese lost in this fight with about 38 men killed, besides a few Canarese, slaves and 200 of them wounded.

On 3rd November, 1538, two captures were sent to relieve Diu, arrived with news that Antonio Da Silva De Menezes, who was in command of the fleet arrived at Mahuwa, on the Diu coast.

After Menezes, Dom Pedro De Castello-Branco arrived there with his fleet from Cochin. Both these troops were now combined and numbered 150 sails with 5000 fighting men. In addition to this the Viceroy decided to dispatch his son Dom Alvaro in the galleon "Sao Matheus " and Martin Affonso De Sousa
in the galley "Bastarda" at the head of galleys and galliots. Everything has ready but the Viceroy had to postpone the sailing of his fleet. The Turks and Safari forces however hearing that a large fleet was being fitted out for the purpose of attacking them.

The Viceroy was much relieved at the news that the Turks had left Diu on 6th November, 1538. He however proceeded very leisurely and reached Chaul, appointed Jorge De Lima as captain of the fort, then sailed for Bassein.

He left Bassein on 1st January, 1538 for Diu, but he encountered a fearful storm, which scattered his fleet in all direction and each vessel sought the nearest port the Viceroy taking refuge in the river Danda, with some other of his vessels. Dom Alvaro in making for Dabhol, ran his ship a ground, but he and his men were saved. Eight days later of the other vessels could join the Viceroy who on arriving at Diu, was received with great joy by Antonio Da Silveira. [11]

(iv) Sulaiman Pasha Returned, November, 1538

In Nov. 1538, the Muslims had made several powerful assaults

on the various bastions. But unfortunately they were unsuccessful and it caused, Sulaiman Pasha to withdraw his light artillery to the ships and embarked his soldiers on 2nd November. He finally left Diu with his fleet on 6th November, 1538. He was aware of arrival of new Governor with a powerful artillery. He could not know the last situation of strength in the fort. The garrison was suffering from scurvy disease and were a few men with negligible arms and powder. Sulaiman Pasha left his 400 wounded men and his heavy guns. His return voyage through the Red Sea was nothing but cruelties.[12] Soon after this event Gujarat generals withdrew their forces from Diu. Indigenous sources indicated us that Pasha had come with large force to drive out Portuguese in 1538. He wrote to Gujarat Sultan for help with men and money. Therefore Safar came to help him. As Pasha was rude, uncivil he alienated his allies by his repulsive behaviour. Hence Safar ceased to co-operate with him and sailed away to Surat. Sulaiman could not obtained his needed supplies and despairing of reinforcements embarked his troops on the ships and sailed away. He left behind Sulaiman Guns which were too heavy to carry with him. Gujarat Court had sent Mujahid Khan with

equipment towards Nawanagar to help the Pasha. After Sulaiman's departure, his several guns left behind were carried to Junagadh by Khan. It is also said that some of Turkish admiral did not accompany him but they settled in Gujarat and attained services in Sultanate. One of them was remarkable Aga Farrukshad Turki who became later Fath Jung Khan after the capture of Idar. Another fellow Turk was Nasir Khan Habshi who achieved headship of Police of Ahmedabad. He also received the title Habash Khan. Sulaimani guns which were casted in Egypt during the reign of the Emperor Sulaiman magnificent of Turkey, can still be seen in Uparkot citadel at Junagadh. They give us the idea of Turkish artillery expertness which made her first military power in Europe. Several other heavy guns also were left behind by Pasha and captured by Mujahid. The Portuguese were very afraid of these heavy terrible guns, and especially two described as "Hawai" were demanded by Portuguese in exchange of maunds of Gold to Shihab-ul-mulk Ghuri (Governor of Junagadh).[13]

The Turks began to undermine the fort. Gasper De Sousa sailed out and drove them away, but he was killed at the same time when the garrison were in extreme distress, four vessels were received from Goa to help them with only 20 men. Nuno had collected a fleet to relive Diu, but on 11th September, 1538. Dom  

Garica De Noronha arrived as viceroy to succeed him. The viceroy did not permit him to carry out his plan.

The siege was pressed with more powerful assaults, which were however successfully repulsed, with the defenders being now actuated by the valour that comes of desperation. There were remaining, but 250 of the original garrison of 600 men. Sulman pasha now resolved to make one ore vigorous attack on Diu fort to take it. He first sent away several galleys hoping by this means to make the defenders think he intended to raise the siege but he had in reality prepared a force of 14000 men in order to make a final attack. After a general cannonading, the fort was assaulted a footing on the bulwarks but the defenders were successful to push them back. Joao Redriguez, a commander of portuguese threw a barrel of powder, with a slow match attached, among the enemy which killed over hundred of them, he remained unhurt. At the end of the day, there were remained in fort only 40 men the powder was all expended. But Safer tired of the arrangeance of Sulaman Pasha, considered that the presence of Portuguese India would arrive the next day with formidable to relieve Diu. On the 5th November, 1538, Safar set five to the city and also retired.

(v) Sulaimani Guns Left on Coast of Gujarat

The Nilam Tope: Nilam Gun which is now not seen in
Uparkot (Junagadh) was about 17 feet long with circumference of 7 1/2 feet at breech and measures at the muzzle nine and a half inches in diameter. It has Arabic inscriptions carved on its body. From this inscription it can be said that it was made by Sultan Sulaiman (King of Arabia and Persia). It was casted by Muhammad, Son of Hamza.[14]

Chudanat or Kadanal: The other cannon in the Uparkot is located in the south east corner. This was made by the brother of Muhammad Hamza (Ali bin Hamza), who was a gunner. It is 13 feet long has a muzzle 14" in diameter. Both are historic memorials of important era during the first half of 16th cent., when Muslim and Portuguese powers fought out with great zeal for mastery over the Indian sea-shore belonging to Gujarat which is our main theme of these.

(vi) Critical Approach of Futile Attempts for Recapture of the Fort of Diu.

Let us now see why the Turkish generals failed here but in Europe they were at the height of its power. For recapture of Diu Fort, main cause of his failure is ascertained that Fort Sulaiman did not follow the instructions provided him. [15, 16].


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It would have been as better if he had not laid siege to Diu. The power of the Turks was in their formidable artillery were exceptionally well trained. But this superiority did not yield them victory. It seems that most decisive factor explaining this failure is lack of co-operation between Turkish and Gujarat Sultan's generals who were suffering from prejudice. The Turkish admiral could not achieve necessary supply for his fleet due to his methodology for warfare. Both of Muslim powers of international nature against Portuguese but could not achieve their goal i.e. freedom of Diu from foreign rule. Alam Khan who was chief commander of the Forces wished to expel Portuguese and wanted to establish sole authority of the Gujarat Sultan, while Pasha wanted to do this for his master's power to establish there. While Khwaja Safar was in between but insisted on his own ascendancy in the town. Sulaiman Pasha's ambition, cruelty and his loot on 5th September were chief reasons of his failure. The important clues could be obtained through Asaf Khan's letter written to Danja Khan Husain (Minister of Sultan Muhammad II of Gujarat). He wrote that Sultan of Turkey advised Pasha not to tyrannise over Musalmans of India but his objective was only to drive away Firangis and not to act like in Zabid and Aden. Asaf Khan at that time, was in Mecca with Sultan Bahadur's harem and
22. DOM GARCÍA DE NORONHA, VICEROY, 1538-40.
treasures. Further he also said that Pasha had halted in Mecca on his way from Diu to Egypt. He further explained that he was not polite and had demanded a portion of the Royal jewels in charge of ex-Vajir. The demand was not granted. Pasha also had not wished to embark Asaf Khan for India as he ordered the Amin of Jeddah.

Dom Garcia the third victory and eleventh Governor who was nephew of Albuquerque had not any military ambition. He arrived at Diu on January, 1539 for reconstruction of Diu fort. His next step was to make treaty with Khwaja Safar and Alam Khan on 25th February 1539, the treaty was concluded. Under this treaty Sultan was allowed to construct a wall four cubits high between fortress and Diu town.[17,18] All the revenues from custom houses at Diu and farms in the island were to be pooled and one third of the amount was to be paid to the Portuguese. While remainder was for the Sultan. It was also cleared that destroyed outworks should not be re-erected. While Cartazes from the captain of Diu was necessary for the ships, to leave from Gujarat ports.

17. Whiteway, R.S.: op. cit. 266p.

27. A SULAIMANI GUN AT UPARKOT (JUNAGADH)

28. GUNS OF DIU (1538) CAPTURED BY NUNO DA CUNHA.