CHAPTER VII

THE LAST PHASE OF FREEDOM MOVEMENT:

The Civil Disobedience Campaign was dragged till the Congress Party abandoned it in May 1934. According to the new reforms Act of 1935, for the first time, elections to the provincial Assemblies were held in 1937 and the Congress Party secured majority votes in six provinces, namely Madras, Bihar, Orissa, United Provinces, Central Provinces and Bombay out of eleven provinces. In the three provinces, the Bengal, Assam and North West Frontier Province, it was only the largest party which secured majority seats. Naturally, ministries in these provinces were formed by the Congress party and successfully it worked to implement Reforms of 1935, for the benefit of the people. Political situation in India was fairly good from 1937 till the out break of the Second World War in September 1939. The British Government of India joined that war without consulting the Congress Party. Therefore, on 10th October 1939, the All India Congress Committee asked the British Government to declare categorically that India would be made free after the War and she should immediately be given to the largest extent power over the Indian affairs. But, instead of that, the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, in his statement of 18th October 1939 wished to give Dominion

Status only. Accordingly only the right to be present in an advisory body, where wishes of the Governor General prevailed was assured. As a result of the frustration caused by the Viceroy's statement of October 18, 1939, the Working Committee of the Congress met on October 22, at Wardha, gave a call to its ministries to resign. Accordingly eight Provinces resigned in obedience to the Congress High Command. In these Provinces, the Governors declared the breakdown of the Constitution under Section 37 of the Government of India Act, 1935, dissolved the Legislatures and took the entire provincial administrations in their own hands. Thus even the semblance of democracy was scrapped and autocratic rule started functioning in those Provinces.

In the middle of 1940 the Congress had to think to change its non-cooperation policy as the Germans were carrying everything before them in the War. The Congress decided to co-operate the Government efforts, if at least Provincial National Government was set up at the Centre. But in August 1940, the utmost concession on the side of the Government was given by the Governor General as the Dominion Status. Though, the declaration was made by the Government in view to sought help from India in the War, the Congress not only rejected the offer but authorised Mahatma Gandhi

to start Civil Disobedience Movement. Thus in October 1940, Gandhiji advised individual Satyagraha, which implied a symbolic protest against the dictatorial and imperialistic conduct of the British India Government. Thus once again the phase of Civil Disobedience Movement was started.

**WOMEN IN 1940 CAMPAIGN:**

In the last phase of freedom movement, i.e., the phase, that began from 1940, participation of Marathi women was equally proud to that of men. Women of Poona, Ahmednagar, Bombay and of other places played very important role and proved again, that they are not lagging behind and shouldered their responsibility equal to men. The unique feature of this movement was quite new than the earlier one as in this movement Mahatma Gandhi himself selected the individuals to offer individual satyagraha. Vinoba Bhave was the first individual Satyagrahi, who offered satyagraha on the 17th October, 1940, at Pavanar by repeating the pledge which runs as follows:

"It is wrong to help this British war efforts with men or money. The only remedy was to resist all wars: by non-violence."

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Most of the intellectuals, parties and the like minded people had no confidence on the individual satyagraha and they never believed such an attempt ultimately would result in independence. They thought as Pattabhi Sitaramayya described it something like a joke. But Gandhiji had complete confidence not about the campaign but also for satyagrahis, especially women, who courageously participated and courted imprisonment. Pattabhi Sitaramayya while describing the courage of satyagrahis rightly stated thus—

"But satyagrahis in India never taken not of their imprisonments. They have all along gone to jail cheerfully and remained in imprisonment spinning and writing, falling ill and recovering, dying on release or in prison."

The Civil Disobedience Movement of 1940 was continued for one and half year in which women of Maharashtra participated voluntarily. The account of their participation found in the British Government records and other relative records are given below.

WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN POONA:

In accordance with the appeals made by the Congress Resolution of Individual Satyagraha and Gandhiji's appeal, the individual satyagraha in Poona was started in the last

7. Ibid.
8. Ibid., P.221.
week of November 1940 and first it took place at Saswad. It was Miss Prema Kantak, who started it on 21st November 1940 as the first member of the individual satyagraha. On the very next day, i.e., on 22nd November, the second satyagraha in Poona district was performed by Mrs. Laxmibai Thuse. She was elected in the election of 1937 to the Bombay Legislative Assembly and resigned that post along with all other members as the Congress Party asked them to do so in 1939.

A meeting was held, at Sonya Maruti Chauk in Poona, where 4000 persons were present. Laxmibai Thuse addressed the meeting, asking all people there, not to help the Government in its war efforts in cash or men. And due to her anti-Government speech she was arrested on the very next day, i.e., on 23rd November 1940.

In the month of December, again two more women namely, Mrs. Durgabai Jog and Dr. (Miss) Jogalekar offered individual satyagrahas. On the 5th December, Mrs. Durgabai Jog delivered anti-war speech in the Indapur Taluka in Poona District.

9. Home Department, Civil Disobedience Movement 1940, File No. 1020(5)-c(12).

10. The details about Laxmibai Thuse are not available. Originally she was from Khopoli in Kolaba district. She lost her husband at the age of eleven only and after that she took training in nursing at Indore and was employed in Bombay. By the time of 1930 Civil Disobedience Movement she was at Poona and worked with Padmavati Harolikar and Yashodabai Bhat. In 1935 she started 'Stree Sevika Sangha' an organisation of Congress women workers of Poona-Kantak, Prema. Op.Cit., PP.285-86.

11. Home Department, Civil Disobedience Movement 1940, File No. 1020(5)-c(12).

12. Ibid.
The second woman namely, Dr. (Miss) Jogalekar was inspired by the Indian nationalism so much that she offered individual satyagraha twice. She was first convicted under the Indian Defence Rule 38 and was fined Rs. 200. As fine was paid by some unknown person, the Government had to release her. But as soon as she was released, she again offered satyagraha on 12th December, 1940. She was arrested and sentenced to 3 months' imprisonment.

The incident proves how Marathi women became fearless and eager to free the country. Within two months from the commencement of the movement, the individual satyagraha was so popular that more and more women came forward to offer satyagraha. On the 8th January 1941, Mrs. Kamal Tulpule shouted: anti-war slogans at Nira. She, on the very next day was arrested.

In the month of March, three women from the Poona district offered satyagraha. On the 5th March 1941, Miss Prema Kantak and Tanubai Balaram Mogi offered individual satyagraha at Pimpari. The third woman, namely, Mrs. Abubai Marutirao Bhosale offered satyagraha, on the 20th March at the same place. All the three ladies were arrested and sentenced to two days simple imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 200 or in default 3 months imprisonment. They accepted the later.

13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
Miss Prema Kantak, after the completion of three months' imprisonment, offered satyagraha twice in that year. On 17th June, 1941, she offered satyagraha at Jejuri by shouting anti-war slogans for which she was again arrested and had to complete three months' imprisonment. As soon as the completion of arrest this fearless lady again performed individual satyagraha for the third time on 29th September, 1941, for which she was sentenced six months imprisonment.

In the month of April, one woman, Laxmibai Thuse and two men, Deogirikar T.R. and Gupte G.M., were selected by Mahatma Gandhi for the individual satyagraha. On the 18th April, 1941, Mrs. Laxmibai Thuse offered satyagraha in Poona by shouting anti-war slogans and as usual she was arrested.

Mrs. Laxmibai Vaidya offered satyagraha twice during the Individual Satyagraha Movement. Like, Prema Kantak and Laxmibai Thuse, she was the third woman of Poona who offered the first satyagraha on the 29th October 1940 and the second on the 23rd May 1941 in Poona, when she was selected by Mahatma Gandhi. Both the times, she was arrested and sentenced to jail.

Thus during the individual satyagraha movement women of Poona were ahead and they did not wait for Gandhiji's order.

16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
Most of them offered satyagraha on their own and women like Miss. Prema Kantak, Dr. (Miss) Jogalekar, Mrs. Laxmibai Vaidya and Mrs. Laxmibai Thuse offered satyagrahas more than once. Almost all the women participated in the movement were sentenced to one or two days' simple imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 200 or three months' imprisonment. And it is noteworthy that no woman satyagrahi either of Poona or Maharashtra requested for pardon. In fact, all of them accepted imprisonment and proved their nationalist spirit and love for freedom.

AHMEDNAGAR:

Ahmednagar was the second district to open the individual satyagraha movement. It was at the end of December 1940 and a widow, by name, Yamunabai Gajanan Kaduskar was the first satyagrahi. On the 26th December 1940, she delivered an anti-war speech at Koregaon before an audience of 250 to 300 people and asked them not to contribute to British Government through money or men for their army. Further she advised that it was necessary to carry on such a propaganda throughout the villages and make the villagers aware of that act against the Government. And because of that, on the very next day she was arrested under the Defence of India Rule 38. Then after her release she, again, on 17th July 1941 offered individual satyagraha at Koregaon.

19. Home Department, Daily Reports of Civil Disobedience Movement 1940, File Nos. 1020(9)-1, 1020(5)-C(1)-I, 1020(5)-c(6), 1020(5)-c(6)-2, 1020(5)-c(7) 1020(5)-c(7)-1, 1020(5)-c(8).
20. Home Department (Spl.) 1940 Reports of Central Division File No. 1020(9)-1.
21. Home Departmental (Spl.) 1940, File No. 1020(5)-C(8)-I.
In the first week of January 1941, Jankibai Apte offered satyagraha on the ground before the Congress House, Ahmednagar. Before delivering her anti-Government speech, she took out a procession through the main streets of Ahmednagar along with 100 persons. The procession was ended at the Gandhji Mandir where a mob of 700 to 800 people was present. She in her speech, advised the people not to cooperate the British in any way, as the war was fought not for democracy but for imperialism. And as other satyagrahis she was arrested on the very next morning.

After a week, then, another lady Shantabai Bindumadhav Pandit observed individual satyagraha on the 13th January, in Dane Bazar, i.e., grain market, of Ahmednagar. She made an announcement of anti-war slogans twice before her arrest in a gathering of 200-300 people, that the war which was fought for imperialism should not be helped by supplying money or men.

On the same day one Muslim woman, Fatimabi Tyabji offered anti-war slogans at Wadale Madee, a village in the Newase Taluka of the district. She was arrested immediately and she was sentenced one days' imprisonment and a fine of Rs.200 or in default 3 months' imprisonment.

22. 1. Home Department(Spl.)1940.File No.1020(9)-1.
  2. Ibid., File No.1020(5)-C(8).

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.
In the month of February, two individual satyagrahas were performed on two different places by two ladies in the Ahmednagar district. The first was performed on the 23rd February 1941 by Jaibai Anandrao Rathod at Usthal Dumala in the Newase Taluka. And the other on the 15th February by Padmavati Shrikrishna Kukade, a young woman of 19 years at Ukadgaon by shouting anti-war slogans. Both of them were arrested but taking into consideration the age of the younger woman, instead of usual sentence she was sentenced to a fine of Rs.50 or one months' imprisonment. Instead of fine, this young lady accepted imprisonment. Padmavati Kukade was originally from Bhingar a near by village of Ahmednagar and the people of Bhingar were impressed much by her participation in the satyagraha and spontaneously about 80 persons in Bhingar took procession to give send off to Padmavati when she was taken to jail.

Further, on that day, people of Bhingar observed a hartal on account of arrest of Padmavati and three other persons, that is, Mr. and Mrs. Vithabai Rakhamji Bondre and Govind Raghunath Balsing. In the evening, a public meeting was called at Bhingar to congratulate those satyagrahis. The meeting was attended by about 200 people and the Government was criticised for the arrests of those satyagrahis and acts of suppression.

25. Ibid.
26. Home Department(Spl.) File No.1020(5)–C(8).
In the month of March 1941, there was one individual satyagraha in the district observed by Mrs. Ramabal Dattatraya Suwarnpatki. She was sentenced to one day's imprisonment for anti-war slogans. In May 1941, two more women, Shantabai Digambar Tendulkar and Ramabai Bhaskar Gosavi offered individual satyagrahas on 12th May and 31st May at Wambor in Rahuri Taluka. In the month of July 1941, again individual satyagraha was repeated by Mrs. Radmavati Kukade, Mrs. Vithabai Rakhamji Rathod of Bhingar and Mrs. Jaidevibai Keshavrao Deshmukh of Sangamner. The last satyagraha in the district was observed by Mrs. Sulochanabai Kashinath Bondre on the 23rd August 1941. Thus, during the individual satyagraha movement thirteen women from the district offered satyagrahas and showed their bitter sentiment against the British rule. Because of those women the movement remained alive in the district and it did help in arousing public opinion fearless.

BOMBAY:

In Bombay, the individual satyagraha movement began under the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee and it decided to launch the satyagraha from 2nd December 1940. From the daily reports of the Police Commissioner it seems that there was a great enthusiasm among the general public in view of the proposed satyagraha.

27. Ibid.
28. Ibid., File No. 1020(5)-C(8)-I.
29. Ibid.
On the 29th November afternoon, before the beginning of the satyagraha, a private meeting of the first batch of 17 satyagrahis, including three ladies, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mrs. Hansa Mehta and Mrs. Lilavati Munshi, was held in Bhulabhai Desai's residence at Warden Road Bombay. The final programme of the satyagraha was fixed and it was decided that on the four different days, i.e., Monday, 2nd December, on Wednesday, 4th December, on Friday, 6th December and on Saturday 10th December, 1940, Satyagrahas would be performed at different places in Bombay. Knowing the plan of launching satyagrahas, the active Congress workers like Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, including seven other persons were arrested by the Government on the 1st and 2nd December 1940.

On the 7th December, about a dozen students of Bombay Students' Union organised Black Flag demonstration under the leadership of Mrs. Nargis Baltaliwala, Keshav Talapade and Abdullah Parikh. They left Mantri House in the afternoon of the same day and reached to the Hindu Gymkhana ground. They exhibited there black flag and posters containing the following declarations:

1. "Freedom, peace and progress.
2. Boycott, pentangular-Nation's trek to prison-will you go to pentangular?

31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
3. Nation engaged in great contest-No side show And.

On the 9th and 10th December three other satyagrahis of the first batch, Dr. D.A. Gilder, Mrs. Lilavati Munshi, Jhinbhai P. Joshi were arrested. Many shops in Bombay Municipality Corporation also adjorned on the 10th on account of those arrests.

In April 1941, six women Mrs. Lilavati Ramnikarai Joshi, Mrs. Gangabai Bhulabhai Patel, Mrs. Vasanti Shroff, Mrs. Ramabai Bairroprasad Pandit, Mrs. Minakshi Amulkarai Desai and Miss. Saralaben Kevalram Joshi, who were selected by Gandhiji offered individual satyagrahas. Before that Mrs. Vasanti Shroff performed satyagraha on the 29th January, 1941, for which she was sentenced to three months' imprisonment. She was then just released on the 1st April 1941, and within three weeks from the date of release, i.e. on 22nd April, she again with other five ladies mentioned above performed the satyagrahas.

Like young women even Mrs. Maniben Mangalal, an old woman of sixty-five years showed the same courage during the Individual Satyagraha Movement and offered satyagraha at Ghatkopar on 10th February, 1941, by shouting anti-war slogans before an audience of 300 persons. Being considering

33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. Home Department (Spl.), File No. 1020(5)-C/I-1.
36. Ibid.
her old age she was sentenced to one day's simple imprisonment, and a fine of Rs.50 or one month's imprisonment. That courageous lady not only accepted the imprisonment but two weeks after her release, i.e., on the 18th March, she again, observed satyagraha. She was arrested and sentenced to two days imprisonment and a fine of Rs.200 or in default 4 months' imprisonment. And as per the earlier way she accepted imprisonment.

Like in Ghatkopar, satyagrahas were offered in Chembur, Ville Parle and Santa Cruz, the suburbs of the Bombay district. The participants as usual shouted anti-war slogans and on occasions delivered speeches advising people not to help the War either in kind or men. Four women, Gulabbai Mahendranath Vengurlekar, Mrs. Sonabai Sitaram Rao, Mrs. Kamlaben Kishordas Sanghavi and Mrs. Gangaben Patel of 52 years, offered individual satyagrahas at the above mentioned places from the 3rd March to 30th June 1941. They were arrested as soon as they observed satyagraha and sentenced to fine, invariably from Rs.50 to 200 or in default, imprisonment from two to three months.

37. Home Department(Spl.), File No.1020(5)-C(7).
38. Ibid., Bombay Suburban District, File No.1020(5)-C(7)-I.
THANA:

Like women of Poona, Ahmednagar, and Bombay women of Thana district played their role with the same courage and zeal. From the Government Reports, it is a notable fact that not only women of the Thana district but boys and girls also participated in the movement.

The Thana district opened the campaign in the last week of November 1940. On the 24th November 1940, Mrs. Kirtane performed satyagraha at Palghar Railway station, when about 100 people were present. She was arrested and kept in Thana jail. On the same day two other programmes, namely, flag salutation and a morning procession of about 30 school girls, were arranged by a local Congress worker at Bhiwandi, with a view to inspire people regarding the individual satyagraha.

As Mrs. Kirtane was a leading figure in Thana district repercussions of her arrest were seen on the very next day in places like Dahanu and Palghar of the district. On the 25th November 1940, K.L. Ponda High-School in Palghar and the Government Primary School of Dahanu were closed on account of the arrest of Mrs. Kirtane. Some shops in the Bazar area were also closed. On the same day at Palghar hartal was observed by the Hindu shop keepers in connection with the arrest of Mrs. Kirtane and some other Congress leaders.

40. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
The students of Bhiwandi seem to be more awakened as again on the 15th December a morning procession was taken in which 15 boys and 20 girls participated.

In the month of February 1941, there were three satyagrahas which were performed by women, from Bhiwandi taluka of the Thana district. The first was offered on the 10th February 1941 by Mrs. Lila Gadre at Kalhar by shouting antiwar slogans. The second satyagraha was offered by Mrs. Indirabai Dahanukar at Anjur in the Bhiwandi taluka. The third one was observed on 20th February 1941 by Mrs. Hirbai Hirachand Meher of Satpati. All of them were arrested as soon as they shouted anti-war slogans as usual. The first two women, i.e. Lila Garde and Indirabai Dahanukar were sentenced as usual a fine of Rs. 200 or in default 3 months' imprisonment. The third one was sentenced one day imprisonment and Rs. 50 or one month's imprisonment. All of them accepted imprisonment.

On the first April 1941, Mrs. Kalyani Devi Putranarya offered satyagraha in Thana for the second time. She was arrested and sentenced as usual a fine of Rs. 200 or 3 months' imprisonment. She accepted the latter. The last satyagraha of the district was offered on 1st November 1941, at Kalwa by Mrs. Kaveridevi Gopal Patil by shouting anti-war slogans before a mob of 200 people. She was fined Rs. 51 or in default 2 months' imprisonment.

Ibid.
Ibid.
Like Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930, Satara was ahead in the Individual satyagraha also. The ground for the freedom movement was prepared since 1925 and from the beginning many Congress workers took active part in the activities of the Congress Mrs. Ambutai alias Satyabhamabai Ramchandra Lele, who was popularly known as "Savai Vaidya" and wife of Ramachandra Lele, a leading personality of the time, was the only woman from Satara who had sworn to use khaddar. From the account of Mr. Ramji Patil, eminent freedom fighter of Satara, not only in the Congress movement but in the social and educational development of Satara Satyabhamabai Lele was a landmark. Thus the ground was prepared by her and other co-workers which lit the light of freedom movement alive in the Satara district.

During the phase of individual Satyagraha, six women from the district participated, Mrs. Limaya Satyavati Raghunath was the first woman from Satara who offered individual Satyagraha at Masur, a village in Karad taluka of the district on 7th December 1940. A public meeting was held in Masur in which Satyavati Limaye delivered anti-war speech advising people not to help the Government in the War which was fought for imperialism. She was arrested and sentenced two months' imprisonment. During the Civil

44. Personal Interview of Shri. Ramaji Patil of Satara dated 25-12-1986.

45. Ibid, also refer to Home Department Reports from Central Division, File No. 1020(9)-I and File No. 1020(5)-C(13).
Disobedience Movement of 1932 she also delivered a speech for which she was sentenced six months' rigorous imprisonment.

In the month of February 1941, three women offered Satyagraha in Satara district. The first was offered on 4th February 1941 by Mrs. Sulochanabai Joshi. The list of Satyagrahis of Satara was declared by Gandhiji and Mrs. Sulochanabai was the only woman Satyagrahi in the list. She was arrested as soon as she shouted anti-war slogans in Satara. The second satyagraha in the month was offered on 13th February, with a pre-notice to the Government. Mrs. Vaijayanti Hadap of Satara offered Satyagraha at Limb, a village in the district, by shouting anti-war slogans and advocating people not to help the Government in any way for which she was sentenced 3 months' imprisonment.

The third Satyagrahi was Mrs. Champabai Bhatted of Satara, who had given notice of her intention to offer satyagraha to the District Superintendent of Police for necessary action. She offered satyagraha on 25th February, 1941 by reading anti-war slogan in Hindi, advocating that nobody should help the British Government either by way of money or men. She was arrested and sentenced two months' imprisonment.

Within a fortnight of the individual satyagraha by

47. 1.Home Department(Spl.) File No., 1020(5)-C (13) and 2.1020(9)-I.
48. Ibid.
Champabai Bhattod with two women, namely, Mrs. Sonubai Achyutrao Deshpande and Mrs. Muktabai Bandu Natu of Bilashi offered Satyagraha on the 15th March 1941 by reading an anti-war poem and preaching people complete non-cooperation to the Government in the Great War. They were sentenced 3 months' imprisonment. And after about two months later, on the 29th May 1941, Mrs. Sulochana Ramachandra Joshi offered satyagraha at Arale, and was sentenced for three months' imprisonment.

Thus by offering individual satyagraha at different places in Satara District women kept the freedom movement alive and at the same time because of their efforts it reached into the villages.

EAST KHANDESH:

The people all over India had become charmed by the freedom movement and Maharashtra was not an exception. On the other hand people of Maharashtra including women, to some extent at least, were ahead since the beginning of the freedom movement. From the account of Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930, it is a well known fact that people including women of the far distance places like Satara, East Khandesh were inspired by the movement and played very important role in the movement. During the individual Satyagraha like Satara, women of East Khandesh shouldered their responsibility spontaneously.

49. Home Department, Reports of Central Division, File No. 1020(9)-I.
50. ibid., also refer to file No. 1020(5)-C(23).
During the individual Satyagraha movement about 13 to 15 women of the district offered satyagraha. Women like Rahibai Shivnath Ponde and Banubai Sonu Khatri played a very important role by offering satyagraha time and again, which proved that how people, especially, women became fearless and bold to defy law and faced courageously the suppression made by the police.

In the month of January 1941, two women namely, Mrs. Rupkawarbai Jagjivan of Pachora, and Rahibai Ponde offered satyagraha. The first one satyagraha by Mrs. Rupkawarbai was offered at Bhadgaon on the 6th January 1941.

Though she was not arrested the District Magistrate took cognizance of her satyagraha under the Defence of India Rules. Within a week, i.e. on 11th January again that brave lady offered satyagraha at the same place. This time she was arrested and ordered to give personal bond assuring not to offer satyagraha again. But as she refused to give the undertaking she was sentenced 3 months' imprisonment and for refusing order of the Government she was punished by a fine of Rs.25 or 6 weeks' imprisonment. She accepted the latter. The efforts of the lady for the nation's cause impressed the people of Bhadgaon and partial hartal was followed by merchants of that village.

51. Home Department(Spl.), 1949 East Khandesh, File No. 1020(5)-C(9).
52. Home Department, Reports from Central Division File No. 1020(5)-C(9).
53. Ibid., also refer to File No. 1020(5)-C(9).
The second satyagraha by Rahibai Ponde was performed on the 18th January, about a week after the above mentioned, at Kasoda. She was sentenced both, one day's imprisonment and a fine of Rs.21 or 6 weeks' imprisonment.

Again in the next month i.e., in the month of February 1941, two satyagrahis were performed in the district. The first one was performed by Mrs. Lilavati Uttamrao Patil of Amalner, at Mahlkhed. She shouted anti-war slogans for which she was sentenced one day's imprisonment and a fine of Rs.25 or 6 months' imprisonment. Of course, that patriotic young lady accepted imprisonment.

The second satyagraha was performed by Banubai Sonu Khatri at Vanjole a small village in Bhusawal Taluka. From the account given by the police Sub-Inspector of Bhusawal, the programme of the satyagraha was declared in advance as 19 men including some women came to Vanjole from Bhusawal to attend the satyagraha. A public meeting was arranged before chavadi at 6.15 p.m. on that day, which was started by flag salutation. Then V.V. Dastane, the Congress leader of Khandesh introduced the work of Banubai in the social and educational field, as well as the role played by her during the Salt-satyagraha. While delivering a speech she explained the then prevalent

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54. Home Department, File No. 1020(5)-C(9).
55. Ibid., Information sought from Dr. Uttamrao Patil, husband of late Mrs. Lilavati Patil, by correspondence dated 26.8.87 by the scholar.
position of India and how the Government gave tortureous
treatment to Indians. How people were curtailed of their
rights of speech and writing and jailed for expressing
their thoughts. She further told that the money collected
from the people of India was used by the British to buy
weapons for killing men and at the end of her speech she
requested people not to help the Government either in
kind of money or men as well as not to buy Rupee Fund
Tickets or War Tickets, which were published by the
Government for the collection of the war fund. After her
speech she with her child of ten, went round the village
propagating the war slogan thus,

"Hear people, hear, do not help Government in this
56 war with men or money".

Again, in the month of March i.e. from 4th March to
12th March, Sonubai, the patriotic lady, offered satyagraha
in six different places in Bhusawal Taluka, Viz. Chorwad,
57 Kurhe, Vardsim, Sunasgaon, Sakegaon, and Kandari. On 23rd
March 1941, she moved in the weekly bazar of Bhusawal where
people from round about area came for shopping with a view
to popagate anti-war move of the Congress. She shouted
the anti-war slogans thus:

1. Don't help the War.

2. Don't purchase War Tickets.

3. Don't help the war by men and grain.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid.
She also offered satyagraha by shouting anti-war slogans in Ferki and Fulgaon, two villages of Bhusawal taluka on 25th and 26th March 1941 respectively.

On the first three days of the month of April 1941, Banubai Sonu Khatri offered Satyagraha at Edlabad, Kothali, and Salsbadri by shouting anti-war slogans.

Rukamabai Narayan Phadake, a woman from Jalgaon was very much impressed by the work of Banubai and she shouldered the responsibility of satyagraha with Banubai Khatri. In the month of April 1941, they both offered satyagraha jointly at Marnuabad, Dhamangaon, Avar, Tarkhed, and Asoda on 17th, 18th and 20th April respectively. Then on the following two days Banubai offered satyagraha at Bhadi and Rukamabai at Jalgaon independently. Though according to the Government report no effect of her satyagraha was on public, the work of the awakening of people done by Banubai Khatri could not be minimised. It was she, who, toured over many villages of the district of East Khandesh and tried her level best to awake people against the British Rule.

Rahibai Shivanath Ponde was the second woman of the district who, like Banubai Khatri, offered satyagraha many
a time. She was first convicted for the satyagraha on the 18th January 1941 and sentenced one day's simple imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 21 or 6 weeks' imprisonment. She accepted the latter. And shortly after her release in April, she again offered satyagraha from 9th April to 14th April 1941. For this she was fined four annas. The last satyagraha was offered by her on 26th April 1941 at Jalgaon for which she was arrested.

WEST KHANDESH:

There was only one incident of individual satyagraha which was offered by a woman, namely, Mrs. Tarabai Ghanshyamdas Gujarati. Early in the morning at 7:00 a.m. of 21st March 1941, she performed satyagraha by shouting anti-war slogans. She was arrested and taken to the police station.

NASIK:

The Nasik District Congress Committee declared the list of individual satyagrahis of the district which included the name of Mrs. Maltibai Sabnis. On the 8th April 1941, she offered satyagraha by shouting anti-war slogans as usual in Nasik. She was convicted under the Defence Rules of India and sentenced one day's simple imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 50 or one month's imprisonment. Like other satyagrahis she accepted the latter.

61. Ibid, also refer to File No.1020(5)-C(10).
62. Home Department(Spl.)West Khandesh, File No.1020(5)-C(10).
63. Ibid, also refer to File No.1020(5)-C(11).
The second woman to offer satyagraha in Nasik district was Mrs. Kamladevi Madhavrao Janorkar. She offered satyagraha on her own on the 14th November 1941 in Nasik by shouting anti-war slogans before an audience of about 150 persons. Three days later she offered satyagraha at the same place for second time before an audience of 175 persons at 8.15 a.m. She shouted the following slogans:

1. Don't help the present war with a pie.
2. Don't enlist yourselves in the army, navy and air-force, and
3. Don't work in War factories.

Thus men and women mentioned above and many more still unknown to the history, played their role in raising the public opinion against the British rule in India. The campaign continued for one and half year. It was a unique feature of the movement that during the period there was not a single case of violence by the Congress workers. The method used in the satyagraha was very simple. In most cases satyagrahis were selected by Gandhiji. But at the same time it is true that people especially women in majority offered individual satyagraha on their own also. The satyagrahis had to inform to the District Magistrate about their satyagraha. They shouted anti-war slogans and delivered speeches and let be arrested calmly. It is again a notable thing of the satyagraha that instead of

64. *Ibid.*, also refer to File No. 1020(5)-C(11)-II.
paying fine they accepted the imprisonment. The movement was successful in raising public resentment against the Government and also keeping the Government uneasy. As a result, Government's attention remained diverted towards the War as well as towards the growing Nationalism in India.

CHANGE IN THE BRITISH POLICY AS WELL AS THE CONGRESS POLICY:

In the beginning of 1942, the turmoil of the World War II was such that the British Government in India had to think over the National Demand of India. By that time, the Axis Power, i.e. Germany and her friendly nations like Italy, Yugoslavia, Japan etc., over-whelmed the Allies, i.e., a group of democratic nations like England, Russia, France, China etc. The astonishing success of Japan in the earlier stages brought the War right to India's doors. Japan had over-run Malaya and Singapore. Soon Burma, which before 1937 had been a part of India, was occupied. Japanese ships had already appeared in the Bay of Bengal and soon the Andamans and Nicobars fell into the hands of Japanese Navy. With Japan's entry, the United States of America had to face direct responsibility with regard to the War. It had even before suggested to the British that they should come to terms with India. Now it started to apply greater pressure on Britain to settle Indian problem and win India's willing co-operation. President Roosevelt, immediately after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on the 7th December 1941, requested the British Government,
that Indian leaders should be conciliated. The same view was repeatedly urged by Generalissimo Chaing-Kai-Shek, of China during his visit to India in February 1942. The Government of India should not altogether ignore these requests and up to a point decided to change its policy. At that time, the Great War had reached a stage that Gandhiji felt that the British would have no option but to recognise the freedom of India as the price of co-operation. But Gandhiji's confidence of the British Government, regarding allowing freedom became futile as the Commission known as Cripps Mission, which was sent by the British Parliament to India to settle the problem, in March 1942, declared nothing but the Dominion Status. The Cripps Offer was refused by the Congress as well as the Muslim League, and it ended in complete failure. While criticising the offer Mahatma Gandhi stated as, it was a post-dated check on a crushing Bank.

The Congress Working Committee met in Wardha from 6th July to 14th July 1942 and in that session the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution rejecting the Cripps Proposals. The resolution declared thus:

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The congress Working Committee views this development with grave apprehension, as this, unless checked, will inevitably lead to a passive acceptance of aggression. The committee held that all aggressions must be resisted, for any submission of their subjection. The Congress is anxious to avoid the experience of Malaya, Singapore and Burma and desires to build up resistance to any aggression on, or any invasion of India by the Japanese or any foreign power. The Congress would change the present ill-will against Britain into good will, and make India a willing partner in a joint enterprise securing freedom for the nation's and peoples of the world and in the trials and tribunals which accompany it. This is only possible if India feels the glory of Freedom.

The resolution went on to explain the "Quit India" slogan as follows:

In making the proposal for the withdrawal of British rule from India, the Congress has no desire whatsoever to embrace great Britain or the allied powers in their persecution of the War, or in any way to encourage aggression on India, or increase pressure on China by the Japanese or any other group associated with the Axis group. Nor does the Congress intend to jeopardise the defensive capacity of the Allied powers. The Congress is, therefore, agreeable to the stationing of the armed forces of the allies in India, should they so desire, in order to ward off and
resist the Japanese or other aggression and to protect and help China.

The proposal of withdrawal of the British power from India was never intended to mean the physical withdrawal of all Britishers from India, and certainly not of those who would make India their home and live there as citizens and as equals with the others. If such a withdrawal takes place with goodwill, it would result in establishing of a stable provisional government in India, and co-operation between this Government and United Nations in resisting aggression and helping China.

The last paragraph of the resolution warned that the Congress would be compelled to act if its appeal failed and clearly indicated the possibility of mass satyagraha.

"The Congress will then be reluctantly compelled to utilize all the non-violent strength it might have gathered since 1920, when it adopted non-violence as part of its policy for the vindication of the country's political rights and liberty. Such a widespread struggle would inevitably be under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi".

At the end the resolution stated that the Working Committee would refer the resolution to All-India Congress Committee for final decision. And that purpose the A.I.C.C. would meet in Bombay on the 7th of August 1942.

The rejection of the Cripps proposal by the Working Committee was hailed with a sigh of relief by the country, in general. The offer made by Britain was an insult to the nation and the only response to it was total rejection. A nation was either free or not. The farce of partial freedom could not stand in the face of an emergency like the War.

The draft of the resolution was released to the Press on 11th April 1942, and from 14th July to 5th August Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the President of the Indian National Congress was busy with the meetings with Congress leaders from different parts of the country. He impressed on them that if the Government accepted the demand of the congress or at least allowed them to function, the movement must develop strictly according to Gandhi's instructions. If, however, the Government arrested Gandhiji and other Congress leaders, the people would be free to adopt any method, violent or non-violent, to oppose the violence of the Government, in every possible way. It was made clear by the leaders of various parts of the country who came to meet Maulana Abulkalam Azad that the people of Bengal, Bihar, the United Provinces, the Central Province, Bombay and Delhi were fully prepared and the movement would be strong in those provinces. Thus, the country was ready for the freedom struggle.

71. Ibid., PP.81-82.
Soon after the declaration of the Resolution by the Congress Working Committee, the Bombay Provincial Committee had decided to organise daily propaganda meetings in the different parts of the city to popularise the Resolution as well as to prepare people for the proposed movement. Accordingly, the first meeting was held at Chowpaty on the 26th July 1942 under the presidentship of Nagindas T. Master. The meeting was attended by a big crowd of about 5,000 persons including eminent personalities like T.R. Narvane, S.K. Patil, R.A. Khatrikar, Mrs. Shantabai Vengaskar and others. The leaders including Mrs. Shantabai Vengaskar in their speeches insisted that, people should be ready for the last fight of the freedom.

On the very day, Shankarrao Dev, addressed a meeting of about 500 students including 25 ladies at the People's Jinnah Hall, Bombay. He explained the Resolution of Wardha Congress and appealed them to be prepared to participate in the coming struggle. Three days after, he held another meeting of 800 persons in the same Hall. Besides holding the daily meetings, the congress leaders especially Shankarrao Dev and Yusuf Meharally, the mayor of Bombay were prominent in whipping up enthusiasm. They spent much time with students. The main purpose of this propaganda by the

72. Home Department(Spl.) Intelligence Reports regarding the activities carried in the province of Bombay, File No.1110(1)(5).
73. Ibid.
Congress was to create feeling of tension and excitement so that by the time of A.I.C.C. meet, an atmosphere favourable for the movement would be prepared.

THE SESSION OF THE ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE:

It was declared in Wardha Congress, that the meeting of the All India Congress Committee would be held in Bombay. Consequently the atmosphere in Bombay was full of eagerness and zeal. Though, there was little time at hand for preparation, the Bombay Provincial Committee, with the help of Congress workers, was ready to receive the participants with all preparations. A special Pendal was erected on the ground of Gawalia Tank in Bombay. A large number of volunteers numbering about 3,000 from three institutions, namely, the Bombay National Guards, Bombay Seva Dal and People's Volunteer Bridge, including 500 Desh Sevikas were employed in keeping order and peace during the Session. It might be the biggest Session of the A.I.C.C. which was attended by about 10,000 people including 25 members of the A.I.C.C. from different provinces of India. Besides these there were about 5,000 people who had assembled outside the pendal to hear the proceedings. Arrangements of loud-speakers were specially made.

The delegates of the Session were arriving in Bombay since the beginning of August 1942, and they were received heartily by the people of Bombay. On the 3rd August, Mahatma 75. Home Departmental, Intelligence Reports, File No. 1110(1)(5).
Gandhi with Mrs. Kasturba Gandhi, Mahadeobhai Desai and Pyarelal arrived at Bombay station. They were received by about 1000 people including four eminent women Congress workers of Bombay, namely, Mrs. Sofia Khan, Mrs. Shantabai Vengaskar, Mrs. Mrudula Sarabhai and Miss. Maniben Patel.

The Session of All India Congress Committee, opened on the 7th August 1942 in Bombay was momentous in every sense of the word. Among the participants there were 108 prominent personalities of the country of whom there were 18 ladies as Listed below:-

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu            Miss. Miraben
Mrs. Sofiya Khan              Mrs. Sucheta Kripalani
Mrs. Hansa Mehta              Mrs. Mrudula Sarabhai
Mrs. Anusayabai Deshmukh      Mrs. Nargis Batliwala
Mrs. Durgabai Desai           Mrs. Shantabai Vengaskar
Mrs. Suhasini Jambhekar       Mrs. Rajashri Raijee
Mrs. Kamla Devi Chattopadhyaya Mrs. Krishna Hathising
Miss. Maniben Patel            Mrs. Sen Gupta
Mrs. Lilavati Munshi          Mrs. Anil De Silvia

In the opening speech, the President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad explained the meaning of "Quit India" and his expectation of large contribution from the youth in the movement thus:

76. Ibid.
77. Ibid.
"The Congress wanted to see that every Indian youth took part in resisting aggression. The "Quit India" demand does not mean the physical removal of all Britishers from India but it means transfer of Power. Then the famous resolution, known as the "Quit India Resolution" was moved by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and seconded by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. While winding up the debate Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru explained the meaning of the resolution thus:

"This resolution is not a threat. It is an invitation. It is an explanation. It is an offer of co-operation. But still behind it, there is a clear indication that certain consequences will follow if certain events do not happen. It is an offer of co-operation of a free India. On any other terms there will be no co-operation but conflict and struggle?"

On the next day, i.e. on the 8th August 1942, the resolution was finally put to vote and passed by majority, only 12 members dissenting. It was probably the most important resolution ever passed by the All India Congress Committee. Mahatma Gandhi himself spoke for full two hours, in Hindi and English. His speech was described as the charter of liberty, the quintessence of the philosophy of non-violence, the final and unanswerable indictment of

British rule in the country, the symbol of friendship with China, Russia and every oppressed people of the World and a word of glorious encouragement to real and true friends all over the globe who were ready to cherish friendships transcending barriers of race and isolation. It was a rousing call to the dormant soul of Hindustan and to every man and woman who cherished liberty. He ended his speech with these words.

"I have pledged my support to Congress and the Congress will do or die". It was these words which supplied the movement with its famous slogan "Do or Die"—Karange Ya Marenge.

Gandhiji also indicated that he had no intention of starting the movement in hurry. He stated that he would see or address the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow. But the opportunity for such contacts never came as the Government had already decided to crush the movement. Daily reports of Mr. Amery S.L., the Secretary for State of India, to the Prime Minister of England, Mr. Churchill, throw light on the fact how the Government was prepared against the activities of the Congress. It was decided that the Congress leaders would be arrested immediately on ratification of the resolution and the Provincial Congress Committees as well

79. Ibid., PP. 119-120.
as All India Congress Committee would be declared unlawful. And accordingly, in early hours of the morning of 9th August, the Government arrested Gandhiji, members of the Working Committee and some 50 leaders in Bombay. There were eight ladies, namely, Miss Miraben, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Miss. Maniben Patel, Miss. Kisan Dhumatkar, Mrs. Shantabai Vengaskar, Mrs. Kasturba Gandhi, Mrs. Sophia Khan, and Dr. Miss. Sushila Nair. Amongst the prominent leaders, there were Gandhiji, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Acharya J.B. Kripalani, Maulana Abulkalam Azad, Shankarrao Dev and others. It is clear from the reports of the local officers of the Bombay presidency that in Bombay Suburban District 50 men and 33 women were convicted under the Defence of India Rule whereas in West Khandesh three men and one woman were arrested. No female arrest was reported from Sholapur. Some Congress leaders were arrested in route from Bombay to their home district, some others who had not been able to go to Bombay to attend the meeting were arrested by the evening of the 9th August. Thus, as soon as the declaration of the resolution was made the Government started its work of arrest not only in Bombay but all over India. By the morning of next day, the news of the happenings reached the remote corners of the country.


82. Ibid., File No. 1110(4)-D(5).
As soon as the news of the arrest of Congress leaders was spread not only Bombay city but the whole country responded bitterly as was expected by the leaders like Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. And too to surprise the Congress leaders behind the bar and the authorities.

While describing the situation Swarupanand stated that the unexpected happened upsetting all the careful calculations of the authorities. Frank Mores described the situation in the country on 9th August 1942 in his biographical book, "Jawaharlal Nehru" thus:

"A hot gush of mass anger had swelled to the surface and overflowed in violent and non-violent protest. Despite the country-wide arrests which had left them leaderless, thousands of Indians had demonstrated against the repression of the Raj. Confined at first to Bombay, Ahmedabad and Poona, these demonstrations soon spread throughout the country and in certain districts, notably in Bihar, in the Midnapur area of Bengal and in the southeastern tracts of the United Provinces, the long arm of British authority had ceased to function for several days".

There were peaceful hartals and protest meetings, but there were outbreaks of mob violence, arson, murder and sabotage also. Students and workers were prominent in these.

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demonstrations, who were sometimes dispersed by tear gas and baton charges and sometimes fired upon. The revolutionary out-burst of the mass upsurge sprang up leaders from the grass roots, who preached the gospel of Gandhi to the masses and provided them with drive and the direction. That was done through the meetings, morning processions, the Congress Songs and Slogans, leaflets and bulletins, and national Kirtanas.

The 'Quit India' movement provided women an opportunity to prove at the national level their ability to participate in the above mentioned violent, secret as well as underground activities. The women who were strict Gandhian like Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mrs. Kasturba Gandhi, Dr. Miss. Sushila Nair, Mrs. Vijayalaxmi Pandit, Peacefully allowed to be arrested but others like Aruna Asaf Ali, Sucheta Kripalani, Usha Mehta escaped from the police and went in underground and played very important role in the freedom movement of India.

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN:

Participation of Marathi women in the last phase of freedom movement started since its inception, i.e., from 9th August 1942. Women from Bombay, like Miss. Kisan Dhumatkar, Mrs. Sofia Khan, Mrs. Shantabai Vengaskar were arrested early hours in the morning of that day. The daily reports of the Bombay city and the Bombay Congress Bulletin of 10th September 1942, show that the actual participation of women on a large
scale started since 9th September 1942. The country completed one month of Freedom Revolution on the 9th September 1942 and the Bombay Provincial Committee Celebrated the month anniversary in a beautiful manner in which women and girls of Bombay went into action on a large scale and proved that they were not lagging behind in shouldering responsibility of the movement.

On that day some ten girl-students and one boy student of the Elphinstone College arranged **picketing**. In the morning, they sat on the staircases of the college and prevented students from entering the college. The College authorities took help of police and the police arrested them. In the same college two other girl-students distributed objectionable leaflets among the students. They were also arrested.

In the evening, a public meeting of women was arranged at Chowpaty. Women and girls from different parts of the city like C.P. Tank, Hira Bagh, Vithalbhai Patel Road, Lamington Road, Kandivali, Prarthana Samaj, Congress House at the Lamington Road, Seva Sadan School, etc., arranged processions from 2.30 to 3.10 p.m. to attend the meeting at Chowpaty. The procession was to be started from C.P. Tank. So women from the said places started their march towards the C.P. Tank. But as the Government had decided to crush the movement ruthlessly, police tried to disperse
women by means of lathi-charge and arrest, while they were on their way to the C.P. Tank. One such procession of 50 women under the leadership of Mrs. Jaisorai Rajji was stopped by police on its way to C.P. Tank. Police asked them to disperse but as the patriotic women rejected, police used force and seized three Congress flags from the hands of three women and arrested them.

At 2.45 p.m. a batch of 4 women also attempted to take a procession at Vithalbhai Patel Road. In the way they were followed by 50 women. But the procession could not reach to the target, i.e. C.P. Tank, as it was forcibly dispersed by the police.

At 3.10 p.m. of the same day a batch of 24 girls formed procession at Kandivali. The Police asked them to give their address and disperse. But as the girls boldly denied to give their names they were arrested. Just after 15 minutes the police became successful in arresting a similar batch of 39 girls for the same reason. In the meanwhile, on the Lamington Road Station, about 40 Desh Sevikas of whom 34 were in saffron colour saries tried to march procession near Prarthana Samaj with small tri-colour flags and they were arrested. Because of the arrest of women and girls-Satyagrahis and the evil treatment given to them began to express their grievances against the police.

by throwing stones from all directions. The situation became tense when women and girl-satyagrahis were taken to the police station. In the clash between the public and the police two police officers, one Inspector and one Police Sub Inspector were injured. About this time, one more procession of men and women numbering about 134 intercepted near the Congress House at Lamington Road. Like women, girls also came forward and a batch of 20 girls from Seva Sadan School formed a procession. While they were marching infront of the Lamington Road Police Station on their way they shouted Congress slogans like "Quit India", "Do or Die" etc. They were immediately arrested.

In Gamdevi area also attempt was made by lady students to form a procession. A large number of lady students of about 300, in batches formed a procession. One of the batches led by Mrs. Jainrainji Naik was broken by mild cane charge. The Satyagrahis were very firm in reaching their destination. They, therefore, again started the procession to enter the sands of Chowpaty, but it was dispersed by the police making lathi charge on the Satyagrahis.

On the same day again a procession of 72 women were arrested at Maheshwari. Out of them 63 were discharged in the afternoon and remaining 9 women who were the ring leaders were kept in jail for prosecution. In the same way at Lamington Road 79 women were arrested out of which 39 were 88. Ibid.
discharged at night and 30 were discharged on the next morning where as 10 leaders from them were kept in detention.

The Bombay Congress Bulletin of 10th September, 1942 gave a detail account of the meeting at Chowpaty thus:

Thousands of women took part in the procession inspite of the best efforts of the police to curtail it. The police tried to disperse them first by tear-gass but when they came to know that it was in vain, they used cane and lathi-charges. Nevertheless a large contingent of about 600 women managed to reach Chowpaty, the destination where they wanted to reach as a protest to the Government. At Chowpaty police in their nervousness opened fire and seriously injured passersby.

The battle reached in its high-pitch when the police tried to snatch away the flag from the hands of Manjula Vasudev Mokashi, a 14 year old girl. But that small patriotic girl put up a brave fight for several minutes and let go her hold of the flag only when she became unconscious from the effect of merciless beating by the police. And nearly 200 women were arrested. Many of them were taken to Yervada jail as there were no vacancies in Bombay jails.

89. Ibid.
It is clear from the above account that on the 9th September, processions were taken from the various parts of the city. They had to face bitter atrocities of police but those inspired women did not leave the cause incomplete. According to the Daily Reports of Home Department there were 321 arrests on that day out of which 296 were women. Thus once again women proved their responsibility towards the nation bravely.

Like the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930, the Government declared the Congress illegal at the very beginning of the movement, and started arresting people. As a result, with a view to continue the movement the Congress workers started working secretly and established secret centres at various places. But the Government had strict watch on them and in the evening of the 19th September, the special branch of police raided one such centre in a flat of the Ground floor of Manu Villa, Matunga and 8 persons including one woman, namely, Kavitaben, Sukharam Divecha were arrested. Although she was convicted in the last Civil Disobedience Movement she again joined the "Quit India Movement" without losing her courage.

From the account of the Bombay Congress Bulletin dated 21st September 1942, it can be seen that the movement was spread all over Maharashtra. The Bulletin stated thus:

"Reports are being received from all over Maharashtra of great unrest and resistance towards the authority. There have been firings all over Maharashtra particularly at Satara and Mahad. Hundreds of arrests have been taking place daily. Reports have also been received of mass movement having been started in the smaller states like Sangli, Ichalkaranji etc."

Further it gave accounts of unrest in Poona as, "In Poona, students’ strike is going on in full force. Thousands of students of the Fergusson College recently held meeting inside the college compound and demanded the name of the college should be changed to some national name".

Like Poona, in Bombay on the 25th September afternoon, a mixed procession of boys and girls students numbering about 100 was held near Fellowship School at Gawalia Tank. They were shouting slogans as mentioned earlier. Using force the police dispersed the procession. But six girl students were not ready to move from their places. The police compelled them to give their address but those little soldiers of the freedom movement refused it boldly. They were arrested and taken to the police station. They were released when they gave their address before night."
Thus Maharashtra, like other parts of India, opened its glorious chapter of Indian history. The people of Maharashtra including the small States like Sangli, Ichalkaranji and especially women and students of Bombay and Poona responded to the "Quit India" movement vigorously. The expectation of the Government that after the arrest of leaders the movement would be nowhere was proved false by the people. And it proved, what Gandhiji told in his speech on the 8th August in Bombay that, the voice of the Congress was the voice of the whole nation. After the famous Quit India Resolution, every one who participated in the cause became a Congress volunteer. The atmosphere of India during the period was so magnetic that people, especially, women who were never in contact with politics and not accustomed to the public life, at all came forward and held their responsibility successfully.

Though the Government was arresting people on a large scale, it seems that it did not affect the courage and valour of the people.

BOMBAY:
ARUNA ASAF ALI (1905):

Though, Aruna Asaf Ali is from out of Maharashtra, she played such a dynamic role during the "Quit India Movement" that without considering the account of her activities, the history of freedom movement, not only of Maharashtra but of India will be incomplete. She had been an ardent soldier of the army of freedom fighters.
She comes from a respectable Ganguli family of Bengal. She had her early education in Lahore and then she completed her education at Naini, Tal. Later Aruna met Asaf Ali, a promising lawyer and a Persian Scholar at Allahabad and they became attached to each other. There was great opposition for their marriage for they both belonged to the different communities, i.e., Asaf Ali was a Muslim and Aruna, a Hindu girl. But Aruna clung to her decision and inspite of opposition married Asaf Ali in 1924.

During the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930, Aruna was residing at Delhi. During the movement she led processions and arranged public meetings to create enthusiasm among people, especially, women. Her activities alarmed the chief Commissioner of Delhi. As a consequence, he persecuted her not for sedition but for being a vagrant, having no ostensible means of livelihood. She was asked to furnish security of good behaviour but she boldly refused to furnish any undertaking. Aruna was arrested and was sentenced to one year's imprisonment and kept in Lahore jail. A few months later of her arrest most of the political prisoners were released under the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. However, the Government, did not think it proper to release Aruna. On account of that other women co-prisoners refused to leave the prison. At last, Gandhiji had to intervene and then women co-prisoners were ready to be released. But there was strong public agitation against the decision of the Government.

92. The Tribune, 10 February 1947, Quoted from Kaur, Manmohan. Role of Women in the Freedom Movement of India(1857-1947), Sterling Publisher(p) Ltd., Delhi 1968, P.236.
for which Aruna was released soon.

Aruna again participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1932 and was arrested. In addition to her 3 months' imprisonment she was fined two-hundred rupees. Failing to get the fine so imposed the police adopted novel method of taxing her patience. They seized several of her most expensive saries.

After the release from Jail, Aruna for the next ten years remained away from active politics and she watched the developments in the country with interest and formed her own ideas regarding the programme and methods of achieving freedom. Asaf Ali, her husband was a follower of Gandhi. Aruna was of the firm opinion that violence was necessary to achieve the goal of freedom. She had respect for Gandhiji, no doubt, but she felt that personal feelings for Gandhiji should not deter the party from achieving its pre-eminent goal of political independence.

QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT AND ARUNA:

Aruna accompanied her husband to Bombay to attend the All India Congress Committee meeting on the 7th August 1942.

93. Ibid.
94. Ibid.
On the 9th August the Congress declared a flag hoisting ceremony at Gowalia Tank Maidan in Bombay. Due to the declaration of the Quit India Resolution on the previous day, there was curiosity about the ceremony among the people and so a large number of people including women and children were present for the ceremony. But as it is already mentioned that all the great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Asaf Ali, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Sarojini Naidu and others were arrested on the 8th August, there was great curiosity among both the public and the police who were present there, that who would hoist the flag. People were waiting for the guest and young Aruna came immediately on the ground, hoisted the flag and went away. This happened so abruptly that no one, even the watching police could come to know about it, but when they saw the flag was hoisted and some people were giving slogans like "Mahatma Gandhiji Ki Jai" Police became furious and at once used tear-gas by which many women and children got fainted. People began to escape from the tear-gas as well as lathi-charge and even bullets by the police.

As leaders of the Congress and the Working Committee were behind the bar: and though, Gandhiji told that every one was free to join the Quit India Movement, the need of an organisation to guide the movement was felt by the congress Socialist leaders like Mr. Achyut Rao Patwardhan, Mr. Narendra Dev, Mr. Rammanohar Lohia, Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali and Mrs. Sucheta Kripalani. These...
leaders met, soon after the declaration of the Quit India Resolution, in Bombay and decided to form a shadow AICC. The organisation under the leadership of Aruna Asaf Ali and Achyatrao Patwardhan was in great success in establishing contacts with various political organisations and their leaders from all over the provinces. They gave direction and offered advice to the freedom movement. The shadow AICC in Bombay issued bulletins, leaflets, on behalf of the Congress under the signature of Aruna Asaf Ali and Mr. Achyutrao Patwardhan. Thus, after the arrest of Congress leaders, Aruna handled the situation in the Bombay province boldly and courageously. But her work could not last long as police soon found her residence in Bombay and seized subversive literature in her residence. She, however, went underground and avoided the arrest. Thus, Aruna proved what she told to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad at the Victoria Terminus railway station at Bombay when she went to see her husband and other leaders on 9th August, that she would find something and would not remain idle.

Till 1946, Aruna kept carrying her activities from underground. The Government gave her a notice that she should surrender within a month but as she turned a deaf ear to it, on the 26th September 1942 her property in Delhi was forfeited by the Delhi Administration. But this did not deter Aruna from her determination and she continued her activities. During

the period she organised various activities like publishing bulletins, participating in the movement, going from place to place to meet the leaders of the movement, raising funds she needed for the work etc. She even met Gandhiji at Agakhan palace but the police could not arrest her.

One of the noteworthy works of Mrs. Aruna along with Rammanohar Lohia, during the Quit India Movement was the publication of "Inquilab", a monthly journal of the Indian National Congress. It did help the people of India, especially, students to participate in the movement without any confusion in mind. While advising, she stated in the issue of "Inquilab" of March 1944 thus:

"To choose his (freedom fighter) field of work and if the aim is common do not allow any academic and therefore futile arguments on question like violence or non-violence to divert your attention from the stern realities of today.... This revolution is the most opportune moment for taking and making preparation for our next effort. I want every student and youth to think and feel as soldiers of the resolution that was to come".

Aruna came out in open when warrants against her were cancelled on 26th January 1946. A month later, i.e. in February 1946, she suggested to the Congress to create a new Azad Hind Army in India under the banner of the Congress.

While explaining the need of such an army she said thus:

"We have no place for more intellectuals, we want practical people who can carry the message of independence throughout the country".

Aruna continued her political work till India attained the freedom. Yusuf J. Maharaj wrote about her role in the daily Tribune thus:

"The heroine of 1857 was the Rani of Jhansi, that of 1942 revolution is undoubtedly Aruna Asaf Ali."

USHA MEHTA (1920):

Usha Hariprasad Mehta was another eminent woman who played a very important role in the Congress Radio during the Quit India Movement.

She was born on 24th March 1920 at Satara in Surat district. She completed her Bachelor of Arts degree in 1939 by standing first in the Bombay University from Wilson college. Usha was interested in law and passed LL.B. in 1941. But then came the Quit India Movement and her attention was then diverted from studies to politics. The only political activity she had so far been involved was her meeting with fellow students interested in promoting the use of Hindi as a national language. But it seems that she was attracted to

101. The Tribune, 18th February, 1946, Ibid., P.239.
the freedom movement right from her childhood. During the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930, Vanar Sena, i.e., Children's organisations were formed all over India which helped in passing messages to the persons involved in the movement and distributing bulletins among people. Usha was taking her education then at Baroda. One such Vanar Sena of about 30-40 girls was formed under the leadership of Usha in Baroda. The civil Disobedience Movement impressed the school going girls greatly and they decided to have flag, procession through the main streets of Baroda city. They organised the procession but soon the police took off the flags from the hands of the girls and dispersed them easily. But this little girl, Usha, felt the assault of the Congress flag very much and she again arranged a procession on the next morning adopting a new way of holding flags. These girls went to the Khadi Bhandar, took cloth and prepared dresses in trio-colour. On the second day, early in the morning they went to the police station and asked the police courageously to take off the trio-colour that they wore in the form of dress and police could not do anything else but to keep quiet. This incident told by Usha Mehta throws light on the fact that how the atmosphere in India during the Civil Disobedience Movement was inspired and even children also tried their best to stand for the nation.

Usha Mehta attended the Congress Session on the 8th August 1942. It was her desire to do something to make the

Lecture by Usha Mehta on the Participation of Women in the Freedom Movement of India at a seminar held at Undale on the occasion of celebration of 15th Annual Freedom Fighters Seminar on 18th February 1989.
resolution a success. She wanted to do something different from civil disobedience and she got the opportunity when Mr. Ram Manohar Lohiya, Mr. Achyutrao Patwardhan, Babubhai Khakar and Usha discussed about the starting of a Congress Radio.

The Congress Radio worked from 27th August 1942 to 12th November 1942, in Bombay. It worked mostly from 8.30 a.m. every day, with the announcement by Usha Mehta that "This is the Congress Radio on 24.48 meters some where in India." It started with the song "Sare Jahanse Achche Hindostan Hamara" and ended with Bande Mataram, the national anthem. Usha was mainly assigned the task of broadcasting news in Hindustani on the radio. It was the Congress Radio that gave the news like Chittagong bomb raid, strike of workers at Jamshedpur as well as the atrocities done by the police at Chumur and Ashti. The speeches were mostly delivered by Mr. Ram Manohar Lohia, in which attempts were made to clarify and explain the Congress stand both from national and international point of view. While explaining the "Quit India Movement" with a view to inspire people for the struggle it commented thus:

104. Written information from Usha Mehta, also refer to Phadake, Y.D., Congress Radiocha Itihas, Marathi article in Dinak Marathi magazine November 1984, also refer to Limaye, Madhu, Op.Cit., p.127.

105. Ibid.
"So far we are conducting movement but now we are conducting a revolution. In a revolution there is Victory or Defeat. This revolution is not of one party or community but the whole of India, we hope you will not rest till the British Empire is burnt to ashes".

Like news in Hindustani, English news was also broadcasted by Miss. Kumi Dastur, a Parsi lady. The police came to know that there was a girl involved in broadcasting but they could not know her name that is why her name was not recorded.

However, the radio could not work for a long time. Though, to keep it away from the police, efforts were made by Usha Mehta and others to change the place, of the radio time to time. Police raided the place on the 12th November 1942 at night. Usha Mehta and others present there were arrested, but inspite of six months' continuous interrogation the police could not get any information from her and finally charged her with "agreeing in conspiring among and between ourselves and others to do or cause to be done illegal acts like possessing, establishing, maintaining and working illegal wireless telegraph without lawful-authority or excuse prejudicial acts and spreading prejudicial reports. The case was decided and Usha Mehta was sentenced to four years' imprisonment. She remained in jail till April 1946.

106. The Congress Radio Calling, Accused No. 3 in the Congress Radio Conspiracy case-papers in Possession of Usha Mehta P.4.
109. Ibid., Also refer to Kaur, Manmohan, Op.Cit.
Response of Satara to the "Quit India Movement" was a unique one. People of Satara not only showed their resentment against the British by the activities like burning of post-offices, looting of pay trains, destroying telegraphic wires but they-established a parallel Government or Pratisarkar. During 1943 to 46 it worked successfully especially in the talukas of Khanapur, Tasgaon, Waiva, and in Sangii, Miraj Budhagaon under the leadership of Nana Patil who is popularly know in Maharashtra as "Kranti Sinh". Like Satara, parallel Governments were formed in places like Ballia, Midanaper, Bhagalpur etc., but they lasted either for some days or months. While explaining the work done by the parallel Government in Satara Mr. Jaiprakash Narain said that if like Satara, in other parts of India also there would have been the parallel Governments, the independence of India would have been brought definitely nearer.

Like the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930, the participation of women of Satara in the "Quit India Movement" was unique. The parallel Government became successful because of the women of the Satara area who not only provided bread but also protected the underground people many a time. Among the women of Satara one woman, namely, Rajamati Patil alias Tai Aitawadekar played such an important role in the parallel Government of Satara that according to Mr. Kaka Desai, a freedom fighter, without considering the role played by Tai Aitawadekar, the history of the parallel Government would be incomplete.

RAJMATI PATIL:

Born in 1909 in a Patil family of Aitawade in Sangli district, Rajmati lost her mother in her childhood. She started her education at about the age of ten in Jain Shavika Ashram at Sholapur. There in Sholapur, Rajmati for the first time, came into contact with eminent persons like Kailash Chandra Vibhute and others. The work of those leaders attracted Rajmati to the freedom movement of India during her school days.

In 1942, she distributed the proscribed literature before the office of Police Sub-Inspector of Sholapur and also led a procession of women in the city of Sholapur for which she was sentenced eleven months' rigorous imprisonment. She was sent to Yervada Jail, where she met other eminent women like Miss. Prema Kantak, Mrs. Leelavati Patil, daughter-in-law of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and others. There were about 150 women political prisoners. As due to the policy of the Government to arrest people haphazardly, the prisons were becoming overflown, the Government had to adopt a policy to release some prisoners. As such Rajmati was released after six months. She again wanted to join the school at Sholapur but as the management did not want such revolutionary girl in its school, she was not permitted and Rajmati had to return to her native place.

113. Personal interview of Rajmati Birnale alias Tai Aitwadekar Ankalkhop by the scholar, dated 15.9.87 also refer to Rudrawani Marathi journalist and 15th August 1982.
114. Ibid, also refer to Swatantrya Sainikancha Charitrakosha Vol.II, P.434.
115. Personal interview of Rajmati Patil.
After the establishment of parallel Government, it was necessary to have independent army and in 1944 Mr. Nagnath Naikwadi tried to form a military organisation. He was mainly assisted in that task by G.D. Lad, who later became the Field Marshal of Tufan Sena of the Parallel Government, Kisan Ahir, Rajmati Patil, and others. One Sikh soldier namely, Nanaksing from the Azad Hind Sena trained the army in the forest of Mandur in Shirala Taluka. During the camp the police of Shirala came to know about the training and attacked the camp. Rajamati was there for training who challenged the police and encouraged the soldier by shouting in inspiring words as "Go up Kaka", "Shoot Kaka", etc. along with the Congress slogans such as "Mahatma Gandhiki Jai", "Bharat mataki Jai" and other war cries like "Har Har Mahadeo", Shivaji Maharajki Jai" etc. She, with Y.C. Patil and Nagnath Naikwadi opened fire on the Police. They succeeded in escaping from the hands of police. Rajamati felt the necessity of having a ladies branch of Tufan Sena and in 1945 she arranged on such training camp at Aitawade. Though the details of the training of women are not available it is a notable fact that some women came forward to form a military organisation, i.e., Mahila Tufan Sena.

Day by day the underground activities of the Parallel government increased as the movement progressed and it fell short of arms and ammunition. Nagnath Naikwadi, G.D. Lad and

112. 1. Shinde, A.D., Parallel Government in Satarara Phase of Quit India Movement, A thesis submitted for Ph.D.

p. 169 also refer to, Shivanikar, R. Op.Cit.; p-169

and Information from Kaka’ Desai.
Rajamati Patil provided arms and ammunition to the Tufan Sena. They used to bring arms and ammunition from Poona Military Camp. Once when Rajamati and Mr. V. L. Patil, ex-minister for Social and Welfare Department of the Karnataka State, went to Poona to bring arms and ammunition and one police on the Poona Station who recognized Rajamati stopped her and began to enquire why she had come to Poona. But anyway Rajamati and Mr. V. L. Patil escaped. Rajamati and others went to places of long distance like Goa and brought ammunition. Like the activity of collecting arms and ammunitions, Rajamati was present at the time of looting of Government treasury at Sakri in Dhulia district. She wanted to participate in the looting but all other colleagues were of the opinion that she should not join the risk. Rajamati had to live at Amalner in the house of Dr. Uttamrao Patil. But later she and Nathaji Lad, another soldier of the mission went Nandgaon to help their colleagues in taking away the loot.

In the parallel Government of Satara Rajamati worked effectively in co-operation with Naganath Naikwadi, G. D. Lad and Balwantrao Biranale to eradicate decoity in the Satara region. Thus Rajamati Patil participated in various activities like protecting underground soldiers, bringing arms and

117. 1. Personal interview of Rajmati Patil.
ammunition, conveying messages to the underground, abolishing decoity and keeping peace etc. But unfortunately, no detail account of the role played by Rajamati Patil or even by the women of Satara either in Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930 or in Quit India Movement was taken by scholars like A.R. Bhosale, who made research on the freedom movement of Satara except giving passing by reference to Rajamati Patil. A.D. Shinde, another scholar, who worked on the parallel Government of Satara has given account of Rajamati Patil to some extent. Raghav Shivnikar has given detail account of the role played by Rajamati Patil during the freedom movement.

LILAVATI PATIL:

Lilavati Patil was another eminent woman who worked in Dhulia and was one of the colleagues of Rajamati Patil during the last phase of freedom movement of India.

Lilavati was born on the 15th March 1922 in Sakora, a village of Nasik district. Her father Mr. Vamanrao was a satyashodhak and an ardent follower of Jotirao Phule. As such she got lessons of equality in her childhood from her father. She completed her primary education and got married at the age of sixteen to Dr. Uttamrao Patil of Dhulia. Her

marriage was celebrated in a very simple manner and a sahabhojan i.e., common party was arranged, when about 10,000 people from all castes were present. For that, both Mr. Uttamrao and Lilavati had to face social boycott.

WORK IN DHULIA:

Dr. Uttamrao and Lilavati propagated khaddar in the villages of Dhulia district. They personally were hawking Khaddar and while hawking, they propagated the work of Congress and enlisted members for the Congress. Lilavati had done creditable constructive work in regard to village cleanliness, health and upliftment of backward classes.

It was impossible that the activities of Lilavati and Dr. Uttamrao could leave them free for a long time. During the phase of Individual Satyagraha Movement of 1940 both of them were arrested under the Defence Rules of India and sentenced one and half months' rigorous imprisonment. Again in the "Quit India" Movement Lilavati participated in sabotage activities. In Amalner under the leadership of Lilavati a public meeting was held in which she inspired the people against the British rule. As a result, under the leadership Lilavati the buildings of the Court, Post Office, and railway station of Amalner were burnt by the people. The Government

sentenced a common fine of Rs.15,000 for Amalner city and Martial Law was declared in the city. The Government sent military army to crush the movement in Amalner. But this fearless lady arranged a public meeting and defied the Martial Law, in which she was seriously beaten by the police and was arrested. She was sentenced seven and half years' rigorous imprisonment. Later the Government arrested Lilavati's mother-in-law and brother-in-law also. somehow Dr.Uttamrao escaped from police successfully and went in underground.

ESCAPE FROM JAIL:

Mrs.Lilavati was first kept in Dhulia Jail and then in Yeravda jail, Poona. When she was in Poona, her husband Dr.Uttamrao Patil was in Satara with Mr.G.D. Lad, Mr.Baba Mirge, Mr.Sada Pawar and other members of the parallel Government. When Nana Patil, the hero of the parallel Government, came to know about the courageous work of Lilavati, he decided to release her. Accordingly, a plan was prepared in which two women Mrs.Vijayabai, the wife of G.D. Lad and Mrs.Shalutai Mirge with her newly born baby participated. All of them went to Poona and released Lilavati, who was under medical treatment in Sasoon Hospital, under the police watch, on 25th May 1945. With the help of Mrs.Vijayabai and Mrs.Shalutai Mirge, Lilavati could travel Safely and reach Satara after four days.

124. 1. Information from Dr.Uttamrao Patil Dhulia 1986.
125. Captain Lad, Rum.Mrs.Vijayatai Lad- A Revolutionary, Quoted from Bapu Lad Gaurav Granth P.15.
The Government tried to arrest her again by placing an incentive of Rs.1,000 before people, but it could not help the police to arrest her as no one came forward to give information about her. Later she became the captain of the ladies branch of Tufan Sena and in cooperation with Rajamati Patil, Mrs. Vijaya Lad, played an eminent role in the parallel Government of Satara.

The Government declared a prize of Rs.1000 when she was absconded from the jail. But even the prize could not help the police to arrest her. She then became the captain of ladies branch of Tufan Sena of the Parallel Govt. in Satara. She with her colleagues Miss Rajmati Patil alias Tai Aitawadekar, Vijaya Patil, Mrs. Indumati Vishwasrao Patil and other women played a prominent role in the parallel government of Satara.

KOLHAPUR:

In the year 1943-44, the Quit India movement was rather in full swing in Kolhapur as in other parts of Maharashtra as well as in India. Many sabotage activities like postal runner robbery, cutting of telegraphic wires, burning of liquor shops, temple dacoity, burning of police-station etc. were successfully done in Shirala, Hatkanangale, Panhala and Shahuwadi Peta of the Kolhapur State under the leadership of

127. Ibid.
Though, the women participation in the movement of Kolhapur, were small in number, their participation inspired the spirit of the people against the British. The Kolhapur Durbar proclaimed a law against procession, Prabhat pheries etc. On 19th January, 1943, two women from Rendal near Kolhapur, namely, Leelavati Pitambar Malvade and Mrs. Sonubai Annappa Sutar with two boys, viz. Khushruddin Babulal Attar and Basavling Virabhadra Chikhale of Sangaon organised a Prabhat pheri on Bhausingji Road in Kolhapur and shouted slogans against the British rulers and the Regent of Kolhapur. As they violated the law, they were arrested by the police but as the participants were ladies and children they were sentenced a fine of Rs.25 each.

Kisantai Jayaram Shete was the first woman of Kolhapur who participated in the movement. She was an active member of the organisation of Praja Parishad in Kolhapur which was started in 1941 under the leadership of Ratnappa Kumbhar and Bhai Madhavarao Bagal.

In Quit India movement Kisantai was courted jail for three times. For the first time she was sentenced five days imprisonment for distributing proscribed literature whereas,

129. Ibid, File No.137 K.No.15.
at the second time she was sentenced ten days' rigorous imprisonment for observing Satyagraha before the office of the Resident. At the third time she participated in the public meeting at Miraj for which she was courted five days' imprisonment and deported from Miraj. She was one of the active underground participants during 1942 to 47.

BHAGIRATHIBAI TAMBAT AND JAYABAI HAVERI:

The two other women, who courageously participated were Mrs. Bhagirathibai Tambat and Mrs. Jayabai Haveri. Both of them as well as Kisanlai Shete were inspired by the cause by their respective husbands.

BHAGIRATHIBAI TAMBAT AND JAYABAI HAVERI:

Bhagirathibai, the wife of Dattatraya Tambat, a renowned revolutionary of Kolhapur was born in 1916. Being little educated up to 4th she married in 1931. She played an eminent role in the 'Quit India' movement.

Her husband prepared her for the movement. Bhagirathibai with her colleague, Jayabai Haveri picketed two-three times at important places like court in Kolhapur and propagated for the involvement in the movement. They asked the judge and advocates while picketing before the court to join the movement. They were arrested but were released on the same day. From this experience they came to know the fact that women were not punished and became more and more bold.

Jayabai Haveri, the third woman of Kolhapur, who joined the movement was born in 1910. Though she was from a backward class family she was educated up to 7th standard. She was attracted by the work of freedom fighters in Kolhapur like Ratnappa Kumbhar, Jayaram Haveri, Dattatraya Tambat. She used to meet these persons. She got married to Jayaram Haveri, a Lingayat by caste. This was the first intercaste marriage in Kolhapur. After marriage they had to face tremendous difficulties as they were boycotted by their respective families as well as by neighbours. They could not get even a rented house for living. At this critical moment Govindrao Korganokar, the renowned reformer of Kolhapur and Jayaram Haveri's friends helped them.

With a view to increase hatred among the people against the British rule it was decided by the Congress leaders of Kolhapur to disfigure the statue of Lord Wilson, ex-Governor of Bombay, which was installed in Ferris Market. Kolhapur. Jayabai Haveri and Bhagirathibai Tambat were assigned the work. As per the plan a ladder and tar was kept ready near the Statue by other Congress workers. On 10th August 1942, in the noon, these courageous ladies went in Ferris Market and poured tar which was kept in earthen pots, on the statue and dispersed away. Soon the police came to know about it and they found out Mrs. Jayabai and arrested her. At night

134. Kolhapur Daftar, File No. 197, K.N. 105, 42 also interview with the two ladies.
they went to Mrs. Bhagirathibai's home but she regreted to open the door as she was alone in the home with her small children. Police had to wait till the morning and next morning she was arrested and both were courted six months' rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 25 or in default two months' rigorous imprisonment under the Defence Act of India Rule 38(5) and one month's simple imprisonment under Indian Penal Code 426. In this way both were sentenced nine months imprisonment in all.

Being not only the wife of freedom fighter but herself a freedom fighter, Mrs. Bhagirathibai had to face tremendous difficulties. As her husband, Pattatraya-Tambat was completely engaged with revolutionary activities, Bhagirathibai had to shoulder all kinds of household responsibilities. At night she used to spin and in the morning she sold it and managed for bread and butter of her children. Neighbours were not ready to co-operate or to talk either with her or her children. She had to change her rented house often as soon as the house owner came to know that she was involved in the movement. But this brave lady was never disappointed. She pulled on very courageously. She was pregnant when she was arrested and delivered in the jail only. There was nobody to look after her children and the Police department

135. Ibid.
tried to convince her to accept her work against the government and assure them not to participate in the movement any more so that they would release her and she would be able to live with her children. But she regretted it and completed the sentence.

ATTITUDE OF SOCIETY TOWARDS WOMEN AGITATORS:

For the first time in the history of India, women boldly participated in the freedom movement. The attitude of the Congress workers and co-workers towards women was sympathetic and co-operative. Due to this co-operation only women could participate whole-heartedly in the movement and complete any work like distributing proscribed literature, or supplying arms and ammunitions, or looking after the underground workers, very courageously and confidently. It is quite proper to say that there was no difference of sex during the freedom movement of India.

But as far as society was concerned, almost all interviewers admitted that no co-operation was sought, not only from neighbours but even from relatives. All participants especially, women had to stand firm and bold and face the criticism by society as well as by their respective family members.

136. Interview with Mrs. Bhagirathibai Tambat.
   3. Interview with freedom fighters.
GOVERNMENT MEASURES AGAINST WOMEN AGITATORS:

The authorities from the very first regarded women as intruders and resented at their presence in the freedom movement of India. But the increasing number of women in processions and public meetings required the Government to formulate a policy towards women agitators. The Commissioner of Excise in Bombay wrote to the Collector and District Magistrate of Ahmedabad on July, 30, 1930, that there was no statute or legislation to stop them from taking action against women. Women picketers had affected business activity and revenues, and it was therefore, the responsibility of the government to protect their interests. The Government decided to discourage the women by arresting their leaders, driving them away in a lonely place and releasing them when the disturbance was over, only the most determined of them were prosecuted, the majority were only fined or summoned for questioning.

In a secret Home Department Circular the special role of women in the national movement, was noted. It pointed out that the Congress deliberately placed women in the forefront when the police were about to take action to disperse the crowds. The police were advised to counteract these unchivalrous tactics by arresting and realising them once the disturbance was over. The Government did not want to fill up prisons with women.

Most of the provinces had no facilities to accommodate female prisoners. They had either to transfer women prisoners to a province which had women's prison or to accommodate them with criminals. Mostly the second alternative was adopted.

Women, however, were not discouraged by the fines, police atrocities like imprisonment, arrest or summons, tear gas or lathi charge. On the other hand they became more awakened of their responsibility and came forward on a large number and joined the movement. They continued marching processions and showed determination and courage when faced by the police. Gangabai Vaidya, a volunteer injured in one of the processions, described the incident in a letter to Mahatma Gandhi as follows:

"When all of a sudden the police came down upon us with a shower of lathi blows and I came in for a big share of them, receiving several on the head, the arms, the back, the face and the ears. Blood steamed out from a wound caused on my head but did not budge an inch and asked the other sisters to sit down. Many a time in the movement, the police used severe lathi charge to women to disperse them or to take off flag from their hands, but women never discouraged.

140. Interview with Bhagirathibai Tambat and Gulab Mhatre. Also refer to Apte, Radhabai, Op.Cit.
141. The collected works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol.XLV Appendix III.
142. Interview with Gulab Mhatre, Bombay, and Dr. Shanta Kulkarni Nasik, 6th May, 1985.
At the beginning there was only cursing on the part of the authorities, but later they became more vociferous. It was infinitely easier for sensitive women to bear physical torture than insults. Many and varied were the insults inflicted on them. When fields were confiscated or peasants refused to pay tax they were driven away and lashed, their ploughs were snatched and their cattle were taken away. Police were not satisfied by adopting such measures. They entered the houses, picked up what they could, the few copper vessels, the more precious pickles and preserves, smashed the earthen pots, that had so long cooked the family meals, and finally after turning out the inmates, locked and sealed the houses.

It mattered little whether there was a new-born babe or an old woman on her death-bed they were thrown out without concern. The defaulters were put under arrest and taken on the long march to the nearest lock-up under the blazing sun. The women were made to drudge as the police marched besides them, abuses or ugly jokes to humiliate them.

In the villages the majesty and the grandeur of the people's strength was shown at its best, just as the police repression showed itself at its worst. For one thing the villagers were mostly illiterate not conversant with law and procedures and could be billied and terrorised without 143. Interview with Jayabai Haveri, Parbatabai Rahangadale also refer to Baig, Tara. Ali (Ed.) Op.Cit. PP.26-27.
fear of intelligent challenge. Also, Indian villages were so scattered and communications were also poor that what happened in them escaped the eyes and ears of the world. But it was here, in these remote regions, that the men and women of India as well as of Maharashtra showed their real genius and strength. Of course these atrocities did not discourage the women, but activated the desire in them to suffer more to sacrifice and more to achieve.

TOWARDS THE GOAL:

The leaders of the major political parties were in jail between 1942 to 44 and the people had to continue efforts for the freedom movement. The Government was still reluctant to open negotiations with Indian Leaders on constitutional set up. The labour party of England became critical of the policy of British Government in regard to India, and condemned it for its failure to arrive at some workable solution. In December 1944 the Labour Party of the British Parliament passed a resolution where in it regards with a view to securing a place for India as a self-governing member of the British common wealth.

The next year was significant in nature for it had witnessed a new British offer which was announced by Lord Wavell, the then Viceroy. General elections in Great Britain which were held in July, 1945, the Labour Party was in power. Secondly the ending of second world war also effected the policy of Britain.