JAWAHARLAL NEHRU AND THE MERGER OF
THE FRENCH SETTLEMENTS INTO
THE INDIAN UNION

Thesis submitted
for the award of the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in
HISTORY

by
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dedicated to my beloved parents
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the Thesis entitled "Jawaharlal Nehru and the Merger of the French Settlements into the Indian Union" submitted to Pondicherry University for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History is a record of original work done by me under the guidance of Professor Dr. Mahavir Singh, Director, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Behala, Kolkata and that it has not formed the basis for the award of any other degree, certificate or any other title by any University / Institute before.

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PREFACE

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The thesis entitled “Jawaharlal Nehru and the Merger of the French Settlements into the Indian Union” is a work done by me which analyze the role of Jawaharlal Nehru in relation to the French settlements, Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe, Yanam, Chandernagore and its merger into the Indian Union.

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I express my deep and sincere gratitude to my beloved parents, sisters and brothers, and Mr. M. Somasundaram, for their encouragement and support in all my endeavours,

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

National leaders like Motilal Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Sardar Vallabhai Patel and so on have contributed substantially for the attainment of independence for India from the British. The application of the new concept of Non-Violence introduced by Mahatma Gandhi in the independence struggle received the attraction of many in India and abroad. The mighty power of the British had to face the tactics of Non-Violence policy advocated by Mahatma Gandhi. The partition of India planned by the British brought about untold misery to the inhabitants of India and Pakistan. However, the urge for getting freed from the colonial power persisted in India and was taken seriously by those residing in the Portuguese and French colonies. But the freedom enjoyed by those of independent India enthused the subjects of the French to establish their colonies in India. Active attempt for liberating these pockets from the French after the Indian Independence was started. A number of individuals came forward to organize themselves in different associations targeted towards the liberation of French pockets. However, on account of the diplomacy followed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru the French pockets in India especially Pondicherry continued to be a window for the French culture.

Therefore the present work highlights the activities of the role played by Indian National Leaders and those in the colonies. Special emphasis may be laid on astute labour and diplomacy of Pandit
Jawaharlal Nehru while looking at the role played by the people of French colonies. Attempts were made to collect information from the founders of French India Students Congress like Shatrugh Paramael, Paul Radjandassou and Antoine Vallabh Mariadassou. Late Ansari Douraisamy, late Dorai Munusamy, late R. L. Purushothama Reddiar and late S.R. Subramanian fought for the freedom movement. Similarly the communist party of Pondicherry too participated actively in the freedom movement. Late V.Subbiah and his colleagues fought for freedom under the communist banner. They published their “New Age”. Late Edouard Goubert established National Democratic Party and later renamed it as French India Socialist Party with his co-worker late Lambert Saravane.

The union territory of Pondicherry comprises four regions: Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam. Pondicherry and Karaikal are situated on the east coast of Tamil Nadu covering an area of 293 sq. kms. and 160 sq. kms. respectively. Mahe is situated on the west coast, four miles south of Tellicherry, having an area of 9 sq. kms. Yanam lies on the eastern coast in the east Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh, and has an area of 30 sq. kms. The total area of the union territory is 492 sq.kms.

Pondicherry is bounded by the Bay of Bengal on the east and by previous South Arcot District, which is now called Villupuram and Cuddalore Districts respectively on the other sides. Pondicherry has a beautiful coastline and the harbour existed at the beginning of the Christian era was known as Podouke according to the famous traveller Periplus of the Erthryaean sea. Karaikal is bounded on the east by the Bay of Bengal, Mahe on the western coast at the confluence of the river Mahe with the Arabian Sea, and Yanam by the side of the river Godavari on the eastern coast.
western coast at the confluence of the river Mahe with the Arabian Sea, and Yanam by the side of the river Godavari on the eastern coast.

Gingee River, which is known as the Sankarabharani or the Varahanadi, is rising in the Gingee Taluk of the previous South Arcot District, which is now called Villupuram District. It receives the Kallae and Pombaiyar in the Villupuram Taluk of Villupuram District on the right before reaching the Pondicherry area. It covers a length of 34 kms. Before its confluence with the Bay of Bengal, at a distance of 7 kms., it branches into two. The northern branch of these outlets is called the Ariyankuppam River and the southern branch the Kilinjiyar or the Chunnambar.

Karaikal is situated on the northern bank of the river Arasalar, which falls immediately into the Bay of Bengal. Seven branches of the river Cauvery, namely Arasalar, Mudikondanar, Nandalar, Nattar, Noolar, Thirumalarajanar and Vanjiyar flow through Karaikal.

To the north of the Mahe town the river Mahe flows.

Yanam is situated on the east coast, between rivers Coringa and Godavari. The trade with India gave such a glamour to other nations, had only faintly evoked any emulation for the French. Unlike the Venetians, the Dutch and the Portuguese, there was no compelling financial need to make the French undertake any venture, that too, inspite of the fact they consumed more of the products of the east than others. A few merchants of Rouen however, sent a vessel in 1503 to the far off regions. Gouneille who commanded it, left from Houre and was attacked near the Cape of Good Hope by a tempest, which landed
him on the unknown land to which he gave the name of "South India". However, a document, which remains of his voyage, makes this hypothesis impossible, for the details on the manners given in his report appear to be applicable more to the barbarous hordes of the Sunda Isles than to the intelligent people of the Deccan. No expedition was undertaken after this for a century, inspite of the Decrees of King Francois I in 1537 and Henry III in 1578 exhorting the people to undertake long distances.

In 1601 a society formed in France sent two ships to India. According to Pyrafd who wrote on his first voyage, this company undertook to see how the land lies and find out the road to India in order to go to the good source. He had only one object namely, to see new things and acquire property. A tempest who took him to Madagascar from where he went to visit Comores. His ship wrecked at Pouladon, one of the Maldive Islands, went through Malabar, Bengal and Ceylon, was made prisoner for a long time in Goa and after 10 years of misfortune and misery, he returned to his home town in Label on 16.2.1611. A third company was formed at Honfleur to take advantage of the experience of one Flamand gerard le roy who had travelled many times to India on Dutch vessels. By Letter Patent dated 1-6-1604, the king of France granted him and his associates, a free carriage, two pieces of artillery, an exclusive privilege of fifteen years, as well as other immunities. But funds were lacking and nothing happened. Seven years later Flamand formed another company which, however, was inactive. In 1608, Surat became the seat of the office of

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1 The French Settlements in India, Texts of Important Notes Exchanged between the Governments of India and France (From 22nd March to 9th April 1954), p. 33
2 Ibid
the Director-General of the French Trading company. In 1642, the French established their first settlement in Madagascar under the direction of a company called the "Society of the east "or" the company of Madagascar" with the navy captain Rigault at its head and under the high patronage of Cardinal de Richelieu, chief and general secretary of commerce and Navy. By letters patent dated 24th June, 1642, the privilege for 20 years was granted to the company in order to find colonies and commerce and take possession in the name of this most Christian Majesty. The new borne conception of colonial exploitation had spread to other nations, also the Portuguese and the Dutch had their settlement in Madagascar, as well as the French. On 1654, the funds of the company (Madagascar) failed.

Even from the outset, the Royal company had chosen its agents and conducted its enterprises badly, Wasting of funds was the order of the day. Millions given by the king and the money received from France to achieve the great political ideal, went only to feed the lowest tastes. But the following year, the company sent a fleet of the ships escorted by four coastal under the orders of Marquis of Mondemerigue who was conferred the title of Admiral and Lieutenant-general of the kings. The French established their first loge at Surat in 1666 and it became the headquarters of the future settlements in India. They arrived on 10th March, 1667 and found Madagascar in ruins. They realized that prospects were bleak in Madagascar and so proceeded to Surat where they established in 1668 their first warehouse on the Indian continent. The situation in Madagascar inspired Colbert with the idea of founding a new company to extend the trade to India. Accordingly, he constituted the East India Company on the model of
those of Holland and England. It was combined with the West Indies Company which traded with America. The management was entrusted to a band of nine famous merchants with the secretary to the king’s council as the head. In the mind of Colbert also, Madagascar was an unsuitable place for obtaining merchandise. He concluded that the French should establish their trading center in India. For this purpose, he selected two persons, though not French, who had a lot of experience in the trade with India. They were Caron and Marcara Aranchi viz. The former was born in Holland of French parents and was employed in the Dutch company for a long time. The latter was a Persian with capability equal to his experience. In 1670, the French obtained from the king of Cannanore the warehouses of Tellicherry and Rajapoor on the Malabar coast. Three years later, Sher Khan Lodi, on behalf of the king of Bijapur made a offer to the French, of a place for an establishment on the soil of his Government. Francois Martin, within a span of 33 years converted it into a flourishing town of Pondicherry. This place had earlier been frequented by foreigners who carried on trade with adjoining market towns; but they never thought of colonizing the place.

The French fleet under the command of Admiral De la Haye, anchored off Triconomallee and with the permission of the King of Kandy prepared to construct a fort. But the Dutch Governor of Ceylon, Reyclof Von Goens, opposed the move first by correspondence and later, by force a part of the French fleet engaged in construction work had to capitulate. However De la Haye proceeded to Santhome, nearly 5 kilometers south of Madras and laid anchor.

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3 The French Settlements in India, op. cit, p.36
Santhome which was previously under the occupation of the Portuguese had been recovered from them by the king of Golconda. Two men were sent by De la Haye to obtain water and fuel. They were badly treated. The Admiral than captured Santhome on 25th July, 1672. It was the first territory captured by the French in India. 12,000 moors who were helped by the Dutch with arms besieged Santhome, were retreated some time later. On hearing this news of the French victory, Sher Khan Lodi volunteered to find a place to the French in his kingdom. It was on 4th February that the first Frenchman, Bellanger de l’espinay put his foot in Pondicherry. In 1673 a factory was set up in Pondicherry and Bellanger de l espinay was appointed as its first Director. A Sovereign Council was set up at Pondicherry by a royal edict of February. Incidentally, Santhome capitulated on 6th September 1674 and De la Haye returned to France. The Moors took back santhome in October the same year from the Dutch who preferred it to be in the hands of the Moors rather than return it to the French in the event of peace between France and Holland being established. Francois Martin left Santhome and came to Pondicherry with sixty men in the same year. For the first time, Francois Martin seized the fort at Valdavoor on 25th September, 1676 at the instance of Sher Khan Lodi who acted on behalf of the king of Bijapur. This success was, however, short lived and posed a danger to the very existence of Pondicherry. Nazir Mohammed, the enemy of Sher Khan Lodi, became an ally of the king of Golconda, the enemy of the French at Santhome, who, in turn called for assistance from the Marathas led by Shivaji. Madame Labernadie in her book, “Le vieux Pondicherry”, says that, “in order to understand the fight that seized the inhabitants of Pondicherry on hearing the news, it is necessary to know that the Marathas were a little
mercenaries, the Swiss of India, placing their cavalry at the service of
the highest offerer and waging war not for preserving the town and
nation which they subdue, but uniquely to loot them.\(^4\) The
consternation at the announcement of their approach was such, that the
men went to the woods with whatever precious things they possessed,
and a few soldiers deserted to withdraw from Valdavoor which was
least fortified. Sher Khan Lodi was subdued by the Marathas at the
battle of Trivady and imprisoned. Martin sent two of his men with a
few presents and a cash of 50,000 pagodas to Shivaji who not only
accepted it, but issued a Firman for the safety of the French at
Pondicherry, on one condition that the French should observe strict
neutrality. It was in July, 1677. On 9\(^{th}\) August 1676, the chief of the
‘Loges’ at Balassore obtained from the viceroy of Bengal, permission
to set up ware houses at Hoogly, Dacca, Cassembazar and Balassore.
The ‘loges’ at Hoogly was later transferred to Chandernagore in 1690.

In 1693, Pondicherry district was sold by the Marathas to the Dutch
who laid siege both by land and sea.\(^5\) It lasted from 23\(^{rd}\) August to 8\(^{th}\)
September, 1693 when the capitulation containing 13 articles was
signed. The garrison left with military honours. Francois Martin was
made on parole and taken to Batavia where he was treated with high
consideration. He returned to Chandernagore in February, 1694. By the
21\(^{st}\) September 1697, Pondicherry was restored to the French in full
sovereignty and they took possession of the fort on the 16\(^{th}\) and the
town on the 17\(^{th}\) September, 1699 after paying the Dutch a sum of
16,000 pagodas as the price of the territories surrounding Pondicherry.

\(^4\) The French Settlements in India, op. cit, p.37
\(^5\) Ibid
In the convention of Nagapattinam dated 13\textsuperscript{th} September, 1699, Francois Martin was appointed the commander of the fort at Pondicherry with full authority of the officers of the garrison said as regard for the wisdom and steadiness and for the such distinguished services rendered in India. Pondicherry had by that time become important, that Francois Martin had silver coins of half panamas, panamas and double panamas minted at Pondicherry in 1700. In 1701, the French set up a warehouse at Calicut. Francois Martin was appointed the first President of the Sovereign Consul and Director – General of French affairs in India\textsuperscript{6}. Elacourt, Chalonge, and Harden Court were appointed as the members of the Sovereign Consul. The first meeting of the sovereign council was held on September 25\textsuperscript{th} 1702. Chandernagore was given the privilege to form a local council headed by the commandant. The chiefs of the settlements at Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam were appointed as members of the Sovereign Council. All official communications from Paris were first received at Pondicherry and then forwarded to the other settlements\textsuperscript{7}.

In 1703, Martin obtained from Nawab Davood Khan, representative of Aurangazeb, a small village of Kalapet in order to get timber from the forests surrounding it for construction of houses. He also obtained authorisation to set up a warehouse at Santhome as an alternative, in case Pondicherry was captured again. In 1706, the same Nawab ceded the village group Oulgaret, whose annual revenue amounted to nearly one thousand pagodas as well as the village groups of Murungapakkam, Olandai, Pakkamudayanpet and Karuvadikuppam.

\textsuperscript{6} Prof. M. Ramadass, Pondicherry Economy, Applied interdisciplinary Development, Research Institute, Madras, p.7
\textsuperscript{7} Ibid
Martin died at Pondicherry on the 30th December 1706. In 1706 the company minted 10,000 pagodas in gold. Aurangazeb, the Moghul Emperor, granted to the French a place at Sonaly, 5 miles from Surat and authorised them to trade in the town under the same conditions as were granted to the Dutch and the British Sonaly which was the first French port in India, near the port of Surat on the estuary of the Tapti. Two years later, Caron, the Director general of the French Trading company, abandoned Sonaly for Surat where business had better prospects. The following year, the king of Golconda authorized the French to establish a trading depot at Masulipatinam and permitted them to trade with his kingdom without paying export or import duties. This Firman was renewed successively in 1687 and in 1718. On that date, the French trade extended upto Bengal and Orissa on a royalty of 21/2% which they paid to the Moghul Empire.

Another idea underlying these expeditions was colonial expansions. The Portuguese who were the first, had come across Madagascar which they called Saint Laurent island and chose it as a center of operations due to its situation and due to the docility of its inhabitants. Madam Y.R. Gaebele in her book "Histories de Pondicherry de l'an 1000 à trois jours", says according to the report on the excavation made by the Archaeological survey of India, the oldest civilization occupying this territory to which one can trace back, surely had close relations with a civilization which flourished in Mysore at the same epoch, same pottery – black, black and red, same habit of depositing the dead in the buried megalithic tombs or in earthen jars. These burials in the megalithic tombs or in the jars have a number of

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8 The French Settlements in India, op. cit, p.37
9 The French Settlements in India, op. cit, p.35
points in common presence of iron instruments, and of red and black pottery proving an evident relation between the two anodes of sculpture. The actual territory of the Pondicherry state was under the Andhra dynasty, which disappeared in about 236 B.C and which was replaced by the dynasty of Pallavas in the 5th up to the 8th century A.D and by that of the Cholas nearly 980 years A.D. The race which occupied and occupies this territory is Dravidian It is proved that the Dravidians listed in India since very remote times and forms a family of independent language.

"The eminent authors Louis Renon and Jean Fillozat in their book "L' Inde classique", assure us that the Dravidians had a brilliant civilization and had traded with distant places. The port situated in the middle is sure to be Poduke or Poudoucheri. The author of the Periplus tells us that he will speak only of allotted ports. These are therefore the ports allotted by the Indian kings and that it was only in these ports they could have commercial establishments which were called "Emporium". The kings collected customs duties on goods entering and landing these emporiums. Therefore, surely two centuries after the Christian era and no doubt several centuries before this date, Poudoucheri existed already and traded with Rome and was certainly a port of relay between Rome and the countries of the far East".

On 20th May 1740, Dost Ali, Nawab of Arcot and his son Hassan were killed in the battle on the northern of Ponnayar by the Marathas. Sufdar Ali, the second son of Dost Ali and his brother – in – law Chanda Sahib entrusted their families to the French for safety. The general of the Marathas, Ragoji Bhonsle threatened the French of

10 Ibid
serious consequences. But Dumas remained firm and refused the demand. The Marathas withdrew their army and was reduced by the bullets from the French fort at Ariankuppam. For this, the Nawab of Arcot gave the French the village a groups of Archiwak and Aduvanatham.

Dupleix became the Governor of French possessions in India on 15\textsuperscript{th} January, 1742.\textsuperscript{11} His main object was to destroy the trade of the British by capturing Madras at the first opportunity. When the war broke out on 15\textsuperscript{th} March 1744 between England and France, the British seized the French ship “Favori” off Achem with a cargo worth Rs. 400,000. Not less than three tornadoes, which burst in quick succession over Pondicherry in November 1745, lay low all avenues, orchards and gardens, unlashet away several houses, drowned many men and cattle, killed even birds and flooded waist deep several parts of the town. They also captured in 1746, another ship “Pondicherry” which anchored off Tranquebar in neutral waters. The French fleet under Mahe de la Bourdonnais, assisted by the troops of the company attacked Madras on 16\textsuperscript{th} September 1746 and on 21\textsuperscript{st} the city surrendered and remained under the French for nearly 30 months. The British attacked Pondicherry in September 1748 by land and by sea. But they had to withdraw. On hearing this victory, the Emperor at Delhi, sent Dupleix the titles of Khan-Mansoubadar-Nabab-Mouzafar Jung Bahadur with the seal attached to these honours.\textsuperscript{12} In the carnatic, Chandasahib claimed the throne occupied by Anwardi Khan who had usurped the place of his family. In the Deccan, Muzaffar Jung wanted to seize the throne occupied by his uncle Nasar Jung. Both

\textsuperscript{11} The French Settlements in India, op.cit,p.38
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid
Chandasahib and Muzaffar Jung sought the help of the French in achieving their goal. On the 1st September the same year, Madras was returned to the British according to the Treaty of Aix-la-chappele (30th April 1748). Dupleix sent D’ Autemil with 400 French and 200 native soldiers to the help of Chandasahib and Muzaffar Jung. The combined army defeated Anuardi Khan on 3rd August, 1749. But the second son, Johamed Ali took refuge in Trichinopoly. In exchange, England returned Louisbourg and Cape Breton in North America. The French defeated Pratab Singh, King of Tanjore on 31st December 1749 resulting in a Treaty by which the king undertook to pay Chandasahib and Muzaffar Jung Rs.7,000,000, to repay the company the trinity of Rs. 7,000 paid to him since 1738, to cede 81 villages to the French in Karaikal and to distribute a sum of Rs. 200,000 to the French troops. Bussy was sent to Gingee with an army of 250 Europeans and 1,200 sepoys. The fort was known for its impregnability situated on a steep rock. It had defied the general of Aurangazeb for three years. This fort fell to the French on 11th September, 1750 Muzaffar Jung, nephew of Nasar Jung, who was the second son of Nizam-ul-Moulk and who had succeeded to the viceroyalty of Deccan, revolted against Nasar Jung and appealed to the French for help. On 15th December, 1750 La touché left Gingee with a force of 800 Europeans and 3,000 sepoys and 10 cannons to the camp of Subabhdar whose army counted more than 25,000 men. In the battle which ensued Nasar Jung was killed and Muzaffar Jung declared Subabhdar of the deccan. In recognition of the help, Muzaffar granted to the French the following.
1. The possession of Villianur was confirmed and 36 village groups of Bahour were added to it so that the advance posts were brought upto the Ponnayar.

2. They were permitted the full enjoyment of Masulipatinam and Divy, with nearly 75 miles of land in the neighbourhood with an annual net revenue of 8 lakhs of rupees.

3. The sovereignty of the company over the district of Yanam was confirmed.

4. The territory of the French was extended from Karaikal side.

5. Dupleix was confined the title of Nawab of the carnatic, with the command of the entire coast from the river Krishna upto Cape Commorin. He was invested with the insignia of the order of the Fish, one of the best honours of the Moghul empire. He was granted in person by Muzaffar Jung, the authority to collect the revenues of the whole of the Valdavore district.

6. The pagodas minted at Pondicherry were made legal tender in the Carnatic, Masulipatinam and Golconda.

But on 14th February 1751 Muzaffar Jung was killed by treachery. Bussy who accompanied the French troops had Salabat Jung declared Subabhdar of Deccan. The new Nawab confirmed all, that was granted by his cousin.\textsuperscript{13} This moment may be regarded as the peak of French influence in India.

\textsuperscript{13} The French Settlements in India, op. cit, p.39
The French lost Arcot in 1751 and in September the same year, their forces under Faques marched on to Trichinopoly. By that time, the English brought the Prince of Mysore on their side and concluded an alliance with Murari Rao, the Maratha chief who with his party men always placed himself at the disposal of his best payer. The French forces camped in front unable to do anything decisively. In April 1752, he retreated to Srirangam and was on the defensive and cut off from Pondicherry by the English. He surrendered with his war material and 600 European prisoners. Arcot, Chingleput, Villupuram and Trivady were occupied by the English, the entire Carnatic was taken over by Mohamed Ali.\(^\text{14}\) This created an unfavourable opinion against Dupleix and contributed in hastening his recall.

Dupleix counteracted this set back by reversing the alliances between the English and Indian princes. He dealt first with Mortiz Ali, Nawab of Vellore and brother-in-law of Chandasahib who gave Rs.50,000 and promised neutrality. He then tackled Murari Rao, who undertook to get the French and supply 4,000 cavalarymen and 2,000 footmen, on immediate payment in cash a sum of one lakh rupees and two lakhs in two months, and also a sum of Rs 1,25,000 per month for the maintenance of his troops. In 1753, Trivady and Chidambaram fell to the French. Consequently the direct communication between Cuddalore and Trichinopoly was cut, except through Tanjore. Dupleix decided to capture Trichinopoly on behalf of the Raja of Mysore. The latter promised to give Rs. 15 lakhs, Rs. 4 lakh in cash and the balance later. An army under Asiatic was sent by Dupleix. It was situated five miles south of Trichinopoly. In the meantime while Major Lawrence

\(^{14}\) Ibid
got the Raja of Tanjore on his side and the latter gave him 3,000 cavalrymen and 3,000 sepoys. This was another blow to the French. In token of what Bussy had done for his enthronment as Subabhdar of deccan, Salabat Jung undertook to provide for the maintenance of the French troops and in order to ensure in a definite manner the protection of the French, he ceded the revenues of the four circars or coastal provinces (Mustafanagar, Ellore, Rajamundry and Chicacole). The annual revenue amounted to 10 lakhs of rupees. He had to wage a war in the name of Salabat Jung against Ragoji Bhonsle, chief of Berar and south of the Vindhyas. On 1st April, 1754, at the right of the French troops at Nagore, Ragoji negotiated with the French by effecting a payment of Rs. 5 lakhs and a peace treaty was concluded. It was in August 1754, Dupleix was relieved off his duties by Charles Robert Godehou and on the 14th October the former left for France.

Bussy conquered Gingee and returned to France in 1762, and presented the clothes of Pondicherry to Louis XV and Madame de Pompadour, who admired the texture of the clothes very much. In 1777, Bellecombe made a regulation laying down an equitable distribution of the produce of agriculture between tiller and the state. Before the arrival of the French, Pondicherry was a famous cloth center. On receiving the news of the French revolution, the French citizens of Pondicherry formed a General Assembly and set up a committee of Representatives in March 1790. At Chandernagore, the citizens on the instigation of Richemount formed a general Assembly and set up a Representative Committee in May 1790. On October 21st, the General Assembly of Pondicherry constituted a new Representative Committee consisting of 27 members, and for the first time invited the
representatives from the other French settlements in India. The National Assembly in Paris accepted the two representatives sent from Pondicherry. Therefore this was the first time that the French India was represented in the Parliament of France. It was during the revolutionary period, that a municipality was set up at Pondicherry by the general Assembly in September 1790. In April 1791, a municipality was set up at Mahe. But after the resignation of its Mayor, Boyer, the General Assembly in its meeting in July 1792 decided not to re-establish the municipality. The Assembly elected a Mayor and five members to the municipality. A number of elementary and secondary schools, colleges were also started. On October 26th, 1826 a college known as Royal college was opened and its name was changed to Colonial College towards the end of 1848. The first girls' school was started on February 12th, 1827. Ananda Ranga Pillai makes a mention of a dispute between the right hand and the left hand divisions on May 10th, 1848. There was a separate girls' central school in Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe, Chandernagore and Yanam. Ecoles remains were set up in rural areas and formed the basis of the educational system in the French settlements. The Calve Soupraya Chettiar college was established on May 2nd, 1877. Later, College Mahe de la Bourdonnais was started in Mahe and college Dupleix in Chandernagore. Women's education was encouraged and separate schools for girls were also started. French was the medium of instruction right from the primary school. In March 12th, 1880, the French Government enacted a Decree by which all the five settlements were divided into ten communes. The Government of France granted a sum of 5,00,000 francs towards relief for the damage caused by floods in November-December 1884. Pondicherry was divided into Pondicherry, Ozhukarai, Villianur and Bahour, Karaikal
into Karaikal Grand Aldee and Nedungadu\textsuperscript{15}. The other three establishment of Chandernagore, Mahe and Yanam were set up as the three independent communes. The French came to India not only to gain commercial profits and political supremacy but also to propagate their religion Christianity. Besides the Government, reformists like Bharathidasan and magazines like Puduvai Murasu took up the cause of the down trodden and worked for their uplift.

**Acquisition of the French Settlements**

The union territory of Pondicherry was left to the French more as an act of grace and represented remnants of the lost glory. It had no territorial significance for the French. The policy followed in the French settlements of India was part of the larger colonial policy followed by the French in other parts of the world. It was not so much the disappearance of the British from India in 1947 as the loss of Indo-China to France that precipitated the disappearance of French from the Indian soil.\textsuperscript{16} The French tried to merge Pondicherry with the British India. But the Pondichereans objected these proposals proposed by various sections of the people at that time. The people of French India as well as the independent India prepared to meet the political and constitutional struggle with the Government of France in liberating the French possessions in India in 1947. The Government of India under Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru persue the policy with regard to the liberation of French in India. He was not prepared to accept any delay in the merger of their settlements. The members of the Mahajana Sabha under the leadership of I.K. Kumar, a veteran freedom fighter of

\textsuperscript{15} A. Ramasamy, History of Pondicherry, New Delhi, 1987, p.32

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid
Mahe, fought for the freedom struggle in the Mahe region. V. Subbiah on one hand even suggested the merger of other French colonies like Karaikal, Mahe, Yanam and Chandernagore with the neighbouring free states of Indian union; it was decided not to accept anything else than complete independence. They refused for merging Pondicherry with the independent India. The French India Socialist party under Dr. Andre did not like the idea of Pondicherry. Though the French were the last European power to come to India and settled their headquarters in Pondicherry with their spheres of influence in Chandernagore, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam, they remained in India even after 1947. On no other account there was the time lag between the handing over power by the British in 1947 and the de facto merger of the union settlements in 1954. A view is expressed by the French unlike on India, but for the folly by the then king of France in recalling that great genius Dupleix, the history of India would have been different. This view can no longer be sustained. It was due to the superior strength of the British on the sea and in India, that the French were overthrown.\textsuperscript{17} The continuance of Dupleix or his policy could not have made any appreciable difference to the fortunes of France in Indian soil, long as in the world sphere the British were the more dominant power. But the French through Dupleix, had made a signal contribution to the expansion of the British power in India. The superiority of European trained army over the Indian trained was demonstrated by the Portuguese earlier. But it was left to the genius of Dupleix, that the possibility of using Indian soldiers disciplined by Europeans to hold any territory in India was conceived. In the 16\textsuperscript{th} century the European nations began to expand their trade by

\textsuperscript{17} A. Ramasamy, op. cit., p. 33
discovering new sea routes. The Portuguese were the first to land in India. By the decision of the Pope they wanted to intervene in the dispute between the Portuguese and the Spanish to draw a line through the Ayores and assign areas west to Spain and areas on the east to Portugal, Spain had no interest in India.

Attainment of independence of India from the British in 1947 gave a boost to the residents of the French colonies to fight against the French rule. Various associations giving lead to the people became activated in the wake of Indian independence. This was the same case with the Portuguese settlements in India. The residents of the colonies whether Portuguese or French received encouragement to fight against their colonial master after 1947. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who had a wide exposure to liberal thoughts of Europe during his studies abroad cherished great appreciation for the French culture and their values. At the same time he was active in the freedom struggle against the British. Therefore, being the Prime Minister at the helm of affairs of the subcontinent of India, he had to respect the nationalist feelings of the residents of the French colony. His training in the school of Non-Violence preached and practiced by Mahatma Gandhi did not permit him to follow the path of armed confrontations with the colonial rulers. He had several compulsions from various quarters to get rid of the colonial powers. The decisions taken in the Parliament were for keeping India absolutely free from foreign rule. On the other hand there were suggestions that a referendum had to be taken to see the mind of the residents of the French colonies in India in 1954 (de facto transfer) but the treaty of cession was concluded later. Though by 1954

18 Ibid
effectively the French left India and the jurisdical surrender of their possessions in India took place only by 1962. The first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru played an important role in the liberation of the remaining parts of India which were under the Portuguese and the French. He had to take very stringent measures against the Portuguese who violated the right of the Indians and finally liberated the colonies from the Portuguese in 1961. During the process of decolonization of India at large, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru played the role as a proven and mature diplomat. He had great appreciation for the values of liberty, equality and fraternity propounded by French thinkers. At the same time, the nationalist sentiment in him prompted him to take effective steps in making every bit of India independent. Therefore he worked for the merger of French possessions into the Indian union without offending the sentiments of the French. Therefore the present study is based on the contemporary documents as well as interviews with the freedom fighters.

A short discussion on the various schools of thought regarding the national movement in India in general is attempted in the first part of this chapter to situate the freedom movement in the French settlements as to assess if it was really a mass movement or elitist movement. With a view to understand the problem of merger of the French possessions and the role of Jawaharlal Nehru in the historic perspective it is proposed to discuss socio-political and economic conditions of the French settlements on the eve of Indian independence. The details of the settlements like Chandernagore, Yanam, Pondicherry and Mahe were collected from census reports of the period preserved in the National Archives, New Delhi and Archives
in Pondicherry. Attempts were made to discuss the composition of the society and economic activities of the settlers in these colonies.

From the study of the composition of the society of the settlements and their political consciousness it will be possible to highlight the activities of the residents of the French settlements directed towards the attainment of independence from the French. The freedom-loving people of the French colonies in India took the Indian national congress which spearheaded the freedom movement in British India as a model. French India National Congress and French India Students Congress were established to give a lead to the movements towards the freedom from the French. The other parties with their ideology too came forward to guide the movements towards freedom. Leaders like V.Subbiah and Edouard Goubert started organizing movements towards freedom. Attempts have been made to examine how these different movements percolated into various sections of the common mass. It had to be checked if it was really a movement comprising of all information in this regard. The publications of the French India Students Congress preserved in the Archival repositories provide additional information. The surviving participants of the freedom struggle have their own reminiscences of the various stages of the struggle. Some of them like the Communist leader V.Subbiah have published the details of courses of struggle, which have served as an important source of information.

Intense diplomatic exchange between Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the French Government took place during the period from 1953-1963. This period includes the steps towards de facto and de jure transfers. The treaties and the articles of the transfer both de facto and
de jure preserved in the National Archives of India and the debates in the Parliament throw a lot of light on this subject. The correspondence between Jawaharlal Nehru and the French Government preserved in the Archival repositories in India contain a lot of information for the period. The pains taken by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to keep the ideals of non-violence, national integrity of the subcontinent of India and the respect for French culture and values stand out in documentations related to the theme. As decided by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the erstwhile French colonies in India remain as a window of French culture. Unlike in any other part of the world, between French citizens of Indian and foreign origin hold their proprietary rights, distinct culture and elect their representatives for the House of Deputies and French Parliament. The law and order came under the Government of India. Interactions at various levels between French citizens and Indian citizens in these colonies took place creating an atmosphere of exceptional cultural synthesis.

The conceptual framework of the historians dealing with national movement can be classified into :-

a) Liberal School of thought

b) Marxist school of thought

c) Cambridge school of thought and

d) Subaltern school of thought.

a) Liberal School of Thought:

Tara Chand and R.C. Majumdar did the pioneering work in this field under the orders given by the Government of India. Ever since the board under Majumdar constituted in 1952 and dissolved in 1955
on account of his extreme views, he began to tie the line of extremists while Tara Chand appointed to replace Majumdar followed the path of a moderate. Both of them could be considered the earliest Indian historians to bring the whole range of the study of national movement, under consideration. They do not assign any important role to economic and political factors responsible for the attainment of independence from the English though Tara Chand tried the dialectical method to write the history of Freedom movement. Since the first volume of Tara Chand's work appeared a year before that of Majumdar, we shall discuss the views of Tara Chand first. He held a moderate view while Majumdar for obvious reasons, extremist view. Both of them fall under the Non-Marxist liberal school of thought.

Moderate:

Tara Chand, educated at Oxford and keeping Ranke, Acton and E.Lipson as his models, was invited by the Government of India to write the history of the Freedom movement. Once the board under the chairmanship of R.C. Majumdar was dissolved in 1955, the first volume of his work saw the limelight in 1961. He claims that his approach is dialectical considering the state of society before the British arrival as thesis, and the British rule as anti-thesis and finally the Freedom movement as synthesis. He agrees with Majumdar in viewing that Indian Nationalism was of recent origin since the British period of Indian history. The revolt of 1857 was a national revolt for Tara. Tara Chand does not qualify the foundation of Indian National Congress as a remarkable event, but refers to its foundation sharely as part of his historical narration—Regarding the communal problem in

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20 R.C. Majumdar, op. cit, Vol. 4, p. 249
India, Majumdar holds the view that the Hindus and Muslims constitute two separate nations and keeping their separate identity, the Muslims remained aloof from the mainstream of Indian politics cutting at the very root of Indian Nationalism. Majumdar while dealing with the political leaders, assigns the role of the Father of Indian Nationalism to Sureindranath Banerjee and disputes the claim of Mahatma Gandhi. However, he agrees with the view that Gandhi, Subbhash Chandra Bose and Jinna dominated the political scene during the movement towards freedom. He exposes the failure of Gandhi in preserving the unity of India and depicts him as politically invalid. Gandhi is accused of having abandoned his agitation prematurely and made the British the bitterest enemy through his provocative and ill-timed strategy. He mentions that even Gandhi's own hand-picked followers rejected his own ideology. Congress was made more anti-imperial by Gandhi than was necessary which enhanced the bargaining power of the Muslims. Gandhi, according to Majumdar wrongly imported mysticism in politics and bungled the communal problem. In fact the third volume of his book was titled as “Gandhi: A study in Failure”. World forces and the unrest in the Indian army made freedom possible according to Majumdar. He insists on interconnectedness of events. The anger arising from the dissolution of the board under him and the rejection of his text made him write bitterly against the Congress and its leaders setting aside the position even of Jawaharlal Nehru. He does not attach any importance to economic and social factors responsible for the attainment of freedom from the English. He viewed politics as the sole factor leading to it. He holds the view that nationalism grew first in Bengal and Sureindranath
Banerji should be considered the father of Nationalism. He considers Swadeshi movement the harbinger of true nationalism.

b) Marxist School of thought

The Marxist interpretation of the national movement serving as a counterpoise to the romantic or administrative version of Indian history. Marx brought to the study of Indian nationalism economic reasoning. He wrote a series of articles in 1853 on British rule in India and its future results. He held the view that the Indian village communities held an “isolated, stagnating, undignified and vegetative life”. He is of the opinion that the British rule shattered the entire framework of Indian society without any symptoms of reconstruction. He emphasized at not only destructive nature of the British rule, but also its regenerative character. He explained the necessity to political transformation freeing the Indians from the foreign rule. It is true his concepts of the stagnant nature of pre-colonial Indian economy and the regenerative force of the British rule were faulty, his methodology made substantial contribution to the study of Indian nationalism by preparing a balance sheet of the consequences of the British rule and attempted to forecast the future course of events. Later in modification of his earlier views, he held that the work of the destruction of the Asiatic mode of production proceeded rather slowly and India suffered distorted development and failed to develop on pure capitalist line. It was the last attempt of the effect of old order recover its departed glory” as suggested by Percival Spear earlier. Tara Chand speaks of the foundation of the Indian National Congress as the most remarkable event in the history of India. Tara Chand had a sort of fatalist approach to the partition of India though he held the view that Hindus and
Muslims represented the composite culture of India. The assumption that these two machinations of the British who wanted to perpetuate their rule in India according to Tara Chand. He mentioned that the British were really responsible for the separate electorates and instigated the Muslims to demand them. The British discovered in the Muslims a forge to fight against the Hindus and to support them. He concedes the fact that the Muslims had certain legitimate grievances which, of course, were exaggerated. He finds fault with Sri Mohammed Iqbal and Jinnah for their communal approaches. He says that some unkind fate brought Pakistan into existence. Tara Chand is of the opinion that Gandhi had played a very revolutionary role and that without him the attainment of Independence was impossible. Tara Chand offers a Non-Marxist dialectical exposition of how and why National movement grew. He is actually a representative of the erudite school of thought. His conceptual framework is intricate with internal inconsistencies according to V.N. Datta. However, he describes not only the events but also the social and institutional configuration of the freedom movement. He is a liberal historian adhering to no particular school of thought.

**Bipan Chandra**

Bipan Chandra’s work entitled “The Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism 1880-1905” which is a study of the economic reasoning of the Indian national leadership demonstrates Dadabhai Naoroji, M.G.Ranade, R.C.Dutt, G.V.Joshi and G.K.Gokhale exposed the British exploitation of India. Though they were not theoreticians, their approach was pragmatic and their thinking was from a national

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21 V.N. Datta, Interpreting Indian Nationalism, Presidential Address, Indian History Congress, Bodh Gaya Session, p.9
view point. His work is a study of the economic elite and its ideas provided emotional drives impelling people to fight the British rule. The joint work freedom Struggle is another work anchored in Marxist ideology.²²

A.R. Desai

He claims to have used historical materialism in his work Social Background of Indian Nationalism. He gives a survey of the social and religious background of Indian Nationalism, though with his own preconceptions. The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal, 1903-1918 written by Sumit Sarkar tries to show how it failed to turn out to be a mass movement.²³ He gives the valid reasons for its failure. He recommends Trotsky’s concept of, substituism’ and Gramsci’s role of ‘traditional as distinct from the organic intellectuals’ for the interpretation of Indian nationalism. He holds the opinion that Marxist approach still is valid and relevant for the study of National movement in India.

R. Palme Dutt

R. Palme Dutt was the first to apply systematically Marxist ideas to the study of Indian Nationalism through his work India Today. He was expelled from Oxford in October 1917 for propagating Marxist ideas, a fortnight before the Bolshevik Revolution. He applied Marxist method in analysing Indian national movement also in his work World Politics. He confirmed the British ruination of Indian economy with quantitative analysis and elaborate details. He proved that the British through scientific exploitation reduced India to an agricultural

²² A.R. Desai, Social Background of Indian Nationalism, Bombay, 1959, p.20
²³ Sumit Sarkar, The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal 1903-1908, New Delhi, 1973, p.512
The picture of India’s industrial development provided by the British was a sheer myth according to him. Dutt considered Gandhi made of feeble stuff who betrayed the peasantry and working classes by resorting to non-violent means—a convenient tool serving the class interest. He accused Gandhi of starving off the revolution and calling off the movement at a strategic moment when it reached heights. Dutt believed in armed rebellion for liquidating imperialism. According to him Gandhi and Tilak were responsible for communalism by mixing religion with politics. The British created the communal problem and the solution of this problem lay in the mass movement where Gandhi is said to have failed. Partition of India according to Dutt was a bourgeoisie compromise with imperialism. He holds the view that Indian independence became a reality on account of the emergence of new world forces, Britains’s weak position after the war and the discontentment in the Indian armed forces on the verge of rebellion.

**Extremist**

The Government of India interested in highlighting the activities of the national leaders, appointed in 1952 R.C. Majumdar as the director of a board to bring out the history of Freedom movement. As he could not tie the line with the Government and forget his own mournings in Bengal, the board was dissolved by the Government in 1955 with the indictment that “Bengal loomed too large” in his text on freedom movement. However, he published the work in three volumes on his own.24 This being one of the pioneering works on the history of the Freedom movement, it is considered worthwhile to bring out the salient features of his work. Majumdar rejecting the dialectical model

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24 V.N. Datta, op. cit. p. 10
of Tara Chand emphasized the political account of the freedom movement. In true the ideas widely propagated by the imperialists like Herbert Risely, Valentine Chirol, John Strachey and Vincent Smith, Majumdar holds the view that Indian nationalism was of recent origin and no trace of this was in existence in the pre-British period. He shared this view with Tara Chand. Against the opinion held by the latter, Majumdar considers the Revolt of 1857 as the “first great and direct challenge to the British rule in India”. But he does not call it the “first” nor “national”, or a war of independence.  

c) Cambridge School of thought

Percival Spear after his retirement began to teach at Cambridge and influenced the evolution of Indian historiography. He maintained that there is some specific historical connection between India’s intellectual development and the west. Besides the contributions of Percival Spear and of his pupil Eric Srokes, John Gallagher’s ideas had a great influence on the evolution of the ideology of the Cambridge school regarding Indian Nationalism. Gallagher along with Robinson argued that imperial rule in Africa spread on account of the collaboration of Africans. Anil Seal, Gallagher’s student, used this concept for explaining the emergence of Nationalism in India. He stressed the conceptual system of elite rather than class. According to him the western educated elite of the presidency towns collaborated first with the British and but when the job aspirations of the elite were not satisfied, they turned anti-British. He emphatically writes that nationalism was not formed through the prompting of any class demand or as the consequence of any change in the state of economy.  

26 Perival Spear, India, Pakistan and the west, Oxford, 1952, p. 10
This is considered to be the most formidable anti-Marxist interpretation. Later Seal himself discarded the elite concept and stated that the elite concept was applicable only to the later half of the nineteenth century and suggested that the Government prepared its own destruction by fostering an intellectual elite is not relevant. He added that the structure of imperial Government could provide the clue to the way the Indian policy developed.\(^\text{27}\) He is of the opinion that ideology makes no sense. On the contrary, the British built their framework based on patron-client relationship operating at country, provincial and local levels and the Indians fitted in it very well. The race for influence, status and resources made the clients decide their political choices. The whole business turned on scramble for advancement, self-interest and factions which became the stuff of Indian politics. He holds the view that Congress was built out of this rabble and that congress was not an all India movement. He regards the analysis of the structure of Government and its clients as the fundamental method of explaining this complex phenomenon.

C.A. Bayly considers Nationalism as a tenuous fusion of vested interests and groups which exercised their influence derived from their wealth in the field of religion. He holds that it was through the participation of the religious concerns that political activity developed in upper India. He provides an aggressive frustration model in the light of local grievances and relegated nationalist ideology to the background.\(^\text{28}\) Christopher John Baker regards Satyamurti and


\(^{28}\) Anil Seal, "Imperialism and Nationalism", Cambridge, 1968, p. 34 & 110
Thus the scholars of the Cambridge school hold the general thesis that politics is a skillful game to be played for fame, status, survival, self-interest and advancement, and is not bound in any case with ideologies. Peoples were not awakened but used for material interest. Without specifically mentioning, these scholars follow the ideas of Namier who showed that in politics men were motivated by ambition, vested interests and personal grievances rather than ideas or principles. But it must be remembered that men in India were only thinking of themselves and their narrowly personal grievances in National movement. There is no revolutionary spirit without idealism, which inspires sacrifice. If ideas were of no real important it would be difficult to explain how the people could wish to be united.

d) Subaltern school of thought

Dissatisfied with the elitism of colonialist, bourgeois-nationalist, neo-colonialist and neo-nationalist ideologies a few historians like Ranajit Guha, Shahid Amin, David Arnold, Partha Chatterjee, David Hardimann and Gyan Pandey opened up new vistas of thought giving importance to the people who constituted the vast majority of the population of India in the freedom movement. He affirms that the approaches of the historians of freedom movement till recently failed to acknowledge far less interpret the contribution made by the people on their own, that is independently of the elite to the making and the development of this nationalism. The group called Subaltern

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29 Anil Seal, op. cit, p. 6
30 C.A. Bayly, The Local Roots of Indian politics, Oxford, 1975, p. 7
consisted of lesser rural gentry, impoverished landlords, rich peasants and upper-middle peasants who are generally known as the "people".\textsuperscript{31} Therefore this school of thought worked on the involvement of the Indian people in vast numbers sometimes in hundreds of thousands of even millions, in nationalist activities and ideas. He says that parallel to the domain of elite politics there existed throughout the colonial period another domain of Indian politics in which the principal actors were not the dominant groups of the indigenous society or the colonial authorities but the Subaltern classes and the intermediate strata in town and country-the people.\textsuperscript{32} Thus people's history of freedom movement has begun to receive attention in the hands of the historians of Subaltern studies.

In fine, one may say that as the historiography of nationalism develops, historians would search for more and more causes for the emergence and development of national movement. No rational historian can be satisfied with a single cause. Historian's innate tendency is to deal in multiplicity of causes to explain a historical event. So, too in the case of the history of national movement, it is expected that historians should search for more causes and factors that led to the attainment of freedom. A single individual or a group of elite cannot explain the emergence of nationalist tendencies and the sufferings undergone by a galaxy of eminent leaders. Nor can we say that there was no ideology behind the untold hardships undergone by millions of people for the sake of breaking the shackles of slavery imposed by the colonial powers. Let different schools of thought

\textsuperscript{31} C.J. Barker, The Politics of South India, 1920-37, Cambridge, 1976, p. 6
\textsuperscript{32} Ramajit Guha, "On some aspects of the historiography of colonial India" Subaltern Studies, Vol. 11, New Delhi, Oxford University, p. 8
flourish to find out the multiplicity of factors but let us not try to close the different avenues, the scholars interested in interpreting of explaining the various facets of national movement.

As comprised this Thesis illuminates the views and actions of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in the relatively peaceful incorporation of the French territories in India into the Indian Union.
CHAPTER II

French Settlements in India on the eve of the Indian Independence - Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe, Yanam and Chandernagore

The Europeans right from the dawn of the sixteenth century established their settlements on the coastal regions of India. The first were the Portuguese who concentrated their attention on the western coast of India and took great interest in spices. Once high profit of the trade with India was brought to the notice of the Europeans in general, the English, the Dutch, the Danes and the French tried their level best to have a foothold on the coastal regions of India to enhance capital through trade. The English through the English East India Company acquired territorial possessions in India and gradually attempted for building of an empire. The French arrived on 10th March, 1667 and found Madagascar in ruins. They realized that prospects were bleak in Madagascar and so proceeded to Surat where they established in 1668 their warehouse on the Indian continent. Caron, the Director General of the French trading company, abandoned for Surat where business had better prospects. The king of Golconda authorized the French to establish a trading depot at Masulipatnam and permitted them to trade with his kingdom without export or import duties. In 1670 the French obtained from the King of Cannanore the warehouses of Tellicherry and Rajapoor on the Malabar Coast. The union territory of Pondicherry consists of four French settlements of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam. In the 17th century, the French came to India and established
their depot at Masulipatnam on 4th February 1670. In 1673, they landed in Pondicherry and established a settlement. The French arrived first in 1674 and stayed on to rule the larger period till 1954.

Capture of Santhome

François Martin seized the Fort at Valdavoor on September 1676 at the instance of Sher Khan Lodi who acted on behalf of the King of Bijapur. Before this received, the French fleet under the command of Admiral De la Haye, anchored off Triconamalle and with the permission of king of Kandy prepared to construct a fort. François Martin left Santhome and came to Pondicherry with sixty men in the same year. On 9th August, 1676, the chief of the “Loges’ at Balassore obtained from the viceroy of Bengal, permission to set up warehouses at Hoogly.  

Dacca, Cassembazar and Balasore the ‘Loges” at Hoogly was later transferred to Chandernagore in 1690. In 1703, Martin obtained from Nawab Davood Khan, representative of Aurangazeb a small village of Kalapet in order to obtain timber from the forests surrounding it for construction of houses. In 1706, the same Nawab ceded the village group Oulgaret, whose annual revenue amounted to nearly one thousand pagodas as well as the village groups of Murungapakkam, Olandai, Pakkamudayanpet and Karuvadikuppam. Martin died at 30th December 1706. The French Governor Francis Joseph Dupleix entered in the race. He did not get full support from the home country and as a result, his ambition to build a French Empire was completely destroyed and his forces were defeated at the battle of Plassey. Henceforth, the French had to retire to the five

---8 C.A. Bayly, The Local Roots Of Indian Politics, Oxford, 1975, p. 7
settlements like Chandernagore, Yanam, Pondicherry and Karaikal on the East coast on India and Mahe on the Western coast.

Mahe

Mollandin, chief of the cabinet Loge, asked in 1721, Boyanor, Prince Badagore and his brother if they still had the intention like their uncle to give a piece of land to the French on the banks of the river of Mahe to establish a loge there. A treaty was signed on April 1721 for the cession of the spot at the mouth of the river with the right to maintain a garrison. The French withdrew to Calicut, but Marquis of pardaillan recovered it with a fleet of six ships on 23\textsuperscript{rd} December 1725. In 1726, British persuaded Boyanor to push the French out of Mahe. On November 1726 Mollandin and Boyanor signed a Peace Treaty. On 20\textsuperscript{th} March 1728, the French at Mahe and the British at Tellicherry signed a Treaty for the common good of the companies of France and England.

Yanam

The settlement of Yanam was founded in 1731.

To the north west of Pondicherry town, a girdle of low hills (an elevated region, 30 metres high) extends in Eastern and North Eastern and Western and North Western direction. This high ground suddenly emerges from the low lying alluvial plain and is known as Les Montagnes Rouges or the Red Hills of Pondicherry or Korimedu, probably after the memorials put up during the first siege of Pondicherry (1760). The freedom struggle in Pondicherry is

\textsuperscript{34} op.cit.p.37
otherwise known as Merger movements or Decolonisation in this typical region. This very name came into being due to the efforts of the people of Pondicherry with the Indian Union. There are many views prevailing amongst the scholars who are specialized in French India, about the role of people for the freedom struggle of this region. The freedom struggle was highlighted, there were yet many other political parties and people from various walks of life contributed their might and efforts for liberating Pondicherry from the French rule and merging the territories of Pondicherry state with the independent India. With this began the rise of the French regime in the sub-continent of India, which after a series of servings of fortune culminated in the treaty of Paris dated 30th May 1814. The English gradually established an Empire and the Crown took over the possessions of the English East India Company in 1858. But the residents of British India in due course of time organized popular revolts against British hegemony. The present work is to highlight the role played by Nehru in the liberation of the French settlements and merging them with the Indian Union. The five French settlements were divided into eight communes and the figures were based on the commune. This division took place under the decree of the 12th March 1880. Various historians in general have studied the nature of the movement for freedom in India and different strands of thoughts have been established. We can examine some of these conceptual frameworks to place the nature of the movement for freedom in the French settlements and examine their relevance. Jawaharlal Nehru played an important role in the merger movement. He did not want any foreign possession to be in India. He did not want to go away from the principle of Non-Violence. He did not want to see the world through English window or through French window, but

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permitted people to opt for either French or Indian citizenship. But Indian Government will administer the territory. The National movement for freedom from the French was something indigenous originating the French settlement themselves and the residents. French nationals born in the territory of the Establishments and domiciled in the territory of the Indian union of the date of the entry into force of the treaty of cession shall become nationals and citizens of the Indian union. French India National Congress, Students congress, Mahajana Sabha, National Democratic Front and the Communist party were the political parties during the merger movement of the French settlements.

Cession of Pondicherry

Sher Khan Lodi on behalf of the king of Bijapur made an offer to the French, of a place for an establishment on the soil of his Government. It was a hamlet of fisherman known by the name of Puduchery, which Francois Martin, within a span of 33 years converted into a flourishing town of Pondicherry.36

Pondicherry situated between 11°46’ and 12°3’ north latitude and between 79°36’ and 70°53’ east longitude. The total area of Pondicherry including its eleven enclaves, is 290 Sq. kms. It is a flat land with an average elevation of about 15 metres above sea level. The deltaic channels of the rivers Gingee, Ponnaiyar and other streams form the two main drainage basins. There are several lagoons, lakes and tanks interspersed. This is the most prominent feature of the landscape. The river Gingee crosses the region diagonally from North

36 The French Settlements in India, Texts of Important Notes Exchanged between the Governments of India & France (From 22nd March to 9th April 1954), p. 35
West to South East. The Ponnaiyar forms the southern border. The alluvial delta of the Ponnaiyar is almost on level ground just a few metres above sea level. To the north west of these hills are fossiliferous limestone formations of the Cretacian age. To the south is the alluvial tract of Varahanadi (Gingee) and to the north the recent alluvium. Pondicherry has a hot, tropical, maritime climate, with huge humidity and moderate rainfall. The average rainfall is 127 cms of which 50 percent is recorded in October and November while 25 percent is recorded during the South West monsoon. The Pondicherry region consists of four geographical zones. The coastal zones comprises both new and old dunes, including saline areas of clayey texture. The saline zone is made up of the two plateaus called the Pondicherry Plateau and the Tiruvakkarai plateau, composed of a geological formation called the Cuddalore sandstone. The upper layers are made up of red transported ferrallitic soil. Marshy depressions are also frequently encountered in the plains of Valudavur. The flat alluvial zone occupies the rest of the region. The union of Pondicherry consists of four small pockets isolated from one another and has a total area of 180.9 sq. miles. It is divided into 16 communes - 8 in Pondicherry, 6 in Karaikal, one in Mahe and one in Yanam. Pondicherry town is the capital. When the census enumeration of 1961 took place, Pondicherry was not regarded a part of India. It was de facto administrated by the External Affairs Ministry of the Government of India, under the Foreign Jurisdiction Act. Even until 1961 it was administered by the External Affair Ministry. Pondicherry is bounded by the Bay of Bengal on the east and on the other three sides by previous South Arcot District of Madras State presently Villupuram District of Tamil Nadu. It does not

37 K.S. Singh, op. cit, p. 3
form a continuous area and is interspersed with the previous South Arcot District presently Villupuram District.

The eight communes in Pondicherry are Pondicherry, Mudaliarpet, Ariyankuppam, Ozhukarai, Villianur, Bahour, Nettapakkam, and Mannadipet.  

**Area and Population:**

According to the Census of India, 1961, Pondicherry has an area of (293.70 Sq. Kilometres) 113.40 Sq. miles, and Population 258,561.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commune</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Pondicherry Commune</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>73,387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ariyankuppam Commune</td>
<td>9.40</td>
<td>20,226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Mudaliarpet Commune</td>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>27,560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ozhukarai Commune</td>
<td>13.30</td>
<td>39,217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Mannadipet Commune</td>
<td>24.50</td>
<td>25,963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Villianur Commune</td>
<td>25.60</td>
<td>30,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Bahour Commune</td>
<td>21.30</td>
<td>23,890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Nettapakkam Commune</td>
<td>11.70</td>
<td>17,518</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Villages**

The 1961 Census counted in all 388 villages spread over in all the four regions of the territory, apart from the four towns of

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Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam. However, for purposes of revenue administration the territory was divided into 96 revenue villages. In the course of 10 years between 1961 and 1971, about the entire rural complex of Mudaliarpettai commune covering 18 villages except Kuppam and Panchavadi had developed urban characteristics so that the whole commune came to be treated as a town. Similarly 16 out of 49 villages in Ozhukarai commune had developed urban characteristics to give shape to the new town of Ozhukarai. Thus the new towns of Ozhukarai and Mudaliarpettai emerged only after the 1971 census. During the same period all the 20 villages of Pondicherry communes had developed urban characteristics to merge with Pondicherry town. Corresponding the number of census villages in the territory declined from 388 to 334. In another important development, the whole of Mudaliarpettai Commune was merged with Pondicherry Commune for purposes of Municipal administration.

Abhishekapakkam

This village in under Ariyankuppam Commune and it is situated at a distance of 11.50 km south of Pondicherry. The name Abhishekapakkam seems to be the corruption of Abhishekapakkam.39

Adingapet

This village is under Bahour commune and it is also known as Adangapattu which falls within the jurisdiction of the Seliyamedu revenue village and is situated at a distance of 17.50 kms from Pondicherry. More than 85 percent of the villagers belong to the scheduled castes.

39 Francis Cyril Antony, Gazetteer of India, Union Territory of Pondicherry, Vol. II, Administration of the union Territory of Pondicherry, p. 1521
Aranganur

This is a village under Bahour Commune situated at a distance of 17.50 kms from Pondicherry with jurisdiction extending over Nimayapet village. It is one of the border villages, the then population of which had shown abnormal growth between 1961 and 1971.

Ariyankuppam

This village is under Ariyankuppam Commune. It is situated about six kms south of Pondicherry town. It is the headquarters of Ariyankuppam Commune Panchayat bearing the same name. It has been designated as a revenue village with its jurisdiction extending to Kakkayantoppu and Periya Virampattinam. The name Ariyankuppam might be the corruption of Ariyankuppam, probably named after Buddha was also known as Aruhan.

Ariyur

This village is under Villianur Commune also known as Aruyur, is situated at a distance of 17 kms west of Pondicherry on the Pondicherry - Villupuram road. Chinnababusamudram railway station (Previous South Arcot and present in Villupuram District) is about 1.61 kms from Ariyur.

Arumpattapuram

This village is under Ozhukarai Commune and is situated at a distance of 7 kms west of Pondicherry. It forms part of the Ozhukarai revenue village and is not to be confused with another village of the same name near Odiambattu in Villianur Commune Panchayat. The name of the village is derived from the word “Arumbatai” which
means a supplier of victuals (fournisseur). Anandarangapillai refers to one Arumbatai Azhappa Pillai in his diary.40

Bahour

This village is situated at a distance of 20.50 km south west of Pondicherry (Via. Kirumambakkam) is the headquarters of Bahour Commune Panchayat. It is also designated as a revenue village.

Dharmapuri

This village comes under the Ozhukarai Commune. This is situated at a distance of 6.5 kms from Pondicherry, is famous as a cattle market but does not show other signs of brisk social and economic activities. It forms part of the Ozhukarai revenue village. The villagers are mostly cultivators, agricultural labourers, handloom weavers and construction workers. Sri Drowpathiamman temple is the main centre of worship. The annual festival celebrated in this temple lasts for 25 days.

Embalam

This village is under Nettapakkam Commune. An inscription in Tirubhuvanai refers to the existence of three temples in the village dedicated to Emalathu Mahedevae, Adhitheswaramudayar and Emalathu Dungaiyar Omkara Sundari.

Eripakkam

This village is under Nettapakkam Commune. It lies at a distance of 25.25 kms. from Pondicherry (via. Kilur) and about 4 kms. from Pallineliyanur railway station of previous South Arcot and

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40 Francis Cyril Antony, op. cit. p. 1526
present Villupuram District. It has been designated as a revenue village with jurisdiction extending over Andasikuppam and Mattamedu.

**Gudapakkam**

This village lies at a distance of 13.50 kms from Pondicherry (Via Villianur) amidst an expanse of lush greenary fed by the waters of the nearby Usteri. Since the days of Anandarangapillai the name of the village has not undergone any change. The Villianur railway station is at a distance of only about 5 kms from Gudapakkam. It is designated as a revenue village with jurisdiction over Konerikuppam. This village is under Villianur Commune.

**Irulansandi**

This village is under Bahour Commune. This is a fast growing revenue village which lies at a distance of 23 kms from Pondicherry and about 8 kms from Tiruppapuliyur railways station (in Villupuram District). The most significant feature of this village is that its populations which was only 425 in 1961 had increased more within a period of ten years. Situated on the eastern limits of Bahour enclave, it is likely that people from the surrounding villages of Tamil Nadu area had migrated to this place to derive the benefits of development programmes implemented by the Pondicherry administration. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people who cultivate mostly paddy, sugarcane, groundnut and ragi.

**Kadirkamam**

This village is under Ozhukarai Commune. Kadirkamam lies 4.50 kms west of Pondicherry. It forms part of the Thattanchavadi revenue village. The village is named after God Kadirvel, in whose
honour the village temple is understood to have been built about 150 years ago. The first settlers of the village are said to have been poor. Sengunda Mudaliars migrated from Kanchipuram about 300 years ago probably during the period of Francois Martin.

Kakkalippattu

This village is under the Mannadipattu Commune. This village is located north west of Pondicherry at a distance of 22.50 kms. on the bank of Sankaraparani (Gingee) river. It forms part of the Kodattur revenue village. The village may have derived its name from the word "Kaikolars", a community of professional weavers who must have lived in the area many centuries ago. The word Kaikolar is said to have been derived from kai (hand) and kol (Shuttle). Kakkalippattu may probably be the corruption of Kaikolarpattu or Kaikolar patru.

Kalapet (Periya Kalapet) & (Chinna Kalapet)

Both are under Ozhukarai Commune. There are two villages bearing this name in the same commune separated by a distance of only about a kilometre. One is known as Periya Kalapet and other as Chinna Kalapet. Both villages are situated north of Pondicherry on the coromandal coast at a distance of 11.75 kms. and 10.50 kms. respectively on the Pondicherry Marakanam road. While, Periya Kalapet is a revenue village with jurisdiction over Kanakachettikulam, Chinna Kalapet forms part of the Pillaiachavadi revenue village.  

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41 Francis Cyril Antony, op.cit.p.1531
Kalithirtalkuppam

This village is under Mannadipattu commune. The village which lies at a distance of 25 kms. west of Pondicherry (Via Villianur) is also known as Kalithirthalkuppam. It is a revenue village with jurisdiction extending to the neighbouring Andipalaiyam, Kuchi Palayam and Silkaripalayam.

Kalmantapam

This village is under Nettapakkam Commune. It is at a distance of 2.25 kms. from Nettapakkam and forms part of Pando Cholanallur revenue village. It must have derived its name from the stone mandapam located there. The walls of the mandapam raised on carved octagonal pillars, carry the images of old derides, the avatars, maidens waving the samaras, or in dancing postures, etc. all carved in relief. The area has also been identified as a pre historical archaeological site. This is one of the few potential market places in the region.

Kaninlyakoll (Kannikovil)

This village is under Bahour commune, situated at a distance of 17.50 kms. from Pondicherry and forms part of the Manapattu revenue village. It must have derived its name from the temple built in honour of Patchai Vazhiamman who is otherwise known as Kanni. With the passage of time, the village itself came to be called after the village temple. A ten days utsavam is celebrated with a great deal of fanfare in the temple. The theemithi ceremony is held on the tenth day. A fair is held in the village during these days.
Karalamputtur

This is under Bahour Commune, situated at a distance of 32 kms. from Pondicherry (Via. Bangaravaykal). This is a revenue village with jurisdiction extending to Chinna Karaiyamputtur. It is not known how the village acquired this peculiar name which literally means a place of white-ant hills. Even Anandarangapillai refers to the place as Karaiyamputtur. The village is otherwise well known for its 10 day utsavam celebrated in Sri Dropathiamman temple. The festival is accompanied by a fair. There is also an Inspection Bungalow (P.W.D) in the village.

Karikalampakkam

This village is located at a distance of 15.25 kms. south west of Pondicherry (Via Abhisehekakappam). It can also be reached by road via Villianur. An XI Century inscription is Thirubuvanai refers to a village by the name Kazhukulampakkam. It is likely that Karikalampakkam is the corruption of Kazhukulampakkam. The reigning deity of the village temple was called Kazhukulampakkam Mahadevar. Anandarangapillai refers to the place as Karukalampakkam.42 It is designated as a revenue village.

Karaiyamanikkam (Karimanickam)

This village is under Nettapakkam Commune. This village is situated at a distance of 27.50 kms. from Pondicherry and 3.20 kms. from Pallineliyanur railway station (South Arcot). Villupuram is the nearest town from Kariayamanikkam. The populations of which had declined as a revenue village, its jurisdiction extends to

42 Francis Cyril Antony, op.cit,p.1537

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Thavalakuppam, Kariyamanikam, Kuchichipalayam, Moalppakkam and Surmangalam.

Katterikuppam (Kattery-Kuppam)

Katteri is under Mannadipattu village. Kuppam though for purposes of revenue administration etc. Katteri and Kuppam are treated as two villages, both are under the common name of Katterikuppam. It is located at a distance of 21.50 kms. from Pondicherry via Valudavur and 20.50 kms. if approached via Suttukanni. It is about 9.70 kms. from Chinnababusamudram railway station. This village has been identified as a market place. A road running across the village serves as the boundary line separating Katteri from the so called Kuppam. While in Kuppam as many as 528 belong to the scheduled castes, in Katteri the number is only 26.

Kirumambakkam

This village is under Bahour commune. It is situated at a distance of 15.50 kms. from Pondicherry. It is designated as a revenue village with jurisdiction extending to be changed into Aladimedu and Pannittitu. According to certain inscription Kirumambakkam was known as Kirumamapathi. Anandarangapillai however refers to the place as Kirumamacakkam in the XVIII century. Cuddalore is the nearest town which lies at a distance of 11 kms and Bahour at a distance of 4 kms. It appears that in the XVIII century the Muslim had an entrenchment at “Grimamabakkam”. In 1712 the place came under a sudden attack by the English, a description of which is left by caption Roach.
Kilur (Kizhur)

This village is under Villianur commune. Though a small village about 21 kms. from Pondicherry (Via Mangalam) it rose to prominence in 1954 when elected representatives of the former French establishments met here on 18th October and voted in favour of merger with the Indian union finally clinching the issue of freedom for French India. A memorial was unveiled on 16th August 1972 to commemorate the historic event. It is a revenue village with its jurisdiction extending to Sivartangam.

Korkkadu (Korkadu)

This village lies at a distance of 15 kms. from Pondicherry (Via. Villianur). This is a revenue village where Vanniar and Reddiars are predominant. Its name seems to suggest that it must have been some kind of a forest in ley-gone days. In fact an XI century inscription at Thiruvakkarai refers to a village by name Kakathur. It is also likely that this name had changed into Korkadu.

Korkumedu

This village is under Ariyankuppam. Although this is a small village situated at a distance of 11.50 kms. from Pondicherry, it assumes some importance on account of the five day annual festival in St. Anne’s Church held in July. It is attended by several hundred people. This village forms part of the Thavalakuppam revenue village.

Krishnavanam

This village is under Bahour Commune. This lies at a distance of 13.50 kms. from Pondicherry and forms part of the Uchchimedu

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43 Francis Cyril Antony, op.cit.p.1539
revenue village. It assumes some importance on account of Sri Pattabiramaswamy temple. The one day attru thiruvizha held in the month of January every year attracts several thousands of people from all surrounding villages.

Kudiyiruppuppalayam

This village is under Bahour commune, situated at a distance of 18 kms. from Pondicherry and forms part of Seliyamedu revenue village. The one day theerthavari festival held in Sri Muthalamman temple is a major attraction.

Kumarapalayam

This village which forms part of Tettambakkam revenue village, lies at a distance of 20 kms. from Pondicherry. Although a small village in terms of populations, its fame rests chiefly on the popularity of Sri Mariamman temple. The one day Masi Magam festival celebrated here, usually on the banks of Sankaraparani river, during February-March every year, attracts many thousands of people from all surrounding villages. The occasion is also marked by a fair. This is among the few villages in the territory where there are no scheduled small village in terms of population, its fame rests chiefly on the popularity of Sri Mariamman temple. The one day Masi Magam festival celebrated here, usually on the banks of Sankaraparani river, during February-March every year, attracts many thousands of people from all surrounding villages.

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44 Francis Cyril Antony, op.cit,p.1541
Kunichampattu (Kunitchampet)

This village is under Mannadipet commune, situated at a distance of 26 kms. from Pondicherry, this is a revenue village with jurisdiction extending to Kondaredipalayam. This is one of the several villages the name ending of which has mistakenly changed from pattu to pet. The 18 day long annual festival celebrated in Sri Drowpathiamman koil during March April is marked by a fair.

Kuruvinattam (Kuruvinatham)

This village is under Bahour commune, situated at a distance of 27.75 kms. from Pondicherry. As a revenue village, its jurisdiction extends to Soriyankuppam. This village is understood to have been known as Kurivimedu in the olden days.

Madagedipattu (Madagadipet)

This village is under Madagadipattu commune. This village, identified as a pre-historic and archaeological site, is situated at a distance of 24 kms. from Pondicherry. It is a revenue village with jurisdiction extending to Madagadipattupalayam, Nallur and Nallur Kuchichi-palayam. Kundankuzhi appears to be the earliest name of Madagadipattu according to inscriptions. Kundankuzhi means a deep and beautiful water storage. The name Madagadippattu is said to have come into vogue only after the period of Vikrama cholan. As in the case of many village names, the suffix patru or pattu has ultimately changed into “pet”. The village is famous for its Eswaran Temple originally built entirely from stones during the period of Rajaraja-I in the XI Century. It is now a historical monument under the care of the Archaeological survey of India.

45 Francis Cyril Antony, op.cit.p.1543
Madukkarai

This village is under the Nettapakkam commune and is situated at a distance of 28.50 kms. from Pondicherry. It appears to have acquired this name because, sometimes in the past, it is said to have been close to a madu (a Tank), and Madukkarai literally means the banks of a madu, the traces of which are said to be found even now. The village is famous for its Sri Manakkaleswaran temple, although the festivals there do not attract much crowd.

Manaveli (Manavely)

This village is under Ariyankuppam commune. Many villages in Pondicherry region are known by the name Manaveli, viz. one in Ariyankuppam commune Panchayat, two others near Kodattur and Kalitirthalkuppam in Manadipattu commune Panchayat and yet another near Odiambattu in Villianur Commune Panchayat. The village dealt with here is the one in Ariyankuppam Commune Panchayat. This village lies at a distance of 7.80 kms. (Via Ariyankuppam) South of Pondicherry. As a revenue village, its jurisdiction extends to Manaveli, Nonanguppam, Odavely and Chinna Virampattinam. Sri Mariamman temple, Sri Drowpathiamman temple and Sri Pandurangar temple are the principal centres of worship in the village.

Mangalam

This village is under the Villianur Commune, situated at a distance of about 13.50 kms. from Pondicherry and 15.60 kms from Villianur railway station. As a revenue village its jurisdiction extends to Vadamangalam, which as its name suggests, lies on the north. The village of Kil Sattamangalam and Mel Sattamangalam are not far away

Francis Cyril Antony, op.cit.p.1545
form mangalam. An inscription in the gangai varaga eswaran temple in Tirukkanji ascribed to the period of Kulothunga-I refers to one Cholakonar who is described as Puddhamangala Mudayar.

Mannadipattu

This village is under the Mannadipattu commune, situated at a distance of 25 kms. from Pondicherry. Although the commune is named after this village, it is not its headquarters. As a Revenue village, its jurisdiction extends to Monbranpet, Sombattu and Tirukkanur. The village of Monbranpet may have been named after the Montbrun family. About 500 people attend the annual festival celebrated in the Sri Drowpathaiamman temple at Mannadipattu.

Mudaliyarpettai (Mudaliarpet)

This village is under the Mudaliarpet commune as per the census of 1971 and the best part came to be treated for the first time as an urban area. With a population of 42,933, it forms part of the Pondicherry urban agglomeration embracing besides Mudaliyarpettai the residential settlements of Kalapet, Karamanikuppam, Kirapalayam, Kommapakkam, Kusapalaiyam Murungapakkam, Nainarmandapam, Nellithoppu, Orleanpet, Ottampalayam, Pillaiathottam, Pudupalaiyampet, Sakkilipalayam, Savannapet, Subrayapillai Chatiram, Thengaitittu and Veeraraghambudalithottam. Mudaliyarpettai, situated at a distance of three kms. South of Pondicherry on the Pondicherry Cuddalore road, is the industrial hub of Pondicherry where three textile mills and several small scale industrial units are located.

Kirapalaiyam
This is situated very close to the estuary of the now blocked Pondicherry river. It now lies north of Thengaiithittu and covers the two localities of Vamba Keerapalayam. While the former lies within the limits of Pondicherry urban area, the latter falls under the Mudaliarpettai commune. It has been suggested that the word “Olandai” is the corruption of “Hollandai” as the Dutch are believed to have settled in the area before the arrival of the French. This explanation is however not acceptable. An inscription in Tiruvandarkoil refers to a place called Uzhandai and it is quite likely that it refers to this Uzhandai. There is no proper explanation for the name Kirapalayam.

Thengaiithittu

This place is about 4.80 kms. from Pondicherry, lies close to the sea coast surrounded on all sides by uppar (Uppanar) formed by the backwaters of the Bay of Bengal merging with Ariyankuppam river. Thengaiithittu literally means a coconut island.

Kusappalaiyam

It lies at a distance of 2 kms. west of Pondicherry flanked by Nellithopu on the South and Pudusaram on the North. The village is named after the predominant community in the village, namely Kosavar or Kuyavar (Potters), from which the name ”Kosapalayam” or the more preferred “Kuyavarpalayam” must have been derived.

Muttirapalaiyam (Muthirapalayam)

Muttirapalaiyam which forms part of the Tattanchavadi revenue village lies 5.50 kms. west of Pondicherry. It is likely that the original inhabitants of this village belonged to the Mutratcha or Muttirajulu or
Muttarasan caste of the Telugu country. They were employed by the Vijayanagar kings to defend the frontiers of their dominions and were honoured with the title of palayakars. The members of this caste are known as Muthiriyar or Palaiyakkaran in the Tamil country. Anandarangapillai also refers to the place as Muthirapalayam.

Nallambal

This village lies at a distance of 12.30 kms. from Karaikal on the Peralam road, and forms part of the Nallazhandur revenue village. Sri Tantonreeswarar temple ascribed to the Chola period is an important landmark in the village. The outer walls of the temple carry many inscriptions which do not appear to have been published so far. There are also a few exquisitely carved granite statues in the temple.

Nedungadu

Situated at a distance of 10.30 kms. from Karaikal town, it is the headquarters of Nedungadu Commune Panchayat. As a revenue village, its jurisdiction extends to Keezhannavasal, Melannavasal, Nedungadu, Agara Mankudi, Paruttikkudi, Kil Ponbetti and Mel Ponbetti. The most sensational find of bronze images in the territory was reported from this village in 1948. They included the image of Pillayar, Manickavasagar, Thirugnanasambandar, Kandan, Uma, Jnanasakti (a pair), Sivakamasundari, dancing Siva (Anandatandavam) besides a trident, a conche, a pair of sandals, a copper tripod and a plate.

Nettappakkam

48 Diary (Tamil), Vol. v, p. 436
Situated at a distance of about 29.50 kms. south-east of Pondicherry, it serves as the headquarters of Nettappakkam Commune Panchayat. Villupuram is the nearest town from Nettappakkam. As a revenue village its jurisdiction extends to Mettutheruvu, Pudupattu and Sembadapet. Inscriptions at Thirumanikkuzhi, Tirukkanji, Thiruvendipuram, Thirthanagari and Tirubhuvanai refer to this village as Netapakkam. We are certain of its existence since the days of Rajadhiraja-I. During the days of Kulothunga-I it was known as Poopalasundaranallur, named after one Poopalasundaram, otherwise known as Cholakkonar. The fact that Boopalasundaram was a great warrior is attested by Vikrama Cholan Ula (lines 143-146) which describes him as the conqueror of the Gangas, Marathas, Kalingas, Kongars and Kudakas. He was again responsible for carrying out repairs in the lake near Tirubhuvani.49

Niravi

The village, situated at a distance of 5.30 kms. From Karaikal town, is the headquarters of Niravi Commune Panchayat. The Village is noted for its temple of Sri Jambunathaswamy claimed to be about 300 years old. The Thiruvathiral (December-January) and Thirukkarthikal festivals (November-December) are celebrated in this temple. Several hundred people take part in the Thiruvathirai festival. A fair is held on the occasion when articles of worship are kept on sale. Vaikunta Ekadesi is celebrated during December-January in the Kariamanickaperumal temple. This village is believed to be the birth place of the famous Adhimadura Kavi who adorned the court of Thirumalairayan, the king who ruled from Tirumalarayanpattinam. It

49 Pulavar S. Kuppussamy, op. cit, p. 167
was the pride of this poet which was subdued by poet Kalamegham. The village assured some importance after the Oil and Natural Gas Commission carried out test drills to locate possible deposits of petroleum at Neravi.

Odiyambattu

This is a revenue village situated at a distance of 8.50 kms. from Pondicherry with jurisdiction extending to Arumattapuram, Karaiyamputtur, Manaveli, Periapet, Tattanchavadi and Valluvanpet. The village is referred to as Udayampattu in Villaipuranam (Stanza 125) although Anandarangapillai refers to it as Odiampattu. It is more likely that the village may have derived its name from Odiam tree which is very common at Odiyambattu. It is clear that the suffix pattu has changed into pet. The village is otherwise famous for its Kasi Viswanathar temple, where the 10 day Brahmothsayam during February-March is marked by great festivity. A fair is also held at the place. An estimated crowd of 60,000 attend the celebrations.

Oduturai

This is one of the twin villages in Karaikal regions, one known as Kil Oduturai and the other as Mel Oduturai, together forming a revenue village. Villagers are mostly engaged in agricultural activities. Both wet and dry crops are grown at Oduturai. Lands in the area are irrigated by the Oduthurayan channel. The annual festival celebrated in Sri Kali Amman temple and the naming festival of Child Jesus in St. Antony's Church are of some importance.

Ulavarkarai (Ozhukarai) (Oulgaret)

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50 Diary (Tamil), Vol. III, p. 231
Situated at a distance of 6.50 kms. west of Pondicherry, Ulavarkarai is the headquarters of the Commune Panchayat bearing the same name. Presently it is upgraded as Oulgaret Municipality. It is nowadays wrongly referred to as Ulavarkarai. As a revenue village its jurisdiction extends to Arumattapuram, Dharmapuri, Mulakkulam, Muttupillaipalaiyam and Pichchiviranpet.

Padudarkollai

Forming part of the T.R. Pattinam Commune, it is a very small village situated at a distance of 8.50 kms. From Karaikal it forms part of the Melaiyur revenue village. Its importance lies in the fact that it is the only enclave which lies detached from Karaikal region surrounded on all sides by Tamil Nadu territory.

Pandacholanallur

This village is situated at a distance of 26.50 kms. south west of Pondicherry. According to inscriptions in the Malligaijuneswarar temple here, the village must have been as Thirumudavanpalli during the days of Kulothunga – I (XI century), named after Thirumudavan, probably a chieftain in whose honour the Palli was built. The name of this Palli may have been ascribed to the village in due course. Since XII century the village is said to have been called Pandithacholanllur, after Rajaraja II who was otherwise known as Rajapandithan, erudite as he was both in Tamil and Sanskrit. The name Pandithacholanallur may have changed into Pandasozhanur.

51 Pulavar S. Kuppusamy, op. cit, pp. 110–111.
Pillaiyarkuppam

This village is situated at a distance of 17.00 kms. from Pondicherry on the bank of Sankaraparani river. This is not to be confused with the Pillaiyarkuppam in Bahour Commune Panchayat although both the villages have been identified as pre-historic archaeological site. The Pillaiyarkuppam in Villianur Commune is well known for its temples and festivals. The most famous 18 day annual festival held during April-May is Sri Koothandavar temple. Devotees throng in thousands to witness the celebrations to which the festival fair adds colour and gaiety. Situated at a distance of 17.25 kms. (via Cuddalore road) from Pondicherry, this is one of the places identified as a pre-historic and archaeological site by Prof. J. Dubreuil. As a revenue village, its jurisdiction extends to Kandanpet, Narambai and Valluvarpet.

Ponbetti

Ponbetti is a twin village, viz. Mel Ponbetti and Kil Ponbetti both lying close to Nattar. The name Ponbetti is said to be the corruption of Ponbattri. It has also been suggested that Ponpattrikavalan Buddhhamitrân, the author of Veerachozhiam is a native of this village. This name indicates that he must have been a Buddhist by religion. Interestingly even the old Siva temple in the village is built in the shape of a Buddha Vihara.

There were also other villages like Akalanganni (Agalankannu), Ambagarttur (Ambagarthur), Sermavilangai, Settur, (Agarasethur) (Pandarava Sethur), Sorakkudi (Sorakudy), Tennagudi, Tirunallar under Tirunallar commune. Karaikal under Karaikal commune, Pondicherry under Pondicherry commune, Aranganur, Soriankuppam
and Seliamedu under Bahour commune, Suramangalam under Nettappakkam commune, Suttukanni, Sombattu, Tirukkanur, Tiruvandarkoil, Tirubhuvanai, Selliaapattu under Mannadipattu commune, Talatteruvu under Karaikal commune, Tavalakuppam and Thimmanaikkenapalayam under Ariankuppam commune, Tirukkanji, Tondaimanattam, Tutipattu, Uruvaiyar, Usteri, Sedarappatu, Ramanathapuram, Poraiyur and Villianur under Villianur commune, Tiruvettakudi and Varachakudi under Kottuchcheri commune, Vanjiyur (Kil Vanjiyur and Mel Vanjiyur) and Tirumalarayanpattinam under T.R. Pattinam commune, Satamangalam (Mel Saattamangalam and Kil Sattamangalam) under Villianur commune Reddiarpalayam under Ozhukarai commune and Puttukudi under Nedungadu commune.

**Beginning of Political Awakening**

Subramania Bharati (1882-1921), unquestionably the greatest among modern Tamil poets, happened to be the first Indian nationalist to set foot on and operate for full ten years from the soil of Pondicherry. Sri Aurobindo too arrived a year and a half later, for the same reason as Bharati to escape from the clutches of the British police. Sri Aurobindo’s arrival marked a total break with his past. He, in fact, declared in so many words that Lord Krishna had taken over the burden of Indian liberation and that he was withdrawing from the struggle in order to immerse in yogasadana. But the life of Bharati and his friends in French Pondicherry remained devoted to the cause of India’s freedom. 1908 was a year of repression for the followers of Tilak.

V.O.Chidambaram Pillai and then Subramania Siva were arrested in Tamil Nadu, and four more Tamil ‘radicals’, associated
with Bhakati-Krishna swami Sarma, Hari Sarvothama Rao, Narayana Rao, and then Surendranath Arya were also arrested one after another in Madras on charges of sedition, for writing articles and making speeches in support of India’s freedom. Bipan Chandra Pal left for Europe on 20th August 1908 to get away from India. In the same month, the Madras Government ordered prosecution of Inthiya, the journal of Bharati, its office was raided by police on 20th August 1908; and its nominal editor and publisher M.Srinivasa Iyengar. The same day the great Nationalist Leader and journalist, G.Subramania Iyer of Swadesamitran, was arrested at Courtallam. It was feared that Bharati’s arrest was imminent. The poet was urged by friends and that this voluntary exile would be brief, but it turned out to be of ten years duration. Bharati arrived at Pondicherry carrying a letter of introduction from a friend to one Chitti Kuppusamy Iyengar of Perumal Koil Street, a merchant admirers to seek shelter in French Pondicherry and continue his activities in the service of the nation. V.O.Chidambaram Pillai too sent word to Bharati from Coimbatore prison advising him to go. An employee of the police department, an admirer of Bharati, whose name was kept secret by the poet also passed on information about the move for his arrest. Bharati made up his mind, took his wife to Kadaiyam in Tirunelveli in the last week of August, left her there, returned to Madras to elude the police at Madras Egmore, arrived at Pondicherry the next morning, in the first week of September 1908. The Madras police learnt the news only after the bird had flown. Though he was only 26, Bharati showed the way to others like Sri Aurobindo, all his seniors in age, to escape by fleeing to Pondicherry. He hoped of modest means. He went to the latter’s house early in the morning and was well received, after the fatigue of
the intensely anxious night journey. The British at once alerted the French police about the arrival of the dangerous Swadeshi, Bharati, in their town, and the police summoned Kuppusamy Iyengar and issued a warning against harbouring the ‘rebel’. Bharathi informed the French administration in the very first issue of Inthiya on 10th October, 1908, that peace, order and progress constituted the motto of his paper, and that it would not meddle in affairs of Pondicherry. He scrupulously kept aloof from the filthy politics of the town dominated by the factors under Nadu Shanmuga Mudali, Henri Gaebele their ‘peaceful’ and ‘open’ campaign for Swarajya from foreign soil. V.V.S.Iyer (Varaganeri Venkatesa Subramania Iyer), contributed several articles to Inthiya in Pondicherry. His first article in the series was published in the issue of March 20th, 1909, with an introduction by Bharati in which he grieved over the Tamils ignorance of world history and politics. Subramania Bharati left Pondicherry and was eager to return to the Tamil province, Bharati went on appealing to the Madras Governor, and at last, to Ramsay Mac Donald, the leader of the British Labour Party in Parliament, explaining his activities and complaining against the repression of the British India Police. This letter got published in the Hindu under the title, Police Rule in India, and the matter was raised by the congress member P.V.Narasimha Iyer in the Madras legislature. To this, the Governor made the reply that Bharati was a fugitive from law and if he desired an enquiry to establish his position and charged the Government which spread falsehood. The First World War broke out. The British slackened their repression a little, coinciding with release of Tilak and V.O.Chidambaram. Indian leaders too sympathized with Britain and France in the war, and there was an expectation of some constitutional offer for the good of India.
Bharati was anxious to return to Tamil Nadu. All the more so, as he was feeling suffocated, immobilized and inactive in the narrow ‘prison’ of French Pondicherry; he missed the wide open world of Tamil Nadu with its newspapers and journals which could carry his articles and poem, thereby bringing him some money to ease his poverty. He would have left Pondicherry earlier and he received a favourable reply from the Governor or the Police Commissioner. But some months after the commencement of the World War, Bijoy Kant, a follower of Sri Aurobindo intending to return to Bengal was kept imprisoned until the end of the War. His arrest forewarned Bharati that he too would meet the same fate if he left Pondicherry.

At the end of the War, Britain and France signed an Agreement in April 1918, under which France agreed to curb the activities of Indian nationalists living in her Indian pockets and to extradite them if demanded. Bharati had earlier that year written to the Governor of Madras, in response to which a top C.I.D officer visited Pondicherry to hold consultation with him. The British then declared a general amnesty to the nationalists. Feeling encouraged by these, Bharati and his family left Pondicherry on 20th November 1918 by road to Koodalur. He was then taken into custody even without a warrant. After a legal battle fought and articles, and also planted the seeds of Indian nationalism in its soil. Diplomacy was taken up.

Through continuous resistance by non-violent means the national leaders succeeded in obtaining independence from the English by 1947. This gave a fillip to the residents of the French settlements and finally through the treaty of de jure transfer the French left their possessions in India once and for all. Yet, their erstwhile settlements in
India continue to foster French culture and more than 8000 French people with French citizenship continue to live in these areas. The treaty of cession was delayed because of the problem in France. De-facto on the basis of agreement between two Governments came into effect and the de-jure transfer became legitimized. Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam on the basis of agreement took place later. After the fall, the Government did not take the charge. On November 1st 1948 they took charge and met at Pondicherry. Treaty of cession was detailed. Control of French administration in June 1949 had referendum. In Chandernagore they could not co-operate the terms and conditions. It was purely on the basis of talks, mutually agreed arrangements that French would leave India in 1954 and it was agreed by the French Parliament. The de-facto transfer in 1954 had to be solved and rectified by the Parliament in the de-jure transfer 1962.\footnote{Tara Chand, History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol's. 1-4, New Delhi, 1961, p. 72}
CHAPTER III

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as the Prime Minister of India and his approach towards the Merger Movement

Jawaharlal Nehru (1889 – 1964), India’s first Prime Minister, was the chief architect of domestic and foreign policies between 1947 and 1964. Born into a wealthy Kashmir Brahman family and educated at Oxford, Nehru embodies a synthesis of ideals: politically an ardent nationalist, ideologically a pragmatic socialist, and secular in religious outlook, Nehru possessed a rare combination of intellect, breadth of vision, and personal charisma that attached support throughout India. Nehru’s appreciation for Parliamentary democracy coupled with concerns for the poor and under privileged enabled him to formulate policies that often reflected his socialist learning. Both as Prime Minister and as Congress President, Nehru pushed through the Indian Parliament, dominated by members of his own party, a series of legal reforms intended to emancipate Hindu women and bring equality. These reforms includes raising the minimum marriageable age from twelve, to inherit property, and declaring illegal the ruinous dowry system.

The threat of escalating and the potential for red revolution, across the country seemed daunting in the fact of the country’s growing population, unemployment and economic inequality. Nehru included Parliament to pass a number of laws abolishing absentee landlordism and conferring titles to land on the actual cultivators who could document their right to occupancy. Under his direction, the
central Planning Commission allocated resources to heavy industries, such as steel plants and hydroelectric projects, and to revitalizing cottage industries. Whether producing sophisticated defense material or manufacturing everyday consumer goods, industrial complexes emerged across the country, accompanied by the expansion of scientific research and teaching at universities, institutes of technology, and research centers.

Nehru believed that on the whole Baron agreed with him. As far as India was concerned, Nehru told Baron that he wanted a united country with no foreign basis or islands of extra-territoriality; and it followed that he would like French possessions on Indian soil to be absorbed in the Indian Union, “not be compulsion but because the people there would naturally desire this to be done.” He further pointed out that a free India would be a federation of autonomous units. It was possible that even within a federating unit there might be smaller autonomous areas forming cultural or linguistic units. He desired to maintain the unity of India and a strong Central Government and were anxious not to come in the way of the variety of India and the cultural autonomy of its different regions. But agreement in the language of diplomatic discourse has various shades of meaning, ranging from concordance of views of virtual disagreement and, in the light of subsequent events, the Governor of French India was giving the impression of being accommodated in regard to Pondicherry possibly, because he hoped that one good turn would deserve another in return and Nehru would be equally “understanding” of the French position on Indo-China. That question came up and Nehru told the French Charge d’Affairs Henri-Paul Roux that there was a strong
feeling in India over the conflict going on there. "It was natural not only for Indians," Nehru remarked, "but for the people of other parts of Asia to dislike intensely the activities of a foreign power to supress the people of a colonial territory." This was on June 14th and the writer was none other than O.P. Ramaswami Reddiar, a veteran Congressman from what was then Madras province and is now Tamil Nadu, President of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee in 1938 and destined to serve as Chief Minister of the composite Madras state from 1947 to 1949. There was also the question of customs union which French India had entered into with British India in 1941 whereby "all goods exported from or imported into the ports of Pondicherry and Karaikal," were subjected to the same duties as were applicable to exports and imports from and into Indian ports where the Union Jack flew. The Governor of French India wanted the agreement to continue but desired "certain minor modifications." The French settlements in India comprised an area of 203 square miles with a population of 323,295 according to the Census of 1941. Nehru wrote back to Reddiar on June 23rd, 1947, that they had received "no proposals from the French Government about their settlements in India". Nehru showed himself willing to discuss minor modifications but pointed out that "nothing should be done to weaken the administration and thereby possible to enable a revival of smuggling" Baron agreed. Was Nehru being unduly complacent regarding the real intentions of the French Government? The concluding part of his note would suggest that he had some doubts that the French position was far more ambiguous than Roux or Baron had made out. This was borne out by the difficulties

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33 Iqbal Singh, Between the two Fires, Towards an understanding of Jawaharlal Nehru’s Foreign policy, Vol. II, New Delhi, 1992, p. 262
34 Iqbal Singh, op. cit., p.260

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which arose in the period ahead and also is clear from a note prepared by Quai d’Orsay at the time and marked “very secret.” However, in the predicament in which Nehru and the Government of India were, they had no other option but take the French Ambassador’s assurances at their face value while keeping their fingers crossed. Girija Shankar Bajpai had submitted a note to Nehru on June 26th - three days after Nehru had written to Reddiar in Madras – drawing his attention to something he had come to know from a British source, Col. E. W. Fletcher, a member of the Indian Political Service and Consul General in the French settlements in India for two years between 1945-47.55

The transitional period between August 1947 and March 1952 was an important one as it bridged a gap between the old Legislative Assembly and the new Parliament.56 It helped the new Ministers and senior officers in the administration to familiarize themselves with the working of the new Constitution. At the same time, the Members of Parliament learned to conform to Parliamentary traditions and to suitably adapt them to the needs of independent India and the work of the Parliament of India. It was a period during which progress was made both in regard to elaboration of rules of procedure and the setting up of various committees partly to regulate the work of the House and partly to regulate its relationship with the executive.57

The Naga problem was created by some Indian citizens who were wishing to secede from the republic; the problem of the French and Portuguese settlements was the reverse; many – if not all – of their inhabitants were eager to merge their territories with the mother

55 Iqbal Singh, op.cit.p.263
56 Subbhash C. Kashyap, The political System and Institution building under Jawaharlal Nehru, New Delhi, National Publishing House, 1990,p.167
57 Ibid
country. This problem straddled the domestic and foreign policies of India. The Indian people regarded these demands for integration as part of their national movement. The congress had always encouraged this view and Nehru, more than any other leader before 1947, had involved Pondicherry and Goa in the effort to defeat imperialism. ‘wherever human liberty and human suffering are involved, the problem is not a little one. Wherever people struggle for freedom and against repression they enact a drama which is always full of vital interest to lovers of liberty all over the world. Colonial domination, for however long, could not result in the assimilation of the occupied territory by the imperial power. Pondicherry and Goa were geographically and culturally parts of India and had to be so politically as well. It was only a matter of time and circumstances as to when this happened.

Never well-informed about India and often relying on second-hand sources, principally British, for their assessment of political developments in the subcontinent, the French—or rather that citadel of Bourbonism, Quasi d' Orsay—by the summer of 1947 were expecting not only the division of India into two successor states of the Raj, but further fragmentation of the country. Bajpai felt, rather naively it seemed, that this kind of mischievous disinformation could be corrected by sending at least an Indian Charge d’Affairs to Paris. He suggested this to Nehru in his note.

Nehru dealt with Bajpai’s note the very next day. In a note written on June 27th he agreed with Bajpai that India “should send a Charge to Paris as soon as possible” and for several reasons. But as far as the fate of French India was concerned, he rightly stressed, that was

58 Note to defence Secretary, 19th June 1956, National Archives, Record centre, Pondicherry.
ultimately going to be decided “in India or rather by developments in India.” He repeated the substance of the talk he had with the French Governor of Pondicherry a month earlier and observed that M. Charles Francois Baron had acknowledged that there was no alternative to the French settlements becoming part of India, but that France would like to have “some cultural privileges” in these territories. Nehru said that he “had no objection to this (if they could be arranged) provided politically French India was absorbed into the Indian Union. Col. Fletcher need not therefore be afraid of Pondicherry becoming the base of a foreign power.”

The last sentence was a subtle poking of fun at the British Consul General’s exaggerated fear of the French obtaining certain political leverage in their enclaves in India under the guise of cultural links. However, over the next few weeks people in the French settlements were beginning to take things increasingly into their own hands and were straining at the leash. The inspiration for the agitation in these areas certainly did not come from Delhi which had its hands full with infinitely more agonising problems and would have liked the population of Pondicherry, Chandernagore, and Goa, to show a little more patience. This can be clearly gathered from a note which Nehru wrote on August 8th, 1947, exactly a week before the traumatic birth of independent India. The remaining settlements were: (a) Pondicherry, the capital, together with the adjoining territory; (b) Karaikal and dependent districts; (c) Yanam, with the dependent rural areas; (d) Mahe with the adjoining territory; and (e) a factory in Surat. The

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59 Iqbal Singh, op. cit., p. 263
60 Iqbal Singh, op. cit., p. 264
61 Selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru, Letters to Chief Ministers, Foreign Affairs, p. 673
answer is obvious – the problem of French enclaves in India of which the most important as well as the largest was Pondicherry on the East Coast, the other being Chandernagore (near Calcutta), Mahe and Karaikal. As it happened, the Governor of French Charge d’ Affaires, M.Henri Paul Roux, called on Nehru at Delhi. It was on May 27th, 1947, and judging from Nehru’s record of their talk, the discussion seems not to have been confined only to the French “loges”, but covered French possessions in India in general. Of course he discussed with Baron the question of these little islands of French but has “a certain nuisance value to the rest of India. “Baron agreed “that there should be a settlement about them soon and in fact that reference had been already made to Paris.”

The French enclave of Chandernagore in Bengal became a part of the Indian Union after the treaty for its cession was signed in Paris in 1951 by the two Governments. Bahour, one of the eight divisions of Pondicherry and consisting of 25 villages with 25,000 people, had been in the forefront of the struggle of the people of the French settlement to throw out French rule and be united with India. In the beginning of 1952, Thangavelu Gounder, a Municipal Councillor of Bahour, presided over a meeting which passed a resolution asking the French to quit their settlements without a referendum. Soon a reign of terror was let loose in Bahour, forcing many people to flee to Indian Territory.

There was the problem of Goa and two other toe-holds of Portugal in India –Daman and Diu. There was also problem of winking out the French from their enclaves of what they called

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62 Ibid
“Comptoirs”. They were tiny pimples of colonialism on the face of India, but they were in danger of turning gangrenous if neglected for too long owing to some complication factors. Actually, Goa did lead to what the West called a "War" and the Indians called a minor "police action". The complicating factor here was the Portugal was a member of the North Atlantic Treaty. Besides, Portugal had many treaties with England, one of them going back to as early as the second half of the fourteenth century. N.R. Pillai, Secretary-General of the External Affairs Ministry at the time had, wisely, obtained a complete list of Portugal’s treaties and their texts with England from the British High Commissioner’s Office in Delhi in June 1954. Nehru also referred to the case of K.I. Singh. K.I. Singh posed as a Communist and a "revolutionary". He was a citizen of Nepal with a criminal record. He was given encouragement by China. Nehru pointed out this to Chou, "This kind of thing created apprehensions in the minds of Asian countries.” Chou's reply to it was: K.I. Singh crossed into Chinese territory with some other men in possession of rifles and ammunition. According to international custom, China disarmed them. Nothing more was done. An agreement between India and France was reached regarding the defacto transfer of the French enclaves, chief of them being Pondicherry on 21st October, 1954, seven years after the British had quit their Indian Empire. Combat described the Comptoirs as an anachronism; Le Monde commented that the last vestiges of the days of conquest were over; but a commentator in Le Figaro termed it as a "cruel decision", like Vietnam was. To assume, however, that the withdrawal of the British would be followed rapidly and inevitably by the liberation of other foreign possessions in India was to sink into

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63 Iqbal Singh, op. cit. p. 270
64 Iqbal Singh, op.cit.p.271
facile optimism. The negotiations with the French dragged on till 1954, when M. Mendes—France found an honourable way of handling over Pondicherry and other bits of French territory. Meanwhile, the French Ambassador in India, Count Ostorog, made a calculated diplomatic faux pas. Obviously a man of the ancien régime, he retained the title of “Court” though titles were abolished after the French Revolution. Speaking at Bombay early in June 1954, he had criticized the Indian Foreign Secretary in discourteous even insulting terms. He had said that R.K. Nehru did not know the spirit of compromise and had gone to Paris, not to negotiate, but to dictate the terms of settlement. His private views of how R.K Nehru has conducted the negotiations were even more critical. He is supposed to have told a very high official of the Ministry of External Affairs that France may be down and out, but not so down and out as to be dictated by a fake dictator.

That was why R.K. Nehru gave a press conference in Paris on June 12th and announced his decision to return home which virtually ended the negotiation. Evidently, the intentions of the French authorities were to gain time to strengthen their position both military and otherwise. But this was a foolish policy and could land France in a fiasco, not as resounding as Dien Bien Phu, but to be noticed by students of international affairs. The more the French dug in their toes the more the people’s impatience mounted. Kewal Singh confirmed it in telegram after telegram which he sent to Jha at the Ministry not only of the freedom struggle spontaneously breaking out in the various enclaves, including Pondicherry where the French had concentrated their main forces. Kewal Singh reported they were receiving arms and ammunition by the shiploads. Some of the cases were labelled “Made
in U.S.A.” Part of them were being smuggled to their other Comptoirs, like Karaikal. Actually, they had given orders to shoot down the volunteers in Mahe demanding the merger of Mahe with India.  

The French quickly realized the weakness of their position in Pondicherry and Chandernagore: colonial fragments which they had retained over the years more from sentimental reasons than from the practical advantages they brought. Accordingly, they took steps to negotiate a transfer of their Indian possessions to the Delhi Government. Chandernagore was incorporated in India on June 9, 1952 while Pondicherry, Mahe, Karaikal and Yanam were transferred de facto on November 1, 1954 and formally ceded by treaty on May 28, 1956.

Parliamentary Initiatives and Impact

One of the occasions and perhaps the most memorable when Parliament asserted itself arose in 1955-56, when the problem of reorganizing the States was taken up in the light of the Report of the States Reorganization Commission. The Marathon debate that took place on the Commission’s Report in 1956 was sufficient proof to show that Parliament was no “rubber stamp” of either the Executive or the party in power. In fact, the final decision to create a bilingual Bombay State, an altogether new proposal, was the product of spontaneous Parliamentary initiative. Also there were other allied decisions, which were equally important and emerged from Parliamentary debates on the subject of the States Reorganization. Abolition of disparity in the salaries of Judges of High Courts of Part A

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65 Iqbal Singh, op. cit, p. 273  
66 Subhash C. Kashyap, op. cit, p. 170
and Part B States, discontinuance of grouping of states into A, B & C categories, creation of the office of Linguistic Commission and creation of Legislative Council for the State of Madhya Pradesh were some of the other instances of decisions which could be attributed to initiatives from Parliament. Speaking at an All India Seminar on Parliamentary Democracy on 25th February, 1956, Nehru had said: "We believe in democracy. Speaking for myself, I believe in it, first of all, because I think it is the right means to achieve ends and because it is a peaceful method. Secondly, because it removes the pressures which other forms of Government may impose on the individual. It transforms the discipline, which is imposed by authority largely to self-discipline. Self-discipline means that even people who do not agree—the minority accept solutions because it is better to accept them and then change them, if necessary, by peaceful methods. Therefore, democracy means to an attempt at the solution of problems by peaceful methods. If it is not peaceful, then to his mind, it is not democracy. If he may further elaborate the second reason, democracy gives the individual an opportunity to develop. Such opportunity does not mean anarchy, where every individual does what he likes. A social organization must have some discipline to hold it together. This can either be imposed from outside or be in the nature of self-discipline. Imposition from outside may take the form of one country governing another or of an autocratic or authoritarian form of Government. In a proper democracy, discipline is self-imposed. There is no democracy if there is no discipline. Nehru believed that the Parliamentary form of Government was more likely to bridge the "hiatus between desires and their fulfillment" than the other forms, which lead to "some measure of

67 Ibid
authoritarianism". The Parliamentary system with all its failings had "the virtue that it can fit in with the changing pattern of life".

But the Portuguese had no intention of leaving Goa at any time and, recognizing that the Government of India could not compromise on this issue, adopted an attitude of aggressive hostility. For example, they offered assistance to the Nizam in his attempt to keep Hyderabad aloof from the Indian union. Nehru demonstrated tremendous enthusiasm for India's moral leadership, especially among the newly independent Asian and African nations, in a world polarized by Cold War ideology and threatened by nuclear weapons. His guiding principles were nationalism, anticolonialism, internationalism, and non-alignment. He attained international prestige during his first decade in office, but after the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 when New Delhi tilted towards Moscow criticisms grew against his inconsistency in condemning western but not communist aggression. It would appear that Henri-Paul Roux, who had first come out to India as Charge d'Affaires to be soon promoted to the post of Ambassador of France in Delhi, had called on Nehru that morning to convey an urgent message from Georges Bidault, at the time French Foreign Minister who ended up badly and was even accused of complicity with the Ultras' revolt against General de Gaulle and his Algerian policy in the early 1960s.68

In dealing with Pakistan, Nehru failed to formulate a consistent policy and was critical of the improving ties between Pakistan and the United States; mutual hostility and suspicion persisted as a result. Despite attempts at improving relations with China, based on his much publicized five principles - territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-
aggression, non interference, equality and cooperation, peaceful coexistence - war with China erupted in 1962.

France, too, was an original member of NATO, but there was never any question of the French invoking the treaty organization in safeguarding their enclaves or what they called their "Comptoirs" in India-Pondicherry, Yanam, Karaikal and Mahe. However there were other complicating factors and the problem dragged on for more than seven years after and the British had portioned and quit India. During the most critical phase of the problem Kewal Singh (later to be the Foreign Secretary at the Ministry) was holding the fort as the Indian Consul-General in Pondicherry.69 The people were growing impatient over the longer the problem took to resolve and some of them launched a freedom struggle. But Nehru was for caution and a peaceful settlement.

The French authorities applied the classic remedy of all imperialist powers. They tried to suppress the freedom movement with the French Indian Police, officered by police officers specially imported from metropolitan France for the purpose because they could not trust the Indian policemen. To avoid unpleasantness, the Ministry sent their Foreign Secretary, R.K. Nehru, to negotiate a peaceful transition of the French enclaves to Indian sovereignty. But Quai d'Orsay had its own ideas about transfer of sovereignty and argued that it was constitutionally impossible without being blessed by the National Assembly.70

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69 Iqbal Singh, op.cit.p.271
70 Iqbal Singh, op. cit, p. 272
The fall of the French Government proved a blessing in disguise, both in Indo-China and India. Pierre Mendes-France was elevated to the Premiership of France. He was largely responsible for the success of the Geneva Conference. A little later in the year, he found his way, what Dr. Gopal calls "an honourable way" of handing over Pondicherry and other French enclaves to India.\textsuperscript{71} One of the toughest problems of India's foreign policy was in neighbouring Nepal. It had to be handled with the utmost discretion and delicacy. All the major powers were involved in it, working against each other and practically all against India. Certainly, Americans were trying to muscle in China too, and it had a seasoned army strategically well-placed in Tibet.

**Political Repression in French Enclaves**

Newspapers continue to give information about police and other activities in the French Enclaves in India against those who are in favour of merger with India. These people, no doubt, are citizens of French India and, therefore, in a narrow sense, we cannot intervene. But obviously these activities of the French Government affect us directly. The French Government in this matter told them that this kind of political repression of people who are in favour of merger and preventing them from expressing their opinion or carrying on their normal activities makes it clear that there can be no free referendum or plebiscite in these areas. We must protest strongly against this and inform them that this repression produces repercussions in India.

**No Tolerance of Foreign Footholds in India**

The position in regard to French and Portuguese establishments in India is that the Government of India takes a serious view of the

\textsuperscript{71} Iqbal Singh, op. cit. p. 273
continued oppression of the people and specially of the nationalist elements in the French and Portuguese possessions in India. This oppression, as well as the recent report of some neutral observers, make it perfectly clear that there is no possibility of any fair conduct of the plebiscite or referendum in those places. We have agreed to a plebiscite because we wanted the people to decide. But we have seen that the Governments there do not propose to allow fair conditions to prevail. Therefore, a plebiscite can hardly take place.

Normally speaking, one Government does not interfere with the internal steps taken by another in regard to its own nationals. But the position regarding French and Portuguese establishments in India cannot be so regarded. It is inevitable, as we have said before, that these enclaves in the heart of India must become part of the Indian Union.\textsuperscript{72} We have patiently waited for settlement by negotiations and we still hope to settle in this way. But it must be clearly understood that we cannot tolerate foreign footholds in India, more especially when there is serious oppression taking place on the citizens who express their sympathies for a merger with India. This very oppression puts an end to the slightest justification, if any, for the continuation of these foreign footholds.

The Situation in French India

The Prime Minister started by asking Shri Sellane Naicker about the activities of nationalists inside Pondicherry. Shri Sellane Naicker stated that under the present conditions of repression by the French Government and terrorism through goondas, no political activity was

\textsuperscript{72} Selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru, op. cit. p. 674
possible.\textsuperscript{73} For any public assembly, permission of the local Government was necessary, which was invariably refused to the nationalists, whereas even private meetings or social gatherings by them could not be held, as those attending such meetings were immediately subjected to goondaism. Since the Government were directly behind this type of oppression, the nationalists could get no redress from it.

Shri Sellane Naicker stated that if the Prime minister so ordered, they could occupy the outlying French Enclaves as there were about 7000 – 8000 refugees dispersed all along the Frontier and there was in addition the Indian population to help them. The Prime Minister replied that there was little difference between a private invasion from outside and an official invasion and if force had to be used, India could as well send an army. We had to deal with the foreign power, which had a certain position in Europe, hence it would at once result in war with France. The Government of India, however, intended to settle the matter by negotiation and was not prepared to enter into an international war to expedite the integration.\textsuperscript{74} The Prime Minister added that the position would not be the same if the people inside French territory took any action. Referring to the statement in the memorandum that the Government of India were pre-occupied with the question of Kashmir, hence they were indifferent to the French Indian problem, the Prime Minister stated that this was not so and that there was no connection between the two. The Prime Minister further made it clear that the Government of India were going to deal with the matter through diplomatic channels and that they will not practise any fraud or

\textsuperscript{73} Selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru, op. cit. p. 675

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid
deception or be party to any form of goondaism. He also added that the Government of India would not give any help, financial or otherwise, to do anything inside Pondicherry. He said that India was hence forward going to take up a bigger and stronger attitude with France but they could not expect any great results, because of various factors, namely, international as well as internal and external affairs of France, came into play.  

The Prime Minister explained that the policy of India was determined by India’s national interests and these interests demanded that the Pondicherry must integrate with India. Even if the nationalists inside French India were helpless, merger must take place.

He further stated that Pondicherry and the other colonies were in the nature of symbols to France, which was already a disintegrating power. The Government of France was weak and it was not easy to deal with a weak Government. The Prime Minister, in his capacity as Congress President, agreed to advise the President, Tamil Nadu Congress Committee to take greater interest specially with regard to propaganda and meetings. The Prime Minister told him that the situation all over the world was rapidly developing, hence it would not be advisable to take an adventurous step. He suggested that the nationalists should, at first, build up their strength before thinking on those lines.

73 Ibid
74 Selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru, op. cit., p. 676

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The Prime Minister gave the following advise to the deputationists who specifically asked him if they should stay tranquille:

a) To give as much publicity and propaganda to the present state of affairs in French India and bring to notice all cases of repression and goondaism. This would help in building up a case against the French Government;

b) To help the Congress Committees in the border districts to do propaganda: and

c) To do anything else that was possible inside Pondicherry

The Prime Minister then considered the suggestions made in the memorandum:

a) As regards the continuance of the land customs cordon, he stated that the nationalists had, early this year, recommended a customs union agreement with France. The Government of India had already taken up the question with the French Government but they would now consider the proposal for the continuance of the land customs cordon, as, infact, the present negotiations appeared to be leading in that direction:

b) With regard to complaints against customs officials, the Prime Minister stated that the Government would be prepared to look into them. He would also consider the proposal for the reintroduction of the permit system.

c) As regards the reduction of export quotas for the French settlements, the Prime Minister said that, according to his

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"Ibid"
reports, the present quotas were on the low side. The deputationists explained that the real problem arose because of the large scale smuggling of essential commodities into Pondicherry.

d) With regard the control over the movement of currency, the Prime minister stated that the point had already been examined but it was not considered advisable to take such a statement.

e) As for the request of the deputationists for the grant of monitory aid and other concessions, the Prime Minister made it clear that the Government of India would not give any financial help. The Government of Madras could, however, examine the question of concessions in the matter of appointments, etc:

f) As regards increase in the strength of prohibition staff to prevent people going to French Indian territories for purposes of drink, the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister of Madras pointed out that the real solution lay in the reintroduction of the permit system as it was not possible for the prohibition staff to prevent the movement of people.

Policy towards foreign possessions

Goondas are not only harassing the Indian French nationals, that is citizens of Pondicherry but sometimes show the temerity even to attack Indian nationals. They attacked a couple of our policemen. This is a strange state of affairs. Everybody knows that Pondicherry and Mahe and one or two other places as well as Goa in western India, are geographically the inalienable parts of India. Everybody knows or ought to know that the British empire in India had ended. It is fantastic
for any one to imagine that bits of the Portuguese or French empire can continue in India.

Again because of our love of peace we have waited patiently for a peaceful solution of this problem and we did not wish to force ourselves on any one and would led the people decide by plebiscite. Three years ago there was some kind of an agreement between us and the French Government about some plebiscite or other and preparations were made. That has not taken place yet. Meanwhile methods of gangsterism have flourished. An atmosphere of goondaism has been created there, and if a person talks about the merger with India, goondas are likely to smash his head. It is an extraordinary state of affairs.

The other day some neutral observers came to India and went to Pondicherry. Among other things, they reported that gangster methods were practised in the French settlements. Why are these methods practised? If gangster methods are being practised in Pondicherry, that can only mean one of two things or both: one is that the Government of the French settlements connive at them or encourages them, and the other is that it is totally powerless to control them. There can be no third explanation for it. In either event, the situation becomes an intolerable one. If an Indian national is interfered with, we take action, of course. Normally speaking, if a French Indian national, that is, an Indian citizen of Pondicherry, is interfered, because he is a foreign national, we cannot take any action. But when the goonda tactics are employed to crush a movement in favour of merger of these establishments in India that it is a matter of the most intimate concern to us. After the experience of these two years or so, the obvious
thought that comes to one is that these gangster methods are meant to crush or terrify people from voting for India.

There is then an end of this plebiscite business. India stands in this ground, namely, that Pondicherry and other French settlements and Goa must inevitably belong to the union of India.  

There is going to be no further debate about that issue.

Adie memoire on French settlements in India

The embassy of India, present their compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and have the honour to state as follows:

1. In accordance with an agreement arrived at between the British Government and the representatives of the people of India, the British power withdrew from India in August 1947. Certain parts of India were partitioned and became Pakistan. The historic process, which had brought about the end of British rule in India, would be completed only when the remaining enclaves, which were under foreign colonial rule, were also integrated with the union of India.

2. Accordingly, approaches were made to the French Government for a friendly settlement in this matter and the transfer of the French establishments to the union of India. Conservations took place in Delhi and Paris on this issue and the French Government recognized that the Union of India was justified in asking for a radical change in the existing situation. The nature of this change, however, was not agreed

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78 Selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru, op.cit,p.678
that full opportunity should be given to the inhabitants of these Settlements to determine the nature of this change.

3. By a declaration dated the 8\textsuperscript{th} June, 1948, the national assembly of France decided that the people of the French settlements in India should determine their future political status by means of "a free and sincere consultation, the particulars of which would be fixed in agreement with the elected municipal councils of those settlements". On the 19\textsuperscript{th} June, 1949, a referendum was held in the settlement of Chandernagore and there was an overwhelming vote in favour of the transfer of the free town to the Indian Union. A referendum in respect of the remaining four French settlement which are in South India has not so far being held as no agreement has been reached between the two Governments regarding the modalities of the consultation, and as conditions for a free referendum do not exist in these territories.

4. In their anxiety for an early settlement, the Government of India have felt obliged, on several occasions, to draw the attention of the French Government to the fact that conditions in the French settlements are becoming more and more unsatisfactory politically. This is borne out by the report of the three neutral observers, deputed by the French Government in March 1951 to inquire into the conditions existing in the settlements. The neutral observers considered it indispensable that "owing to certain defects characterizing political life in the settlements" certain measures ensuring
complete freedom for the electoral body during the electoral period should be adopted.

5. The Government of India regret to note that the French Government have taken no steps to implement the recommendations of the neutral observers. Conditions in the settlements are steadily deteriorating and lawless elements have been given a free hand to terrorize people who are in favour of merger. Due to the inactivity or open connivance of the local authorities, a situation has arisen in which freedom of speech; press or association has in practice ceased to exist. Numerous incidents have taken place in Indian territory bordering the settlements and the various representations made in this behalf by the Consul-General of India in Pondicherry and the Embassy of India in Paris have gone unheeded. The existing state of affairs has convinced the Government of India that no useful purpose would be serving by proceeding further on the basis of having a referendum in the French Settlements. Conditions suitable for the holding of a free and fair referendum have in fact ceased to exist.

6. In the circumstances, the Embassy of India are constrained to inform the French Government that the Government of India do not consider themselves bound any longer by their previous agreement with the French Government's declaration of the 8th June, 1948. The Government of India accordingly consider that negotiations between the two Governments should take place on the basis of a direct transfer of these areas to India. They have no doubt that the
French Government will appreciate that it is not consistent with the status of India as an independent Republic that such foreign enclaves, which are relics of colonial rule, should continue to exist on Indian soil.⁷⁹ They are anxious that this question should be settled by agreement in a peaceful manner.

The Indian Government’s note of 11th October condemned firing and the use of methods of coercion against Indian nationals in the French settlements and said that no fair referendum could be held under such conditions. About 50 families of French Indian nationals had in recent weeks, migrated to the Indian Union from French Indian settlements because some gangsters had made life impossible for them. These gangsters operated with connivance of the French India police.

The Governor of French territories then dilated on his Governments plans for developing cultural institutions and “a kind of a University” in Pondicherry. According to Nehru the French idea was that the University in Pondicherry “should serve India by bringing French culture to the French”. However, Baron wanted to know from Nehru, Indian reaction to this idea before the French Government embarked on its implementation. He naturally referred to the political developments in India which were bound to have an impact on Pondicherry and he rightly said that there were two parallel sentiments among the population: there was the sentiment for India as the motherland to which the people were attached; but there was also the sentiment of attachment to France as a consequence of their long

⁷⁹ Selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru, op. cit, p. 680
association with France and French culture. The Governor suggested that Pondicherry and presumably, other French enclaves in India might become parts of the Union of Free India and at the same time "there might be a kind of dual nationality for the people there so that they might be both citizens of the Indian Union and for some purposes citizens of France."  

With much of what the Governor of French India had outlined as his Government's plans for their enclaves in India, Nehru was generally sympathetic. He recognised that there was the dual sentiment among the population of Pondicherry. As far as India was concerned, he told Baron, he wanted a united country with no foreign basis or islands of extra-territoriality; and it followed that he would like French possessions on Indian soil to be absorbed in the Indian Union, "not by compulsion but because the people there would naturally desire this to be done." On the proposal for a dual nationality which he described as "novel", however, he demurred and said that it required full examination as to how far it was practicable. Something of the clan built up during the period of struggle for independence still remained with him and he not only was willing to entertain the continuance of Pondicherry's cultural attachment to France because of its long history of cultural association with that country, but added: Possibly some means would be devised to maintain this or some similar connection, which would not come in the way of Pondicherry being a full member of the Indian Union. India would be a federation of autonomous units. It was possible that even within a federating unit there might be smaller autonomous areas forming cultural or linguistic units. While

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90 Jyotial Singh, op.cit.p.261
91 Ibid
we desired to maintain the unity of India and a strong Central Government, we were anxious not to come in the way of the variety of India and the cultural autonomy of its different regions.

All that has happened is that he had some talks with the French Ambassador (Charge d’Affaires?) here and the French Governor of Pondicherry. Our policy obviously is for the union of these parts with the rest of India, though we are quite agreeable to French cultural associations to continue. As for appointing representatives in the French enclaves, Nehru told Reddiar that there was no such proposal before him. In any case, he remarked, normally, “representatives are appointed from our Foreign Service which is being recruited.” But he was willing to consider any suggestions that Reddiar might have to make which would be “welcome.” Nevertheless Reddiar’s surmise that the French Government was being somewhat disingenuous when they said that they had no objection to their settlements including Pondicherry joining the Indian Union, was not altogether groundless and Nehru had a confirmation of it from no less a person than G.S Bajpai who, after his return from the United States, was appointed officer on special duty in the external affairs department.

The message expressed the French Government’s anxiety over the situation in Pondicherry and Chandernagore, more especially in the latter place, because the Indian nationalists were suspected of staging “something aggressive” on August 15th, the day on which the Union Jack was to be hauled down over the Red Fort in Delhi and the Indian tricolour hoisted.

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82 Iqbal Singh, op.cit.p.262
This was certainly true of Chandernagore, where the Mayor, Kamal Prasad Ghosh, had declared on August 4th that "Chandernagore forms an integral part of Bengal and has every right to break its links with imperialist France". Moreover, a general strike had been called and a hartal proclaimed, but withdrawn after the French authorities released a hundred persons they had earlier arrested. In Pondicherry also the situation was tense. Bidault very much hoped that peace would be preserved in both places and there would be no untoward incident. Nehru also wished that calm would prevail, especially as he felt that the French were being reasonable. They had already decided to cede their "logos" in India immediately and further "grant extensive financial and administrative powers to the municipalities in the French possessions in India. These municipalities would thus have a great deal of autonomy in the future". Added to that, Nehru noted, the French Government were going to have elected members to the Councils in Pondicherry, Chandernagore and their other enclaves. Indeed, Nehru's note of August 8th reads almost at times as if he was holding a brief for the French Government. He wrote: All these were looked upon as a first step. They proposed to take other and more far-reaching steps in the near future, but they could not indicate their exact nature at the present moment. But they wished to assure us that it was their desire that all these matters should be settled amicably between the French Government and the Government of India and in accordance with the wishes of the people in French India. They felt sure that their final decisions would be in accordance with the wishes of the people in the French possessions and the Government of India. In view, however, of Parliamentary procedure, they could not declare anything at present.
Consequently they did not want any publicity to be given to the steps they were taking, except that "they were handing over the loges free." Nevertheless Nehru asked Roux for "something specific in writing about this," to avoid misunderstanding. But the French Ambassador was not forthcoming, though he promised to communicate with his Government at once to get the precise formula. This might well have set Nehru wondering. For in diplomacy it is rarely that ambassadors come with urgent messages from their Foreign Minister of another country without being briefed by their Governments as to how to answer the obvious questions which the other side might put to them, at least informally. In this particular case, the contrast between Roux's keenness for Indian Government to give the maximum publicity it could to the French offer to hand over their "loges" at once and without any quid pro quo with his coyness in giving anything specific and in writing on their larger holdings of real estate in India was, to say the lead rather marked and suggested that they were playing for time or had some reservations on their assurance to Nehru that they wanted nothing else but the preservation of their cultural links with French India, or both.

Nehru for his part was prepared to give the French the benefit of the doubt even if he guessed that there was some divergence between their assurance to him and their real position on the question of Pondicherry and the rest of their settlements. In fact, he assured Roux that his Government was as keen as the French to see every question being resolved in a friendly way "and in accordance with the wishes of the people of the French possessions." He went on: As regards the

83 Iqbal Singh, op.cit.p.265
84 Iqbal Singh, op.cit.p.266
agitation in Chandernagore, it is very difficult, and indeed hardly possible, for us to do anything in the matter. There were all manner of groups in Bengal and we could not control them (they could hardly control themselves). Indeed, we were having plenty of trouble in some parts of Bengal. Even the so-called Congress group in Chandernagore was in no way organisationally connected with the Indian National Congress. Although they use the name of Congress they were an independent group somewhat in sympathy with the ideals of the National Congress, but functioning entirely separately. So far as we were concerned, we did not want any untoward happenings in Chandernagore or Pondicherry."

What Nehru told Roux was the plain truth. Certainly, neither Nehru nor any other responsible Congress leader, whether in the Interim Government or out of it, wished to have any more trouble than they were already facing. Roux, for his part, seemed to be exercised over a report that some people were planning to pull down the French tricolour at Chandernagore and told Nehru that this would create "a bad impression in France." With this Nehru agreed and assured Roux that they "would not like any disrespect to be shown to French flag" but in his note, he observed: "It was not clear to me however what he could do in the matter, except possibly to give private advice to some private individuals, he was not in touch with them". As for the substantive issue, he summed up the position as it seemed to him on the eve of independence in his note: The position thus is that Mons. Roux will communicate with his Government and ask them for a precise formula about the French loges. An immediate publicity was

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85 Ibid
given preferably before 15th August. If the French Government are agreeable we might also state that the whole future of the French possessions was under active consideration of the French Government and they hope to settle it in accordance with the wishes of the people concerned. But we should only state what the French Government itself is agreeable to, lest there should be some misunderstanding in the future.

The total area involved was less than 200 square miles. The Portuguese, on the other hand, continued to treat Goa as an integral part of metropolitan Portugal. It is true and had been in Goa since the middle of the sixteenth century when they made it into a thriving trading and missionary centre, associated throughout Christendom with the name of Saint Francis Xavier. But by the 18th century, the standing of Goa had declined sharply, and for the whole period of British rule in India it remained a sleepy, second-class port, handling chiefly export cargoes of iron ore. There was some smuggling and in the two world wars it caused a good deal of inclination to be hustled into some kind of political action. 'It does not help in dealing with tough people to have weak nerves. The army, however, failed to deal decisively with the rebellion. Its efforts, reminiscent of what T. E. Lawrence and Nagas to provoke criticism of India abroad. So Nehru urged the army to act swiftly but not brutally, and pressed again with many minor political changes while working out the major political decision on the future administration of the area. It must always be remembered that if the Nagas are made to feel that they have no other alternative but to fight and die, they will prefer doing so. We must give them a better

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Ibid
alternative and seek their co-operation or at least [that] of those who are prepared to co-operate. This has not been done so far by the Assam Government or by our military.

Nehru realized that the Portuguese were beyond persuasion and would only yield under pressure either from other powers which are from the people of Goa. ‘Some time or other these people are going to have a route awakening to the 20th century.’ But building up the international support was a gradual and heart breaking process, while there was considerable support for the Portuguese, among the vested interests in Goa that had grown in strength over the centuries. It was not certain that if a plebiscite were held immediately, India would win. So Nehru discouraged the states peoples movement and the Bombay Government from promoting a popular campaign on the borders of Goa, preferring to start negotiations with the Portuguese Government.

To give the Portuguese no scope for complaint Nehru vetoed the establishment in India of a provisional Government of Goa. Organizations working for the merging of Goa with India were viewed with the little more tolerance than before: but this did not involve any alterations of policy which was still one of inaction and patience, waiting for the popular movement in Goa to gain strength, for the colonial economy to weaken, for the transfer of Pondicherry to have an influence in Lisbon and for sympathy in world opinion to prevail. ‘To expect sudden changes and always to think in terms of bringing about a big crisis is wrong both from the general political point of view and that of satyagraha.’

The Pope, when Nehru met him, had agreed that Goa was not a religious issue. The world, and particularly the Atlantic Powers, should take note that India would tolerate about Goa. But the peaceful approach was the right one not only from point of view of Goa and India but also because of major issues in the world. The Government of India was not pacifist but they would only go to war in case of an armed attack.

It was not generally appreciated that Nehru had in fact shown a gritty resolution in adopting his policy of restraint. ‘It has been no easy matter to stop satyagraha and doubt if any other Government anywhere in the world could have had the courage and strength to take such an unpopular step’. The only action he took to counter this misunderstanding of his policy was to send an official note to all the Bandung countries reminding them that India was entitled to their support on this issue. Adherence to peaceful methods despite flagrant provocation could not blur the fact that Goa was a symbol of intransigent and oppressive colonialism, completely out of keeping with the spirit of Asia and Africa and indeed of all freedom – loving people all over the world. Refusal to react to Portugal’s use of force and the decision to stop the satyagraha should not be interpreted as acceptance of the “Monstrous abnormally” of Portuguese rule in Goa. The only settlement which India would accept was as in the case of Pondicherry, an early withdrawal of the foreign power followed by a normal transfer of authority. “A flash of anger short through his eyes as he said, ‘There are some questions over which it is permissible to have two points of view, but over this one, that is the Goa issue, it
seems that only one view is possible”. But the very belief in Nehru’s dedication to peaceful methods weakened the pressure that foreign Governments were willing to exert on Portugal and confirmed them in the even-handed attitude that was all in favour of the status quo. Those who had faith in Nehru could not take seriously his assertion that India would not accept indefinitely the continuance of Portuguese rule in Goa. The adamant Portuguese attitude and the failure of other powers to interfere meant that the dilemma could not be solved by Nehru’s method. It would have to been broken, at the cost of Nehru’s principle, or the Portuguese left undisturbed, in defiance of Nehru’s commitments. Nehru was as yet not prepared to take what he considered to adventurist action.

Nehru’s various public activities were held together by a general theory of Government. Ruling India was to him not just a matter of dealing with files or issuing executive orders. These were important duties, but only a small part of the whole. Democratic Government ‘is not something which we can deal with merely because we have some general knowledge or ability’. Regard had to be paid to the deeper issues beneath the day-to-day concerns.

The fact is that often we are struggling with major problems without the larger experience which gives assurance to the mind. We have to be firm and we have to be flexible. We must not be undecided and unable to make up our minds. But we can only be firm if our minds are clear about major problem. There should not be the human touch, but behind the human touch one should give the feeling of firm

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decisions. That is, while one should be flexible, one should not be weak in handling an issue and our approach to the party and to the public should always be friendly.

This art of human management had in these years to be exercised by Nehru at every level, both in the larger, impersonal context of binding the masses to the Government and in the more delicate task of holding this colleagues together. This country requires such a tremendous deal of managing in a variety of ways. This, of course, was true of India in general but in dealing with narrower, personal problems of Nehru was indispensable. He alone, in the higher ranks of the Congress, because of his undisputed command over the Party and the people, could keep individuals and groups from dissension.

French settlements in India became part of Indian Union after the ratification of the treaty of cession between India and France on 16th August 1961 and by the Constitution (14th Amendment)Bill passed by Parliament on 30th August 1962. The Bill provided for the representation of the former French settlements in the Lok Sabha and for the setting up of a representative Government by the Constitution (Fourteenth) Amendment Bill passed by the Lok Sabha on 30th August 1962.

The constitution (fourteenth amendment) bill passed by the Lok Sabha on 30th August 1962, provided for the representation of the former French settlements in the Lok Sabha and setting up the legislatures in the Union territories of Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Tripura, Goa, Daman and Diu and Pondicherry.
By the time the first General Elections were held under the new Constitution in 1952, Parliamentary democracy had taken deep roots. This election itself was something unique in Parliamentary history all over the world. The conduct of elections won all-around admiration. This was repeated in the second and third general elections, held in 1957 and 1962, respectively. Expression of the free will of the people was the hall-mark of these elections. Even though the size of the electorate grew with successive general elections, it was to the credit of the system working under Nehru that there was minimum room for complaint against the election process and machinery. The Indian National Congress, led by Jawaharlal Nehru, was returned to power in all the three general elections with comfortable majorities in the Lok Sabha.  

Pandit Nehru was the prime architect of India’s political institutions. His contribution to the evolution of Parliamentary democracy in the country was unique. It was he who built, brick by brick, the infrastructure and edifice of Parliamentary institutions in India. The years that followed the commencement of the Constitution constituted a period of great stress and strain for the nation and for the world at large. That India’s representative institutions endured was a great tribute to Nehru’s abiding faith in and respect for the Parliamentary system. The Union Parliament itself was under Nehru’s leadership performed a tremendous conflict resolution and national integrational role during the formative years (1950 – 64). As the Leader of the House – Provisional Parliament (1950 – 52), First Lok Sabha (1952 – 57), Second Lok Sabha (1957 – 62) and Third Lok

\[\text{Subhash C. Kashyap, op.cit.p.167}\]
Sabha (1962 – 64), Nehru played the most outstanding role in establishing healthy practices and precedents. Free and fair elections to Parliament based on universal adult franchise were, for Nehru, the most sacred festival of democracy and an article of faith. He showed tremendous respect to the institution of Parliament and to Parliamentary practices and procedures.

Nehru had the fullest faith in Parliament as the Supreme representative institution of the people. He believed in the primacy of Parliament and in its supremacy within the field assigned to it by the Constitution. In the matter of the role of the judiciary and extent of judicial review Nehru took a very firm stand and said that the courts could not become a third legislative chamber; their role was to interpret the laws made by Parliament and not to themselves lay down the law. It was through his conscious efforts that Parliament secured a Preeminent position in the country’s policy. The effectiveness of the institution of Parliament was convincingly vindicated on several occasions.  

Nehru was meticulous in showing courtesy to Parliament; the very manner of his entry into the House, the graceful bow to the Chair each time he took his seat or left the House, his strict observance of Parliamentary etiquette in the best sense of the term, and his readiness to answer even irritating interruptions were exemplary. As Shri R.Venkataraman, the then President of India says, “it was his innate gentleness and his gentlemanliness that made Nehru an ornament to Parliament”. He took keen interest in the question hour and seldom missed it. He was present during most of the debates on major issues and listened to the members with attention. Nehru

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90 Subhash C. Kashyap, op. cit., p. 168
91 Subhash C. Kashyap, op. cit., p. 169
answered questions with dignity and dexterity, gracefully and effectively. Mrs. Violet Alva once observed that Nehru spoke “with passion but not with malice”. Sometimes he denounced wrongs “with the spirit of a rebel but he left no wounds behind”. He “could intervene and answer any intricate point and wind up the critical stage of any debate. He even went to the extent of getting the members of his won party expelled from the membership of Lok Sabha if found guilty of conduct unbecoming of a member of Parliament. Nehru reacted more strongly on a subsequent occasion in Lok Sabha about 13 years later when some members indulged in disorderly conduct while the President was addressing both the Houses assembled together on 18th February, 1963. The committee was set up to go into the conduct of these members, had recommended that they should be reprimanded. Replying to the discussion on the Committee’s Report, Nehru said: “The sole question before us is – it is a highly important one and vital one what rules and conventions we should establish for the carrying on of the work of this Parliament with dignity and effectiveness. It was for the first time that it happened, and if that was allowed to continue without any strong expression of opinion of this House or Parliament, it would have been a bad day for our democratic institutions and Parliament especially. This Parliament is supposed not only to act correctly but lay down certain principles and conventions of decorous behaviour.

In an impressive show of Parliamentary power, an I.C.S Secretary (H. M. Patel) and a powerful Finance Minister (T. T. Krishnaachari) had to quit their posts in the Mundhra case involving question
regarding investments of L. I. C. funds etc. The matter was raised in the Lok Sabha and followed up by Feroz Gandhi, a distinguished Parliamentarian. In the Berubari case the Government had decided to cede certain parts of the territory of the Union to Pakistan under an agreement. Parliamentary pressure compelled the Government to refer the matter to the Supreme Court and to bring forward a Constitutional Amendment before Parliament. The Supreme Court opinion established the principle that no part of the territory of the Union of India could be ceded by the Government without Parliamentary approval and without the Parliament amending the Constitution. When in the midst of some controversy and reported differences, an army General (Chief of Army Staff, General Thimayya) submitted his resignation, Prime Minister Nehru firmly and categorically declared in the Lok Sabha that in India “civil authority is, and must, remain supreme.” These were significant and memorable words particularly in the context of what had happened to democracies in some of the neighbouring countries.

In the 1962 debacle following the Chinese aggression, the Defence Minister (V. K. Krishna Menon) had to resign as a result of Parliamentary pressure. It showed at once the power of Parliament on the one hand and the magnanimity and vision of Nehru and his deep commitment to the highest norms of Parliamentary democracy on the other. When he found that the majority opinion in the Congress party and in Parliament was against his own personal predilections he readily, willingly and gracefully bowed to it. The compulsory Deposit Scheme which came into force on 22nd May 1963 evoked

92 Subhash C. Kashyap, op. cit., p. 171
strong opposition from the people and Parliament. It was virtually withdrawn even before the year was out. What came to be known as the Serajuddin affair resulted in the Minister of Mines and Oil. (K. D. Malaviya having had to resign after admitting receipt of money from Serajuddin for political purposes and after being subject to an enquiry by a Supreme Court Judge. The reported VOA deal between India and U.S.A generated considerable heat and opposition in Parliament and ultimately Government had to rescind the agreement. A Constitution Amendment Bill introduced on 24th April 1964 and seeking to indemnity certain actions of officers during the Emergency was withdrawn by the Government in view of strong reaction against it in Lok Sabha. Thus, on several occasions, Parliament chose to assert itself, especially on issue of national importance.

Accommodating the opposition and accepting Criticism

Nehru was always more than willing to accommodate the view of the Opposition in the greater interests of the nation. He listened to the view points, of the opposition very carefully. It was, he said, fully democratic that the Opposition should criticize the Government's policies; only it would be more helpful if they offered constructive criticism. Even though the Opposition was weak in numbers. Nehru accorded it considerable importance and held the view that “it would not be right for us to appear to be vindictive”. He met the Opposition leaders occasionally to exchange ideas on crucial issues. He would make it a point to compliment those who made fine speeches and raised important issues. Also, he would talk to them. His personal relationship with many Opposition members was most cordial and friendly. Glowing tributes have been paid to him for his unfailing
courtesy and consideration shown to Opposition members of Parliament. Nehru felt responsible not only to the members of his own party but also to those of the Opposition and in fact to the whole nation. He was conscious of the fact that he was the Prime Minister of the entire country and the leader of the whole House and not merely the leader of the majority party in Parliament.

Under Nehru’s stewardship the rights and privileges of members were duly safeguarded and the dignity and prestige of the House maintained. He asserted, “I am jealous of the powers of this House and I should not like anyone to limit those powers”. Once when some members from the Opposition felt that certain remarks made by the then Special Assistant of Nehru (M. O. Mathai) were a contempt of the House and brought a privilege motion, Nehru requested the Speaker to refer the matter to the Committee of Privileges. He said: “When a considerable section of the House was feeling that something should be done, it is hardly a matter for a majority to over-ride those wishes, suggestion to drop this matter would not be a right one because it almost appears that an attempt was made somehow to hush matters or hide matters, it is not a good thing for such an impression to be created”.

Nehru appreciated and informed criticism from all quarters and did not hesitate to accept and appreciate valid points. On one occasion during the discussion on President’s Address an Opposition leader, Ashoka Mehta, described the President’s Address as odourless, colourless and blamed the Government for it. While replying to the debate, Nehru dealt with that points first and said: Nehru would often

93 Subhash C.Kashyap, op.cit.,p.172
begin by welcoming “well-deserved criticism” in Parliament saying that his Government could benefit them. At the same time, he would disarm his critics by observing that beyond that criticism there was a vast amount of agreement on fundamentals, and then he would set out to analyse the areas of agreement. Nehru might have sometimes appeared “impatient and intolerant of criticism, obstruction and indecision, so characteristic of democratic assemblies”. But, in fact, he was at great pains to appreciate criticism. He was so introspective as to go out of the way to see the other man’s point of view. He tried his best to pick out points from the criticism of the opponents of his stand, and was patient enough to try to rebuild and reshape his own plans and ideas. Within the Congress party also, Nehru permitted debates and discussions, inviting different shades of opinion on various matters. Thus, Congress was flexible enough to accommodate different points of view. It offered enough scope for every opinion and criticism to develop and held frequent discussions or consultations, the gist of which were often given out in the press for public information and discussion. This characteristic of the functioning of the party enabled it to hold its position in the House. The discussions and developments in the ruling party meetings themselves greatly influenced the Government in shaping its policies and in responding to public opinion. The impact of the party on the administration was perhaps as important as that of Parliament. Nehru led the way in emphasising the need to preserve the dignity of the House. Nehru’s approach and attitude to Parliament were largely responsible for the growth of healthy Parliamentary traditions in the first decade and a half of Parliament in independent India. In the words of Dr. Gopal, the biographer of Nehru: “Building on the familiarization with politics
brought about by the national movement, Nehru defied conventional wisdom and introduced adult suffrage. Much as he disliked the sordid rivalry implicit in elections to legislative assemblies, Nehru gave life and zest to the campaigns; and, between elections, he nurtured the prestige and vitality of Parliament. He took seriously his duties as leader of the Lok Sabha and of the Congress Party in Parliament, sat regularly through the question hour and all important debates, treated the presiding officers of the two Houses with extreme defence, sustained the excitement of debate with a skilful use of irony and repartee, and built up Parliamentary activity as an important sector in the public life of the country. The tone of his own speeches in Parliament was very different from that which he adopted while addressing public meetings. He still sometimes rambled, but sought to argue rather than teach, to deal with the points raised by critics, to associate the highest legislature in the country with deliberation on policy and to destroy any tendency to reduce it in Max Weber’s phrase, to ‘routinized impotence’. By transferring some of his personal command to the institution of Parliament, he helped the Parliamentary system take root’.  

The result was that debates in the Indian Parliament attracted wide attention not only in India but in the wide world outside. Foreign affairs debates were eagerly looked forward to. The visitors Galleries and Diplomatic Galleries were fully packed during all such debates. There were some momentous occasions like the debate on the nationalization of the Suez Canal. Often, the debates helped to ease tense situations, resolve conflicts and highlight India’s impact and

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94 Subhash C. Kashyap, op.cit,p.176
contributions in the process. Nehru always emphasized the desirability of Ministers''. This ability to accept others' viewpoint and extract out of them the best elements, to be used for the good of the society, was one of the most remarkable traits of Jawaharlal Nehru's personality.\textsuperscript{95}

It is worth recalling how once when Shrimati Rukmani Arundale's Private Member's Bill on Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was under consideration. Nehru walked into Parliament and declared that the Government was committed to the principles of the Bill and would bring forward its own legislation on the subject. It was through such firm stands and spirit of accommodating legitimate suggestions that Nehru laid the foundation of Parliament of the largest democracy on earth and made it a potent instrument of nation building, social engineering, economic reconstruction and national integration.

Thus, before the Nehru Era in the history of India came to an abrupt (end in May 1964), firm foundations of Parliamentary Government had been laid. The Parliament of independent India – of the Sovereign Democratic Republic of India – had been in existence for nearly 14 long years. During this period, the nation was able to actually work the system of representative Parliamentary democracy and to adapt it, where necessary, to India's own ethos, needs and aspirations. The country was fortunate in having at the helm of affairs a galaxy of highly distinguished and competent men headed by the great stalwart of the freedom struggle, Pandit Nehru himself. They proved to be as good nation-builders and administrators as they had been patriots and freedom fighters. Also, the existence of a well-organized and reasonably disciplined political party – the Indian

\textsuperscript{95} Subhash C. Kashyap, op.cit., p.177
National Congress – with its firm faith in representative institutions proved a great boon in the task of institution building, developing healthy traditions, ensuring effective functioning of Parliament and State Legislatures and of the Congress Ministries at the Union and State levels etc.

The war was a rude awakening for Nehru, as India proved ill-equipped and unprepared to defend its northern borders. At the conclusion of the conflict, the Chinese forces were partially withdrawn and an unofficial demilitarized zone was established, but India’s prestige and self-esteem had suffered. Physically debilitated and mentally exhausted, Nehru suffered a stroke and died in office in May 1964. His legacy of a democratic, federal, and secular India continues to survive inspite of attempts by later leaders to establish either an autocratic or a theocratic state. Nehru’s long tenure in office gave continuity and cohesion to India’s domestic and foreign policies, but as his health deteriorated, concerns over who might inherit his mantle or what might befall India after he left office frequently surfaced in political circles. After his death, the Congress Caucus, also known as the Syndicate, chose Lal Bahadur Shastri as Prime Minister in June 1964, a mild-mannered person. Shastri adhered to Gandhian principles of simplicity of life and dedication to the service of the country.

The driving force behind Nehru’s contributions towards the building up of a Parliamentary system was a profound democratic spirit, which found expression not only in the setting up of Parliamentary institutions but also in providing the right atmosphere for the flourishing of such institutions. Once, when he was asked as to what his legacy to India would be, Nehru replied: “Hopefully, it is four
hundred million people capable of governing themselves”. The Parliamentary system and its institutions that we have today evolving through the changing times are indeed an integral part of this great legacy left behind by Nehru. The Parliament and its healthy conventions and traditions, evolved during his life-time, and which have become essential and permanent features of our democratic polity, owe greatly to the persistent efforts of Jawaharlal Nehru to make Parliamentary democracy strong and resilient for ever in our country. Nehru’s vision of developing Parliament as a symbol of the nation’s will has become a reality. We all know how meticulous Nehru himself was in the observance of these norms and conventions and that too, to the last breath of his life.

96 Subhash C. Kashyap, op.cit, p. 185
CHAPTER IV

The Freedom Movement in the French Settlements and
the response of the People and the Press

As a result of the French revolution, an all-white general assembly was held on 2nd February 1790, in Pondicherry. An all-white municipality was set up in Pondicherry in August 1791 with 5 members and a Mayor. A new representative committee of 27 members with a representative from each of the other settlements including Mahe was also set up. The Indians were not allowed to participate in it. The representative committee was replaced by a Colonial Assembly consisting of twenty one members. Fifteen of them were from Pondicherry, three from Chandernagore and one each from Mahe, Yanam and Karaikal. French residents above the age of 25 and who were residents in India since two years were to elect the 21 representatives of the Colonial Assembly. Mahe had a French Mayor called Boyer. The general council consisted of about 2 members for Mahe. The local council consisted of about 6 in Mahe. Each commune had its municipal council and its Mayor. The whole of Mahe was constituted into one single commune. The municipal council of Mahe was composed of 12 elected members. The Europeans were about hundred in Mahe. In 1870 Nalporeyil Baddouincutty (Vaduvan Kutty Vakil) was elected to the local council of Mahe in the 1870s and also as Mayor of Mahe, Payanadin Bapou, was the Deputy Mayor. In the local and municipal councils during this period, there were people like

97 K.S.Singh, op.cit.p.480
Errampally Kellappan, Manalile Moideenkutty, Poudiaporeyil Carotte Abdulaja, and Madayi Knaran. In 1899 Punna Ramotty was elected as Mayor of Mahe. Radical - socialist party communities first appeared in Mahe in 1907.

The natives of Pondicherry identified themselves with the Indian Independence right through the history and the stalwarts of this noble movement were invited periodically to come to Pondicherry to address the people here about the growth of the national Congress. The fiery speeches and writings of leaders like Tilak, Gandhiji, Nehruji, Das, Aurobindo etc; were received with great enthusiasm.\(^9\) The imprisonment of the leaders of the movement and their satyagraha sparked enough courage and conviction among the citizens of Pondicherry. The stay of great leaders like Aurobindo, Bharathi, V.S.S. Iyer, Neelakanta Brahmachari and a host of their local admirers tilled the soil of Pondicherry and sown the seeds of freedom. The spirit of nationalism, patriotism and freedom from the foreign yoke became very significant in Pondicherry. Interestingly, the labour movement of the textile industries in Pondicherry were used as the substratum for organizing public demonstrations initially towards realization of their long pending demands. The same force formed the basis for freedom movement later. V.Subbiah, veteran freedom fighter and labour leader provided commendable leadership at the beginning.

Pondicherry was not lacking in national consciousness before 1947. In the year 1924 itself, one Shri A. Palanippa Mudaliar of Muthialpet was running a bus company by name “The Swathanthira

\(^9\) N. Rajkumar, The Problem of French India, Department of foreign Relations, Indian National Congress, New Delhi, p. 194
Major bus company" and "The Swathanthira Motor Service" which earned the displeasure of both the British and the French Governments. He acquainted himself with the liberation movement against the British domination. He used to help the nationalists in many ways. The name of the motor service roused the indignation of both the alien Governments. Though he was pressurized constantly to change the said name of the bus company, he flatly refused. As a result of his philanthropic acts, he lost all of his properties and for the debts he had thus incurred, his properties were auctioned on the 25th February 1935 by the Pondicherry court.

The Indian National Congress came under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi who wanted to attain complete Independence for India. He launched the civil disobedience campaign against British rule. Many residents of French Mahe participated in the civil disobedience movement. Kallat Damodaran, a Tiyya of Mahe plunged into the Civil Disobedience movement in neighbouring British Malabar, C.F. Gopalan and Muchikkal Padmanabhan joined the communist party in organising a youth league in Mahe in 1934. Mahatma Gandhi came to Mahe in 1934 to uplift the Harijans and social reforms. The Mahajana Sabha party was organised under the leadership of Marie Savary and R.L. Purushothama Reddiar. N. Sahadevan was re-elected as Mayor. His relative C. C. Kumaran and a Muslim were appointed as Deputy Mayors. Namatte Madayi Karayi Govindan and Padicotte Nadamel Kanchi Mannan were the land owners who became special deputies of Pallur and Pandakkal. The nationalist trends of both Pondicherry and the British India remained inseparable right from the beginning of Independence struggle. In fact,
the prominent leaders like Gandhiji and Nehruji felt that the independence of Pondicherry from their French colonial master was almost an automatic by product of Indian Independence from the British Raj. Mahatmaji during his visit to Mahe in 1934, declared that there was no difference between French India and British India as far as Indian Independence was concerned. Hence, there was no question of leaving the issue of liberation of French India unsettled for a longer duration. Including the encounters under the French and the Portuguese control efforts were already on to mobilize public consciousness towards the goal of independence from the French masters even by early 1930s. The formation of Harijan Seva Sangam in 1933 and the visits of Mahatma Gandhiji in 1934 and that of Nehru in 1936 accelerated the process of political consciousness and fundamental thirst of freedom. In 1939 the Mahajana Sabha party was founded in Mahe. Two Muslim associations were founded during this period in Mahe. The association known as the La Jeunesse Musulmane of Mahe took active part in liberating Mahe from the French. Though Shri Vijayaraghavan had not entered into a direct clash with the French, he served very usefully for the liberation cause. He was the editor of “The French India Gazette” in 1930. In 1938, he vehemently opposed the poll-tax imposed by the French Government to the British subjects living in the French Settlements. According to the order, a British subject living in the French settlements had to pay Rs. 20/- per head if he was a male and Rs. 10/- per head if she was a female. Unable to withstand the growing opposition to the said order, the French Government withdrew the poll-tax.
In 1942, he published the protest of the late Shri S. Arangasami Naicker of Tirunallar to the convening of the special session of Representative Assembly in a private man’s building. Having become furious over this news item, the then Governor M. Bon Vin banned the publication, “The French India Gazette”. 99

Many illustrious leaders like Shri P. Ansari Doraisamy, R.L.Purushothama Reddiar, V.Subbayya, A.Khaddar Nedesan, Ettyappa Naicker and S.R.Subramaniam took leading part in the “Salt Satyagraha” and the “Quit India” movement sponsored by Mahatma Gandhi in the years 1930 and 1942 respectively. Some of them were however criticised by their contemporaries for their indulgence in petty politics. Antonie Vallabah Mariadassou writes in his paper referred to earlier that “what is the most amazing bewilderment is that a popular leader like Subbiah, a very steadfast person, had recourse to such ugly methods. Greed for power seemed to have shot him into the vortex of the ill process of dirty local politics. Thereby Subbiah became a opportunist, without ideology and principles. As a result, his popularity began to decline”. As long as the second world war 1939 – 1945 lasted, the CPI stood under the command of the international communist authority called Comintern of all political decisions. For instance, the CPI took a different stand contrary, to Gandhiji by not supporting the “Quit India” people’s movement of 1942 for the only ideological reason of not jeopardising soviet interest to win the war whose duration could not be foreseen. 100

99 Ibid
100 Ibid
Freedom Struggle in Karaikal Region

The formation of the Karaikal National Congress on 13th June, 1947 and the students Congress on 31st January 1947 were events of great significance in the nationalist history of Pondicherry region. The popular desire to get freedom was very visible. Leaders like R. Supparayan and Sivanandam took early steps to form the students Congress even by 21st September 1946. However, the French administration gave them permission only in January 1947. Immediately after its formation, they passed a resolution for merger with the Indian Union on 13th March, 1947. The working committee of the Congress party rejected the concept of free city floated by France.

National Democratic Front in Chandernagore

Annussamy belonged to the National Democratic Front. Chandernagore identified itself more with the nationalist politics and developed a strong tendency to slip away from the tutelage of Pondicherry. They for the first time, demonstrated their rebellions temperament in the middle of July 1946 in the wake of the municipal elections. In that elections the NDF (a communist led front) secured a majority and Kamal Ghosh, a NDF leader, became the Mayor. They, along with the courtsides, hoisted the flag of the Indian National Congress on the Marie (town hall). The trend of defiance of the Pondicherry authorities thus commenced continued until Chandernagore seceded from Pondicherry. Its memories were still fresh in the minds of the people. While the rest of India was obeying the anniversary in a befitting manner, French India did not want to lag behind and decided to observe 21st February 1947 as a day of union between the army, “the police and the people” in order to demonstrate
their determination to wrest complete independence and throw off foreign domination. The French India communist party organized the whole thing and the NDF took the lead. In a telegram the President of the French India National Congress also held the communists and their associates, the NDF responsible for the incident at café Ansari and pointed out that inadequate preventive measures of the Pondicherry administration gave the attackers a few hand. The administrator of Chandernagore observed that it was for the first time that all parties—united parties members of the representative Assembly, the NDF (Mayor), Communists (labour leaders) jointly protested against the police and not only patronized an illegal action but threatened to blockade the police post as long as their demands for apology were not accepted.

Annussamy, a NDF member strongly criticized the proposed constitutional reforms and demanded the institution of a really responsible Government in French India. The governor still remained as the executive power, observed police and Judiciary, supported by metropolitan budget (from 1st September 1947), remained in his hands. Annussamy demanded the integration of French India with Indian union and strongly pleaded for the conversion of the Representative assembly into a constituent representative assembly with all rights and prerogatives. Demonstrations and slogan shouting against the decree marked the inaugural day of the municipal assembly. It was reported that the party opposed to the NDF had accepted the decree of 7th November on the advice of the Indian National Congress and with the consent of the Bengal provincial Congress committee. The Presidents of the newly constituted Administrative council could not be strictly
called Congressmen with the exception of one or two – they were moderately inclined anti-communists and opposed to NDF. Expressing his reaction on the installation of a new administrative council in Chandernagore the French Consul General of Calcutta reported to the charge ‘d’ Affaires of the French Government at New Delhi that the administrative changes in Chandernagore had been received well by the people.\textsuperscript{101} Resentment against the provincial administrative council was also mounting and Prakash Chandra Das, President, NDF demanded immediate dissolution of the Administrative council and its replacement by an impartial responsible Government. There was a strong protest when the life of the provisional Administrative council was extended for another six months. Elections of the Municipal Assembly through elected members would fix the date of consolation and the modalities of referendum. Hence there was a President demand for an early declaration. The council of Joint Action had also threatened violence. On 2\textsuperscript{nd} May, a bulge crowd besieged the representative Assembly which had rejected the nationalist motion for integration with Indian union. The municipal election of Chandernagore was last held in 1946 and in that election, as stated earlier, the NDF Emerged Victorious. Since 1947 Deben Das and other members of the Pondicherry representative Assembly from Chandernagore had been demanding the revision of the voters lists, but it was delayed on flimsy pretexts. The election of 25\textsuperscript{th} July attained special significance for the first time voting was to be on the basis of adult suffrage. Already the CPI had been bound and the NDF was on a low profile. The Congress Karma Parishad fought the election under the patronage of the provisional council of administering. As this

\textsuperscript{101} Ajit K. Neogy, op.cit., p.69
municipal assembly was going to play an important role in the coming days and the contesting parties the Congress, the NDF and the Forward bloc periled up all their resources to win the election and naturally it generated an unprecedented thesis among the people, nevertheless the election was peaceful.

The French administration was constrained to introduce a few reforms to appease the domestic aspirations of the agitated people of Pondicherry. The Privy Council was replaced by a Council of Government by an act of 12th, August 1947, by another order of 20th August, 1947, the Governor was to give directions and exercise control over the public services in the French establishments in India. He continued to function as the President of the council of Government as previously in the case of the conseil privée but functioned under the advice of the Councilors who were to be elected by the assembly. He was to pass orders only in the council of Government or in consultation with the Councilors except on subjects like judiciary police, law and order. There were six Councilors in the council of Government. Three of them were elected by the representative assembly and the rest were appointed by the Commissioner. The communist party also demanded the immediate merger with India. V. Subbiah, senator for French India and the Leader of the communist Party criticized the reforms envisaged by governor Baron regarding the composition of the council of Government and called upon the people of French India not to accept any settlement except on the basis of complete transfer of French Indian territories to the Indian union.  

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102 N.Rajkumar, op.cit,p.196
The communist Party gave instruction to all the municipal bodies to hoist the Indian flag in place of the French flag on 15th August, the Bar Associations of Pondicherry and Karaikal passed resolution on 30th August 1947 calling for the integration of the French establishments with India. Chandernagore, situated in west Bengal, decided to merger with India through a referendum held on the June 1949 in which 7473 voted in favour of merger and 114 against merger.

With the announcement of the dawn of freedom to a major portion of India on the 15th day of August 1947, from the British yoke, the continuance of French colonialism in some parts on the coast lines of India was felt as an anomaly and also against the security of India. So, a great wave of enthusiasm and zeal began to creep into the minds, of the young men to rise up against the French colonial rule over the tiny pockets of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe, Yanam and Chandernagore in India.

The French administration introduced some illusory methods in the pattern of administration with the aid of his “Yes Men” to make the people believe that a true representative Government was functioning in Pondicherry also like free India. By a decree dated 12th August 1947 he formed a “Council of Government”, “Conseiller du Government” to aid and advise the Governor in the administration of Pondicherry and by another decree on the same date, the Representative Assembly was created for Pondicherry and other enclaves. By another decree dated 20th August 1947 he changed his designation as Commissioner for the French Republic in India. Out of six counsellors, three were to be elected from the Assembly and the other three, to be nominated by the
Governor. But to trumpet to the world that true democracy was functioning in the French Settlements in India, he allowed all the six counsellors to be elected from the Assembly itself. This council which had to meet at periodical intervals under the Presidentship of the Governor was purely an advisory body. Their advice could be flouted or ignored, if it did not suit the imperialistic interest of the French. These advisers had no say on the subjects of Finance, Police and Judiciary. All the heads of these Departments were also Frenchmen and their salaries were paid from the Metropolitan Budget of the French Government. In case of any difference of opinion among the six counsellors on any matter, the Governor had the casting vote. For example, in 1948 when the counsellors became divided three on one side and the other three another side, the Governor Mon. Baron cast his vote in favour of the group headed by Mon. Goubert as the resolution of the latter was found favourable to the imperialistic interest of the French.

Mon. Baron on his way back from Paris with the above said legislations, arrived in Calcutta and sought an interview with Gandhiji. With the help of the then Chief Minister of West Bengal Dr. B.C. Roy, he was able to meet Gandhiji. It was said of him that he briefed Gandhiji as to the legislations, he was about to introduce in Pondicherry in the pattern of administration. Gandhiji, who was seized with the communal riots which were rocking the country at that time, was stated to have paid patient hearing to his words but what actually transpired between the two-nobody knows. Mon. Baron, after reaching Pondicherry issued a press statement that the said legislations had got

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103 Ibid
the blessings of the Mahatma and thus gagged the mouth of all the nationalists. By this arrangement, the French were able to retain a handful of vested interests, styled as “The French Indian Socialist Party” headed by a retired judicial officer who was a French-Indian, Mon. Edouard Goubert by name. This Party had no connection either with the Socialist party in France or in India. It did not function even as a party.

With the aid of power, police, he and his supporters in Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam were able to maintain a rowdy gang, always at their disposal, to terrorise their respective localities and to suppress pro-merger feelings. Since Pondicherry, Karaikal and Mahe were free-ports, smuggling had become an approved and dignified business. Those merchants who indulged in smuggling activities, naturally owed their allegiance to the foreign domination. With the connivance of the French authorities, these merchants were able to import luxurious goods, free of duty, from foreign countries and smuggle them across the borders to India, thus affecting the Indian economy. So, the continuance of French rule in some parts on the coast lines of India, another one in the heart of Andhra Pradesh and the other on the bank of the river Hoogly in Bengal, had become a constant headache to the Government of Free India. Even then the activities of the pro-French elements were not able to put down pro-merger, sympathies. This was made clear to the French Government by the people of Pondicherry and by the Government of India, in no uncertain terms. In April 1948, Shri Leon Saint Jean, Secretary of the Congress group in the Pondicherry

104 R.Ramasrinivasan, op. cit., p. 17
Representative Assembly, which consisted of S. Raja Iyer of Kurumbagaram and T. Madhavan of Varichikudi declared that immediate merger with the motherland alone will be a stable solution.\textsuperscript{105}

Communist Party

On 1\textsuperscript{st} May 1947, the communist party of Pondicherry organised a huge procession at 10.A.M. followed by a demonstration at 5P.M. Through Dupleix street (Now Jawaharlal Nehru Street) which took an ugly turn and during which Ansari Dorai’s restaurant was plundered by hooligans shouting only one solgan “Long Live V.S. Leader Subbiah” a student Congress meeting was going on the 1\textsuperscript{st} floor of the Café. No action was taken by the French Administration to ban the demonstration. Despite the presence of a strong contingent of armed police, the assault could not be prevented, thus the communist party had to hooligans this event to such an extent that communist rowdies snatched and tore the tri-colour flags hoisted on several houses in the town and more than as suspenders. Still, they did not do to approach the house of Ansari Dorai and that of brothers Paul Rajanedassou knowing fully well that they were prepared as well as to meet them adequately as Sardar Vallabai Patel once remarked that connection with the Razakar Hooligans let loose on the Congress Volunteers in Hyderabad. “Meet goondas with Goondas.”\textsuperscript{106} On the 6\textsuperscript{th} October 1947, immediately after the attainment of Independence by India, some “Loges” viz. Surat, Calicut, Masulipatnam, Balasore and other places in India were handed over to India even without any referendum.

\textsuperscript{105} Ibid
\textsuperscript{106} V. Subbiah, Saga of Freedom of French India, Madras, 1990, p. 147
With India's independence approaching and the French Communist party in France resigning from the French Ministry in protest against the Vietnam War, and also abiding by the clearly drawn policy of all the Indian Communist party as published in the official organ "New, Age, the liberation of the territories from alien rule" as claimed long before by the students Congress and National Congress. Subbiah, Chief of the French India Communist Party on his return from Paris, told press that the French Government should grant complete political autonomy to French India so that it could make perpetration for fusion with India. He also rewarded that the cultural relations with Baron intended to forge with India was nothing but a mask of preparation, French Imperialism in India. Soon a manifest was signed by the Mayors of Pondicherry, Tirubhuvane, Nettapakkam, Modeliarpettah, Oulgaret, Ariankuppam, Bahour, and Villianur, distributed it among the people urging the French Government to transfer power to free India. They expressed their firm intention of getting united with India and requested Indian nationlist leaders to help them in their efforts. The Bar association of Mahe, held an extraordinary meeting held on 28th July 1947, adopted a resolution similarly urging the French Government to give up their claim of sovereignty without delay and transfer power to a popular interim Government under conditions analogous those to Great Britain. The French India National Congress and the French India communist party instead of working on a common programme, competed with each other in organising processions and rallying people. Subbiah wanted to take extreme measures. But the French Indian National Congress was for Non- violent movement, Veteran leaders like Pakirissamypillai, Kali Ghosh (Joint Secretary, French India Communist Party) and
N.Ranganathan did not escape from the wrath of the French Police. The Mahajana Sabha of Mahe demanded that the French Government should immediately concede independence to the five French Indian settlements and establish an interim popular Government. The resolution adopted by the party further stressed that in the event of the failure of the French Government of concede of the above demands it would constitute a parallel Government in Mahe. The French India Communist party had by now changed its stand towards that French pockets in India. The communist party suddenly found the Government of India an anathema. Slogans for the merger of the French Indian settlements were no longer heard so vociferously. The Government of India refused to grant visa to Subbiah for his visit to France. He along with his CPI comrades in Chandernagore had taken active part in the mini-resolution of the town. The Government of India had banned the CPI, so did the Chandernagore Council of Administration now they felt no qualms of heart to support a resolution which aimed at blocking the process of merger. They now gave an all out and sovereign status.

The Indian National Congress appealed to the people of French India to remain patient until the issue could be sorted out by mutual agreement. It was openly announced by the Government of India. It was on 1st January 1948, the French Indian National Congress had a two-day convention at Nehru Vanam to decide the future of French India. More than two hundred delegates were present, it was held under the leadership of R.L.Purushothama Reddiar. He called for the unconditional withdrawal of France from the establishments and conveyed its determination to achieve its merger with the Indian union. It did not approve the idea of holding a referendum for this purpose as
it would affect the sentiments of the people though they were for a bilateral dialogue with the French administrator. The people were asked to fight for their freedom. The Municipal elections were held as scheduled on the 24th October 1948 and the results were also as anticipated. Except Chandernagore and Thirunallar Commune in Karaikal, all Municipalities were captured by the French Indian Socialist party which stood for the continuance of the French colonialism in India. French democracy was so broadminded, even a single opposition candidate was not able to win a single municipal seat in any of the municipal constituencies. After the Municipal elections were over, one “Vinthan” composed a song which gave a vivid description of the French Democracy in action in the French Settlements as to the fair conduct of the election. The said song was published in Tamil Weekly “The Kalki”, published from Madras & edited by a veteran Freedom Fighter, Shri R. Krishnamurthy. Immediately, the French India Government banned the circulation of the said weekly in Pondicherry and Karaikal. Only after the imposition of the ban, the circulation of the weekly increased as the people immensely glad to place on record that the contribution of the dailies and the weeklies, of Madras and the other parts of India to the liberation cause of Pondicherry was unique and unforgettable.

The central committee of the French Indian communist party, in a manifesto dubbed the Nehru Government as “fascist”, strongly criticised the failure of the Nehru Government to solve the problems of the country “in ten months”, the repressive measures it had followed in Hyderabad and Puducottah and expressed its willingness to remain

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107 Ibid
within the French union. The party believed that by remaining within the French union and fighting for people’s democratic right in close cooperation with the French working class, a social structure could be built up. On 15th August 1948, at a meeting held in Quai de gingy, Subbiah strongly opposed the integration of the French Pockets to Indian Union. The Communists might have changed its stance possibly with a view to wooing the Pondicherry authorities. They feared that if Pondicherry authorities had banned the party in the manner Chandernagore administration had done, their survival would be at stakes. Moreover, the all India position of the party was not comfortable either. The French pockets might be safe if anything worse befell them. In the mean time a good number of Malabar communists had taken shelter in French Mahe where they were welcomed by the pro-French elements and this created considerable tension. The communists of Karaikal also expressed their willingness to remain within the French union. Le Monde explained the changes in the attitude of the French India communist party as a reaction of New Delhi’s policy of anti-communism followed by the southern states. It also alienated the shift in policy as an expression of disapproval against some reactionary members of the Government.

The French Government with a slight modification in its old-stand agreed to the participation of the Municipal Councilors of all the Municipalities of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam who were elected during the elections in the year 1948 about the fair conduct of which the Government of India disputed with the French and the Members of the Pondicherry Representative Assembly in the so called referendum, instead of the whole population. This idea of the French
was of course a God sent opportunity for the leaders of the so called “French Indian Socialist Party” who were skilful in changing colour overnight. The Government of India readily agreed to this proposal. The fact that the spirit of the June 1948 agreement was not carried out either by our Government or by the French Government can never be allowed to go into oblivion. Even though the French Indian Socialist party leaders betrayed the French, in the last minute the French was not willing to abandon them but were very keen in giving them a new lease of life under the Indian regime also, by giving importance to them.

As early as 1948, the Government of India served a notice to the French Indian Administration expressing its intention to terminate the customs union under changed conditions. No reply was received from the local administration. The future status of these areas was announced later. The future status of the French territories was to be decided by the natives through a referendum. The modalities of the future status was to be decided by the municipal councils of all at the settlements. The Government of India continued to express its goodwill by permitting the customs union agreement to continue until the referendum was over. There were differing opinions about the stand of the Indian Government. Their agreement with the French was vague and full of loopholes. Another group of people preferred to have a fair conduct of the plebiscite under joint Indo-French auspices to ascertain the wishes of the people. For the first time in the history of Hyderabad, the Nizam came to the Begumpet airport to receive Sardarji, the then Deputy Prime Minister, of India by whose efforts all the princely states were amalgamated with India. No vengeance was wreaked either on Razvi or Razakars by the Government of India but
they were treated in the Gandhian way. Shri Ramanandha Thirthar and his colleagues who stood for the merger of Hyderabad with India, against many odds, at least achieved their objective.

The French India National Congress and Students Congress

In the year 1949 a group of politically conscious young men formed the French India National Congress. Prominent persons like Savarinathan, Sethuraman Chettiar, Ambadi Narayanan, Govindapathar and M.A. Annamalai laid the foundation of this organization in Pondicherry. Its functions came under the guidance of R.L. Purushothama Reddiar, S.R. Subramanian, Ansari Doraisamy and Zeevarattinam.

As a preliminary act before the proposed referendum, fresh elections was proposed to be held for all the municipal councils. As early as 1949, they were held in Chandernagore and Karma Parishad captured 22 out of the 24 seats. The municipal councils in Pondicherry had 102 seats. There were 250 candidates in the fray. The French India National Congress fielded 84 candidates, the French India socialist party put 102 candidates. Even in September, 1948 political activities gained sufficient momentum. 120 student processionists defied the ban and the merchants responded to a hartals call given by the French India National Congress. Ambassador of France Daniel Levi made it clear to the press that the conduct of both the elections and the referendum would be done with absolute fairness and in the best democratic tradition. However, the realities were different. The election process came to be encamped as a political fraud played upon the people as no opposition party and the Government was in a position to win the

108 N.Rajkumar, op.cit.p.198
elections. Police atrocities and terrorism became inseparable. All these unhappy events were brought to light by the French Parliamentary commission in its report to the Government.

The people of Pondicherry professing faith to various parties like the Congress, the Communist, the Socialist and the Dravidar Kazhagam forgot their internal differences and joined together in their struggle for independence. Both men and women without any distinction of caste, creed, religion, race and language contoured their maximum to fight against the French rule. The newspapers and magazines gave top priority to the message of preparing the natives for this holy task Manilam Samudayam, Janatha Podhujanam Vimochanan, and Puduvaimurasu, some of the journals triggering the independence struggle. The role of Swathanthiram was definitely unique. Three parties were the major contenders in the fray; the French India National Congress, the French India socialist party and the Progressive Democratic party, the last one included the Communist Party of French India and the Dravidar Kazhakam. There were certain reported irregularities in the conduct of elections. The polling agents of the Congress party did not receive authorization cards in sufficient numbers. The percentage of polling was poor. Ballot papers of some of the contesting parties were removed from the booths. There were several instances of misuse of voters identity cards. Among women, only a feasible percentage of voters preferred to vote, some of the Congress candidates were targets of attack by the socialist party workers. The Presiding Officers of maximum number of booths belonged to the French India socialist party and in a number of cases

109 N.Rajkumar,op.cit,p.199
they were the candidates for elections. Dr. Subbarayan of the Congress party warned the Government of India to recognize the elections in French India in deciding the option of the people to merge with the Indian union. However, the election process was completed and the Socialist party recorded hundred percent success. Even the Representatives of the French Government, Laugenie, expressed that the referendum would not solve the problem. He added that the proposal to go for a referendum must be given up and a Tripartite conference was suggested. In the meantime, the Government of India introduced a permit system for the flow of essential goods into Pondicherry.

A meeting of the newly elected Municipal Councilors of the four regions was held on 17th, and 18th October 1949 in Pondicherry, K.Mouttoupoule, Mayor of Pondicherry presided over the meeting. They passed a set of resolutions underlining certain basic conditions and this resulted in the indefinite postponement of the referendum. The joint session of the Municipal councils however accepted the offer of autonomous status and implored the natives to accept it. The political activities were carried out with tremendous zeal and fervour to secure unanimous acceptance of the French offer. In the mean time, the Government of India clarified the false impression among the natives on 27th, October 1949. Accordingly, the Indian Government decided to extend an autonomous status for these counters under the patronage of the central administration. Changes in the administration were to be implemented only after the public opinion. Further, they promised to preserve the linguistic and cultural identities of these colonial pockets.

110 Ibid
They came forward to extend necessary financial assistance for running the administration. The existing financial commitments of the French administration would be honoured by the Indian administration. This statement was perhaps the first categorical official declaration of the union Government in respect of the colonies of the French and Portuguese.

The French Indian Socialist Party leaders were made to stay in the costly Hotel “Maiden” in New Delhi at the cost of the Government of India. Facilities were given to them to fly to Agra and admire the beauty of the Taj Mahal. In short, according to Dr. N.V. Rajkumar, they were treated as the “sons-in-law” of the Government of India.

A delegation of the French India Socialist Party went to Paris on 11th July 1949 but returned empty handed and disappointed. They subsequently went to Delhi and had an interview with the late Panditji, and Shri Girijashankar BajBai, the then secretary-General of the External Affairs Department of the Government of India, except the late Rajaji, who was then the Governor-General of India, all others gave them the necessary assurances to safeguard their political status, if they decided to merge with India. That is to say, their treachery done all along to the National cause will be forgiven and forgotten and they will be retained as Ministers in Free Pondicherry under the kind patronage of the Indian National Congress for their display of last minute patriotism.\textsuperscript{111} This was meant that those, who kept the problem alive all along, sounding pro-merger slogans, will be thrown into the waste paper baskets.

\textsuperscript{111} R.Ramasrinivasan, op.cit,p.37

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It must be said to the credit of the Government of India and the Indian National Congress that after liberation, both allowed the French Indian Socialist party to be converted as the Pondicherry Congress Committee and these accredited leaders of the same with the exception of those who passed away in the meantime were made to decorate the Ministerial Chairs, flying the Indian tricolour on the bonnets of their state cars, flag which they tore into pieces through their rowdies and caused it to be worn by them as lion-clothes on the occasion of the celebration of “Chandernagore day” in the Odiansalai maiden in Pondicherry on 26th June 1949.

These leaders, throughout their talks with the Indian leaders in New Delhi assured them that after they had reached Pondicherry they will again call for a meeting of the Municipal Councilors and the Members of the Pondicherry Representative Assembly and arrange to pass unanimous resolution favouring merger with India. Prior to this, Monsieur Daniel Levi, the then French Ambassador in New Delhi visited Pondicherry. The people of Pondicherry, under the leadership of Shri Durai Munusamy and S.R.Subramaniam staged a “Black Flag” demonstration. The precisionists were severely manhandled by the police and the jeep belonging to the Congress party was burnt to ashes.

On his way back to New Delhi, Monsieur Levi issued a statement to the press that Pondicherry and Karaikal may be retained as Andora and Montegarlo in France. It will be curious to know that Andora and Montegarlo are two places in France which were used as holiday-resorts by the Frenchmen as well as the visitors to France to satisfy the petty ambitions and obscene comforts of the unprincipled adults. Volleys of protests from all over the French Settlements came
against the statement of M. Levi, that the Indian culture and civilization do not allow the existence of Andoras and Montegarios, within the skirts of India.

The French Indian delegation after finishing their talks in New Delhi, came back to Pondicherry and called for the joint meeting of the Municipal Councils and the Representative Assembly on 17th and 18th October 1949, contrary to what they have assured the Indian leaders in New Delhi, the leader of the delegation Mon. Goubert gave a distorted version of their talks with the Indian leaders in New Delhi to those attended the meeting and caused the ignorant" Yes Men" to pass a series of resolutions in one of which they condemned the Government of India. Instead of chalking out the modalities of the referendum proposed to be held on 12th December 1949 they threw the referendum-baby on the laps of the two Government of India and France to negotiate as long as they could. This was a clever stratagem to procrastinate the issue for an indefinite period.

Though the Government of India was not shocked at this attitude of Mon. Goubert and his followers, it had to rebut the charges levelled by him against the Government of India by means of communiqué through the Ministry of External Affairs. The said communiqué dated the 27th October 1949 of the Government of India made it clear that in case the people of Pondicherry decided to merge with India, the former French Settlements will be administered as autonomous units in direct relations with the centre. They will also be kept as separate entity until the population decide otherwise. Apart from this, necessary legislations will be made to give representations in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, one in the former and the other in the latter, though
Pondicherry is not eligible for a single seat on population basis and adequate funds will be provided from the central budget to run the administration and payment of pensions. In addition, the late Panditji said that Pondicherry will be maintained as a “Window of French Culture”.112

The heroic people of Chandernagore under the leadership of Shri Debenthanathdas gave the unanimous “NO” to the French and tolled the first death-knell of the French colonialism in India. Since the Municipal Congress had decided to leave the referendum question to both the Government of India and France and on the pretext of waiting till the decision of the two Governments, the French Indian Socialist Party leaders put forth their ability to perpetuate the French seldom over the other territories viz. “Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam”, In Pondicherry, the “Chandernagore Day” was celebrated by the Nationlists on 26th June 1949. The Government accorded the necessary permission to hold the public meeting in the Odiansalai Maidan but instigated the rowdies belonging to the French Indian socialist party to brutally attack the general public who thronged there to hear the National leaders. The Indian National flag was torn to pieces and one man to the amusement of the police who were posted there on bandobust duty wore the Indian Tricolour as loin-cloth.

On the pretext of maintenance of law and order, the police dispersed the crowd and from that day onwards the French India Government imposed complete ban on public meetings and processions throughout Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam. Shri Dadala Ramanayya of Yanam who was the Inspector of Police in the

112 R.Ramasrinivasan, op. cit., p. 57
Special Branch Department of the French Government was suspected to have revealed the official secrets to the promergerites and he was dismissed from service. While the French attempted to arrest him, he evaded arrest and fled to Cuddalore and threw himself heart and soul into liberation activities.

Since the Karma Parishad captured 22 seats out of 24 in the Municipal Elections it wanted the outright transfer of Chandernagore to India even without a referendum. As the French insisted for a referendum, it was held on 19th June 1949. On 2nd May 1950 the Government of India took over the de facto administration of Chandernagore. The Indo-French Treaty of Cession of Chandernagore was signed in Paris in 2nd February 1951. The de jure transfer took place on 9th June 1952.\textsuperscript{113}

Mahe Revolt

On 22nd October 1948, I.K. Kumaran hoisted the Indian National flag on the Administrator's residence in the presence of not only thousands of people (two thousand) but also the Administrator Perrier, the Mayor, C.C. Kumaran, the Deputy Mayors, N. Sahadevan and M.Muhammad Kunhi, the French India representative assembly member, V. Govindan and other elected representatives and the heads of all Government departments and some prominent citizens of Mahe. The Ambassador of France in India, Daniel Levi had the view that the Indian foreign Ministry and the Congress party assumed the anti-French posture. I.K. Kumaran, President of the Mahajana Sabha arrived in Mahe, accompanied by 450 nationalists hailing from India and 50 members of the local Congress party. V. Subbiah participated in

\textsuperscript{113} R.Ramasrinivasan, op. cit., p.71
the Mahajana Sabha of Mahe. A meeting of the Mahajana Sabha was held on 9th October 1948 at Pallur, attended by 300 persons of which 100 were from Indian territory, one of the leaders P.V. Anandan declared that 600 volunteers from neighbouring Kurnmbaranad Taluk and hundreds of other volunteers from Chirakkal were ready to invade Mahe. Jawaharlal Nehru did not want the French Government to prosecute the Mahesians who had taken part in the revolt. Some Muslim members of the Mahajana Sabha like K.A Omar Haji participated in the revolt. In October 1946, a rival Congress group All French India Congress was formed by Muthu Venkatapathy Reddiar and C.A. Rathinam. There were no serious ideological differences between the two Congress organizations. The new organization was to be inaugurated by M. Bhakthavatchalam under the Presidentship of K. Kamaraj, Chief Minister of Madras state on 30th September 1949. The old organization claimed seniority and priority and condemned the new one as the communist sponsored organisation. All French Indian Congress questioned the national character of the French Indian National Congress. The local administration issued an order prohibiting the foreigners addressing public meetings in the French territory and introduced rigorous press laws. The entry, sale and distribution of the Madras journal Dinasyary and other tracts of political nature were totally banned in October 1946. The news that the British had ultimately decided to quit India in August 1947 granting full independence to India resulted in a new awakening among the people in Pondicherry and stirred them to action. From the year 1950, law and order situation in Pondicherry became deteriorated. A bomb was thrown on Mon. Goubert while he was addressing a public meeting in Murungappakkam. He had a narrow escape but here others among the
gathering became seriously injured. From that day onwards, violence began to raise its ugly head. Outbreaks of goondaism were witnessed everywhere. The provision stores, the building of the Communist Party in Pondicherry wherein the office of the Tamil weekly “Swathanthirm” was located, the house of Shri V.Subbayya, and the garage of Shri Nannayya Bhaga vathar were set to fire. On the 13th January 1950 along with them nearly two hundred houses were burnt to ashes.

The French India communist party was in a disarray. But, the communist party of India called upon the people of French India to vote for joining Indian union in the ensuing elections and to oppose any move to the retention of “French Imperialism” in Indian soil. In statement the party in order to justify French India communist party embittered by the betrayal of the Indian leaders and the repression in the Indian union, had persuaded themselves into the belief that the French union was much progressive and thereby fallen into a reactionary trap. In Pondicherry and in the adjoining communes Subbiah’s follower’s became the target of assault by the muscle men of Goubert in collaboration with Boulard, the Police commissioner. In Mahe, their position was much more precarious and they were bounded like anything by the nationalist forces. The French India Communist party led by Subbiah had changed its stand and demanded merger of the French settlements with India. But, anti-mergists of Chandernagore anticipated that the results of the referendum would go against them. Both Goubert and Subbiah lurked in a bitter rivalry. Goubert’s official position enabled him to lynch his communist rivals. The communist were stripped of their hope on the working class popularisation of

114 Ibid
115 Ibid
persecution, terrorisation and physical liquidation. The assembly election of January 1950 was the occasion for the outbreak of new violence in Pondicherry with all its attendant evils. It was essentially a fight between Goubert and Subbiah, the latter having already been cornered by the strong-arm policy of the former. They also raised the house of Venugopalasami, a Congress worker of Pondicherry and threatened him in similar manner. The house of Thambidorai who was a French India delegate to the Preparatory Asian Regional Conference of I.L.O at Delhi was attacked because he had made a statement of the press condemning insecurity in French India, the attack on the labourers, dismissal of workers on political grounds and harassment and exploitation of labourers by political parties. Aided and abetted by the administration the “Goonda” ran on a rampage, booting and buying the headquartet of the French India Communist party which was located in the house of Subbiah. On 14th January 1950, the fire which reduced to ashes the house of Subbiah, spread rapidly to adjacent shops and houses. The police chief Boulevard was personally present there but did nothing to stop this. The houses of Clemenceau and Annussamy leaders of the French India communist party were all on fire. More than 30 houses in French India Capital were burnt by goondas who received no resistance from anywhere. Subbiah had to go under political liberation. India had issued warrant of arrest on him on many counts and more particularly to prevent the extension of Communist activists in South Arcot districts. Nehru’s anti communist policy was strongly resented by Subbiah. The CPI also received a raw deal in his hands. The Government of India’s warrant had in interdicted his entry in the South Arcot districts. He had incurred the displeasure of the Pondicherry Government for many reasons. He was
a staunch critic of the French imperialist rule. One of the founders of the French India communist party had organised the working class population against the exploitation of the management.

The year 1950 was year of violence and lawlessness. More than 125 houses of pro merger supporters were burnt in Pondicherry alone, including the office of the communist Party. A team of neutral observers appointed by the International court of Justice at the instance of France visited Pondicherry in April 1950. They concluded that the organized political violence was conducted as a profession in the establishments. On June 17th, 1951 election was held to choose a Deputy to the French Parliament. Goubert was elected getting 90,053 votes out of 90,667 votes polled. The election result was a surprise to many. By this time, the Indian Government withdraw its warrant issued against V. Subbiah in 1948. Swandandiram, a Tamil Weekly published from the border areas served as the Chief Organ of his Movement. He said that the Communist Party of French India would ally itself with all the democratic forces in French India to fulfill its historic commitment of liberating Pondicherry from the French domination and strive for its reunification with India. Prime Minister Nehru condemned the acts of violence in the territory of Pondicherry in his public address in Madras.

When Andre Gaebele formed the opposition to the French India socialist party in power, violence was further invigorated on a large scale in Pondicherry. Dr. Pery, a Member of the National Assembly in parties ridiculed the policy of the French Government playing into the hands of the Socialist party which had no faith in civilized administration and its main creed was unabated goondaism.
In 1952, nearly thirty families of the Handloom Weavers and those belonging to the "Sizing Workers Union" had been forced to leave Pondicherry under the leadership of Mr. Srinivasan owing to the repression let loose by the ruling party and they took refuge in the adjoining area of Kottakuppam in Tamil Nadu.

Under these circumstances in the year 1952, they planned to form a youth organisation with a view to jump into direct action. With great difficulty, the National Youth Congress was formed with the sole aim of offering Satyagraha against the French under his Presidentship. Shri R. Ramasrinivasan was also aware of the fact that the elders were not in favour of any direct action. He encouraged and assured all possible assistance from his side. He came back to Karaikal, prepared an ultimatum to the Overseas Minister of France and sent it to him stating that if the French did not withdraw from India before the 31st July 1952. His colleagues were about to offer Satyagraha in the month of August 1952. In the meantime he met Dr. P. Subbrayan, the then President of the Tamil Nadu Congress in Kumbakonam and sought his advice. Contrary to his expectation, he was to refrain from any activity which will encourage the French authorities. Though, he was shocked by this advice of Dr. Subbarayan, he did not get discouraged.

Soon after the publication of the news in the press, the then Administrator of Karaikal Monsieur Roman Charles Bouchney summoned him to his office. Narrating the incident of firing in Bengal when he was the Administrator of Chandernagore, he said his agitation will lead to loss of lives. He also said that such an agitation was unwarranted in Karaikal since this was ruled over by a Republican country and not like the Britishers. He also stated that our own
countrymen were the advisers. When he pointed out to him that the key-posts and key-portfolios were retained in the hands of the French, he had no explanation to offer.

He assured him that the proposed agitation would be cent-percent non-violent in spite of provocations if any from the Government side. At that time, he used to write articles in the weekly edition "Kudi Arasu". Shri G. Rathnavelu, S. K. Subbarayan and M. S. Mani also used to write articles in the said weekly.

While making the search, he seized all files from him and was very keen only in removing one file which contained the letter of the Indian Consul-General Shri Tandon from Ooty. He was steadily standing by the side of the Police Commissioner to snatch away the letter of Shri R.K. Tandon if he was able to trace out the same, following the footsteps of Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan as he had already read the way in which Shri Jaya Prakash Narayanan tore the letter sent by his wife to the prison where he was detained, concealing in a book, put the pieces into his mouth and chewed in the presence of the Jailor. He succeeded in removing the same and handed it over to his young brother R. Rama Krishnan who took it away to a safer place. Then he took them to the T.R. Pattinam police Station. There he picked a copy of the journal "Kudi Arasu" which contained his article making reference to his unlawful act. He asked him whether he had written the said article and when he answered in the affirmative, he left it at that. On the pretext of investigation, they were kept in the police lock-up of the French in one of the colonies of the so-called "Big-power" France, requires a special mention.
On the 8th of August 1952, they were produced before the investigation Magistrate, Monsieur Hubert de Rozario who was a Franco-Indian. He immediately remanded them to judicial custody and ordered to be kept in separate rooms in the gaol of Karaikal which were called “secret” rooms and which were meant for criminals who are alleged to have not revealed the truth.

Panditji was arrested by the British Government on the 9th of August in connection with the “Quit India movement”, sponsored by Mahatmaji. Most of the Students of school observed hartal and were picketing standing before the portico of the school requesting their schoolmates to refrain from attending the school. The said hartal was led by Shri R. Ramasrinivasan’s classmates Shri T.S. Kuppusami and T.S.Dashinamurthy Mudaliar, both from Tirumalarayanpattinam. Since he was staying in the house of a gentleman who was a staunch supporter of the Justice Party Shri SP.K. Kandasami Pillay, he was strictly instructed by him not to join the hartal but to attend the school. But he felt very much for his inability to join the hartal and said to himself whether he will get a chance of going to the gaol following the footsteps of our beloved Panditji. He totally forgot the continuance of the French colonialism in India at that time.

It was irony of fate that Shri Dakshinamurthy Mudaliar who conducted the hartal in 1942 against the British became one of the staunch pro-French elements in 1952 within a short span of ten years and he himself did not participate in the hartal in Karaikal in 1952.

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116 Ibid
While in jail, they received the shocking news that the goondas hired by the French Indian Socialist Party, entering the house of the late Shri R. Sellane Naicker, a leading advocate and a staunch nationalist in Pondicherry on the 20th August 1952 fired at him three shots by a revolver. Fortunately, Shri Naicker escaped with a bullet injury in his left thigh. He declined to undergo treatment in the local hospital at Pondicherry. Therefore, he was immediately taken to the General Hospital at Madras.

In the month of October of the same year, Panditji visited Madras and while addressing a public meeting there in the Gymkhana grounds, referring to the French Settlements he said, “Either the French Government must be unable to check gangsterism or it must connive at it. There cannot be third reason for it”. A delegation consisting of the top leaders among the nationalistic groups of Pondicherry met Panditji at Madras and informed him of the political situation then obtained in Pondicherry. To them, Panditji is said to have raised the question “Is there only one Ramasrinivasan in Karaikal?” A group of students which included Janab A.M. Dawoodshaw went on an excursion to Kashmir and they met the then Yuvaraj Shri Karan Singh. He and his brother were defended by the late Shri J. Xavery and the late Shri M.J. De la flore appeared for the late Shri Pillay claiming damages. During enquiry the judge appointed a committee consisting of a Notaire (Sub-registrar), one temple accountant and another retired police officer viz. Shri Rajaganapathy, Muthayyavandayar, (father of K.M.Sivasubramaniam) and Lesingar to find out whether the hand writing in the wall-posters were that of his brother Kanda Kumar’s. Their finding was in favour of the prosecution. On the twenty-sixth of
November 1952 the Judge Mr. Huber de Rozario, convicted and sentenced him to six months imprisonment with fine and his brother Kandakumar to eight months imprisonment and M. Uthirpathy to eight months imprisonment in absentia and one approver to three months imprisonment.

They prepared an appeal against the said judgment to the Tribunal de Superior in Pondicherry. Pending disposal of our appeal, in expiry of the term of his conviction, he was released on 8th February 1953 and his brother on 8th April 1953. After his release, he wrote a letter to the Indian consul general at Pondicherry and he sent him an inspiring reply. After his release, M.G. Chellayyan came to his house and garlanded him. When this news was conveyed to Shri Sivasubramania Pillay he instigated his hooligans to manhandle Chellayyan. Unable to bear the troubles given to him, he left Tirumalarayanpattinam and took refuge in a nearby village Pragaram in Nannilam Taluk.

On 3rd May 1953, a meeting of the agricultural labourers was held in the Kizhaiyur Harijanpet. At the request of the Harijan leaders Kandakumar, the late G. Loganathan and Ramakrishnan attended the meeting. The meeting discussed about the reduction of the yearly wages by two kalsams of paddy (from 18 Kalsams to 16 Kalsams) and about the non-representation of the Harijans in the Municipal Councils and the Legislature.117 The speakers told them that this disparity can be removed only after the liberation.

117 R.Ramasrinivasan, op.cit,p.94
The appeal came up for hearing in the Sessions court at Pondicherry some months later before M. Cousson, French Judge who confirmed the lower court conviction. Here they were defended by Shri G. Ambroise and D. Zivathanam, the two leading advocates of Pondicherry belonging to the Merger committee.

By the end of October 1953, Kewal Singh took over as the Indian Consul General in the French establishments succeeding R.K. Tandon. At the beginning of January 1954, steps were taken to launch a massive campaign in favour of merger with the Indian Union. Saravanan, a former member of the Council of Republic in France called for the unification of all the pro-merger parties to defeat the humiliating French Indian Government in power. He expressed his reservations about the fair conduct of plebiscite and further added that there was no need for it. Subbiah issued an appeal to the people to forget all party differences and to extend their full support to the merger movement.

On the 14th of November 1953, Shri Kewal Singh assumed charge as the Indian Consul-General at Pondicherry. Within less than one year of his assumption of office as Consul-General, he was fortunate enough to become the first Chief Commissioner of liberated Pondicherry. Earlier in February 1953, the general body of the Tamil Nadu Congress committee which met in Tranquebar under the Presidentship of the late Shri K. Kamaraj appointed a sub-committee consisting of Shri M. Bhakthavathsalam and T.N. Ramachandran of the Tara press, Nagapattinam to attend to the freedom struggle of Karaikal. He was in constant touch with Shri Ramachandran and both toured around the border areas of Karaikal and gathered the support of
the Congressmen there. The French India Liberation League was also formed in Nagapattinam to help us with many distinguished persons including Shri S. Ranganatha Iyengar, the press Correspondent.

"The Free India Publications" of Madras published a booklet by name "The French pockets in India" which contained the photographs of almost all the leaders of Pondicherry, Karaikal and Mahe who were active at that time. These booklets were distributed in Tirumalarayanpattinam. One Mr. Dharman brother-in-law of Shri Antonisamy Pillay, a patriot of Velankanni who spoke in the market place of T.R. Pattinam that what was done to his father as unjust was severely beaten till he fell unconscious. They remained there conducting public meetings in favour of merger around the borders. Kannayya Thevar also joined there in Nagore with his family.

In Karaikal in the month of November, Pannerselvam and M. Marimuthu offered satyagraha by holding the Indian National flags in their hands. Since they were students they were severely beaten by the police and later let off. The then Chief Minister of Madras (before the bifurcation of Madras, Andhra & Kerala) the late Shri O.P. Ramasami Reddiar refused to hand over these patriots to the French. A criminal case was filed against them in the French court of sessions at Pondicherry and after a long time the trail was conducted during the absence of these revolutionaries. Shri I.K. Kumaran and the late C.E. Bharathan were convicted and sentenced to twenty years rigorous imprisonment each in absentia and their other followers to various terms of imprisonment. These patriots carried on the liberation movement till July 1954 by remaining outside. Before the Municipal elections, the late Shri Kamaraj the then President of the Tamil Nadu
Congress Committee Dr. P. Subbarayan and the late Shri S.B. Adityan came to Karaikal to address a public meeting in favour of merger on 2nd October 1948.\textsuperscript{118} Though the Government accorded permission to hold the public meeting in the premises of Shri Kailalammayyur temple in Karaikal, it instigated some rowdies to pelt stones on the dais when the meeting was going on. Shri Kamaraj had a narrow escape without being hurt. A similar meeting was also held in Tirumalrayapatnam which was addressed by Shri Adityan.

On the pretext of maintenance of law and order, the French police making use of this incident dissolved the meeting and foisted criminal cases against the leaders and Shri N. Srikantha Ramanujam was convicted and sentenced to two years rigorous imprisonment and was ordered that he should not enter Karaikal for two years after release. Shri A. M. Jambugesan, M. Sundaramurthy, S. Mani and Thangaraj were awarded six months imprisonment each.

Since the national activities in Karaikal were necessitated to be confined to only holding of in-door meetings owing to the ban imposed by the French Administration for conducting processions and holding public meeting as a measure of preventing the spread of Promerger feelings, the publication of the news items in door meetings in the newspapers was felt primarily necessary. The daily editions and the Weekly editions of Madras which played a significant role in the freedom struggle of India against the British did not lag behind to contribute their best to the struggle of emancipation of the French Settlements in India against the French also.\textsuperscript{119} The Tamil dailies viz.

\textsuperscript{118} R.Ramasrinivasan,op.cit.p.24
\textsuperscript{119} R.Ramasrinivasan,op.cit.p.25

The part played by the Press Trust of India and the United Press of India was so great and the editor of the latter Shri S. Vijayaraghavan had his thickest connections with Shri A.N. Sivaraman, a veteran Freedom-fighter and the then editor of "The Dinamani" the news of our activities were given much prominence by him.

Shri S. Vijayaraghavan, a journalist of Karaikal who had already earned the displeasure of the French officials for his pro-merger activities and Shri M. Nagarajan, Secretary of the Karaikal National Congress had been to Pondicherry to watch the proceedings of the joint meeting of the Municipal councils and the Representative Assembly, the former as a correspondent and the latter as an observer of the Karaikal Congress. On the report sent by Shri S. Vijayaraghavan, "The Dinamani" vehemently attacking the Slavish mentality of Mon. Goubert published the remarks "Gouberts Servile mentality is exposed in the Municipal meeting". This has exasperated the followers of Mon. Goubert, and one among them had begun to search for Shri S. Vijayaraghavan. But he was taken away to a safer place in Pondicherry and later to Cuddalore having become aware of their bad intention. It may be recalled that in 1947 when Shri Vijayaraghavan was on a visit to Pondicherry, two people caught hold of the rickshaw.
in which he was travelling and overturned it and the other two people took out a big aruval and cut off his tuft.

Despite the prevalence of this sort of organized goondaism, the Pondicherry Students Congress under the able leadership of the late Shri Durai Munusamy, the Pondicherry National Congress under the able guidance of late Shri R. L. Purushothama Reddiar, P. Ansari Doraisamy and S.R. Subramaniam were vigorously working for the liberation cause. The late Shri R. Sellane Naicker, S. Perumal, D. Zivarattinam, G. Ambrose leading Advocates of Pondicherry and other organisations under the leadership of the late Shri D. Mariappan, A. Lahache, Shri A. Arulraj and others also stood for the merger cause. Shri A. Khaddar Nadesan, Andhre Selvanadan Govindapathar, L.G.X. Doraisamy, M.S. Annamalai, K. Sivaprakasam and Palani Doraisamy, a press correspondent also played an important role in the freedom struggle.

In Karaikal, the late Shri R.M.A.S. Packirisamy Pillay, the then Senator, representing the French Settlements in the French Council in Paris who was the Mayor of Karaikal belonging to the ruling French India Socialist Party headed by Mon. Goubert, was acting as his agent. While the Karaikal National Congress was vigorously working for the merger of these territories under the Presidentship of Shri R.M.A.S.Venkatachalapathy Pillay, the pro-French activities were carried on by his younger brother, the late Shri Packirisamy Pillay.

In Karaikal, Tirumalarayanpattinam Commune deserves a special mention. The late Shri P.R. Sivasubramania Pillay, Mayor and one among the advisers to the French India Government was
terrorizing this place like an autocratic zamindar. He was notorious throughout French India as a smuggler. He was having a set of rowdies always at this disposal. He did not allow any merger activity here. The Karaikal National Congress was able to have a branch in Tirumalarayanpattinam, only after strenuous efforts. At a time when nobody was willing to come forward to shout the merger slogan and earn the displeasure of Shri Pillay, some courageous people came forward to form an adhoc committee. Nobody had the courage to take over the Presidentship as it meant a challenge to the supremacy of Shri Pillay.

At such a time, the adhoc committee was formed under the Presidentship of the late Shri S.O. Rangasami Pillay with the late Janab. S.M. Shri K. Madarsa Maraicar as Vice President, the late Shri V.O.K. Ganapathi Pillay as treasurer, Shri S. Varadarajalu Chettiar and Shri Mari Savari as its secretaries and some others including Shri R. Ramasrinivasan formed the working committee. Some fishermen of the place also were very active workers of the organisation. This has enraged Shri Pillay and he induced his hoodlums to assault Shri S. Varadarajalu Chettiar in the public market place of Tirumalarayanpattinam. A complaint was filed with the local police regarding these incidents but to no effect. Nobody came forward also to tender evidence regarding these incidents. The fishermen who had pro-merger sympathies also were attacked mercilessly. Contrary to this, Tirunallar Commune was known as a Congress commune under the leadership of the late Shri R. Subbarayaalu Naicker, the Mayor of that place.

120 Ibid
Under these circumstances, the Municipal elections were held. As said above, the identity cards to those electors who were known as pro-mergerites were not distributed. Hence, the Karaikal National Congress refused to participate in the election and boycotted the same. The same tactics was adopted in Mahe. The Mahe Mahajanasabha which was functioning under the leadership of Shri I.K. Kumaran and the late C.E. Bharathan did not tolerate the same of Mahe rallied round under the leadership of these two illustrious leaders and went to the Administrator of Mahe who was a Frenchman and placed before him their grievances. Since he did not pay heed to their words and gave a satisfactory reply, they got furious, surrounded the office and captured the administration. Shri I.K. Kumaran assumed charge as the Administrator of Mahe, placing the French Administrator under house arrest. At the time of the Municipal election a French Cruiser “Dumond Du Vile” by name was readily anchored off the Pondicherry shore just to terrorise the electorates. When the news of the capture of Mahe by the national leaders reached the ears of the French Governor Mon. Baron in Pondicherry, he immediately boarded the cruiser and arrived in Mahe. As soon as the cruiser reached Mahe, all the revolutionaries evacuated Mahe and left for the Indian territories of Badagara and Azhiyur near Tellicherry just to avoid unnecessary bloodshed under instructions from the Government of India and remained there as refugees. The French Government issued warrants of arrest against them and requested the Government of Madras to execute them.

The late Shri R. Subbarayalu Naicker who was then the Mayor of Tirunallar Commune accorded a vociferous reception to
Dr. N.V. Rajakumar in the premises of the Municipal office. It must be said to the credit of Shri Naicker that he was the first Mayor not only in Karaikal area but also in the whole of the French Settlements in India to celebrate the first Indian Republic Day in Tirunallar commune hoisting the Indian National Flag in the Municipal Office out of the Municipal funds. Exasperated these acts of Shri Naicker, the French Administrator of Karaikal M. Picat suspended him from the loyalty for a period of one month.

In the meantime, outbreaks of goondaisrn in the French settlements were reported to the Government of India and at the request of the same to the International court of justice at Hague, for observers viz. Messrs. Holgert Anderson, Rodolf Castro, Francois Perrard and Manul O’ Chan were sent to Pondicherry to make a report whether favourable conditions were obtaining there for an impartial referendum. Under instructions from the French India Government, the French Indian Socialist party men took vigilant care to see that nobody hands over any memorandum to these observers regarding the prevalence of goondaisrn in the French Settlements. The buildings in which they stayed in Pondicherry and Karaikal were fully guarded by the goondas of the party in power. In spite of these difficulties, Karaikal National Congress leaders managed to meet them in Karaikal and handed over a memorandum to them giving a vivid picture of what was happening in Karaikal to terrorize the people.

Youth Congress

Even from 1938, illustrious leaders like Shris Joseph Xavery, S. Arangasamy Naicker of Tirunallar, Leon Saint jean, Syed Ahmed, V. Thangavel Pillai, Vyande Pazhanoor of Kottucherry,
R.M. Govindasamichettiar, C. Kathaperumal Pillay of Ponbethi and V. Krishnamurthy Iyer who resigned the post of the Municipal Secretary in 1954 in favour of the merger cause and many others nurtured nationalistic aspirations under the aegis of the Mahajana Sabha and Thiruppani Senai without directly jumping into a direct conflict with the French.

The late Shri V. Subbiah, the leader of the Communist party of Pondicherry to whom Mon. Goubert and his followers owe their political existence had gone underground since warrants of arrest were pending against him by both the Governments of India and France. Though the available records show that the policy of the Communist party was not stable regarding the issue of the question of merger of these settlements with India, it stood for merger with India sometime before 1954. Later on, the hurdle of warrant of arrest was removed by the Government of India enabling Shri V. Subbiah to jump into the freedom struggle by remaining in the borders.

In Karaikal, the Karaikal National Congress under the Presidentship of the late Shri R.M.A.S. Venkatalakapathy Pillay was working against these odds. The late Shri N. Srikantha Ramanujam was its working committee President, Shri P. Pichaikannu Pillay was its Vice-President, Shri M. Nagarajan was the secretary and the late Shri A.M. Jambugesan was the Treasurer. The Jawahar Youth League was functioning under the distinguished leadership of the late Shri M. Sundaramurthy, with a group of selected young and energetic youths.
After the receipt of this reply from the French Government, the Government of India announced that negotiations in this regard had failed. But the Indian National Congress decided to send its observers to watch the election to be held on the 24th October. Accordingly, Dr. N.V. Rajkumar, the then Secretary of the Foreign Department of the Indian National Congress and the late Dr. P. Subbarayan, representative of the then President of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee were sent to Pondicherry, the late Shri A.M. Saminatha Chettiar of Nagapattinam, the then President of the Thanjavur District Congress Committee to Karaikal, Shri Jagannadha Rao of Bhimavaram belonging to the Andhra Pradesh Congress to Yanam and Shri Damodaran of Kerala Pradesh Congress to Mahe. Having become aware of this, these three gentlemen began to negotiate with Shri Kewal Singh, the then Indian Consul-General at Pondicherry through Shri Fernandez, the son-in-law of Mon. Edouard Goubert. Necessary assurances were reiterated to these gentlemen that their past treachery to national cause will be forgiven and forgotten and they can continue to enjoy the benefits of the same offices even under the Indian regime. With these assurances, they were about to leave Pondicherry on the 18th March 1954. Shri Kewal Singh aspired for a strong agitation in Karaikal also simultaneously so that the French Colonial rule may be paralysed and so he made a dash visit to Nagapattinam on the 12th March 1954, stayed in the Dak Bungalow there and had discussions with the Merger leaders like the late Shri R.M.A.S. Venkatachalapathy Pillay, Leon Saint Jean, N. Srikantharamanjum, A.M. Jambugesan, M. Nagarajan and S.O. Rengasamipillai of T.R. Pattinam. These leaders were informed of the change of mind of the French Indian socialist party leaders and their proposed agitation on the 18th. But they were
not in favour of any direct action against the French in Karaikal. They had even gone to the extent of informing the Consul-General that any agitation in Karaikal will bring them into direct conflict with the French Government.

At about 10 PM, on the same night, i.e. on 12th March 1954, he got a telegram from the Consul-General to meet him next morning at Pondicherry immediately. Accordingly, he met him at Pondicherry and he narrated him that Mon. Goubert and his retinues have become pro-merger minded and they were making arrangements to shout the pro-merger slogans more loudly than us and we should not allow these French Indian Socialist party leaders to reap the benefit of sounding the merger slogan at the eleventh hour. He made it clear to him in no uncertain term that these socialist party leaders who were like “Cats on the Wall” have then decided to jump on the Indian side having found that the Indian landing ground alone was found to be very soft for them earlier. He also will help the cause. He accepted his point of view and he gave him his plan of action and he readily agreed to that.

In the meantime, the Commissioner for the French Republic in Pondicherry Mon. Andre’ Menard summoned a meeting of the Representative Assembly at Pondicherry on 27th March 1954.

After coming back to Nagore, Shri R. Ramasrinivasan sent the second ultimatum to the French Overseas Minister in Paris stating if the French did not withdraw from the Indian soil before the 26th March, he will offer a non-violent peaceful Satyagraha on the 27th March 1954 on the eve of the proposed meeting of the Representative Assembly.
He further wrote, "We love France and the French but not its colonialism in the Indian soil. We have no personal enmity towards any single individual belonging to France of French Settlements. All our struggle is against colonialism, which will be ventilated in the form of a movement on the eve of the opening of the Representative Assembly at Pondicherry on the 27th.

On the morning of the 18th March 1954, Mon Goubert, Shri K. Muthupillay and B. Muthukumarappa Reddiar with their pelf and costly "Cadillac" cars left Pondicherry to Tindivanam. Mon. Menard who was eagerly waiting to put them behind the prison bars got disappointed by their miraculous escape. They took shelter in Tindivanam. They were not able to commence any movement till the then Government of Madras tightened their security arrangements by posting the Malabar Special police along the borders to prevent the trespasses of the French police into the Indians limits. Nettappakkam and Tirubhuvanai, two Communes in Pondicherry became isolated by this posting of police. These leaders with their henchmen went to Nettappakkam, head erect, and established a parallel Government. While Nettappakkam was under the control of the French Indian Socialist party leaders, Tirubhuvanai was under the control of the Communist leaders. A similar attempt of them to establish a parallel Government in Bahour, became futile because the French police had access to Bahour through the Coromandel Coast. An "Administrative Council" was set up in Nettappakkam and the late Shri V. Venkata Subba Reddiar was made its President. Shri V.Subbayya was attending to the administration of Tirubhuvanai. It is worth mentioning here that Shri Kewal Singh had become shaky, because Mon. Goubert
and his colleagues began to keep quite in Tindivanam without resorting to any national activities for about a week. In spite of repeated requests of Mr. Fernandez, Mon. Goubert's family was not allowed to leave Pondicherry by Shri Kewal Singh till Mon. Goubert and his colleagues went to Nettappakkam and established a parallel Government there as the example of Mr. Rashid Ali Baig, the former Indian Consul-General at Pondicherry was before him. It was told that the socialist Party leaders gave an assurance to Mr. Rashid Ali Baig through Shri Leon Saint Jean that they will bring a resolution favouring merger with India in the Representative Assembly itself. Mr. Baig reported this assurance to the Government of India immediately but later they changed their stand which badly reflected on Mr. Baig.

The French Indian Socialist party Leaders who left Pondicherry and established parallel Government in Nettappakkam on the 30th March 1954 were dismissed from their respective offices by the French India Government. In the meantime, Mon Goubert, Shri B. Muthukumarappa Reddiar and K. Muthupillay conveyed their decision in favour of merger with India to the then Inspector-General of colonies of the French Government, Mon Teznaz du Montcel. The then President of the South Arcot District Congress Committee Shri K.S. Venkatakrishna Reddiar also played a significant role serving as a negotiator, between the Tamil Nadu Congress and the French Indian Socialist party Leaders.

The proposed meeting of the Representative Assembly on the 27th March was announced to have been postponed sine die and the meeting was never called for under the French banner thereafter. Since R.M.A.S. Packirisamy Pillay of Karaikal had felt that the Satyagraha
may also be postponed. He sent this message through Shri S. Vijayaragavan to him at Nagapattinam. He did not agree to that but told him to contact the Indian Consul-General at Pondicherry. Accordingly, he spoke to Shri Kewal Singh over the phone and conveyed this news. He was also of the same opinion of him and did not agree for the postponement.

Soon after the announcement of his Satyagraha on the 27th March, appeared in the press, his father had met Shri Joseph Xavery, a leading advocate of Karaikal and one among the merger leaders, as usual. He seemed to have told his father that defying the Government ban on processions and public meetings was serious office according to the French law, punishable in the “Court Criminelle” (Sessions court) with imprisonment in years and such it was not wise on our part to conduct the Satyagraha and face a risk. His father did not get discouraged by the legal advice tendered by his family lawyer but jocularly revealed it to him, one day. While this was the feeling of everybody at that time, his commencement of the Satyagraha and release from the police custody itself within less than twenty-four house arrests serves as an encouragement and eye-opener to all the white-collared merger leaders and ear marked the liberation activities in Karaikal in the final phase of the struggle in the year 1954.

The Karaikal Administrator Mon. Bouchney took all steps to get agitators arrested before they could stage a demonstration in Karaikal. He wanted that the people should not understand that there was an upsurge in Karaikal against the French colonial rule. He posted the police on all sides through which they could reach Karaikal from the Indian borders. The service buses coming from the Indian borders to
Karaikal were stopped in the French limits of all sides, passengers were asked to get down and interrogated.

Shri R. Ramasrinivasan was unaware of this and on the previous day Shri S. Vijayaraghavan came to Nagapattinam and told him about the measures taken by the Administrator. He advised him to adopt careful methods to enter into Karaikal. He was strongly of the view that somehow or other a demonstration should be staged in Karaikal on the 27th March 1954 as announced by him. It was a pity that even our colleagues in Karaikal did not fail to make a false propaganda that he won’t come to Karaikal and offer satyagraha.

He asked some of his colleagues to come to Nagore and halt there the previous day itself. Accordingly S. Anjappan and K. Arumugam reached Nagore. V.A. Kannayya Thevar, M.G. Chellayyan and Raju Nadar were already there with him. He left Nagore by about 9 P.M on the 26th March with Placards and flags, and reached Dharmapuram on the same night. Since Kannayyan was thorough with the border routes, he safely reached Dharmapuram, a village in Karaikal and halted there in the house of one Kumaravel who was a best friend of Kannaya Thevar. The next morning they saw that they were surrounded by blue caps and red caps (French local police and Armed Reserve). Thevar planned to go Karaikal and bring a taxi through which they can go to Karaikal. As a first step to his endeavour, he walked a distance of a few yards and reached a bridge nearby where an armed police constable was sitting who questioned him and threatened him with dire consequences if he persisted to go Karaikal. He came back and narrated the incident.
Shri R. Ramasrinivasan asked Anjappan and Arumugam to go to Karaikal first and wait there near a Pillayar temple. They then folded the flags, wrapped the placards with a paper, removed their shirts and tied them around heads just like sweetmeat-hawkers and began to walk. Throwing dust on the eyes of all the police constables who were posted to round them up, they were able to reach Karaikal and arrive near the Cinema Theatre, Jothi Talkies. Anjappan and Arumugam also joined them there and got ready for a demonstration wearing the badges and holding the Indian National flags flying and the placards which contained the slogans “We don’t want referendum”, “we want merger with India”, and “French colonialism quit”, “Don’t curb Civil liberties” and “Independence is our Birthright”.

They hurriedly reached the Mosque in Tirunallar Road and began to shout the slogans and moved towards the Government House. A Sub-Inspector of Police and a host of constables stopped them and asked them to disperse. On refusal to do so, they were asked to walk up to the Central Police Station. While nearing the police station, a French Police Officer came out and asked a constable to identify him. When the constable identified him, he caught hold of his shirt, snatched away his flag staff and beat him with it. When he started using violence on him, other constables began to beat his other colleagues. As revealed to him later by prominent persons among the crowd collected nearby, viz. Shri S. Kadirvelayutham and P. Thandavasamy that the French Police Commissioner was said to have remarked while beating him “I agit par conviction”.

When they were in the police station Mon. Bouchney came there and sent word to him. During the meeting, he characterized the
Satyagraha as a “foolish act”. When he retorted that he was unhappy to hear these words from the mouth of a Frenchman whose country gave the three great ideals of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity to the whole world, he simply smiled. The next morning they were taken to the Government house to meet him. Mon. Bouchney told him that if they gave him the assurance that he will not persist in merger activities in future he could order the release. He asked him what was the harm done by the French to him. When he pointed out that while he was sitting he was made to stand before him and that itself was an injustice done not only to him but also to the Indian Community, he immediately offered him a seat. When he refused to give him the assurance he wanted, he got wild and ordered a service bus to be brought to the police station, and asked to get into the same. The conductor was instructed by the police to drop them in the Nagore customs chowkie, i.e. beyond the French Indian limits. Except his brother Kandakumar who was told to have been arrested under a pending warrant, they were all taken in that service bus belonging to Shri Sakthi vilas bus service, Porayar and dropped near the Nagore chowkie. Along with his brother P. Chidambaram of T.R. Pattinam was also arrested and remanded to judicial custody. Leaving his other colleagues in Nagore, he went to Nagapattinam and met the Vice-Consul Mr. S.J. Wilfred who was waiting for him and other merger leaders like Shri M. Nagarajan, the late Leon Saint Jean and the Press Correspondent S. Vijayaraghavan. Shri D.M. Jejurikar, who was the Pro-Consul also used to visit Karaikal often. Before release, the Administrator had sent word to Shri Vijayaraghavan and refused the appearance of the news in the press that the Satyagrahis were lathi charged. He had also told him to get a statement from him and publish
it and therefore he wanted a statement from him. What actually happened was the police wrested the flag staffs and used them as lathis.

They then decided to revive the agitation and continue it till the achievement of the object. The next day i.e. on the 28th March a procession was taken, defying the ban, under the leadership of the late Shri R.M.A.S. Venkatachalapathy Pillay elder brother of the late Shri R.M.A.S. Packrisamy Pillay, a pro French leader in Karaikal which included the late Shri Leon Saint Jean and N. Srinkanta Ramanujam and many others. The procession was taken under the aegis of the Jawahar Youth League, Karaikal. P. Meenakshisundaram, M. Selvaraj and A. Poyyathamurthi, were arrested on a charge of threatening a police constable. This time the Government changed its attitude. They did not want to leave the mergerites unpunished. Since the French Government were repeatedly saying that nobody will be punished for political offences, they resorted to foisting cases against them. These three nationalists were charge sheeted on the cooked-up charge of having threatened a police constable. Immediately they were remanded to judicial custody and during the trial after a few days, they were given the benefit of “first offenders”.

Then the wrath of the Administrator fell on the press correspondent Shri S. Vijayaragavan. He summoned him and warned him that he will sue against him for damages if he persisted in sending news relating to pro-merger activities to the press. The following day, another batch which included Thangaraj, Packrisamy, G. Meenakshisundaram, M. Ganapathy and Sivaprakasam, offered satyagraha. They were arrested and released from the police itself. Day by day, the agitation was getting strong. The police also began to
use brutal force on the workers after taking them inside the police station. The late Chinnappa of Neravy belonging to the Dravid Munnetra Kazhagam, Govindaraj, and G. Meenakshisundaram took out a procession. Though the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and Dravida Kazhagam have not sent any directive to their supporters in Pondicherry and Karaikal to support the liberation cause of Pondicherry and Karaikal, they participated in the freedom struggle in their individual capacities. The said two Kazhagams maintained the same policy towards the French which their parent organisation, the Justice Party, was having towards the British. In this connection, it is worthy of mention that in the year 1948, the late Shri P.R. Sivasubramania Pillay organised “The French-India Swantantra Thaniarasu Committee” in T.R. Pattinam for making pro-French propaganda. One of the public meetings held under the auspices of the said Committee was addressed by the revolutionary poet Kavignar Shri Bharathidasan, and Shri Varadarajaluchettair.

After the parallel Government was established in Nettappakkam in March 1954 in Pondicherry by Mon. Goubert and his Colleagues, there was a move to isolate some places in Karaikal also viz. Padutharkollai in T.R. Pattinam and Parivarthanakattalai in Nedungadu Commune. As a first step to this endeavour, two maps of these two villages were supplied to the then Inspector General of Police, Madras Shri V.R. Ramanathan by the then Chief of the Cadastre Department of Karaikal Shri S. Kadirvelayudam through Shri A. Ramanathan Chettiar who had his thickest connections with the Karaikal National Congress but the idea was dropped later.
On the 11th April 1954, the National Congress Karaikal took out a procession defying the ban. They wrote to the Karaikal Magistrate (Procureur De la Republique) about their proposed Satyagraha on the said date at about 1PM and sought his permission for a procession. As they anticipated, the Magistrate refused to grant permission but they have decided to offer the Satyagraha as planned originally. While the police were making arrangements to round them up before the commencement of the procession, i.e. before 1PM these leaders, having become aware of the plan of the police, started the Satyagraha two hours earlier. This procession was headed by the late Janab S.M. Shaik Madarsa Maraicar, the then President of the organisation. When the Government was under the impression that the whole of the Muslim community was with them, a Muslim leading the Satyagraha had naturally roused the indignation of the administration. No sooner did they move a few yards from the Congress house than the police arrived on the spot and began to use force. The procession included the late Shri A.M. Jambugesan, M. Nagarajan, P. Pichaikannu Pillay, S.O. Rangasami Pillay, S. Varadarajan Chettiar, S. Marisavari, the late M.S. Mani, M. Ramasami, K. Murugayyan, Derparanya Sundaram Pillay and some others.

After taking them to the police station, except the late Janab Shaik Madarsa Maraicar, Shri A.M. Jambugesan, M. Nagarajan and P. Pichakannu Pillay, all others were let off. It was told later by Shri V. Janakiram, the Investigating Magistrate of Karaikal after merger that those who were released from the police except a few, others gave a statement that they did not participate in the Satyagraha but stood there as mere on lookers. The police after recording this statement from
them, released them. Afterwards a fine of fifteen francs each was levied on those who were released from the police itself. Some among them paid the same and many like M. Ramasami refused payment which was waived by the court after merger.

In the police station Janab Shaik Madarsa was severely assaulted by the rowdies of the Pro-French elements. He got bleeding injuries on the face and the ear and immediately rushed to Nagapattinam hospital and took treatment there. One Veerappan of Neravy and the Secretary of the Kottucherry Municipality were assaulted. Upagarasamy, a student was also manhandled. The police had also planned to do away with the press correspondent Shri S. Vijayarghavan.

In Mahe, the Mahe Mahajanasabha workers attempted to hoist the Indian National Flag in the Police Station of Cherukillai. In a Police firing, Achulthan and Anandan were shot dead. Since there was a lull of activities for more than a week without any demonstration, he arranged for another batch of Satyagrahis. On the 17th May 1954, the members of the National Youth Congress under the leadership of M.G. Chellyyan offered Satyagraha. It included his another brother R. Ramakrishnan, R. Adhimoolam, G. Krishnamurthy, G. Packirisami and the late M. Uthirapathy and R.M. Varadaraju. This batch also had tasted the police repression and they were remanded to custody. After trail, they were sentenced to six days imprisonment each.

At this stage, attention of the T.R. Pattinam police fell on the fishermen quarters. Utilising the exchange of heated words between the Pro-Merger group and the Pro-French elements, the police had begun to use force on the Pro-Mergerities alone. Unable to withstand
the beating because he had shattered the impression among the general public that the whole of the Muslim community in Karaikal was behind the French. A French Police Officer came to the Police lock-up and shouted “Charge that Musalman”. Then these four leaders were remanded to judicial custody and during trial Janab Shaik Madrasa and Shri M. Nagarajan were convicted and sentenced to three months imprisonment each with an order of internment for two years after release and Shri Jambugesan and Pichaikkannu Pillay to fifteen days imprisonment each. The next batch headed by K.M.Sivasubramaniam of the “Karai Pagutharivu Manram” which included Kudanthai Srinivasan, Valangiman Balakrishnan, Thillaiyambur Samy Ayya, Valangiman Saminathan and Sivasubramanian offered Satyagraha. At this time, repression of the Police reached the high pitch. The processionists were severely beaten and the left hand of Sivasubramaniam was fractured by the beating of the police. They were remanded to custody and after a detention of twenty-three days they were sentenced to seventeen days imprisonment each.

Rowdism was let loose by the police itself. Hooligans instigated by the police pelted stones on the house of the late Shri Leon Saint Jean one day in order to intimidate him. The late Shri A. Manickam, editor of the weekly, “The Karai Mail”, a pro-merger journal of Karaikal and Shri Ramadoss lyer of the Arya Bhavan were assaulted. On the same night, just a few minutes after this assault while a meeting of the “Comite Francophile “was going on, Shri R. Ramasrinivasan and one Krishnasami were brutally attacked by the police, some of them began to retaliate. The situation had gone to such an extent that some of the impatient youth snatched away the caps of policemen. By
this incident, a large number of fishermen had evacuated T.R. Pattinam and reached Nagore. Against many of them criminal cases were filed and they were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment by the Karaikal Court in absentia.

In this connection, Shri R. Ramasrinivasan was summoned by the then Investigating Magistrate of Karaikal Mon. Guernane to meet him in his office.

He took more pains to mobilize the Satyagrahis from the remote corners of Karaikal. He and G. Meenakshisundaram very carefully reached Tiruvettakudy one night to organize a branch of the National Youth Congress there. There, some energetic and patriotic young men were ready to join the Satyagraha movement. He asked them to reach Nagore on the previous night itself. In the meantime, the police, off and on, used to make him get down from the bus at the Arasalar bridge at Karaikal and made him walk from there to the town. This became an amusement to the police. As passport system was introduced from 19th April 1954 and it was in force at the time, he obtained his passport from the Tirumalarayanpattinam Municipality. The then Deputy Mayor Shri Dakshinamurthy Mudaliar who was officiating as Mayor after the demise of Shri P.R. Sivasubramaniapillay issued him the passport. This news has reached the ears of the police. One morning, he was summoned to the Karaikal Police Station and one Sub-Inspector of Police who, has retired as Superintendent, Shri Katinat Kadirvelu wanted his passport. When he handed it over to him, he took it and sent him away.
On the 22nd May, he was arrested again and remanded to custody and these satyagrahis were released from the court. During trial, the judge Mr. Hubert de Rozario, convicting and sentencing him to one month imprisonment remarked that his head had become burnt. In French he said “Votre Tete est bruis”. His brother Kandakumar who was arrested on the 27th March while offering Satyagraha along with him on a charge of assault and remanded to custody the next day was acquitted by the judge for want of evidence after a detention of forty-five days. While the enquiry was going on, my brother refuting the charge that he came to Tirumalarayanpattinam and committed the offence referred to the assault of his father in the public market place near the police station. His brother said in the open court that how can he come to that place where police co-operates with rowdies? The judge Mr. Razario, shouted aloud and said “The very same France is establishing justice now you are acquitted”.

Besides the late Janab Shaik Madarsa Maraicar, S.M. Zackaria, A.M. Kader Syed Ahmed and Sheriff Maricar were active in the movement. An organisation called “The United Merger Front” was formed under the Presidentship of the late Shri Leon Saint Jean. This consisted of persons of all shades of political opinion with the object of merger with India. Those whom the police suspected to be working for the merger cause were summoned to the police, detained there for a few hours for interrogation and sent off. This had become a habit to the police. S.M. Zackaria and Kader were taken to the police and later let off. One N. Thangarasu was arrested while distributing bit-notices in Ambagarthur, beaten severely and later let off. The screening of the cinema “Andhanaal” was banned by the Government. Mon.
Bouchney, having become desperate, began to indulge in let loose rowdism.

On the 22nd June the late P.M. Ambiga Sundaramurthy, one among the prominent leaders of the communist party of India, Karaikal Unit, offered satyagraha and was arrested. He was later convicted and sentenced to there months imprisonment. After release, his remand was extended for two years. The late M. Sundaramurthy, President of the Jawahar Youth League was convicted and sentenced to one month imprisonment. M. Subramniam another prominent and active leader of the Communist Party and K.M.Sivasubramaniam were arrested, beaten mercilessly, detained in the police lock-up for more than two days unlawfully and later released. Gopalakrishnan, V. Vengadachalam, K. Saminathan, A. Hirudayasamy and the late K.P. Pushpam offered Satyagraha and they were arrested, severely belaboured, detained in the police lock-up for two days illegally and later released. By the beating of the police Pushpam lost two of his teeth. On the morning of the 22nd June, he was released from the jail after the expiry of his one month term of imprisonment. Having become aware, of the date of his release, Mon. Bouchney had ordered the Revenue Department to demand payment of the court expenses regarding his previous case in the year 1952 and in default of payment to take him back to the prison. The officials of the Revenue Department were made to wait in the police station of his place which is on his way to Nagore. But he took a different route and reached Nagore completely unaware of this news. He then gave up the idea of conducting, the movement inside Karaikal. Most of the mergeities became disheartened owning to the repression let loose by the police and the goondas.
Shri R. Ramasrinivasan therefore, came to the conclusion of imposing economic blockade around the borders and thereby cause hardships to the anti-social elements inside which will paralyse the administration to a certain extent. The people of Karaikal have to get their daily necessities only from the adjoining Indian borders. Except luxurious goods, which were illegally imported from Sri Lanka and other foreign countries, all commodities essential for human consumption had to be got from India.

He conveyed his plan to the Indian Consul-General at Pondicherry Shri Kewal Singh and he readily agreed to the same as similar activities were going on in the Pondicherry frontiers. On the previous day, he along with the then Superintendent of Customs chowkies viz. Sennamangalam (Nagore), Valumangalam, Kandangudi, Velangudi and Nandalar (Porayar) and he instructed all the customs officials to offer every possible assistance to the volunteers. In Nandalar, he met the then Manager of Shri Shakti Vilas Bus Service, the late Shri Narayanan Nambrar and requested him to bring all the buses to the head office at Porayar for night halt. Accordingly, he took all the buses to Porayar, leaving only one at Nagapattinam.

Selvaraj of the Jawahar Youth League was arrested for non-payment of a fine of 16 Francs levied by the Magistrate. The late P. Jeevagan, a Municipal Councillor of Tirunallar Commune was arrested and later let off. S. Rajamanickam, Pannirselvam, S. Rathnasami, M. Kandasamy, K. Velusami, V. Ramachandran, K. Mani, S. Murugayyan, Govindarasu and some others, were convicted and sentenced to six months imprisonment each in absentia while they were participating in picketing around the borders. S.K. Subbarayan
offered Satyagraha on the 22\textsuperscript{nd} July and he was arrested and sentenced to one month imprisonment.

The repression let loose by the Government was most unbearable, and it had affected the mergerites to some extent. The movement from within and without got strengthened day by day. Durairaj, N. Mani Iyer, T. Thiagarajan, V. Govindasami, S. Manickam, M.V. Krishnan and Karadi alias Krishnan took out a procession and they were severely beaten and later let off.

On the 29\textsuperscript{th} July Puduthurai Narayanasamy, Sambandam, M. Vivekanandam and S. Visvanathan were arrested and later released. The rowdies instigated by the Pro-French elements pelted stones on the house of Shri N. Nagarajan and his neighbour Sattayappan was also assaulted, P. Muniandi alias Meenakshisundaram resigned his post from the Veterinary Department to express his sympathy towards the merger cause and joined the movement.

A token fast was observed by M. Ramasami, Syce Xavier, Krishnamurthy, Charles, Aroul, U. Thirunavukkarasu and Simmon Saint Jean in the office of the United Merger Front. On the 27\textsuperscript{th} July it was inaugurated by Shri Joseph Xavery. The next day Shri Leon Saint Jean joined the fast along with his wife. P. Thirunavakkarasu Pillay, Ex-INA of Neravy was arrested and convicted to fifteen days imprisonment. Processionists led by Shri T.K.S.M. Kalayansundaram of Neravy which included the late A. Dhandapani, Vaithilingam, T. Govindaraju, Singaravelu, Dakshinamurthy, Kannayyan, Chinnappa, Muthuvaithilingam Pillay, Narayanasami, Madasami, Pethaperumal,
The students of the Modern College who observed hartal on the 3rd of August were suspended for fifteen days. Ekambaram, K. Jayakumar and K. Ramasami were arrested and released. Among the students the name of A. Perianayagasami deserves to be mentioned. He used to address many meetings in favour of merger translating the French Speech Shri Michael Padmanaban. Between the years 1950 and 1954, he along with G. Sathymurthy of Tirunallar published the Journal “Manavan” in which articles were written by Shri Leon Saint Jean, A. Manickam, A. Sebastien and Syce’ Xavier, the said journal. French languages for which Shri R. Thirumurugan, Mariadoss Pillay and William Vitorian were Honorary editors respectively. Though young in age, these two exhibited enormous courage carefully distributing the bit-notices through Russia alias Vengadachallam in Karaikal got printed in Nagapattinam and brought to Karaikal through P. Thandavasamy along the sea-coast.

In Pondicherry, three students viz. Janab C.M. Acharff, former Minister of Pondicherry Shri Prosper Tamby, a doctor in Pondicherry and Shri L. Balasubramaniam undertook a token fast as a mark of protest against the atrocities perpetrated by the Government on the pro-merger elements. This novel situation had really became a challenge to the administration. Shri Swamy Lourdes, Secretary of the Bharat Yuvak Sangh, Pondicherry, with a group of selected youngmen also played an important role in the freedom struggle. Shri B. Rangapillay, N. Damodaran, S. Ragunathan, B. Parthasarathy, M. Gunaseelan (son of Shri D. Maniappan), P. Janarthanam and Anwar Alikhan took out a
procession under the aegis of the Pondicherry Students Congress on the 14th April 1954 defying the ban on processions and public meetings, imposed by the Government. They were arrested and remanded to judicial Custody and released afterwards binding them over for good conduct for five years. They were severely belaboured by the jail authorities also by casuarina posts as a result of which the forefinger of the right hand of Shri B. Rangapillay got fractured. Shri N. Damodaran, who was in Netaji Uniform, holding the Indian National flag in his hand was severely instructed by Shri Dorai Munusamy, not to leave the flag to the police so long as he was conscious. In case he had become unconscious, the instruction of Shri Munusamy was that the next person should hold the flag. Accordingly, Shri Damodaran refused to hand over the Indian National Flag to the police till he fell unconscious and was taken away to the police van with head injuries. On the evening of the 31st October 1954, the French National Flag was lowered down from the Government House, Karaikal with full Military Honours by Mon. Bouchney in the presence of the then Town Kaziar Janab H.M.T.S. Kader Mohideen Sahib Maraicar. The way in which Mon. Bouchney took leave of him was said to be very pathetic Mon. Bouchney said “Mon. Kazi, je Mon Vais à la France’. The reply also, was said to be in the same tone which is needless to repeat. He felt that it has now become ripe to weigh the pros and cons and examine the merits and demerits of the policy adopted by Mon. Goubert as leader of the French Indian Socialist party throughout his public life upto the 18th March 1954 towards the merger cause. Comparing the political fate of Chandernagore with that of the other settlements viz. Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe, and Yanam which are kept as autonomous units in direct relations with the Centre,
inspite of their geographical positions, judging the activities of Mon. Goubert from the happening in the quagmire of the politics of that time and probing into the reasons for the issue of the Communiqué of the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India on the 27th October 1949, clarifying the political status of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe, and Yanam after merger as separate entity, right-thinking persons of political maturity, sagacity and far sightedness will not fail to characterize his activities before merger as a blessing in disguise to the people of Pondicherry. The fact that he always evinced keen interest in safeguarding and maintaining the individuality of Pondicherry cannot and should not be allowed to go into oblivion. He was all along the champion of the same and he ever surrendered it to anybody, however highly placed he may be, during his life-time even in the midst of many cataclysmic vicissitudes in politics.

After handing over charge to Mon. Douvechelle, Mon. Bouchney left for Trichy immediately from where he emplaned to Paris via Colombo. On the 1st November 1954, at about 3 P.M. Mon. Douvechelle handed over charge to Shri A.V. Loganathan, who was appointed as the Administrator of Karaikal by the Government of India and he hoisted the Indian Tricolour in the Government House before a huge gathering which included those who suffered and sacrificed for the liberation cause of Karaikal. All our representations to the late Shri K. Kamaraj regarding the treatment meted out by Shri Pillay became futile. He was very particular about the present and future than brooding over the past. He was not willing to revive old memories.

The referendum was held in Kizhur, an adjoining Indian territory near Pondicherry on the 18th of October 1954. 170 out of 78 of
the participants voted in favour of Indian where as 8 persons expressed their willingness for the continuance of the French. The French Government agreed to transfer on to power to India by means of an agreement. The referendum was supervised by Shri Kewal Singh on behalf of the Government of India and Mon. Pierre Landy, Special Envoy of the French. The agreement was signed by our late Panditji on behalf of our Government and Mon. Count Stanizlas Ostorog, the then French Ambassador in India on behalf of the French on 21st October 1954.

The French agreed to effect the de-facto transfer of power to the Government of India on the 1st November 1954. So the French had decided to abandon its colonies in India but they insisted on the formality of a reference under article 27 of the then French Constitution which was told to have required popular consultation before transfer of power. They were very keen on this as to avoid repercussions in other colonies like Algiers, Morocco and Tunisia. In this context Mon. Henry Jacquier, Member of the Union of France and Shri R.M.A.S. Packirisami Pillay carried out a new proposal for the solution of this problem. According to their proposal, which was called “Condomonium”, the former French Colonies in India may be administered by both the Government of India and France. It was told that the said proposal got the blessings of the French Government also.

This ridiculous proposal had been rejected not only by the patriots but also by the two Governments of India and France. Even though the Metropolitan Government of France had come to the conclusion of abandoning these colonies in India as early as possible.

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121 R.Ramasririvasan, op.cit.,p.113
and was expediting quick disposal, Mon. Bouchney, the Karaikal Administrator did not fail to cling to every effort to perpetuate the tottering structure of the French colonial rule in India. He instigated the Government employees to carry on Pro-French activities very vigorously. Just six months before the defacto transfer of power was to take place, the Administrator caused the formation of a Committee called “Comite Francophile” consisting of the Government employees and some big merchants. These gentlemen used to hold meetings in big buildings with the installation of loud-speakers attacks on the Government of India. Conspicuous among them were the late Shri Venkaratrama Iyer, interpreter in the Court. In Pondicherry the French Governor M. Menard took every step to create some stooges who can fill up the vacuum caused by the shifting loyalties of Mon. Goubert and his followers. One Mon. Dutamby came forward to help the French and formed a party called “The Republican Party”.

In the same month, on the 7th April 1954, a Satyagraha was organised by the Youth Congress which started from the border of Kottakkupam led by one Raja which included V. Srinivasan, M. Shanmugam, Angamuthu, Rajaram and many others. Another Satyagaraha commenced from Pakkamudayanpet under the leadership of Rajaram and many others. Another Satyagraha commenced from Pakkamudayanpet under the leadership of Ranganathan alias Bernard Shaw which included M. Anandan, Malayappan, Namasivayam and Venkadesam. Similar Satyagrahas were conducted in Thengathittu and Murungapakkam by Ranganathan and Ulandai Narayansami.

122 R.Ramasrinivasan, op. cit., p. 114
On the 4th April 1954, Shri R.L. Purushothama Reddiar, Ansari, P. Doraisamy, S.R.Subramaniam, Thanampalayam Subbarayan, M.S. Annamalai of the Golden company, C.M. Achraf, A. Irudayaraj, and Kathu alias Vinayakamurthy of Vambakeerapalayam conducted a Bhajana, singing the national songs. Afterwards, i.e. on the 15th a Satyagraha movement was launched under the leadership of Shri A. Arulraj which included Shri Mariappa Subburathinam, S.K. Muthu, Srinivasan Nadarajan and Arumugam of Vaithikuppam, Shrimathi Alamelu, Kullapattu, Pavunambal, Rajeswari and Kannammal also participated in the police. Shri A. Arulraj and some others were tortured beyond endurance by being kept in the 'Salt Store' and by passing electric current into their bodies.

On the 14th July i.e. on the “French Republic Day” the Indian National Flag was hoisted in Muthialpet near the border of Kottakkuppam by the nationalists, then a satyagraha was conducted opposite to the residence of the commissioner for the French Republic in India. As a result of violence used by the police on the peaceful agitators, Vivekanandan, received bleeding injuries and he was taken to Villupuram for treatment. M. Anandan belonging to Kurumbagaram Nedungadu, Karaikal played a vital role in the freedom-struggle in Pondicherry. During the absence of Shri A. Arulraj, he was acting as his emissary, to meet the Indian Consul-General and looking to the needs of the Satyagrahis. In his case, one peculiarity was, when Anandan and Achuthan were shot dead in Mahe, his parents in Karaikal had to lament for a while till the fact that their son, Anandan was alive let known to them. Shri K. Dhanaraj also has taken active part in the agitation in the year 1947 and 1954, he was forced to live in
self-exile in the border areas in 1954. Besides, Shri R. Ariaputhri, S. Arumugam, Bakthavathsalakannan, Emmanuel, Thiruvengadam, S. Emperumal, Ervaikrishnan, S. Ethiraj A. Ettiappanaicker, A.P. Gandhi, G. Ganesan, J. Gangadhar Chettiar, S. Govindaraju, K. Jayarma Sharma, Manickam alias Mannagatti, Oma Virapathran, Patturaman alias Govindarasu, M. Thirukkami Asari, K. Sundaraja, Manickam Ammal with her two sons who were murdered by the miscreants during the Gandhi Jayanthi week in 1946, R. Raja Venugopal, K. Ramachandra Bagavaathar and Nataraja Raja also played a vital role in the struggle of emancipation of Pondicherry. On the 4th of April 1954, there was a move to form an “All party Action Committee”, on the advice of Shri K. Kamaraj. Accordingly, a meeting was held in Cuddalore which was attended by Shri R. Sellane Naicker, V. Subbiah, G. Ambroise, D. Zivarattinam, K. Sivaprakasam, Dorai Munusamy, Dadela Ramanayya, D. Mariappan of the Liberation front, A. Arulraj, Sabapathy M. Anandan, K. Karunanidhi, Anbarasan, Govandarasu Naicker, and K.S. Venkatraman, a close associate of Rajaji but the meeting ended without taking any decision. Then another meeting was held in the rice-mill premises of Shri Shanmuga Odayar, the then chairman of the Villupuram Municipal Council which was attended by Shri V.Subbayya, D.K. Ramanujam, D. Mariappan, Cleamenceu, Vathilingam of Mudaliarpet, Dr. N. Ranganathan, A. Arulraj, M. Anandan, K. Karunanidhi, Anbarasan, and Dr. Thinigarajan, Dr. Thiagarajan was very kind enough to give treatment to the injured nationalists, free of cost.

In a rehearsal conducted by Shri Dorai Munusamy how to withstand the police lathi charge, he beat N. Damodaran with a small
log on his two elbows and later as the police also beat him on the same places the elbow-joints were dislocated. The refusal of N. Damodaran to hand over the flag to the police till he became unconscious reminds us of the act of patriotic fervour and heroic act of "Tiruppur Kumaran". The other stalwarts of the Students Congress were Shri Paramel Shatrugh, Dr. Raman Itte candy, Dr. Michilotte Mukkan dan, Haridoss, V. Ramanathan, N. Govindan, A. Kalathi, G. Ganesan, G. Devanathan and V. Munusami. In the actual functioning, these young men worked on the advice and guidance of Shri Dorai Munusami. A Journal by name "Jeunesse" was also Published by the Students Congress.
CHAPTER V
Nehru and the French Government 1953-1963

From the time of the settlement of the French in 1674, Pondicherry was occupied once by the Dutch and three times by the British. It was given back lastly in 1814 by the Treaty of Paris, only for trade purposes with specific interdiction of having any fort or armed forces. From that time there have been several proposals of transferring the French establishments to England against corresponding territories in West Indies or of exchanging the outlying establishments against a compact territory around Pondicherry. Both the French and British Governments were interested in these transfers, which however did not materialize on account of the opposition of the population. Pathetic letters were sent to Paris, not to abandon the faithful citizens of France. There was even a proposal to transfer the establishments to Germany. That was thwarted by the strong opposition from English.

The U.S. President, James Monroe in a message to the U.S. Congress on 2\textsuperscript{nd} December 1823 had declared that the American continents were no longer open for colonization by the European powers and that the U.S would view with displeasure any violation of this policy. This statement came to be known as the Monroe doctrine. By the end of 1939, Mahatma Gandhi had been fully converted by Nehru to the concept of a Constituent Assembly.

The Formative period of the Indian National Congress movement offered Nehru an excellent opportunity to develop his talent
for leadership and to give vent to his radical ideals. Between 1921 and 1946 he was actively associated with the Indian freedom struggle. The Constitution of India was framed by the Constituent Assembly during 1946–49. Actually our Constitution had an organic growth. It was being framed all through the period of the national struggle for independence and the successive doses of constitutional reforms conceded by the British in response to national demands. Nehru, the President of the Congress Working Committee, on being appointed Chairman of the Committee of Experts to prepare material and draft proposals for the Constituent assembly, himself did the original draft of the Objectives Resolution which he moved in the first session of the Constituent Assembly on 13th December 1946, and made a memorable speech in the Assembly. On 7th October, 1946 an Act was passed providing for local assemblies in colonies which rechristened overseas territories. In accordance with that Act the Regulation dated 25.10.1946 created in the French establishments in lieu of the General Council which had been in existence for quite a long time a representative assembly with larger powers.

Even after 1947, he maintained close connection with the Indian National Congress.123 He was the spokesman of the young radical congressmen and introduced radical ideas into the deliberations and also channelled such new social forces as the trade unions and Kissan Sabhas into the nationalist movement. As a Congress worker he travelled extensively in the countryside and propagated the messages of Congress among the villagers.

123 Mrigen Bose, Jawaharlal Nehru and his economic policy, Calcutta, 1977, p. 25
Writing on 13th July 1947 as chairman of the Union Constitution committee, he recommended to the President of the Constituent Assembly the draft of a provision for the amendment of the Constitution. This formed the basis of all subsequent discussions regarding the amendment clause and finally took the shape of Article 368 of the Constitution.

The regulation dated 12.04, 1947 created a Government Council in lieu of the Privy Council. The Council was to consist of three Government officers and three non–officials holding high elected offices. That regulation was modified on 12th August, 1947 providing for three members elected by the representative assembly and three members designated by the Governor.\(^\text{124}\) It also allows the Governor to delegate the Presidency of the Council to one of the Councilors. The Council gets more power under the regulation. It has responsibility of implementing the decisions of the representative assembly of deliberating on all draft rules and notifications of the Governor to the exception of those which are taken for implementation of statutes. The Governor may also entrust to a member of the Council the responsibility of a department whose expenses are entirely borne by the local budget and for that purpose to vest him with the powers of the Governor. Those powers were to be exercised with the technical assistance of the Head of Department. The Government thought it fit not to exercise his prerogative to nominate three Councilors and asked the representative assembly to elect all the six Councilors. By order dated 22nd October, 1947 each of them were entrusted with the charge of one or more departments. However during the session of the

\(^{124}\) David Anusamy, The Merger of French India, a paper presentation at the International Seminar, Pondicherry, 1997, p. 2
representative assembly, the Government was not represented by the Councilors but by the Chief Secretary. It appears that the Councilors found the arrangement quite convenient to them.

By regulation dated 20th August, 1947 the designation of Governor was removed, and replaced by that of Commissioner of the Republic. That was only a cosmetic change. The French Government, while entrusting the elected representatives a larger part of the administration wanted to keep with them the key posts. So by Act dated 6th September, 1947, it was provided that the salaries of the Head of the Territory, high administrative officers, judicial officers and high police officers which were hitherto included in the local budget will be thereafter borne by the Government of France.125

Agreement on Referendum

Till the independence of India, there was no movement against the French in Pondicherry. The nationalists here worked for the liberation of India from the British rule. Indian leaders advised them to do nothing adverse to the French who had been protecting Indian patriots taking refuge here. Immediately after independence the Indian Government declared that they would not recognize the right of France on her establishments. It is true that the Indian Independence Act of 1947 passed by the British Parliament does not make any reference to the French and Portuguese possessions. The Government of India as a successor to the British Government had to respect the treaty of 1814 recognizing the existence of French establishments. But France did not take such a legalistic view. The departure of the British and the great urge for the end of colonies everywhere impelled the French

125 David Ammaasamy, op. cit, p. 4
Government to have a realistic look at the matter. On 28th August, 1947 both the Governments decided to settle amicably the future of the establishments. On 6th October 1947, the loges were handed over to India.

Preparing the ground for an eventual transfer and with a view to satisfy the crave of the population for greater autonomy by a regulation dated 17th November 1947 France declared Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam as free towns having full administrative powers independently of each other and placed them under the common authority of the Commissioner of the Republic in Pondicherry. Chandernagore which was granted separate status on 30th June, 1947 was made a free town on 6th December, 1947 whereas the regulation raising Chandernagore as a free town was given effect to the regulation in respect of the other Establishments was resisted by the Council of Government though it was a progressive step in the way of devolution of powers and of a better Government. The main reason, presumably, was that the regulation transferred with immediate effect practically all the powers of the Council of Government to the Councils of Administration to be chosen in each establishment by the existing municipal representatives without prior elections. So the arrangement had the effect of depriving the existing councilors of Government of their powers and transferring them to others. So the council of Government resisted naturally the move. Secondly the political class which had the responsibility of protecting the special rights of the establishments against the two competing powers, felt that they could achieve better results in keeping the four establishments together.
At the time of transfer some people have put forth the idea of dual nationality. In fact Sri Aurobindo in his message to the Nation on August 15th 1947, at a time when nationalism was at its peak advised “there must grow up an international spirit and outlook, international forms and institutions must appear, perhaps such developments as dual or multilateral citizenship, willed interchange or voluntary fusion of cultures”.

On 13th April 1948, the Constituent Assembly adopted a resolution to the effect that for the proper functioning of democracy and the growth of national unity and solidarity it was essential that communalism should be eliminated from Indian life and no communal organization should be permitted to engage in any of the activities other than those essential of the bonafide religious, cultural, social and educational needs of the community. Pandit Nehru told the Constituent Assembly: We must have it clearly in our minds and in the mind of the country that the alliance of religion and politics in the shape of communalism is a most dangerous alliance, and it yields the most abnormal kind of illegitimate brood. This combination is harmful to the country as a whole; it is harmful to any minority that seeks to have some advantage from it.

In June 1948, they agreed that the future of the French possessions should be determined at the earliest opportunity in accordance with the freely expressed desire of their inhabitants. Conditions for a free referendum did not, however, exist in the four settlements of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam.
On 18th June, 1948 the French Minister for Overseas Territories made a declaration before the French National Assembly to the effect that the Government will allow people of the establishments the right of self determination, after a referendum which will be conducted in consultation with the Municipal Councils of each of the Establishments at a date which will be fixed by themselves. This is confirmed to the Government of India by an exchange of letters dated 29th June, 1948.

The Euphoria

In between, the Government of India made a tactical error. They issued a notice on 29.03.1948 to put an end to the Customs Agreement of 1941 from 1.4.1949, thinking that it will cause inconvenience to the population and impel it to opt for India. This step had just the contrary effect. Merchants, many of them hailing from Indian Union found a golden opportunity for smuggling. Huge bundles of Indian rupees introduced in Pondicherry were exported to Hong Kong and Gulf countries in order to purchase gold.

Nehru dwelt at length on the changing concept of property in the history of mankind. In the constituent Assembly, as a just compromise between the right of the individual and the right of the community, he moved the most important and far-reaching amendment to the property clause providing for the compulsory acquisition of property. After a fairly long discussion, the amendment was adopted on 12th September 1949.

Vijayalakshmi Pandit did not like her son-in-law, Ashok Mehta’s posting to Goa where anti-Indian feeling and lawlessness were on the increase. Following the announcement by the Government of
India in April 1949 that foreign possessions in India were bound to be integrated with India in the near future, a referendum was held in Chandernagore on 19th June 1949. Referendum in other French possession scheduled for 11th December 1949 was, however, postponed.

On 10.03.1949 the Municipal Assembly of Chandernagore was called to meet to fix the modalities and the date of referendum. The Act authorising the Government to organise the referendum was voted by the French Parliament on 26th May, 1949, the date for the referendum was fixed at 19.06.1949. The date for the referendum was fixed at 19.06.1949. The referendum actually took place in Chandernagore on the above said date. Out of 12000 voters, 7500 were in favour of merger with India and 114 against.

Wish of the People

The Municipal Councilors of other Establishments were not called to meet separately but to meet in a General Assembly. This shows again the desire of the Council of Government to face the challenge jointly. The assembly met on 10.03.1949 to fix the date and the modalities of the referendum. Because the assembly was asked to fix a date, it fixed the date of referendum to 11.12.1949. But the delegates were annoyed with referendum. Their forgone conclusion was merger. So the assembly wished to get from the French and the Indian Governments all clarifications regarding the future of the French India.

It is worth noting that Pondicherry had a course of history different from the rest of India. The elite which had French education
was very anxious about its future. They were sincere in their decision for merger evident from the fact that they have started putting their children in English medium schools. But they wanted the merger to take place through a treaty of cession in the negotiation of which they are allowed to participate in order to safeguard the special interests of the people of Pondicherry. They wanted a period of transition of 25 to 30 years. The assembly therefore elected a delegation of three members to contact the respective Governments in Delhi and Paris, to put forth the aspirations of the people and to get the views of those Governments on the future of French India.

None of the Governments took the delegation seriously. The French Government told that there was no question of any undertaking before referendum. The Indian Government hinted that the establishments would be merged with the adjoining districts after two or three years. But both of them relented soon. The French Government wanted to bank on the desire of transition to extend their presence, in promising full autonomy if the referendum went in favour of France. The Government of India retrieved their steps but rested content with vague declarations that the specific interests of the population would be taken care of, that a period of transition would be allowed and that Pondicherry would become a window open on France. Pondicherry were in no hurry to join the Indian Union on account of the lack of commitment by the Indian leaders in respect of the duration and modalities of transition. So in the course of the second session of the general assembly of municipal councils on 17th October, 1949, it was declared that the atmosphere was not congenial for a referendum and that the assembly left the future date of referendum.
Also, ever since its commencement on 26th January 1950, the Constitution has been further evolving and growing through during its actual operation. It is a continuous process. Of the many eminent men who contributed to this process, the most outstanding was Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who once modestly described himself as one of those humble individuals who had something to do with the making of the Constitution.

Nehru pleaded strongly for a Parliamentary system as opposed to the Presidential and other systems. In the words of K.M. Munshi, 'as a middle-of-the-way socialist, impatient to transform India’s life, Nehru favoured Parliamentary Supremacy. Sardar Patel was cynical about Parliamentary Supremacy while C. Rajagopalachari would have favoured what may be termed a state of national democratic Government on Gandhian lines. The system of Parliamentary democracy was finally adopted by deliberate choice. In 1950 several important resolutions were moved by Nehru and they were concerned with the preparation of electoral rolls for the elections to be held in 1950 on the basis of the provisions of the new Constitution agreed to by the constituent Assembly. The ratification of the decision of India’s continued membership of the Commonwealth, the inclusion of Bhutan and Sikkim within the scope of the negotiating Committee and the adoption of the national flag of India. On the question of the adoption of the international form for numerals as against the Hindi or Devanagari numerals, Nehru was immediately convinced that the right approach was to accept the form used internationally. Also, on the question of language, generally, Nehru spoke forcefully, and while agreeing with the need for India having one language, he deprecated
any imposition and stressed the desirability of the all-India language growing from the people. Worth recalling is the significant role played by him in the evolution and final acceptance in the Constituent Assembly of the Ayyangar formula on language.

Intervening in the debate on the citizenship provisions is an important obiter dictum on secularism. Nehru said: “It is brought in all contexts, as if by saying that we are a secular state we have done something amazingly generous, given something out of our pocket to the rest of the world, something which we ought not to have done so on and so forth. We have only done something which every country does, except a very few misguided and backward countries in the world”.

During Nehru’s premiership as many as seventeen constitutional amendments were enacted. Of these, four affected fundamental rights and three sought to amend property provisions. The constitution First Amendment act of 1951 made some vital changes in Articles 15,19 and 31 dealing with the fundamental rights of equality, freedom of expression and of property. To clarify the position and to give effect to what was believed to be the real intention of the framers of the Constitution, new Articles 31 A and 31 B and the Ninth Schedule were inserted in the constitution. The new provisions specially secured the constitutional validity of the Zamindari Abolition laws in general and certain specific state acts in particular by excepting laws providing for acquisition of any estate or any rights there in, from the operation of the Fundamental Rights provisions.
**Political Status**

As far as Chandernagore was concerned there was no specific provision regarding the political status of that territory in the corresponding treaty of cession dated 2\textsuperscript{nd} February 1951 which came into force on 9\textsuperscript{th} June 1952. So, the Indian Parliament by Chandernagore (Merger) Act, 1954, which came into force on the 2\textsuperscript{nd} October, 1954 made it part of the District of Hoogly of the State of West Bengal.

In their note of October 24\textsuperscript{th} 1952, the Government of India have explained the reasons which led them to declare that they did not consider themselves bound any longer by the agreement about a referendum. The basic principles of the agreement had ceased to be operative in the conditions existing in the settlements. The Government of India were, however, anxious that this question should be settled in a peaceful manner. They accordingly proposed to the Government of France that negotiations should take place on a new basis. Bearing in mind the constitutional difficulties which had been pointed out by the Government of France, they suggested that there should be direct transfer of the administration at an early date, while the de jure sovereignty of France should continue until legal and constitutional formalities were settled.

Recent events have clearly demonstrated that the suggestion made by the Government of India has the overwhelming support of the people. The elected representatives of the vast majority of the population of the French possessions have demanded immediate merger with India. Their demand is that this should be achieved without a referendum, as the wishes of the people about merger with
India are known. This demand has been fully supported by the French India Councilors who until recently were responsible members of the Administration and by the President of the Representative Assembly.

The Government of India hoped that this popular demand for merger would be considered sympathetically by the Government of France. They accordingly suggested to the Government of France that this was a suitable opportunity for opening negotiations for a friendly settlement on the lines which they had indicated. They regret that the Government of France have not yet found it possible to accept this suggestion. They also regret that the local Administration, instead of dealing sympathetically with a movement which has the support of the vast majority of the population, has adopted measures which must inevitably aggravate the situation. This may have further repercussions in India.

The Government of France have stated that economic pressure has been exerted on the people of the French possessions. This statement is not correct. The Government of India have taken measures which are still far from complete, with a view to put a stop to smuggling and other undesirable activities.125 These measures have been taken to protect their legitimate interests. Essential supplies, however, continue to be sent from India to the French possessions although the Government of India have made it clear that if discrimination on political grounds is practiced by the local Administration in the distribution or sale of supplies, they may have to reconsider their policy.

125 Note, dated the 22nd March 1954, from the Ministry of External Affairs to the French Embassy, New Delhi, p.9
The Government of France have taken exception to the restrictions imposed on the movement of French police across Indian territory. These restrictions were imposed as Indian territory was violated by the French police and some persons were illegally seized. The restrictions were imposed in the interest, not only of Indian nationals but also of the French police. The Government of India wish to point out that they cannot in any case allow a foreign police force to use Indian territory for the purpose of suppressing a peaceful and popular movement.

In view of the events that are taking place, the Government of India would again urge the Government of France to consider their suggestion. They have made it clear that the cultural and other rights of the people will be fully respected. They are not asking for the immediate transfer of the de jure sovereignty of France. Their suggestion is that a de facto transfer of the administration should take place immediately while French sovereignty should continue until the constitutional issue has been settled. They recognize that legal and constitutional formalities may have to be complied with in accordance with the constitutions of France and of India. All this will take time, while the demand of the people is for immediate merger without a referendum on grounds of principle and also because conditions in the French possessions are such that no free referendum can be held.

The note of the Indian embassy dated 10th June, 1952 valued at 15 tonnes the amount of gold imported in the establishments. Similarly diamonds worth 145 millions of francs were received in Pondicherry. Several persons could become immensely rich overnight. The common

127 Ibid
man was happy to have a free harbour in Pondicherry and get all foreign articles at low price.

The Government of India realising error proposed to re-establish the customs union which was not accepted by France and which did not want to loose the benefit of the unexpected wind in favour of the French presence. The Government of India started having doubts about winning the referendum. They did not want the principal of referendum to be a precedent for the Kashmir problem. So on 9th October, 1952 in a speech in Madras, Nehru condemned the smuggling activities and incidents in frontiers and declared that on account of the political climate prevailing in the French establishments it was not possible for India to accept the principal referendum agreed to 1948. The only possible solution was the retrocession pure and simple to the Indian Union, it was declared.

A note of 13th October, 1952 makes this point clear. On October 24, 1952 the Government of India denounces officially the agreement on 1948. It pleads for the direct transfer of the establishments and came forward with an assurance to protect all cultural and other rights of the inhabitants of the establishments. The Government of India further states that it is going to take all possible measures to stop smuggling. On the other side the political class in Pondicherry indulges in large scale corruption which the French Government helplessly tolerates to keep them in good mood and in favour of the French presence.

The arrival on June 16, 1954 of fifty-six French armed military personnel led to protests on the following by the Bharat Yuvak Sangh and the All India Peace Council. A Non-violent mass movement in
support of union with India was launched on 27th March 1954 by the French India Socialist Party with the support of other political parties. The movement continued to grow in strength and popularity.

Nehru said on 23rd August 1954 we have expressed our inability to participate in this meeting because it seems to us that it is likely to reverse the trend of conciliation released by the Indo-China settlement. On August 30, 1954 the French National Assembly rejected ratification of the treaty by which a European army including German divisions was to be raised. Elections were held on November 2, 1954 for the House of Representatives and Governorships of 34 States and for over one-third membership of the Senate from 18th October to 2nd November 1954. During Nehru’s absence in China, a historic event took place in India. That was the de facto transfer and this took place as a result of a friendly agreement with the French Government. Our policy was thus justified and started this new chapter in Pondicherry. in a spirit of good will to all. We hope that Pondicherry will continue to be a centre of the French language and French culture. On November 1, 1954, the French Government handed over the administration of Pondicherry and three other settlements to India. On 9th and 10th November 1954 following a criticism from some Chief Ministers of the lack of co-ordination between the Centre and the States in the matter of planning, a Standing committee consisting of the Chief Ministers of Bombay, Hyderabad, Madras, Rajasthan, Punjab, Travancore – Cochin, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh was set up.

Distress

The Indian Government, finding that its notes did not yield any effect, started sealing the frontiers of the French Establishments by a
barbed wire fencing and stopped the supply of electricity. After a period of euphoria in Pondicherry, problems started accumulating. Land owners can export their sugarcane to the refinery situated in the Indian Union only after payment of a huge tax, half of which is reimbursed by the Pondicherry Government. Difficulties are experienced in converting huge amounts of francs obtained by the sale of clothes in the French Union into rupees, which was the currency in French India as per the Franco – British Convention dated 27th March 1954. Rice for Pondicherry had to be imported from Indo – China. On account of a severe economic blockade by India, the Government is compelled to spend huge amount of money to maintain the normality of life. As the budget of Pondicherry cannot meet that extra expenditure, the French Government was compelled to come to its rescue in a sizeable manner. The French Government at that stage asked for the restoration of the customs union, which was rejected by the Indian Government. So the French Government started having a fresh look on the situation of Pondicherry that merger with India was inevitable, their only wish being that it is realized in the manner most favourable to France.

As the smuggling became very difficult, businessmen who supported the Pro-French political group feeling the wind of change, started establishing contacts with the Indian authorities. The Government in Pondicherry was also upset by their growing corrupt practices and started taking action against those found responsible, even though they worked for the continuance of French presence. So on March 18, 1954 the Pro – French group called for a meeting of their political friends and had a resolution passed inviting the French
Government to transfer the establishments without referendum according to the wish of the population. In the night of 25<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> March, heavy weights of the group left Pondicherry, settled down in the enclave of Nettapakkam, established a liberation Government and resorted to violent steps. France got reconciled itself to the idea of transfer and decided to strive for a slow and progressive merger. The Prime Minister of France wrote to the Prime Minister of India to resume the talks towards transfer which was whole–heartedly accepted by the Prime Minister of India who desired immediate negotiations to settle the problem but France was in no hurry. Though the solution of referendum was rejected by the Pondicherrians and the Government of India, France was still sticking to it for constitutional proprietary, as a French territory cannot be ceded without prior consultation of the population. France nurtured the idea of a condominium till the last moment.

Transfer

In these circumstances, an important event took place on May 7, 1954 when in Dien–Bien–Phu the French Army was defeated by the Liberation Army of Vietnam; the French Government fell. A new French Government headed by Mendes – France took up deliberately and boldly a policy of decolonisation. The process was started on 31<sup>st</sup> July, 1954 in respect of Tunisia. Further the French Government needed the help of the Indian Government for negotiations with Vietnam. They therefore accepted in principle the rapid transfer of sovereignty leaving the treaty of cession being discussed and signed later. Hasty proposals to that effect were put forth by the French Government to the Indian Government and the agreement of de facto
transfer was finalized on 11th October. The principle of previous consultation of the people was circumvented by recourse to a consultation of the members of the representative assembly and the municipal councils. The latter had no other option but to approve on 18th October an agreement, the content of which was decided without their participation. That ceremony had be held at Kezhur at the frontiers of Pondicherry. The establishments were transferred de-facto with effect from 1st November 1954.

India and France felicitated each other for resolving the issue through the process of negotiation. Of course there was no bloodshed. But there is no denying the fact that the population was subjected to suffering by way of economic blockade and to the shock of a sudden transfer; that the Government of India had to loose a large amount of money on account of smuggling and drastic steps to stifle the establishments; that France had to accept a humiliating and unprepared retreat after brandishing constitutional principles. The matter was however simple and easy to solve. French Indians wanted a merger with a transition of settlements by a tripartite negotiation. But this was acceptable neither to India nor to France. The Government of India was inspired by a metaphysical concept of Bharat (India). Proud of their experience of having absorbed 552 princely states at one stroke, they were surprised by the claims of these tiny establishments; they were not prepared to understand the apprehensions of the people of Pondicherry. France with a natural dislike to part with their possession and having in mind the repercussions of the cession on her effervescent empire, wanted to extend her presence in one form or another. Both the
Government became thus responsible for the inelegant way in which the transfer was effected.

The Government of India was aware that the vote in favour of the de-facto transfer was not given in normal circumstances and wholeheartedly. The population was uneasy to find itself governed by those who have subjected it to a blockade. The Government servants were not very happy about their new heads of department from India who replaced the French officers, who were found to be less courteous, and who did not speak the same language. The political class had lost credibility. The new administration was isolated, it had to win over the hearts. It thought of introducing generously development schemes. This proved to be a good device to establish a bridge with the population since it provided employment to the educated youth. It had also the effect of bringing in more people from the rest of India since there were no qualified hands locally for technical posts. The circle of new-comers got enlarged and provided social life to them. The Government of India discovered that it was the best way to merge Pondicherry with the rest of India and kept on pumping money abundantly into Pondicherry.

A distinction could have been made between those who had earlier opted to be governed by French Civil Code and those who were not covered by it, as it was done thereafter in respect of other erstwhile French Colonies. The failure to do so has created a separate category of Indian citizens governed by the French Civil Code as it stood in the year 1954, modifications made thereafter by the French Parliament would not apply to them since they are no longer French.
Rights of French Citizens

French citizens residing in Pondicherry have been given special rights. As per Article 17, French nationals domiciled in the French establishments on the 1st of November, 1954 shall enjoy in these establishments the same freedom of residence, movement and trade as the other inhabitants of the establishments.

Before 1st November, 1954, the French establishments constituted one of the overseas territories of the French Union enjoying a sizeable amount of self-Government. It was distinct from France and was having a juristic personality of its own.

In fact an important question arises in the implementation of Article 2 of the treaty of cession. The people whose wishes were to be ascertained are obviously those who were residing in Pondicherry at the time of transfer. But now those who have migrated to Pondicherry after that date outnumber the old residents. As per the treaty of cession, the migrants are more dynamic, more politically conscious, more influential and they will play a big role in any decision which might be taken. Any way, one wonders how the old folk can be separated from the new one for purpose of consultation, if any.

By 1955, when it became necessary to reiterate the principle that the responsibility for the economic and social welfare policies of the nation should be with Parliament, not with courts, the constitution fourth Amendment act made substantial changes in Articles 31 and 31 A. when the Fourth Amendment Bill was being discussed, it was argued by Pandit Nehru that the amendment of Article 31 became essential in order to create a socialistic pattern of society and to realize
the ideal of a Welfare State in India and that it sought to remove an inherent contradiction in the Constitution between the fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy.

Despite transfer of power of French possessions in India in the year 1954 on account of some political compulsions in France, it was ratified only in the year 1962 and the exchange of instruments of ratification took place on August 16, 1962 which is thus the date of de jure transfer. After the de-jure transfer, Pondicherry was made a union territory of the Indian Union in 1962 by the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. This provided an unexpected period of transition to the population which was throughout kept out of the process of negotiations.

Even though dual nationality is not officially accepted, dual nationals exist in fact. As per Indian law any person born in India is an Indian citizen. As per the French Law any one born to a French national is French. So children born in Pondicherry after 16.08.1962 to a French parent have dual nationality in law. But there is no administrative mechanism to take care of such situation. So much so those persons can at a time enjoy benefits only of their nationality, the other remaining dormant. France who desires Pondicherrians to settle down in Pondicherry instead of migrating to France and Indian who wants Pondicherrians to invest in India, may perhaps one day take administrative measures to give full effect to existing dual citizenship situations.

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128 David Annousamy, op.cit.p.15
In the Agreed Process -Verbal dated 16th March, 1963 that right was extended to those who have elected their domicile in the former Establishments before 16th August, 1962, the Agreed Process–Verbal further gives full details of all the rights which the French nationals will enjoy.\textsuperscript{129} Though in law the rights are very extensive and confer upon permanent French residents important rights, making them in that respect almost equal to Indian citizens, there are difficulties in matter of implementation of those rights.

As far as the right of residence is concerned, if they remain confined in the establishments there is no problem but when they want to go to France or any other foreign country and come back, they have to get a visa of entry and for that purpose they are enjoined to have a residential permit which is renewed from time of time. In this manner they are assimilated to ordinary foreigners and are deprived of the benefit of the treaty. Right of residence implies necessarily the right to travel without any hurdle, otherwise it is illusory. The implementation of the provisions of the treaty in letter and spirit would require that French nationals domiciled in Pondicherry as on the 16th August, 1962 can get from the Indian Government identity without visa. This will also have the advantage of providing the Indian Government full data in respect of all those residents.

Regarding the economic and financial rights though there are ample provisions in the Treaty and the Agreed Process – Verbal they have not been incorporated in the respective Indian Acts and Rules. So the concerned Indian administrative departments are not prepared to implement them. Among those rights, one has given room for

\textsuperscript{129} David Anoussamy, op.cit.p.17
complaints, that is the right of owning immovable properties. There have been periodically notices from the Reserve Bank of India to some of the French nationals of Pondicherry to show cause why they have not informed the concerned authorities about their assets. Each time the matter was closed only after the intervention of the French Consulate. The identity card referred to above, incorporating the gist of their rights would enable those nationals to get their rights as per the treaty, recognized by the Indian Administration whenever required.

In the treaty of cession of the other establishments which came into force on 16th August, 1962, Article 2 provides that they will keep the benefit of the special administrative status which was in force prior to 1st November, 1954 and that any constitutional change in this status which may be made subsequently shall be made after ascertaining the wishes of the people.

Amendments were later made to clauses 2, 3 and 4 of Article 19 by the constitution (Sixteenth Amendment) act, 1963 concerning the right of freedom of speech and expression, assembly and forming associations or unions in the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India.130

After the de jure cession, France obtained from India a certain number of guarantees on some of the problems which preoccupied the population. They are incorporated in the Agreed Proces-Verbal signed on 13.03.1963. It remains to be seen whether the agreement between the High Contracting Parties was fairly and effectively implemented.

130 Subbhash C. Kashyap, The Political System and Institution building under Jawaharlal Nehru, New Delhi, National Publishing House, 1990, p.322

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Legal Matters

After the de jure transfer, the Pondicherry (Administration) Act, 1962 on 16.08.1962 confirmed that all laws in force immediately before shall continue. This was of course a very wise step. In the Agreed Process - Verbal signed on 6th March, 1963 the Indian delegation stated that the Government of India did not contemplate any sudden reform of the judicial organisation in Pondicherry. It further added that changes will be introduced gradually allowing a reasonable period of transition. However hardly a few months after, as soon as on 20.8.63, one massive extension of Indian laws took place by Pondicherry (laws) Regulation, 1963 through which 160 Indian Acts were extended including the Indian Code of Criminal Procedure modifying totally the criminal justice administration system. This was followed on 31st October, 1966 by the Pondicherry Civil Courts Act, abolishing the existing civil and administrative courts.

Cultural Matters

These questions have been pre-occupying the mind of the French Government from the beginning. The agreement reached in that respect is embodied in six articles of the treaty (Articles 20 to 25). Almost the whole of the annexed protocol devoted to them and also part 4 of the agreed process – verbal. Those provisions could be classified under four heads. The first one is that French language shall remain the official language as long as the elected representatives of the people shall not decide otherwise. In reality, immediately after the de facto transfer, English has acquired the pride of place. That was the language of the Heads of Departments. French Indian officials improved feverishly their skill in English. More and more English
speaking officers were recruited. After the de jure transfer, many French Indian officers opted for the French nationality, were incorporated in the French metropolitan cadres and left the territory. So when the Legislative Assembly of Pondicherry decided on 03.04.1965 that English, Tamil, Malayalam and Telugu will be concurrently official languages, French had practically ceased to be in use for official transactions.

The second provision is in respect of course of studies in French medium. It is embodied in Articles 2 of the protocol, which provides that such a course shall be maintained during the appropriated transitional period in a sufficient number of educational institutions. French medium course was in fact maintained scrupulously by the Indian Government in a sufficient number of schools and the transition from the French pattern of education to the Indian one was effected smoothly.

The third provision is the teaching of French in Indian institutions. Provisions in that respect are made in Para IV 3 of the Agreed Process – Verbal, in which the Indian delegation confirmed that teaching of French will be maintained and encouraged in the educational institutions of Pondicherry and Chandernagore. This is being done, but the results are not upto the expectations. The future for effective teaching of French appears to lie in intensive Certificate Courses in Higher Secondary School, College and the University with the help of competent teachers and adequate teaching aids, for those who are really motivated.

131 David Anousamy, op.cit.p.19
The fourth provision is the continuance of the existing institution owned by the French Government, the opening of similar institutions. Those provisions are found in the Treaty. Accordingly there have been creation of new institution like the French Institute, the branch of Ecolé Français de Extreme Orient and the Alliance Francaise. The French Lycée which was in existence at the time of transfer is functioning with a larger strength and modern equipment. But the teaching of Tamil in that institution has suffered a set back after the transfer, shutting the opportunity of a double culture which has been the traditional asset of Pondicherry. To sum up, cultural matters which have been pre-occupying the minds of all the three parties can now be considered as settled. French language has acquired the place it can have on the Indian soil.

On 26th May 1968, by the Pondicherry Extension of Laws Act, 1968, 95 other Indian Acts were extended. After these extensions the basic legal fabric has become Indian. One cannot escape the conclusion that the change was not gradual, that there was no reasonable period of transition as contemplated in the Agreed Process-Verbal.

The hasty manner of change met with some resistance from the existing lawyers and led to litigations. This has left acrimony which could have been avoided. Further the indiscriminate extension of Indian Laws had also the effect of creating problems and uncertainties. After the de jure transfer, the proper course would have been, for the purpose of extending Indian laws, to constitute a committee of jurists drawn from India and jurists from Pondicherry who were familiar with French law. This would have made the transition smooth. On the
contrary an antagonism has been allowed to take place between the two. Indian law officers who were holding the key in the matter were impatient to change the law.

However regrettable were the timing and manner of change, it is now an accomplished fact. The legal framework in Pondicherry and the judicial machinery under the control of the High Court of Tamil Nadu are no different from the ones prevailing in the rest of the country. The last distinctive feature of the erstwhile French India was its law and legal institutions. With their disappearance, the territory has become fully Indian. The merger has been accomplished.

Pondicherry remains still a separate entity. But there has been a feeling prevailing in the Union Government that Pondicherry was costing too much to the Union Exchequer. So an attempt was made in 1979 to merge the erstwhile French establishments with the respective contiguous states. But there was a sharp reaction in the form of agitation. Curiously enough it was spear-headed by those who had settled down in Pondicherry after the transfer. It had the support of the trading community.

Many of Nehru's ideas were based on this bad liberal tradition, rather than on specific individual sources. He was influenced by classical liberalism with its emphasis on individual rights, a Parliamentary system, free elections, a free press, and freedom of speech. Nehru elaborated the three fundamental nineteenth century liberal ideas, (1) belief in the inevitability of human progress (2) faith in the perfectability of the individual and (3) belief that force could progressively be eliminated as an arbiter of human relations,
throughout his writings and speeches. He believed that through time human beings would gradually progress. "He still do believe that there is something in mankind, some strength, that makes us survive. And if mankind survives it will survive at each step at a relatively higher plane". All throughout his life, nationalism and socialism were the dominant elements in the thought and actions of Nehru. While nationalism overwhelmed him in the early part of his political life, socialism later became his vital ideology.

Nehru was the champion of the young radicals and the westernized Indian intelligentsia. He brought them into the congress movement. He also attracted the urban middle class and the working class to the Congress. All these groups admired Nehru's vision of a new society based on his ideas of liberalism and socialism. Nehru believed that India's independence was only a prelude to the transformation of the Indian society. It had to be followed by social and economic reforms. This determination gave the Indian nationalist movement a materialist and socialist orientation, adding a social and economic content to the meaning of Swaraj.

Jawaharlal Nehru viewed the Indian national movement from a wider international perspective, as part of a world movement under which nations attempted to raise themselves from oppression and tyranny. As he wrote Indian's struggle today is part of the great struggle which is going on all over the world for the emancipation of the oppressed. Essentially, this is an economic struggle with hunger and want as its driving forces, although it puts on nationalist and other forces.
We believe that it is the inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and have the necessities of life, so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe also that if any Government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them, the people have a further right to alter it or to abolish it. The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally, and spiritually. We believe, therefore, that India must serve the British connection and attain Purna Swaraj or complete independence.  

There is a new Government in France and a Prime Minister whose whole approach is likely to be different from the old approach. Then there is the problem of Indo-China with which, rather indirectly, we have become connected. Therefore, we do not wish to take a step in regard to Pondicherry etc., which, instead of helping, might become a hindrance in many ways. We are convinced that these French settlements must come to us before long. In the French settlements, the position grows more tense. The French Administration in Mahe has practically collapsed and the Administration has decided to hand over authority to representatives of the people there. Thus nearly all the isolated enclaves have shed French rule and only Pondicherry and Karaikal remain. There has been a good deal of repression there in view of the very delicate situation. With the intensification of the Movement for merger of Mahe with the Indian Union, the French administrator in Mahe, despite an official announcement on 15th July in

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11 Mrigan Bose, Jawaharlal Nehru and his economic policy, Calcutta, 1977, p.27

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Paris that the administration of the settlement would be withdrawn to Pondicherry, transferred control of the settlement to the leader of the local liberation movement.  

French colonialism was functioning at Pondicherry. There have been brutal assaults on the people there. However, there has been a development in regard to these French establishments which holds out some promise. The Prime Minister of France has written a friendly letter suggesting negotiations in an equally friendly manner and welcomed direct negotiations between the Government of India and the Government of France in regard to these settlements. Neither of us had made any commitments in these letters. But our position was well known. It has seemed to him that the French Government has at last realized that they cannot carry on as they have done. The second realization may soon follow that the only way open is to transfer these settlements of India. But naturally the French Government and people did not wish to be humiliated and have no desire to do that. Therefore, they dealt with them in a friendly way as possible, holding to our views.

The situation in Pakistan continued to be exceedingly fluid and uncertain. The elections in East Bengal have created a situation which, in a sense, is revolutionary. Mr. Fazlul Huq and Mr. Suhrawardy are two prominent leaders of East Bengal and they have considerable influence. But what has happened in East Bengal is something much more than perhaps these leaders themselves imagined. A younger, more advanced and more leftist element has come to the front and undoubtedly want to have its way. This new element is not communal

133 G.Parathasarathi, op.cit.p.613
at all. Politically it has taken up a strong line against the U.S. aid to Pakistan. It is intensely Bengali. Referring to the Bengalis of West Bengal, they said “You people are becoming Hindiwalas now. We are the real Bengalis and therefore give us Tagore whom we will appreciate more than you will.” This was said in a spirit of banter. But it shows this intense Bengali feeling that pervades East Bengal.

While stressing the importance of the Geneva Conference, Nehru believed that had the cease fire in Indo-China been effected at the time when India proposed it, much of the killings would have been avoided. He stated on 15th May in the Lok Sabha that roughly one-fifth of French establishments were under some kind of popular control and in the rest there were strong movements.

France is in a very difficult position because of her defeat in Indo-China and the instability of her Government. French opinion is anxious to have a cease fire and settlement in Indo-China. But the Government seems to be of many minds and is pulled in different directions. The United States, for the first time in international conferences, is not playing a very important part. Normally they dominate such conferences. But the initial lead they gave was not accepted by the others and Mr. Dulles retired from the scene.

Thus, while Pondicherry may be a very small part of India, Pondicherry has now become a symbol of friendly solution by negotiated settlement between nations. This settlement has truly brought joy and happiness throughout a certain objective in India. The objective fulfilled in a large measure and as more fulfillment comes to it. Our great leader, Mahatma, always laid stress on the manner of
doing things, on the means employed. It is good to have a right objective, to have right ends in view, but he always said that it is more important to adopt right methods and right means.

Variety enriches our culture, but only when there is a strong bond of unity also. Pondicherry with its background of French culture and language as something enriches Indian culture. The future of Pondicherry might depend to some extent on us sitting in Delhi or our officers here, but it will depend far more on the people of Pondicherry.134

We live in an age of democracy and India is committed to the democratic ideal for the first time in history. We were brave and courageous enough to give the vote to hundreds of millions of people of India. We gave the vote to the dwellers in the jungle, even as to the dwellers in the cities. We did not deny the vote to any person in India. We did not attach any property qualifications or educational tests. We treated every one as a human being, with a right to say what his Government should be. So we put our faith in democracy to the fullest extent. And democracy only flourishes, as freedom only flourishes when the responsibilities of freedom are understood and carried out. If the responsibilities are not understood and carried out, then freedom itself tends to slip away. There is no right without a corresponding responsibility and obligation. We claim rights, but we forget the obligations that accompany the rights and such rights will not be a blessing to us and may even be a curse. Democracy means cooperation. It means adjustment, it often means compromise of different

view points and it means avoidance of conflict. We are not going to build anything through conflict and violence.

Pandit Nehru’s contribution to the very conception, birth and work of the Constituent Assembly, as also to the framing and functioning of the Constitution of India was unique. He gave to it its spirit and soul, its philosophy and vision. It was he who laid down the basic principles and the broad structure of the constitution through the Objectives Resolution through crucial interventions in the Constituent assembly and through his very active role in committees and in behind the scene informal discussions and party meetings. In this sense, the Constitution is, indeed, his handiwork. In the words of Indira Gandhi; “the spirit of our Constitution bears the imprint of his (Nehru’s) inspiration even though the forms might have been devised by professional lawyers”.

The task of framing the Constitution for independent India would always be remembered as a task of tremendous magnitude; it was second in importance only to the achievement of the country’s independence from foreign rule. The Prime Minister of the newly-independent India, deeply involved in several pressing issues with national and international ramifications, could not be expected to find much time for the exercise of drafting the detailed provisions of the Constitution. Nevertheless, he was the Assembly’s philosopher and its Prime constitutional thinker. Himself an erudite scholar, he looked at the issues from intellectual and idealist angles. While he did not bother

about what he considered to be petty details, he paid the most meticulous personal attention to the fundamentals.

Nehru was the most charismatic leader in the Constituent Assembly with enormous popularity and mass appeal outside it. He had the power to sway opinion. But, as a committed democrat, he saw to it that decision-making in the Assembly was in accordance with the best democratic norms and traditions. He stood for full and free debate on all issues and, so far as possible, wanted decisions by unanimity or near unanimity. This is amply clear from his observations made in the Constituent Assembly. Let us not trouble ourselves too much about the petty details of what we do; those details will not survive for long if they are achieved in conflict. What we achieve in unanimity, what we achieve by co-operation is likely to survive.

Jawaharlal Nehru gave to the nation the concept of the Constituent Assembly. The assembly, as envisaged by Nehru, was to be a fully sovereign body, it could not come as a gift from the imperialist power; it had to be elected by adult franchise and its function was to be only to frame a Constitution and nothing more. Practically all the congress resolutions on the subject of the Constituent Assembly were drafted by Nehru, though not always moved by him.

In fact, Gandhiji categorically declared that it was Jawaharlal Nehru who compelled him to study the implications of a constituent Assembly, who introduced the idea in congress resolutions, and finally made him (Gandhiji) a convert to the idea.
Nehru believed that the Constituent Assembly was a new kind of organ which, once it meets, is self-governing and self-determining and will receive no directions from any one outside it. Even though it had to work within a certain framework, nevertheless, Nehru was fully alive to the responsibility of the Constituent Assembly in framing a Constitution and conscious of the substantial and pivotal role expected of the congress organization in the process. As the leader and the hero of the Indian revolution, Nehru believed that it was important and necessary for him to tell the people of India and the world at large what the Constituent Assembly stood for the nation to be.

The Objectives Resolution which, according to Nehru, was 'in the nature of a pledge', guaranteed fundamental rights to citizens, and safeguards for the minorities. It was through this Resolution that the Constituent Assembly pledged itself to drawing up a constitution for the country wherein shall be guaranteed and secured to all the citizens of India justice social, economic and political; equality of status and of opportunity before the law; freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship, vocation, association and action, subject to law and public morality and wherein adequate safeguards would be provided for the minorities, backward and tribal areas and depressed other classes. The preamble to the Constitution, which outlines in brief the basic philosophy as enshrined in its provisions, was carved out of this objective Resolution.

Thus, while Nehru's Objectives Resolution gave to the Constituent Assembly its guiding principles and the philosophy that was to permeate its task of constitution making, his eloquent and inspiring address, full of the spirit of hope, determination and defiance,
set the tenor and the tone for future Assembly deliberations. Commending the resolution for unanimous adoption by the Assembly, Nehru expressed the hope that it would lead to a Constitution on the suggested lines and the Constitution would lead the people to real freedom from hunger, want and poverty.

Of the most important Committees of the constituent Assembly, Nehru himself was the chairman of as many as three, namely the States Committee, the Union Powers Committee and the Union Constitution Committee. Without, in any way, meaning to detract from the unique role performed by Sardar Patel in the field of integration of the princely states with the rest of India, it may be pointed out that it is often forgotten that the first most crucial steps in the direction were actually taken by Nehru in his capacity as chairman of the States Committee appointed to negotiate with the States Negotiating Committee. Nehru showed remarkable statesmanship and through a display of the requisite firmness and a spirit of genuine accommodation and conciliation, he succeeded in bringing round a large number of States to agree to send their representatives to the Assembly under the formula of representation settled during negotiations. The Union constitution committee and the Union powers Committee under his chairmanship similarly played crucial roles by setting the principles of the Constitution and the nature of the Polity.

On the fundamental rights provisions of the Constitution, Nehru took very active part in the debates in the Constituent Assembly and later, while speaking on the First and the Fourth constitution Amendment Bills. He supported the provision of adequate safeguards for minorities, tribals and backward classes. Intervening during the
debate on the Interim Report of the Committee of Fundamental Rights, Nehru asked for the protection of the tribal areas and the tribal people in every possible way. However, he pointed out that the various safeguards were not to be confused with fundamental rights. The ultimate national objective was to build a united organic nation based on the rich variety and unity of Indian culture and not to perpetuate separatist tendencies on privileges and class or caste discrimination.

Nehru spoke at length on the respective roles of relationship between the legislature and the judiciary. Within the terms of the Constitution, he felt, the will of Parliament was supreme and the judiciary could not be allowed to function as a third member to thwart social reform measurers. He supported Dr. Ambedkar’s amendment to Article 39A of the Draft Constitution regarding the separation for his judiciary from the executive in the public service of the state. The original article had prescribed a time limit of three years which the amendment sought to delete.

Pandit Nehru was a strong advocate of the need for flexibility in the constitution. No Constitution, however good, could bind succeeding generations. In order to be lasting, it must be amendable to change in accordance with changing societal needs and aspirations. ¹³⁶ Nehru said, ‘A constitution to be living must be growing, must be adaptable; must be flexible, must be changeable’. He believed that however good a constitution might be at any time, after working it for some little time, flaws appear. Nothing is perfect, and then it becomes
necessary to make changes to remove those flaws.\textsuperscript{137} In fact, a Constitution gets its real meaning and content only by the manner in which it is worked. So the constitution of India was really being made during the early years of its life when it was being actually put to work and test under the stewardship of Jawaharlal Nehru. Nehru's role in building the national edifice on firm foundations and giving to the Constitution its life and soul by working it for the first fourteen years was most remarkable. Many loopholes were detected in the process of working and Nehru took it upon himself to plug them by bringing in the necessary constitutional amendments which clarified the real intent of the framers of the Constitution.\textsuperscript{138}

The Government of India consider that the resolutions which have been passed for the immediate merger of the possessions with India are as complete an expression of the wishes of the people as is possible under the existing circumstances. In view of this, they have learnt with great concern that the French authorities are taking steps to intimidate and suppress this spontaneous movement of the people. They understood that immediately after the resolutions were passed, four supporters of the pro-merger movement were arrested by the French Police. Further, on the night of the 20\textsuperscript{th} March, the P.T.I. correspondent, Mr. Palani Doraiswamy was assaulted by lawless elements and his cycle was snatched as he was returning from the house of one of the Councilors who is a leading supporter of the pro-merger movement.

\textsuperscript{137} Ibid
\textsuperscript{138} Ibid
An outstanding fact which has been repeatedly emphasized by the Government of India is that the presence of small foreign enclaves on Indian soil is not in keeping with the emergence of India as a free country. Certain historic processes have brought about the end of British rule in India. It is inevitable that similar processes should affect the French possessions and lead to the same results. The Government of India have all along wished that these processes should be carried out peacefully and by the method of friendly negotiations.\(^{139}\)

At the beginning of the Second World War, after the surrender of France to Germany, Pondicherry had the threat of another occupation by the British. That was avoided only by Pondicherry rallying the Free France Movement operating from London. During that period, the French Governor had to bear the influence of the British Consul General. The British Government which had been nurturing discontent on account of smuggling activities from Pondicherry, seized the opportunity to impose deftly on Pondicherry a customs union and brought the customs office from the boundaries to the sea shore. In that way an economic merger was achieved. After the war, France had a second look at her colonies which helped her in no small measure for the recovery of her own land from the clutch of Germany.

It also allows the Governor to delegate the Presidency of the Council to one of the Councilors. The Council gets more power under the regulation. It has responsibility of implementing the decisions of the representative assembly, of deliberating on all draft rules and

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\(^{139}\) Note, dated the 22nd March 1954, from the Ministry of External Affairs to the French Embassy, New Delhi, p.8
notifications of the Governor to the exception of those which are taken for implementation of statutes. The Governor may also entrust to a member of the Council the responsibility of a department whose expenses are entirely borne by the local budget and for that purpose to vest him with the powers of the Governor. Those powers were to be exercised with the technical assistance of the Head of Department.

Main features of the Agreement

Nationality

The provisions of the Treaty in respect of nationality cannot be said to be satisfactory. The main provision is that all French citizens born in the French establishments and residing there in or elsewhere in India would become Indians unless they make a declaration to the contrary within 6 months from the date of effect of the treaty. These provisions have been made in disregard of two important ground realities. Firstly people from French establishment used to get married frequently with parties from outside those establishments. Therefore many children of French nationality were born outside the establishments. Those children have not been covered by the provisions of the treaty and the French Consulate was thereafter surprised at the vast number of persons who remained French without having made the declaration of option for the French nationality. Secondly, French citizens of Pondicherry were of quite different brands, ranging from an European with French as his mother tongue and an Indian hailing from a far off village who has never heard a word of French. Subjecting them to the same treatment was neither fair nor realistic. A distinction could have been made between those who had earlier opted to be governed by French Civil Code and those who were
not covered by it, as it was done thereafter in respect of other erstwhile French Colonies. The failure to do so has created a separate category of Indian citizens governed by the French Civil Code as it stood in the year 1954, modifications made thereafter by the French Parliament would not apply to them since they are no longer French. They are subject to a law which remains static, which has become absolute in many respects and which is not known well in the legal world in spite of steps taken. It would be better to admit those persons to the benefit of this modern India law.

However the idea was brushed aside by both India and France. Thereafter France has reconciled herself with the idea of dual nationality to implement it in her territory in respect of persons having a nationality of some other countries. But India is still vigorously opposed to the idea of dual nationality, especially on account of the Sikh problem. While piloting the Constitution amendment bills and otherwise speaking on important issues, Nehru made a significant contribution to constitutional thinking on Subjects like Fundamental Rights verses Directive Principles, limits to freedom of speech etc., rights of the individual verses the interests of society, the supremacy of Parliament and the jurisdiction of courts, right to property; protection of backward classes, resolution of the language problem, the relationship between President and the Prime Minister. It is pertinent to recall, among other things, Nehru’s role in the evolution and operation of the Constitution of India not only as a matter of historical interest or to pay homage to the great builder of modern India, but because Nehru’s vision and views, and his words and warnings on the crucial problems of the Indian polity are as relevant today as they were when
he moved in flesh and blood and guided the destiny of the nation.  
What he told the Constituent Assembly, he could as well be saying today; At present the greatest and most important question in India is how to solve the problem of the poor and the starving. Wherever we turn we are confronted with this problem. If we cannot solve this problem soon, all our paper Constitution will become useless and purposeless. 

The Government of India understood that all the French Indian Councilors and the Mayors of eight French Communes have passed unanimous resolutions demanding immediate merger of the possessions with India without a referendum. These resolutions have been fully supported by the President of the Representative Assembly. Copies of the resolutions have been sent to the Government of France. The Government of India understood that the resolutions state that the people of the possessions are in favour of merger with the Indian Union without a referendum. The resolutions also call upon the Government of France to take urgent and necessary measures to give effect to the wishes of the people.
CHAPTER VI

French Possession in India- A Window of French Culture

The administration of India was better than the Portuguese administration. Nehru believed that French Indian problem could be resolved diplomatically after India became free. He ruled out the possibility of any violent eviction of the French from India. Nehru took Baron’s declaration in a conciliatory spirit. Pondicherry as a cultural center would be welcome to him, “Pondicherry would be a window on France in India”. On 22nd August 1946, in a press conference he said that the congress did not wish to put pressure or impose its policy on the French settlements and said that he would be happy to see French India joining freely with India after she became fully free. Marius Moutet endorsed Baron’s scheme and condemned the various measures. On 27th August 1947 Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru declared “Pondicherry is a window through which France and India could communicate. We will value this window onto France as a way of developing our cultural relations with that country. We have looked at the world through British spectacles for too long. We want our youth to acquire a more universal training that only French culture can give us. So far as French India is concerned Nehru adopted a different stand and expressed his desire to forge cultural relations with France and welcomed the transformation of the French establishments as “Centers of Cultural Extension”.

Baron proposed to adopt and strengthen the position of the French Indian settlements within the French Union.

Christian Faucet’s idea was to start a scheme to find an Institute Français in British India and to be adjourned for want of fund. Baron’s plan was to have intellectual centers in Pondicherry and other French pockets. In spite of the endorsement of Baron’s scheme by the French overseas Ministry, the French press severely criticised him. Violent reaction took place, at least 12 houses were burnt and nearly 100 people left the French territory and took shelter in the adjacent British territory. K. Soundararadajalou, President, weaver’s union of Mudaliarpet, in a memorandum submitted to the overseas Ministry complained that the trouble makers in Pondicherry belonged to the group of Subbiah, and Baron and Pacha (the general Secretary) were responsible for this because of the soft policy taken by them towards Subbiah whom Bonvin had expelled. Claude Viviers in his article entitled “Destin de l’ Inde et presence française analysed the failure to gauge the real political trend in India by the Paris and Pondicherry authorities. He referred to the violent attacks launched by the Indian press against foreign possessions in India. He wrote that the distinction between British India and Indian India would disappear in future. He made it clear, the application of force for the preservation of French sovereignty “is out of question”.142 His opinion was to start dialogue between Paris and London and in all practical sense between Pondicherry and New Delhi. A few hundred French Sepoys found themselves unable to prevent 350,000 Franco-Indians from joining 400 millions of India. Nehru had ruled out the possibility of using force. A new policy was adopted to grant more concessions in moral and intellectual fields reserving a large place for France and thereby drawing the maximum benefit by an attitude of good will and co-

142 Ajit K. Neogy , op. cit, p. 26
operation. It maintained that the scheme for intellectual co-operation would play a greater role than any other advantages conferred on the five French pockets. This would also be in consonance with the opt-repeated desire of Nehru that “Pondicherry would become a window open on France”. Judging from that point of view Baron’s scheme of cultural collaboration should be developed and induce the Indian leaders to consider Pondicherry and in a wider sense the four other settlements as enjoying a special status and permit the French authorities to preserve their interests over them. The note therefore suggested, before the establishments of a French Embassy at New Delhi which was still a premature idea despite a decision being taken in the affirmative by the Government, to accredit to the interim government of New Delhi “a mission of contact and information” which would be diplomatic but provisional in character. The French overseas Ministry had already allotted a sum of 100 million francs for building a big centre at Pondicherry for the diffusion of French culture in collaboration with the Indian authorities. There was also need of co-ordination between the action of the French Foreign Affairs and overseas Ministers. It also emphasized that the action of the French diplomatic service and that of the consul should be carefully co-ordinated with that of the Governor of the French settlements. For French India the year 1947 was critical and followed crisis. Nehru, in a statement on 7th January 1947, expressed his concern for Indo-china and accused France of having attempted to crush the principles of liberty. Nehru said, in fact, French policy towards the Indo-Chinese states had profoundly shocked the people of India.\textsuperscript{143}

\textsuperscript{143} Treaty of cession of the French establishments of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam, National Archives of India, Record center, Pondicherry, p.1
Treaty of Cession of the French Establishments of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam

Preamble

The President of the French Republic

and

The President of the Indian Union

CONSIDERING that their Governments, faithful to the common declaration made in 1947 and desirous of strengthening the bonds of friendship established since then between France and India, have manifested their intention of settling amicably the problem of the French Establishments in India.

CONSIDERING that after the wish of these populations had been expressed by their representatives an agreement was concluded on the 21st October 1954, transferring the powers of the Government of the French Republic to the Government of the Indian Union. \(^1\)

HAVE DECIDED to conclude a treaty establishing the cession by the French Republic to the Indian Union of the French Establishments of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam and to settle the problems stemming there from and have designated there to as their plenipotentiaries:

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\(^1\) Treaty of cession, op.cit.p.2
The President of the French Republic:

H. E. Mr. Stanislas Ostrorog,
Ambassador Extraordinary &
Plenipotentiary of France in India.

The President of India:

Jawaharlal Nehru, Minister for External Affairs who, after exchanging their credentials, which having been found in legal form, have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE 1

France cedes to India in full sovereignty the territory of the Establishments of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam.

ARTICLE 2

These Establishments will keep the benefit of the special administrative status which was in force prior to the 1st November 1954. Any constitutional changes in this status which may be made subsequently shall be made after ascertaining the wishes of the people.

ARTICLE 3

The Government of India shall succeed to the rights and obligations resulting from such acts of the French administrations as are binding on these Establishments.

ARTICLE 4

French Nationals born in the territory of the Establishments and domiciled there in at the date of the entry into force of the Treaty of
Cession shall become nationals and citizens of the Indian Union, with the exceptions enumerated under Article, hereafter.

ARTICLE 5

The persons referred to in the previous article may, by means of a written declaration drawn up within six months of the entry into force of the Treaty of Cession, choose to retain their nationality. Persons availing themselves of this right shall be deemed never to have acquired Indian nationality.

The declaration of the father or, if the latter be deceased, of the mother, and in the event of the decease of both parents, of the legal guardian shall determine the nationality of unmarried children of under eighteen years of age. Such children shall be mentioned in the aforesaid declaration. But married male children of over sixteen years of age shall be entitled to make this choice themselves.

Persons having retained French nationality by reason of a decision of their parents, as indicated in the previous paragraph, may make a personal choice with the object of acquiring Indian nationality by means of a declaration signed in the presence of the competent Indian authorities, within six months of attaining their eighteenth birthday. The said choice shall come into force as from the date of signature of the declaration.

The choice of a husband shall not affect the nationality of the spouse.

The declarations referred to in the first and second paragraphs of this Article shall be drawn up in two copies, the one in French, the

\[\text{Ibid}\]
other in English, which shall be transmitted to the competent French authorities. The latter shall immediately transmit to the competent Indian authorities the English copy of the aforesaid declaration.

**ARTICLE 6**

French nationals born in the territory of the Establishments and domiciled in the territory of the Indian Union on the date of the entry into force of the Treaty of Cession shall become nationals and citizens of the Indian Union. Notwithstanding, they and their children shall be entitled to choose as indicated in Article 5 above. They shall make this choice under the conditions and in the manner prescribed in the aforesaid Article.

**ARTICLE 7**

French nationals born in the territory of the Establishments and domiciled in a country other than the territory of the Indian Union or the territory of the said Establishments on the date of entry into force of the Treaty of Cession shall retain their French nationality, with the exceptions enumerated in Article 8 hereafter.146

**ARTICLE 8**

The persons referred to in the previous Article may, by means of a written declaration signed in the presence of the competent Indian authorities within six months of the entry into force of the Treaty of Cession, choose to acquire Indian nationality. Persons availing themselves of this right shall be deemed to have lost French nationality as from the date of the entry into force of the Treaty of Cession.

146 Ibid
The declaration of the father, or if the latter be deceased, of the mother, and in the event of the decease of both parent of the legal guardian shall determine the nationality of unmarried children of under eighteen years of age. Such children shall be mentioned in the aforesaid declaration. But, married male children of over sixteen years of age shall be entitled to make this choice themselves.

Persons having acquired Indian nationality by reason of a decision of their parents, as indicated in the previous paragraph, may make a personal choice with the object of recovering French nationality by means of a declaration signed in the presence of the competent French authorities within six months of attaining their eighteenth birthday. The said choice shall come into force as from the date of signature of the declaration.

The choice of a husband shall not affect the nationality of the spouse.

The declarations referred to in the first and second paragraphs of this Article shall be drawn up in two copies, the one in French, the other in English and shall be signed in the presence of the competent Indian authorities who shall immediately transmit to the competent French authorities the French copy of the aforesaid declaration.

ARTICLE 9

With effect from the 1st of November 1954 the Government of India shall take in their service all the civil servants and employees of the Establishments, other than those belonging to the metropolitan cadre or to the general cadre of the France d' Outre - Mer Ministry. These civil servants and employees including the members of the
public forces shall be entitled to receive from the Government of India the same conditions of services, as respects remuneration, leave, and pension and the same right as respects disciplinary matter or the tenure of their posts, or similar rights as changed circumstances may permit, as they were entitled to immediately before the 1st November 1954. They shall not be dismissed or their prospects shall not be damaged on account of any action done in the course of duty prior to the 1st November 1954.

French civil servants, magistrates and military personnel born in the Establishments or keeping their family links shall be permitted to return freely to the Establishments on leave or on retirement.

ARTICLE 10

The Government of France shall assume responsibility for payment of such pensions as are supported by the Metropolitan Budget, even if the beneficiaries have acquired Indian nationality under Article 4 to 8 above. The Government of India shall assume responsibility for the payment of pensions, allowances and grant supported by the local budget. The system of pension of the various local Retirement Fund shall continue to be in force.

ARTICLE 11

The Governments of India shall take the necessary steps to ensure that persons domiciled in the Establishments on the 1st of November 1954 and at present practising a learned profession there in shall be permitted to carry on their profession in these Establishments

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147 Treaty of cession ,op. cit, p.
without being required to secure additional qualifications, diplomas or permits or to comply with any new formalities.\textsuperscript{146}

**ARTICLE 12**

The administration's charitable institutions and loan officers shall continue to operate under their present status, and shall not be modified in the future without ascertaining the wishes of the people. The present facilities granted to the private charitable institutions shall be maintained and shall be modified only after ascertaining the wishes of the people.

**ARTICLE 13**

Properties pertaining to worship or in use for cultural purposes shall be in the ownership of the missions or of the institutions entrusted by the French regulations at present in force with the management of those properties.

The Government of India agree to recognise as legal corporate bodies, with all due rights attached to such a qualification, the "Conseils de fabrique" and the administration boards of the Missions.

**ARTICLE 14**

Legal proceedings instituted prior to the 1st of November 1954 shall be judged in conformity with the basic legislation and procedure in force at that time in the Establishments.

To this end, and up to final settlements of such proceedings, the existing courts in the Establishments shall continue to function. Officers of the court shall be law graduates, habitually domiciled in the

\textsuperscript{146} Treaty of cession, op. cit, p. 4
Establishments, honourably known and selected in accordance with the French regulations governing the designation of temporary judicial officers.

The interested parties shall be entitled, if they so decide by common agreement, to transfer to the competent Indian Courts, the said proceedings as well as proceedings which, though already open, are not yet entered with the Registrars of the French Courts, and also proceedings which constitute an ordinary or extraordinary appeal.

Judgements, decrees and orders passed by the French Courts, prior to the 1st November 1954, which are final or may become so by expiration of the delays of appeal, shall be executed by the competent Indian authorities. Judgements, decree and orders passed after the 1st of November 1954 in conformity with the first paragraph of the present article shall be executed by the competent Indian authorities, irrespective of the courts which exercise the jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{149}

Acts or deeds constitutive of rights established prior to the 1st of November 1954 in conformity with French law, shall retain the value and validity conferred at that time by the same law.

The records of the French Courts shall be preserved in accordance with the rules applicable to them on the date of cession, and communication of their contents shall be given to the duly accredited representatives of the French Government whenever they apply for such communication.

\textsuperscript{149} Ibid
ARTICLE 15

The records of the Registrars offices up to the date of cession, shall be preserved in accordance with the rules applicable to them on that date and copies or extracts of the proceedings shall be issued to the parties or the authorities concerned.

The personal judicial records of the Courts Registries up to the date of cession, shall be preserved in accordance with the rules applicable to them on that date and copies or extracts of these records shall be issued on request to the French authorities and likewise to the persons concerned in accordance with that legislation in force prior to the 1st of November 1954.

The said requests on the part of the French authorities and likewise the copies addressed to them shall be drawn up in the French language and shall entail no reimbursement of costs.

The French and Indian authorities shall mutually inform each other of penal sentences involving registration in the record of convictions of their own territory and pronounced either by French judicatures or by judicatures sitting in territories ceded to India concerning nationals of the other country born in the aforesaid territories.\(^{150}\)

Such information shall be sent free of charge through diplomatic channels, either in French or together with a translation into French.

\(^{150}\) Treaty of cession, op. cit. p. 5
ARTICLE 16

The provisions of Article 14 of this Treaty shall apply to proceedings which the "Counsel du Contentieux Administratif" is competent to deal with.

Temporary magistrates and local civil servants selected in accordance with the principles of the second paragraph of the said article 14 shall compose this body.

ARTICLE 17

Nationals of France and of the French Union, domiciled in the French Establishments on the 1st of November 1954, shall, subject to the laws and regulations in force for the time being in the Establishments enjoy in these Establishments the same freedom of residence, movement and trade as the other inhabitants of the Establishments.151

ARTICLE 18

All persons of French nationality acquired under Article 4 to 8 or in any other manner and all French corporate bodies shall be permitted to repatriate freely their capital and properties over a period of ten years from the 1st of November 1954.

ARTICLE 19

The Government of India takes the place of the territory, with effect from the 1st of November 1954, in respect of all credits, debts and deficits in the care of the local administration. Therefore, the Government of India shall immediately reimburse to the French

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151 Ibid
Government the amount of treasury loans and various funds placed by
the latter at the disposal of the territory, as well as advances made by
the "Caisse Centrale de la France d'Outre-Mer" with the exception of
sums remitted as grants. In addition the Government of India shall pay
the indemnity agreed upon by the two Governments for the purchase of
the Pondicherry power station.

Simultaneously, the French Government shall reimburse to the
Indian Government the equivalent value at par in £ sterling or in Indian
Rupees of the currency withdrawn from circulation from the
Establishments before the 1st of November 1955.

ARTICLE 20

The Indian Government agree to the continuation of the French
institutions of a scientific or cultural character in existence on 1st of
November 1954 and by agreement between the two Governments to
the granting of facilities for the opening of establishments of the same
character.\(^\text{152}\)

ARTICLE 21

The "College Français de Pondicherry" shall be maintained in its
present premises as a French educational establishment of the second
degree with full rights.\(^\text{153}\) The French Government shall assume the
charge of its functionment as well in respect of the selection and
salaries of the staff necessary for management, teaching and discipline
as in respect of the organisation of studies, and examinations and the
charge of its maintenance. The premises shall be the property of the
French Government.

\(^{152}\) Treaty of cession, op. cit, p. 6
\(^{153}\) Ibid
ARTICLE 22

Private educational institutions in existence on the 1st of November 1954 in the French Establishments shall be allowed to continue and shall be permitted to preserve the possibility of imparting French education. They shall continue to receive from the local authorities subsidies and other facilities at least equal to those which were being granted on the 1st November 1954.

They will be permitted to receive without obstruction the aid which the French Government in agreement with the Government of India may desire to give them.

ARTICLE 23

The French Government or French recognised Private Organisations shall be allowed to maintain and to create by agreement between the two Governments in the former French Establishments in India, establishments or institutions devoted either to higher studies leading to diplomas of French language, culture and civilisation, or to scientific research or to the spreading of French culture in the Sciences, Arts or Fine Arts. The Indian Government shall grant every possible facility, subject to their laws and regulations in force for entry into and residence in India to members of French Universities sent by the French Government for a study visit or a teaching mission to India.

ARTICLE 24

The French Institute of Pondicherry, set up by an understanding reached between the two Governments since the 21st October 1954, Agreement and inaugurated on the 21st March 1955, I shall be maintained as a research and advanced educational establishment. The
Indian Government shall provide such suitable facilities to further the
development of the activities of the said Institute, as agreed upon
between the two Governments from time to time.

ARTICLE 25

Equivalences of French diplomas and degrees awarded to
persons belonging to the French Establishments viz. "Baccalaureat", "brevet
elementaire", "brevet d' etudes du premier cycle" with
diplomas and degrees awarded by Indian universities will be accepted
by the Indian Government for admission to higher studies and
administrative careers. These equivalences will be fixed according to
the recommendations of the Joint Educational Committee, nominated
by the two Governments in accordance with the Agreement of the 21st
October 1954. This shall apply equally to degrees in law and medicine
awarded in the Establishments.

Degrees of a purely local character shall be recognised under
usual conditions.

ARTICLE 26

The French Government cedes to the Government of India all
properties owned by the local administration of the Establishments
with the exception of such property as enumerated in Article 8 of the
Annexed Protocol. 154

Properties which are at present in possession of the religious
authorities shall, be retained by them and the Government of India
agree, whenever necessary, to convey the titles to them.

154 Ibid
ARTICLE 27

The French Government shall keep in their custody the records having an historical interest; the Government of India shall keep in their custody the records required for the administration of the territory.

Each Government shall place at the disposal of the other lists of records in its possession and copies of such records as are of interest to the other.

ARTICLE 28

The French language shall remain the official language of the Establishments so long as the elected representatives of the people shall not decide otherwise.

ARTICLE 29

All questions pending at the time of the ratification of the Treaty of Cession shall be examined and settled by a French Indian Commission composed of three Representatives of the French Government and three Representatives of the Indian Government.

ARTICLE 30

Any disagreement in respect of the application or interpretation of the present Treaty which cannot be resolved through diplomatic negotiation or arbitration shall be placed before the International Court of Justice at the request of one or other of the High Contracting Parties.

ARTICLE 31

The French and English texts of the presented Treaty shall be equally authentic. The present Treaty shall enter into force on the day
of its ratification by the two Governments concerned. The exchange of
instruments of ratification shall take place at New Delhi.

The Present Treaty shall be deposited in the archives of the
Government of India, which shall transmit an attested copy to the
Government of the French Republic.

Done in duplicate at New Delhi this twenty-eighth day of May,
1956 A.D.

(Sd.) JAWAHARLAL NEHRU,

(Sd.) S. OSTROROG,

Prime Minister and Minister Ambassador Extraordinary for
External Affairs and plenipotentiary of France in India.

ANNEXED PROTOCOL

ARTICLE 1

As regards the communes of Nettapacom and Tirubuvane which
are part of the Establishment of Pondicherry and as regards the
Establishments of Yanam and Mahe the French Government shall not
be responsible, particularly in respect of Article 3, 9 and 19 of the
Treaty, for any acts done in these communes and Establishments with
effect from the date shown against each:

- for Nettapacom - on March 31, 1954.
- for Tirubuvane - on April 6, 1954.
- for Yanam - on June 6, 1954
- for Mahe - on July 16, 1954

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ARTICLE 2

The sets of courses of studies at present in force shall be maintained during the appropriate transitional period in a sufficient number of educational institutions so as to ensure to the people concerned a possibility of option for the future.

Transitory periods shall be provided for in every course of studies.

ARTICLE 3

All pupils and students now engaged in a course of studies are given the assurance that they will be enable to complete their studies in French according to the curricula and methods in force on the 1st November 1954. They shall continue to enjoy the facilities which they enjoyed on that date, especially regarding free education, and scholarships granted by local authorities, whether these scholarships be valid in the Establishments or in France.

ARTICLE 4

Regarding the organisation of the examinations of College Français and the French Institute every facility shall be given to the representatives of the French Government concerning visas and sojourn as well as practical dispositions to be taken for holding the examinations. The French Government retains the authority to select and appoint examination boards.

ARTICLE 5

Scholarships for the completion of studies leading to the "Licence en Droit" and "Doctorat en Medicine" when begun before

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155 Annexed Protocol, National Archives of India, Pondicherry, p.9

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the 1st of November 1954, shall be granted on request to the students of the former Law College and of the former Medical College. If should they so prefer, medical students shall have the possibility to be admitted into Indian Medical Colleges for completion of their studies, after being given due credits for their previous medical studies.

ARTICLE 6

The Government of India will reimburse to the personnel of educational and, cultural establishments whose salaries are paid by the French Government, amount equal to the Indian income tax paid by them unless it is covered by double Income Tax avoidance agreement between India and France.

ARTICLE 7

If French books, publications and periodicals as well as educational and teaching equipment and other cultural material intended for use in French Institute and College Français, are subject to import duty, or other taxes an amount equivalent to the sum so paid shall be reimbursed by the Government of India to the institutions concerned. 156

ARTICLE 8

The Government of India recognizes as being in the ownership of the French Government the following properties:

1. Property located in rue de la Marine (for the installation of the French Consulate);

156 Annexed Protocol, op. cit, p. 10
2. Properties located on the rue Victor Simonel which are occupied by the "College Français de Pondichery";

3. The War Memorial;

4. Property No. 13 located at Karaikal so called "Maison Lazare" (for the installation of a branch of the French Consulate);

5. Property located on the rue Saint - Louis (for the Institute).

ARTICLE 9

No one shall be prosecuted on account of political offences committed prior to the 1st of November 1954 and against whom no prosecution has been instituted on the said date.

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

New Delhi, May 28, 1956

Excellency,

With reference to Article 25 of the Treaty of Cession of the Territory of the French Establishments in India consisting of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam, I have the honour to recall a clarification given during the negotiations. So far as admission to higher studies in the Indian Universities and admission to administrative careers under the State Governments are concerned, the Government of India cannot take a decision in this regard on behalf of Indian Universities which are autonomous bodies and of State Governments which are solely responsible for the recruitment of their personnel.
Nevertheless the Government of India while agreeing to accept the equivalences for admission to administrative careers under the Central Government shall recommend such equivalences to Indian Universities and State Governments and endeavour to secure a favourable decision.

Accept, Excellency, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU,
Minister for External Affairs.

His Excellency
Mr. Stanislas Ostrorog,
Ambassador of France,
New Delhi.

EMBASSY OF FRANCE IN INDIA
New Delhi, the 28th May, 1956
Excellency,

I have the honour to refer to your letter dated the 28th May 1956, in which you have stated as follows:

"With reference to Article 25 of the Treaty of Cession of the Territory of the French Establishments in India consisting of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam, I have the honour to recall a clarification given during the negotiations. So far as admission to higher studies in the Indian Universities and admission to administrative careers under the state governments are concerned, the
Government of India cannot take a decision in this regard on behalf of Indian Universities which are autonomous bodies and of State governments which are solely responsible for the recruitment of their personnel.

Nevertheless the Government of India while agreeing to accept the equivalences for admission to administrative careers under the Central Government shall recommend such equivalences to Indian Universities and State Governments and endeavour to secure a favourable decision."

The above mentioned position is acceptable to the Government of the Republic of France and your letter referred to above and this acknowledgment will constitute an agreement in this matter between our two Governments.

Accept, Excellency, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

S. OSTROLOG,
Ambassador of France
His Excellency
Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru,
Prime Minister and
Minister for External Affairs,
Government of India,
New Delhi.
CHAPTER VII

Conclusion

Jawaharlal Nehru had a major role in merging the French settlements in India - Pondicherry, Karaikal, Yanam, Mahe and Chandernagore with the union of India as a Union Territory. The French settlements were a couple of coastal settlements like Chandernagore, Yanam, Pondicherry and Karaikal in the regions of Bay of Bengal and Mahe on the shores of Arabian Sea. Pondicherry was chosen as the headquarters. Pondicherry comprised of eight communes namely Pondicherry, Mudaliarpet, Ariankuppam, Ozhukarai, Villianur, Bahour, Netapakkam and Mannadipet. In Karaikal the five communes were Karaikal, Neravy, Tirunallar, Nedoungadu and Kotucherry. In Chandernagore, Mahe and Yanam the communes were known by their respective names. The 1961 Census counted in all 388 villages spread across all the four regions of the union territory apart from the towns of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam. For the purpose of revenue administration the territory was divided into 96 revenue villages.

Jawaharlal Nehru’s role in the merger of the French settlements is extremely interesting and fascinating. As we know Jawaharlal Nehru who was fond of children and the India’s first Prime Minister, was the chief architect of domestic and foreign policies between 1947 and 1964. Born in a wealthy Kashmiri Brahman family and educated at Oxford, Nehru embodies a synthesis of ideals: Politically an ardent nationalist, Ideologically a pragmatic socialist, and secular in religious outlook,
Nehru possessed a rare combination of intellect, breadth of vision and personal charisma that attracted support throughout India.

Jawaharlal Nehru took a lot of pain to keep the ideal of non-violence, self determination, national integrity of the subcontinent of India and the respect for French culture. There was a declaration on 20th February 1947 in the British Parliament by Mr. Atlee that independence would be granted to India before August 1948. The policy followed in the French settlements of India was part of the larger colonial policy followed by the French in other parts of the world.

The French India National Congress, a political outfit in the French India was officially established in May 1946, identical to the Indian National Congress in its aim, creed, method of action and formed with the sole aim of the liberation of French India and its integration with independent India. The Five French settlements in India, in case they remain a separate entity would be always subject to foreign domination and will give room for political and imperialist intrigues, specially when their coastal situation will be taken into account. The people therefore wanted merger with the Indian Union. The President of the French India Congress was R.L. Purushothama Reddiar of Bahour, Ansari Dorai was General Secretary, S.R. Subramanian and Vidvan Sivaprakasam were Joint Secretaries. Professor Ambady Narayanan, Sethuraman Chettiar, Andre Selvanadin J. Savarinathan, Govinda Pathar, Zeevarathinam and S.R. Subramanian were other prominent members of the congress. Some leaders like Purushothama Reddiar and S.R. Subramanian were earlier close associates of Communist Leader V. Subbiah. A student wing of the Congress was also established which spearheaded the struggle for freedom and the leaders of the National Congress were acting as advisors.
and active supporters. A band of youngsters like Antoine Vallabh Mariadassou, Sebastin, Durai Muniswamy and Arumugham formed the French India Students Congress on 17th August 1946 to mobilise the youth to fight for the cause of freedom.

The French Administration took repressive measures following the activities and hartals organized by the French Indian Congress. A large number of the Student Congress leaders like Antoine Maraidassou were arrested. The French India Government at Pondicherry kept on changing their equations with different political parties which initially supported the Communist Party, later shifting its support to the congress party, while the work for the freedom struggle officially was attributed to the Socialist party led by the Edouard Goubert.

On 24th and 25th January 1948, the French India Congress held a two day peoples convention at Nehru Vanam to decide the future of French India which was attended by more than two hundred delegates bringing with them the mandate of more than fifteen thousand citizens above the age of eighteen. The convention which was presided over by

R. L. Purushothama Reddiar called for the unconditional withdrawal of the French from the establishment and conveyed its determination to achieve its merger with the Indian union to which it had close ethnic, cultural, economic and linguistic links.

On 30th May, while addressing news persons in Madras Mr. Chambon, Commissioner of Republic for French India stated that the "People of these settlements would assure to Pandit Nehru" in regard to the future of French India. He conveniently ignores that the people had nothing to say now to Pandit Nehru, they have something to declare to the
French, i.e. "Français Quittez" (French Quit) and that had been unequivocally and with sufficient manifestation declared to the French authorities on 25th and 26th January 1948 by the French India People’s Convention which passed unanimously the following resolutions.

"This Convention demands the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of French sovereignty from all the Five French settlements and their determination of merger into the Indian Union with which our people are linked up ethnically, culturally, economically and linguistically".

In August 1947 Paul Radjanedassou was elected President of the Student’s Congress and Dorai Munisamy again as General Secretary. In November '1947' the Youth Congress was formed by Dorai Munisamy as President with the sole aim of securing separation of French India from France. The Youth Congress was immediately banned by Governor Baron on account of its motto of independence of French territory in India and merger with the union of India.

Following this, a monthly magazine in French called "Jeunesse" (Youth) was started in November '1947 by the Students Congress with the main office at Candappa Street at the residence of Paul Rajanedassou/Antoine Maraidassou to expose the power politics of the French Government. Many people such as Senior Government Servants, Professors, Advocates and Doctors contributed confidential articles on the malpractices of the Government. The Magazine was therefore often the object of summons and searches at the premises, which were pre-warned by police friends like the patriotic Police Inspector Dadala. The paper survived for only nineteen months till May '1949 after which it was
banned because the police could not find out, through enquiries, the real authors of anonymous virulent articles against the French Colonial Administration.

Under the leadership of Purushothama Reddiar, S.R. Subramanian, Radjanedassou and Munissamy, a 3-day convention was organized in January '1948. Students and over 200 Congress delegates from all the French territories in India took part in it. After several rounds of discussions, it was unanimously decided that French should "Quit India" like the British. The idea of a referendum whether they should remain with France or join India or opt for an independent status was categorically refused through an unanimous resolution. The Referendum was considered as an insult to the self-respect of a citizen with a genuine Indian identity, a proposal on the part of the French Government.

Many prominent leaders such as Sivagnana Gramany, Kamaraj Nadar, Ravindra Varma (President of All India Students Congress), Subbu and Rangarajan (leaders of Tamil Nadu Students Congress), addressed the plenary session along with local Congress leaders. Never before in the history of French India was such an impressive people’s convention held. After this successful event, the Congress membership increased.

On the 15th of August 1947, India became free from foreign rule. The people in Pondicherry too celebrated India’s Independence Day. No restrictions were imposed by the French Administration on that day. The Students Congress proposed that a huge procession of students and citizens be taken through all the main streets of Pondicherry on the evenings of 14th August. Through megaphones and microphones, people
in towns and villages were informed about the procession on the evening of the 14th and the National Flag hoisting on 15th of August morning at "Nehru Vanam. Some students leaders met the Ashram authorities and wanted their volunteers to join the procession but despite being received with due respect by the Ashram authorities, they tactfully refused the participation of their contingent in the proposed procession under the pretext that their youth would take part only under the Ashram’s banner of Lotus. Such refusal offended the Students Congress.

A procession was led by the founder President of the Student Congress, Antoine Mariadassou on white horseback, followed by Shatrugh Paramel carrying the Congress tri-colour flag with the “Chakra”. Also, the Communist Party red flags and a French flag carried by some ex-servicemen of the Reveal Social mixed with the National Flag. The whole procession was arranged in three rows, well-lit by many gas lights and, according to eye-witnesses, grand and glorious. At the stroke of midnight, when the national flag of India was hoisted on top of Red Fort in Delhi by the first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru with his famous and dignified speech of “Tryst with destiny”, in Pondicherry bells peeled, drums roared and conches blew in ecstasy in almost all saintly places, announcing that a glorious new chapter was opening in free India.

In May 1948 the members of the Council, all representing Goubert’s French Socialist Party took oath of office. The Students Congress gave a call for general strike in protest against the swearing-in ceremony. All the students assembled in front of the College Colonical (renamed then as College Français) to take out a procession to the Town Hall at 10 a.m. Paramel, the next term President of the Student Congress
and a baccalaureate student in College Français was brutally assaulted inside the college in front of the Professors. In August 1948, Shatrugh Paramel was elected President of the Students Congress and Munissamy was retained as General Secretary for the third time. The people of Pondicherry took part in political activities under different political outfits but there was no coordinated effort on the part of the political parties for the common cause of fight against the French. The French colonial administrators extended their patronage at different times to different political parties and also put them to fight against each other. They encouraged hooliganism and provided protection to the goondas who created obstacles in the way of freedom fighters.

On 1st May 1947, the Communist Party of Pondicherry organised a huge procession at 10 a.m. followed by a demonstration at 5 p.m. through Dupleix Street (now Nehru Street) during which Ansari Dorai's restaurant was plundered by some hooligans while the Students Congress meeting was going on the 1st floor of the Cafe. Despite the presence of a strong contingent of armed Police, the assault could not be prevented.

Ansari Dorai was a staunch supporter of the Congress party who wore khadi clothes till his last day and was the only prominent leader to refuse the "Tamra Patra" and pension awarded to him by the Government of India because it was handed over by some one whom he considered as corrupt politician and not upto the mark in his rating.

During the Second World War from 1939-45, the CPI stood under the command of the international communist authority called COMINTERN for all political decisions. For instance, the CPI took a stand contrary to Gandhiji by not supporting the "Quit India" people's movement
1942 for the ideological reason of not jeopardising Soviet interest to win the War whose duration could not be foreseen.

With India’s independence approaching and the French Communist Party in France resigning from the French Ministry in protest against the Vietnam war and also abiding by the clearly drawn policy of the All India Communist Party as published in the official organ "New Age", asking for “the liberation of the territories from alien rule”, the CPI became active. Subbiah the leader of the C.P.I. in Pondicherry who wanted to get hold the power and play a prominent role distanced the goonda elements from the party and under his influence, the Students Federation which was Communist-oriented started to co-operate with the Students Congress. Their leaders were Arumugham, Shankaran, Sebastien among others. This was the best organised and most powerful party in French India. The French India Government fully covered them, but feared to give them open support owing to the communist challenge in Asia and the anti-communist drive in India. So, to mystify public opinion, it created the democratic and progressive party.

The Communist Party of French India was the most powerful body in Pondicherry but it was enfeebled by Goubert’s incessant attacks. And its violent shifts in policy in regard to the question of merger left the public confused and bewildered the strength of the party was mainly derived from the loyalty and administration of a large portion of the French Indian working class to Mr. Subbiah, General Secretary of the Party. During the days of the National Democratic Front, the Communist leader advocated union with France with the ultimate object of fusion with India. But when the Communists were thrown overboard and the Socialist came to power Mr. Subbiah declared that the people of French
India will not accept any reform short of complete merger with Indian Union.

The Communist Party of French India had earlier called the people of the French establishments to remain in the French Union and agitate for the civil liberties of the Fourth Republic. The party later complained of the arrests of its trade union leaders and supporters and the attacks made on its press, there was no more scope for development under the French Union than under the Indian union.

Disappointed by Subbiah's Volte-face and no longer relying too much on him and his Labour movement, the French Administration created a third force with the support of some locals influenced by the Ashram—Mr. Counouma, an officer of the French Administration, and Dr. S. Lambert Saravane. The latter, for having deserted Subbiah and joining the new pro-French clan, was even attacked with shoes and chappals by the Labour Party supporters during a students demonstration. This clan failed to impress Governor Baron and split.

This party had no connection at all either with the socialist party of France (S.F.I.O) or the Indian Socialist Party. It avoided taking position in favour of either unions, but almost all its members were actually for French Union.

At Pondicherry, there was no Socialist party sponsored by the Indian Socialists. Some of the Pondicherry Congress leaders claimed that they had Socialist feelings. It was suggested to regroup within the Pondicherry Congress all socialist sympathises, in order to constitute a Socialist wing of the Congress. The leaders opposed the move, on the ground that it may lead to partition and weakening of the Congress.
The political situation in Pondicherry was fast deteriorating and urgent steps needed to be taken. The people were discouraged and they sought help from outside. The French India Government cared little about Pondicherry public opinion, on the other hand it feared very much the Indian public opinion by a press offensive on both the French India Government and the lenient congress Government.

The Socialist party’s manifesto to join the Indian Union was highly suicidal to the interests of French Indians, whereas the membership in French India had manifold advantages and a state of importance. The motivation was the fact that the French Indian National Congress was convening a People’s conference in the beginning of August 1947. The conference committee invited personally all the parties in the country and despite differences subscribed to the die of liberation and fusion. The non-party men in French land formed a good majority. The conference was attended by delegates representing all the five French settlements, on the basis of one delegate for every hundred citizens above 18 years old in French India, without difference in party. The object of the conference was to ask the French to quit the country leaving the people to join the Indian Union.

There was a lot of controversy prevailing amongst scholars in so far as the role of Pondicherreans in the freedom struggles within Pondicherry to free themselves from the French rule. There was also an opinion that there was no freedom struggle at all on the part of the people of Pondicherreans towards this end. Pondicherry which saw the French settling here in 1674 had come under permanent French rule only after the Treaty of Paris in 1814 and the British had occupied it three times and once by the Dutch in the interregnum. There were many parleys then for
the exchange of various colonial holdings between France and England which however did not materialize but Pondicherry did come under serious threat of another occupations by the British when France surrendered to Germany during the Second World War. Britain used this opportunity to effect an economic merger by imposing a customs union, shifting its customs office from its own boundaries within Pondicherry to the seashore. Till the independence of India there was actually no movement against the French in Pondicherry. The nationalists in Pondicherry worked for the liberation for India from British rule and the Indian leaders had also advised them not to antagonize the French who provided shelter to Indian patriots taking refuge in Pondicherry. Things changed immediately after independence, the Indian Government made it clear that it would not recognize the right of France to their establishment in India.

The great urge to secure self rule in colonies emerging everywhere, compelled the French government also to take a realistic view of the situation, making France declare Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam in November 1947 as free towns having full administrative powers independently of each other and placing them under the common authority of a commissioner of the Republic in Pondicherry. The only other French establishment in India, Chandernagore, in the meantime, attained a separate status in June 1947 in terms of a declaration made in the French National Assembly to allow people of the French establishments the right of self determination after a referendum and confirming the same to the Government of India. Chandernagore was the first to organize the referendum and subsequent merger with West Bengal in June 1949.
The date of holding the referendum in other parts was deferred. The task of revising the electoral rolls remained disputed. Not even any agreement on the modalities of the consultation between the two Governments took place. But the anti-merger groups under Goubert unleashed a situation culminating in the outbreak of violence unprecedented in the history of Pondicherry. Rivalry between the Socialist and the Communist parties of Pondicherry reached its peak and hounded. Goubert’s Socialist party hirelings neither spared Subbiah nor the other pro-mergerists. The National liberation front was formed under the inspiration of Rashid Ali Bag. The Students congress an active organization till 1948, did not function for some time for fear of reprisal. With the efforts of Rajkumar to the Pondicherry merger committee was formed which gained some success. The committee was further strengthened by the participation of Pro-merger leaders like D. Jeevarathinam, S. Perumal, Victor Mariadass D. Mariappa, A. Lecheche, L. Sathyamurty, Dorai Munisami, L. Selvanathan and G. Munisami. A person of the stature of Sellane Naicker was made President of the merger committee and Ambroise was made working President to help the former. A similar committee was also formed in Karaikal. Kamaraj Nadar, President of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee, hailed the formation of the merger committee as a step forward and made a fervent appeal to the people of Pondicherry and Karaikal to forget all personal and local differences at this hour of trial and put up a united front for merger with India. But the pre-referendum political scenario of Pondicherry was suddenly changed by violence let loose by the supporters of the Socialist party.

Pro-merger sentiment in Pondicherry, though real, was less unanimous than in the far-off outpost Chandernagore. One bone of
contention was the question of popular consultation. France contended that per Article 27 of her Constitution a referendum had to be held before any cession of territory could be made. Though the date was fixed for referendum in Pondicherry, the General Assembly of Municipal Councillors of all four establishments for whom merger with India by then was a foregone conclusion, got preoccupied with the modalities of merger. The French educated elite were interested in safeguarding the special interest of the people of Pondicherry and demanded a transition period of 25 to 30 years. The reaction of both the French and Indian Government to this was lukewarm initially, the French themselves preferring the transition period demanded to extend their presence. The Government of India in the meantime put an end to the customs agreement of 1941 thinking that it will cause inconvenience to the population and compel them to opt for India. This however proved to be an error since the Pondicherry based merchants found in it a golden opportunity for smuggling of huge quantities of gold and diamonds. This unexpected windfall naturally turned the tide in favour of continuance of the French presence, prompting Jawaharlal Nehru to refuse the referendum on grounds that the local political climate was not conducive to a free vote and that pressures by French administration and elements would skew the results against merger. The Government of India thus realizing the possibility of the referendum going against its interests backed out of the principle agreed to in 1948, declaring that the only possible solution to be retrocession pure and simple to the Indian union.

The declaration made in 1947 was desirous of strengthening the bonds of friendship established since then between France and India who had manifested their intention of settling amicably the problem of the French establishments in India. The French managed to retain
Pondicherry, Chandernagore, Mahe, Karaikal and Yanam. In 1948, the people of Mahe revolted and the French Police and troops surrendered. In 1949, the newly elected members of Assembly of Chandernagore passed the resolution in favour of the merger with India. Consequently, the Government of India took over the administration. Considering the wish of the population expressed by their representatives, an agreement was concluded on 21st October 1954, transferring the powers of the Government of the French Republic to the Government of the Indian Union. A treaty of cession was signed by the French Republic and the Republic of India transferring the French establishments of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam by Mr. Stanislas Ostrorog, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of France in India, and Jawaharlal Nehru the Prime Minister and Minister for External Affairs of Government of India after exchanging their credentials which was found in legal form of about 31 Articles. On May 28, 1956, the Treaty of cession of the French establishments of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam was signed between France and India. On August 16, 1962 the de jure transfer came into effect after passing of the bill in the French Parliament. The great struggle for independence was over and the French settlements of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Yanam and Mahe became an integral part of Indian Union.
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APPENDIXES

Statement sent on 20th August 1947 to the Editor of “The Statesman”, Calcutta by the Ashram Secretary:-

“Everybody in Pondicherry without exception supports the right of self-determination for the people of French India and Sri Aurobindo has always been a firm supporter of that right for all people everywhere. Nobody here is for the “continuation of French rule”, but the people were prepared to accept the French proposal of a free and complete autonomous French India within the French Union. It was only when it appeared that the reforms offered by the French Government would fall short of what was promised that the cry arose for the immediate transfer of power and the merging of French India in the Indian Union. Sri Aurobindo, not being a citizen of French India, made no public declaration of the views, but privately supported the views set forth in a manifesto of The French India Socialist Party demanding the end of the colonial rule and a complete autonomy within the French Union accompanied by a dual citizenship and a close association with the Indian Union which should control customs, communications and a common system of industry and commerce.”

IMMEDIATE MERGER, INDIANISATION OF PUBLIC SERVICES, PROHIBITON

Pondicherry, April 28, 1948.

Last night, Mr. Leon Saint Jean, Secretary – General of the Congress Group of the Representative Assembly of French India, submitted the following three motions to the vote of the Assembly:
I. The Representative Assembly of French India thinks necessary the immediate merger of the five French territories of India in the Indian nation; this merger being, obviously, followed by a transitory period.

II. The Representative Assembly of French India wishes that all the posts of gazette officers of metropolitan cadre should be given, wherever it is possible to native officers of the cadre, in the immediate future.

III. The Representative Assembly of French India thinks it necessary to introduce alcoholic prohibition in all the territory of Pondicherry, in October next, when it should become compulsory in the district of South Arcot.

The Assembly, after a short discussion, decided to debate on these proposals on Thursday morning, at 10 o’clock.

The Congress Group of the Representative Assembly of French India.

SELECTED WORKS OF JAWHARLAL NEHRU

1. French Enclaves

The Consul General should be informed that when I was in Paris, a representative of General de Gaulle called on the Secretary General\(^2\) to express the General’s regret that he could not see me. He was away then electioneering in the South of France. He sent a message, however, that he was eager to come to a friendly settlement with India and to have India’s friendship.

2. G.S. Bajpai.

2. Referendum in French Enclaves

I have seen the telegram you have sent to Indian Embassy, Paris, No. 157 dated 14th December.

I should like to point out that owing to recent developments, this whole business of elections and referendum has been thrown out of joint. We should not therefore commit ourselves to any move in this direction. We need not repudiate it, but we should point out that after our recent experiences, it is difficult for us to consider any elections or referendum seriously.


2. In this cable K.P.S. Menon had stated Daniel Levi, the French Ambassador had met him to complain about the arrests of French Indian citizens in Mahe and Pondicherry by Indian police and requested for their release.

3. At the meeting, Ambassador Levi had suggested the posting of neutral observers during the referendum in French India.

3. No Future for Foreign Footholds

We have a large number of intricate problems before us, but this particular problem of foreign possessions within our territory is probably one of the smallest. It is inevitable that it has to be solved in a particular
way. There might be a little delay or difficulty in its solution, but it is not in the larger context of India a really difficult problem.

What is the major issue before us? It is quite inevitable that these foreign possessions should cease to be foreign and should be incorporated politically within the Indian Union. That is a big thing. That is the policy, which India must necessarily adopt because we cannot admit any foreign foothold on international methods. We have to deal with foreign governments. As a Government, and as a great organization which is intimately connected with that Government, we cannot proceed in a non-governmental way. It is for the people of those territories to do what they like, but we cannot go about approaching this problem in a non-governmental way.

I ask you to consider the broad problem to which vague references have been made, namely, the ending of imperialism and colonialism everywhere more especially in Asia. I would hesitate indulging in talk to which effect cannot be given. Nevertheless, even from the point of view of India’s freedom and world peace, we are quite clear in our mind that the continuation of imperialism or colonialism in any part of the world, more especially in Asia, is dangerous.

The cultural aspect of the problem is an equally important matter. We should give the people of these areas an opportunity to live a full cultural life as they choose and any change that is brought about should not be upsetting factor in the personal life of the people there. While India had been under British domination for more than two hundred years, some of these possessions have been under alien political and cultural domination for 400 years and powerfully affected by it. Their
institutions political, educational, linguistic and cultural have been powerfully influenced. If we now tell the people of these possessions to become part of the Indian system and we uproot them completely from the kind of life they were leading for centuries, we would not be serving the interests of justice. It is upto the


4. Future Administration of French Possessions

Your telegram No. 163 dated 16th July. Government of India having agreed to the referendum do not wish to make any other proposal. They are prepared to consider other methods of settling the future of French possessions but these must be based on these possessions becoming parts of the Indian Union. We have already stated that the status and form of internal administration of these possessions is a matter which we wish to decide in consultation with the people there. We would be prepared for some kind of autonomy and for interim period adjustments, but this autonomy must be within the framework of the Indian Union. We cannot agree to any interregnum between cession of French authority over settlement and inauguration of new regime.

Any proposals regarding Pondicherry, etc. should not in any way affect transfer of sovereignty over Chandernagore in accordance with result of referendum there.

You will doubtless make it clear that these views, if you have to express them, are entirely your views.

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2. In 19 June 1949, Chandernagore voted overwhelmingly for union with INDIA. The President of the Chandernagore Administrative Council stated on 7 July that Chandernagore could not wait *ad infinitum* for the transfer of sovereignty.

5. Take-over of Chandernagore

Reference our telegram No. 25447 July 7th about taking over of a Chandernagore.

1. French Ambassador² has not so far intimated to us date and manner in which his Government would wish Government of India to assume *de facto* control of Chandernagore.

2. Meanwhile at a conference held in New Delhi, it was decided that Chandernagore should be administered by Government of India through Provincial Government as their agent. When *de facto* transfer of power takes place Government of India would appoint an Administrator with concurrence of French Government.

3. Steady deterioration of law and order had been reported by Chandernagore Administrative Council. Council have requested that immediate police assistance should be obtained from West Bengal and there should be collaboration between Chandernagore and West Bengal administrations in controlling law and order. We have telegraphed West Bengal Government for full report on Chandernagore situation.
4. A few days ago French Ambassador assured us: (a) that instructions had been given to Administration Chandernagore to seek cooperation of West Bengal police in case of emergency, term “emergency” being liberally interpreted, and (b) Ambassador suggested that pending receipt of instructions from French Government, which were shortly expected, cooperation in maintenance of law and order could be best secured by local consultations.

5. Denan Das, President of the Chandernagore Administrative Council, on 22 July 1949 asked for police assistance from West Bengal following violent incidents on 19 and 20 July when municipal sweepers were attacked by unknown persons. It was also reported that M. Taileur, Administrator of Chandernagore, had asked for extra military forces to be sent from Pondicherry.

6. Meeting with French India Delegation

The Prime Minister stated that he agreed that once French India joins the Indian Union there would be as little local rivalry as possible and to the extent that the good offices of himself and of the Government could be exercised to this end they.

My dear Premier,

I am writing to you about the French Possessions in India, more especially Pondicherry. As you must know, we have recently had a deputation from the Socialist Party of Pondicherry, etc. That Party has in the past been rather an official party inclining towards the French Government and Union with France. The fact remains however that they are the dominant party in Pondicherry, etc. They have now realized that it is to the advantage of Pondicherry to join the Indian Union. We have had long talks with them and the position had been cleared up.

In view of this change in their attitude and their desire to join the Indian Union, it is desirable to avoid the internal conflicts that have been taking place between the Congress Party and the Socialist Party in Pondicherry. Your predecessor Premier in Madras made a number of statements in criticism of what was happening in Pondicherry. I suggest that no such statements be made by representatives and if anything has to be said, we should be informed of it and we shall take necessary action. For the present I would request you to exercise your influence to prevent conflicts in Pondicherry between rival groups, at any rate, between the Congress Party there and the Socialist Party. It is open of course to the Congress Party to express itself positively in favour of union.

The Communist Party of Pondicherry will probably give trouble. But that can be ignored in the present context, when the Socialist Party will stand for union with India.
I might also mention that our Consul General in Pondicherry, Shri Rashid Baig, has done good work for us there. Criticisms made about his work in the past have proceeded on some misunderstanding.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru.

2. T. Prakasam.

Jawaharlal

8. Policy towards Portuguese and French Settlements

The Prime Minister began by saying that our attitude towards these foreign possessions could not be altered, though what action we should take to implement our policy would naturally have to vary from time to time. In matters affecting the prestige of India or the interests of Indian nationals, a soft policy should not be followed with the Portuguese, whatever might be the economic or political disadvantage that such an attitude might entail.

Regarding the steps to be taken at present to implement this policy, the Prime Minister stressed the necessity of making the maximum use of any incidents which may come to our notice regarding the ill-treatment of Portuguese and French Indians (they were, to use the Prime Minister’s words, ‘potential’ Indians) by giving them publicity both in the Indian and the foreign press, and by making a strong protest to the Governments concerned. If necessary, we should also be prepared to withdraw our consular representative from Goa and Pondicherry.

Turning to the proposals made in the Ministry of External Affairs note, the Prime Minister said that no stress should be laid by us on the
holding of a referendum or the visit of the neutral observers to French India. We should offer the French a Customs Union in order to restore normal economic conditions between French India and India and to put a stop to smuggling. If the French did not agree to this, we should take such restrictive measures as were financially and administratively possible. In considering the value of such measures, it should be borne in mind that though the actual smuggling may not be reduced greatly thereby, the measures themselves may have a good effect on the morale of the pro-Indian elements in Pondicherry, and would also enhance the prestige of the Government of India.

The Prime Minister did not agree to the disbandment of the present Goa Committee.

If the Portuguese Consul in Bombay was found to be indulging in any anti-Indian activities, strong action should be taken against him, even to the extent of declaring him a \textit{persona non grata}


2. The Goa Committee was set up in Bombay in 1950 to organize public opinion among Goans in Bombay in favour of merger and to assist the nationalist Goan cause.

\textbf{Note, dated the 25\textsuperscript{th} March 1954, from the French Embassy, New Delhi, to the Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi.}

The French Embassy present their compliments to the Ministry of External Affairs and have the honour to refer to the Ministry’s note dated March 22\textsuperscript{nd} 1954.
In compliance with the instructions that they have just received, the Embassy wish to bring again to the notice of the Ministry that immediately after India’s accession to independence, the French Government committed themselves to give to the population of the Settlements the right to decide their fate and their future status through free and sincere consultations. The letter by which the French Ambassador in Delhi informed the Government of India of this decision and the latter’s reply constituted the agreement of the 29th of June 1948, the application of which has made possible the merger of Chandernagore into the Indian Union.

As far as they are concerned, the French Government have always abidden (sic) by this agreement and they are prepared to accept any solution consistent with the democratic principles guaranteed by the provisions of the French Constitution which stipulates in article 27 Section, 2, that: “no cession, no exchange, no addition of territories is valid without the consent of the interested populations”.

By their note dated October 21st 1952, the Government of India have informed the French Government that they did not consider themselves any more bound by the exchange of letters. They represented, in support of this decision, that the section of the Settlements population favourable to the merger with the Indian Union were prevented from expressing their opinion. The French Government have never considered this assertion as justified. The last events to which the Ministry’s note dated March 22nd 1954 refers, are a proof that public expression of opinion.

On 26th March last the Embassy of India at Paris had remitted to the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs a note protesting against the attitude of the French police in the French establishments in India. This document stated that the Government of India "consider that it is in the interest both of the police officials of the French establishments as well as of the inhabitants of the surrounding Indian territories that so long as the present tension lasts, all armed members of the police of the French establishments should be prohibited from entering Indian territories".

Since then Indian Authorities have refused to the French Police Authorities and to Gendarmerie any transit over Indian territories and any access to the enclaves of Pondicherry. Taking advantage of this state of affairs, persons controlled by M. Goubert, Deputy of Pondicherry, have just attacked the public stations of Nettapacom and have proclaimed the merger of this commune with the Indian Union. It appears from information received at Paris that there are ground for apprehension of similar acts of violence in other Enclaves.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has the honour to draw the attention of the Embassy of India to the very grave consequences which could result from these facts.

In their Note of 26th March last, to which there has hitherto been no reply, the Government of France have stated their position with regard to the problem of these establishments. So long as no solution thereof has been reached the responsibility for the maintenance of law and order in these establishments remains that of the French Authorities. The latter has been given most definite instructions to discharge this responsibility.
From
R.L. Purushothamma Reddiar,
President,
Representative Assembly
Pondicherry.

To
Shri Jawaharlal Nehru,
Prime Minister of India,
New Delhi.

CONFIDENTIAL

My Dear Prime Minister,

It is my sad duty to bring to your notice, the deterioration in the State of Pondicherry which has set in during the last few months.

You are aware of my long and intimate association with the Indian National Congress, extending over a period of 25 years, the bitter struggles for liberation and merger which my friends and I had carried on during the days of French Imperialism. You are also aware that it was Mr. Goubert and his group who were the instruments of the French repression and that we were the victims of their holliganism. After the de facto transfer, we managed to draw a veil over the past and tried to work together with Mr. Goubert's group in the common interest of the Pondicherry State and the Congress Orgainsation. I was anxious to retire then, as I did not wish to associate myself with the discredited group of Mr. Goubert. But I was persuaded by the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee and the All India Congress Committee to help in writing a new chapter in the history of Pondicherry.

27th April, 1956
Fortunately, the Party had a decent leader in late Shri Pakkiriswamy Pillai and the Party was able to carry on well enough. But even during days of Pakkiriswamy Pillai's leadership, Mr. Goubert had been working surreptitiously to strengthen his groups and to seize power if possible, on the death of Shri Pakkiriswamy Pillai, he began to maneuver for leadership, promising contracts, offices, emoluments and other inducements to the members of the Assembly in return of their support.

It is an open secret that Mr. Goubert is personally unpopular and thoroughly discredited before the people of Pondicherry. It was felt that his election as Leader would bring back all the corruption, nepotism and abuses of power for which he has been notorious in the past.

For a long time after the death of Sri Pakkiriswamy Pillai I did not even remotely contemplate, seeking the election as Party Leader. Temperamentally, I am more at home as a speaker than as a Party Leader. When the first Government was formed and the place of Councilor were available to me, I preferred to take up the office of the Speaker so that I may hold the balance fair and equal in the House and establish sound and proper democratic traditions in a place where such ideas were totally unknown.

It was suggested to me that in the interest of the Congress Organisation and of the future of the people of Pondicherry, I should become the leader of the Congress Party. I understood that it was also the desire of the High Command. I felt it was a call of duty that I should offer myself for the election as leader.

Initially, a large number of members warmly welcomed my candidature and it looked that on the 4th February, 1956 when a meeting
was called for election of leader, I would be accepted. But in the meanwhile, certain interested parties who had to benefit by way of contracts, began to move and set up Mr. Goubert to contest for the leadership.

Messrs. R. Venkataraman, M.P. and K.S Venkatakrishna Reddiar, Vice-President, Tamil Nadu Congress Committee came to Pondicherry on the 4th February, 1956. Mr. Venkatakrishna Reddiar appears to be interested in some contracts and bus routes in Pondicherry state. While appearing to be an observer on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee, he started secretly collecting signatures on behalf of Mr. Goubert. This caused a considerable confusion among the members. When the Vice-President of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee engaged himself in collecting signatures, the member thought that they were obliged to support Mr. Goubert. Since a contest for the leadership seemed inevitable, the meeting was adjourned for further consultations among members.

In the meanwhile, the Chief Commissioner seems to have been persuaded that Mr. Goubert had a strong majority in the party and that he should be accepted. Since then, the Chief Commissioner has himself exerted pressure and influence on the members of the Assembly to gather support to Mr. Goubert.

A strong section numbering 9 in a party of 24 members, suggested as a compromise that anybody other than Mr. Goubert would be acceptable to them. As I am was not anxious to become the Leader at all, I welcomed the suggestion. But even this suggestion was rejected by Mr. Goubert and his group.
I do not want to worry you with various details. But I feel it my duty to convey to you that but for the Chief Commissioner, exerting pressure on behalf of Mr. Goubert, the course of events in the Party would have been different.

You should have received distorted versions of the events culminating in the meeting of the Representative Assembly on the 23rd April, 1956. I am enclosing herewith a copy of my version of the events prepared objectively to the best of my conscience.

The subsequent proceedings of the Representative Assembly after I had adjourned it as lawful President of the Assembly is illegal, unconstitutional and totally void. The proceedings of the Representative Assembly on the 23rd April, 1956 were reminiscent of the French Indian Assembly days. What surprises and hurts me is that the Chief Commissioner without immediately declaring it void, is giving every sort of support to the totally void proceedings.

The fair name of Indian Union and democracy is in jeopardy in Pondicherry. Peoples' faith in the Congress Organisation will be shattered if you do not immediately condemn such irregularities. I have every confidence that on the facts ever, as presented by Mr. Goubert or Chief Commissioner you will conclude the subsequent proceedings are wholly void.

I further submit that the majority of the members of the Assembly are against Mr. Goubert's leadership. He is only trying to secure a nominal and adhoc majority by offering some office or other to one or the other of the members. The administration is also aiding him in his methods and activities. I appeal to you not to let the fair name of the
Congress and Indian Union be tarnished by supporting his wholly unconstitutional, undemocratic activities

We have to face the people again in elections sooner or later and the people will hardly forgive the Congress for support to Mr. Goubert.

I beg to be excused for the trouble I have given you.

Yours Sincerely,

R.L. Purshothama Reddiar

Interior Regulation of the Representative Assembly Convocation of the Representative Assembly:

Article – 1

The Assembly meets every year in two ordinary sessions. The first one takes place between 1st March and 1st April and the second, called Budgetary Session opens in the course of August. Their duration cannot exceed thirty days. The Chief of the territory will send the convocation

The Assembly may hold extraordinary sessions, the duration of which cannot exceed fifteen days. The convocation is sent by the Chief of the territory either on his own initiative or on the written request (collective or individual) of two-thirds of the Members made to the President. This request is registered in the Secretariat and forwarded by the President to the Chief of the territory within the forty-eight hours.

FORMATION OF THE TEMPORARY OFFICE

ARTICLE – 2

On the day fixed in the convocation, the Members of the Representative Assembly meet in the place reserved for holding
deliberations half-an-hour before the time fixed for the opening of the session.

If the quorum (half plus one of the Members inactivity) is not attained on the date fixed for the opening of the session, the session is automatically postponed to the third following day, excluding Sunday and holidays. The deliberations are then valid, whatever may be the number of the Members present; The legal duration of the session runs from the date fixed for the session runs from the date fixed for the second meeting.

The oldest of the Members present fulfils the functions of President and the youngest one fulfils the functions of Secretary.

The oldest Members informs the Chief of the territory through a messenger that the Members of the Assembly are present.

ARTICLE – 3

A delegation of four Members selected by the drawing of lots receives the Chief of the territory at the outer entrance of the meeting hall and takes him to the chair reserved for him. The same delegation accompanies him when he goes out.

ARTICLE – 4

At the opening session, only the oldest Member takes seat next to the Chief of the territory. Seats are reserved around them to the Heads of Departments and to the Members of the Privy Council, and in the hall to the officers escorting him.

Formation of the permanent vote

ARTICLE – 5

In the March session, after the Chief of the territory has left the meeting hall, the Assembly begins immediately after the election of the
ARTICLE - 6

If the first round of ballet gives no result, a second vote of oldest Member is declared elected. The voting takes place by uninominal ballot for the President and by ballot for a list as regards the Vice-Presidents and Secretaries.

ARTICLE - 7

After the elections are over, the President and the Secretaries take their respective seats.

ARTICLE - 8

The Vice-Presidents officiate for the President in case of absence or of impediment. The rank of substitutes is put up by the office during the first meeting by means of secret ballot. The Secretaries are replaced by the youngest among the Members present.

ARTICLE - 9

The office receives all documents relating to matters which are to be discussed by the Assembly.

ARTICLE - 10

The Questor is in charge of the account and of the sundry expenses of the Assembly.

At the end of the session, he submits his accounts to the approval of the Representative Assembly.

Assignments of the President

ARTICLE - 11
The President alone maintains the order in the Assembly. He may cause to be expelled from the meeting hall or to arrest anybody creating troubles. In case of crimes or offences, he puts up a report and the Public Prosecutor is immediately called for. He makes to observe the rules, authorizes to speak the Members wishing so, watches that the Members never deviate from the subject of the deliberation, puts questions and pronounces the decisions of the Assembly. He speaks on behalf of the Assembly and in conformity with its resolution.

ARTICLE – 12

The Assembly can send directly, through its President, to the Minister of French Overseas territories the remarks which it would have to make in the interest of the territory, with the exception of political problems, as well as its opinion on the situation and the needs of the various public services.

ARTICLE – 13

The Assembly can direct on more of its members to gather on the spot the necessary information for taking decisions on the matters which are within its assignments.

ARTICLE – 14

The Assembly asks the Chief of the territory to give all information about the matters regarding the territory.

Secretaries and Record – Keeper

ARTICLE – 15

The Secretaries are in charge of drafting, under the guidance of the President, the resolutions of the Assembly, of reading them, of noting in view of the discussion the names of the Members according to the order
of their requests, of counting openly their votes, of taking note of the
decisions taken and of the adjournments pronounced.

ARTICLE – 16

A Record-keeper and an Assistant Record-keeper are responsible
for the records of the Assembly and for the care of the correspondence.
They are proposed by the office and appointed by the Assembly at the
absolute majority of the members present.

One or more "Redacteurs" assist the Secretaries for the duration of
each session. They are appointed by the President.

The Record keeper can be entrusted with the functions of
"Redacteurs".

In case of death, resignation or impediment of the Record-keeper,
the President of the last session provides temporarily for the vacancy.

The Record-keeper and the "Redacteurs" can communicate the
minutes, the records and any other document being at their disposal only
to the Members of the Assembly and to the Administration.

Committees

ARTICLE – 17

At the first meeting of an ordinary or extraordinary session and
after the projects of the Administration have been communicated, the
President informs the Representative of the Administration of the deposit,
of the documents and the Assembly fixes the number of the Committees
which are necessary for the study of these projects. The members of
these Committees are appointed by ballot for a list and their number can
vary from twelve to fifteen.
If after two rounds of ballot, it remains to appoint one or several members, they are appointed by relative majority and in case of equality of votes, the oldest Member is appointed.

ARTICLE – 18

Each committee selects a President and one or more “Reporteurs”. Intimation of it is given to the President of the Representative Assembly.

In the committees, the voice of the President is prevailing in case of equality of votes.

ARTICLE – 19

The President of each committee takes charge of the documents necessary to its functioning and watches that after the decisions of the Assembly, the said documents are restored by the “Reporteurs” to proper hands.

ARTICLE – 20

The committees can, through their President, invite amidst them, with consultative voice, any person to whom they would have to ask necessary information. They can also ask to their the Heads of Administration with the authorization of the Chief of the territory or the Heads of Departments with the authorization of the Representative of the Administration.

The President of the Assembly can, when he deems it necessary, participate to the works of the committees of which he is not a Member, without deliberative voice.

When the author of a proposal is not a member of the committee in charge of the study of this proposal, he will have the right to explain his proposal to the committee.
All the Members of the Assembly can attend the works of the committees, but they have no right to speak.

ARTICLE – 21

When the oldest Member or the President of a committee has failed to convene it with sufficient majority, the said committee will be convocated a second time the next day and its deliberations will be valid whatever may be the number of the Members present.

ARTICLE – 22

The reports will be as much as possible printed and distributed to the Members of the Assembly as well as to the Representative of the Administration, twenty-four hours before the commencement of the discussions, unless the Assembly declares urgency.

When the reports cannot be printed, the manuscripts will be deposited in the office three days before the commencement of the discussions in the general meeting. Intimation of the same will be given by means of a circular of the President to the Members of the Assembly. The office must communicate to the Representative of the Administration these reports twenty-four hours before the meeting. However, in all the questions for which the Assembly would have declared urgency, the report can be made within twenty – four hours and discussed immediately.

ARTICLE – 23

The reading of the reports is followed by a general discussion first on the whole of the project and after on its details. As for the report on the budget of receipts and expenditure, on supplementary provisions and deductions from Reserve Fund, a general discussion take place on the whole and after it is deliberated by Chapter and by Article.
In any case, the discussion on a report must be postponed, if the Members ask for the same, to the next meeting and the documents will remain in the office at the disposal of the Members of the Assembly.

**Holding of meetings**

**ARTICLE – 24**

The president opens the meetings and closes them. At the end of each meeting he indicates, after having consulted the Assembly, the day and hour of the opening of the next meeting and also the agenda.

**ARTICLE – 25**

At the opening of each meeting, the report of the previous meeting is read and the examination and discussion of works under agenda are undertaken.

Nevertheless, if the report of the previous meeting was not ready, the Assembly may adjourn the reading to another meeting.

**ARTICLE – 26**

Resolutions of the Assembly are valid only if the half plus one its number in function, are present.

When the Members present do not form the majority of the Assembly, questions put in the agenda are adjourned to the next day and the resolutions taken are valid whatever may be the number of voters.

In both cases, the names of the absentees are written in the report.

Nevertheless, communications that the Government would have to do, should be previously received, if they require it.

The reading of the reports put in the agenda may also be done.
ARTICLE – 27
No Member of the Assembly can speak if he has not asked for and obtained the permission of the President.

He speaks standing

ARTICLE – 28
The President may speak in a meeting only to present the condition of the question or to recall to the question. If he wants to discuss, he quits the chair. He can take it again only after the vote on the question. He is, in this case, replaced by the Vice-Presidents, according to Article 8 and if they are absent, by the senior Member.

ARTICLE – 29
None can speak to develop his opinion more than twice about the same question and in the same meeting, unless the Assembly decides otherwise.

ARTICLE – 30
Reporters, when they defend the work of the commissions of which they are the organs will have always the right to speak. They got permission at last to sum up the discussion, when they ask for it, and in this case, the closing may be pronounced only after the summary is over.

ARTICLE – 31
During the discussion, speakers speak alternatively, for an against, till the Assembly sufficiently enlightened pronounces the closing.

ARTICLE – 32
Permission to speak is always granted to the Member who asks for it, against the closing, on the fixing of the agenda, on the putting of the question for a resolution of order, for a calling to rules, for a personal
fact, to justify a calling to order, or to reply to a communication of the
Government Representative.

Only one Member will be heard against the closing

When a Member was twice called to order in the same meeting, the
President, after granting him the permission to speak, if he asks for it,
should consult the Assembly to know whether he will be heard again on
the same question.

The Assembly pronounces by sitting and standing without debate.

ARTICLE – 33
If the meeting becomes tumultuous, the President will ring up. If
the tumult continues, he will announce that he is going to break up the
meeting; then he will suspend the meeting for fifteen minutes and after it
will be automatically begun again.

ARTICLE – 34
In complex questions, the division takes place automatically, when
required.

ARTICLE – 35
In any question, the sub-amendment should be put to vote before
the amendment and the amendment before the principal question.

ARTICLE – 36
Amendments and sub-amendments should be by writing, signed
and remitted to the president.

ARTICLE – 37
Before voting, reading of all amendments and sub-amendments is
made and priority is granted always to the largest one.
ARTICLE – 38
Questions are voted in general by sitting and standing.

On any question of person, the Assembly votes in secret ballet.

The secret ballet may also take place whenever, on the proposal of ten members, the majority decides.

ARTICLE – 39
When the Assembly votes by sitting and standing, the office decides, from the result of the trial which may be repeated, whether there is doubt.

In case of division, the President has his casting vote.

ARTICLE – 40
For voting in secret ballot, every Member puts a slip in a box with the word “YES” for adoption and “NO” for rejection. White slips express abstaining.

The counting of votes is made by the President with the help of Secretaries.

The result of the counting is closed by the Secretaries and pronounced by the President.

ARTICLE – 41
In case of equal votes, a second voting is made immediately. If there is again equality, the motion is rejected.

ARTICLE – 42
It is prevented to put again under deliberation, in the same meeting, a motion once acquired.
Nevertheless, when preparing the budget, the equilibrium is not secured, and in the case there will be a surplus of receipts allowing reductions, the discussion may take place again with the consent of the majority on points determined beforehand. In both cases, the motion must be supported at least by five Members.

**ARTICLE – 43**

Any Member who desires to bring a motion, should present it in writing, dated, signed and supported by another Member, to the President who reads it to the Assembly.

**ARTICLE – 44**

No motion is put under discussion in the meeting in which it is presented.

The president, after having consulted the Assembly, fixes the date on which it will be discussed.

**Reports and Correspondence**

**ARTICLE – 45**

A register for the correspondence of the President is kept. It is communicated to Members on their demand by the Record-keeper in charge.

**ARTICLE – 46**

Reports should contain the date of the meetings, calls names of the Members present and absent, admittance or rejection of excuses, announcement and remittance of documents, analysis of resolutions, decisions, adjournments, agenda and communications made to the Assembly.
ARTICLE - 47

Rectification, if any, is made immediately on the spot. It is prevented to change or to rectify anything in the report, read and adopted without remarks. After the adoption, reports may be published in the “Journal Official” of the colony, on the demand of the Assembly.

ARTICLE - 48

Immediately after the writing is adopted, minutes of the reports are signed by the President and the Secretaries and deposited in the records

Room

ARTICLE - 49

Reports written by the Secretaries are signed by the President and sent by him to the Chief of the territory and are published within the shortest time by the Government. One copy of the same is sent to each representative of the territory and to the Members of the Assembly.

ARTICLE - 50

If at the time of the closing of the session, all reports are not read and adopted, a commission composed of five Members shall be adjoined to the office, in order to examine, adopt or modify them and to see to their prompt dispatch.

All the members of the Assembly have the right to take part in this work, with deliberate voice.

Leave, absence and resignation

ARTICLE - 51

No Member can absent himself without a leave from the Assembly. However, the President may, in case of absolute necessity, grant a leave and he renders account of it to the Assembly
ARTICLE – 52

When a member of the Assembly fails, in the course of his mandate, to be present at meetings of two ordinary sessions, without excuse legitimate and admitted by the Assembly, he shall be declared resigned automatically, by the Assembly in the last meeting of the second sessions.

When a member of the Assembly gives his resignation, he sends it to the President of the Assembly or the President of the Permanent Commission who informs immediately about it to the Chief of the territory.

Change in the rules

ARTICLE – 53

Any motion for modifying the rules, shall be taken for discussion, only if it is brought by twelve Members,

Any modification will be admitted, only with the majority of the Members of the Assembly

Petitions sent to the Assembly

ARTICLE – 54

Any petition sent to the Assembly, should, to be accepted, be stamped, written in the French language and signed by the petitioner. In case the petitioner does not know to sign in French, the petition writer should sign it also. Any petition in a language other than French should be accompanied with a translation.
ARTICLE – 55

Petitions are opened by the President and sent for examination by the competent commission with a serial number. This serial number and the name of the petitioner only will be mentioned in the report.

Badges

ARTICLE – 56

Members of the Representative Assembly of the French Settlements in India bear a badge, its model is fixed by Arrete of the Chief of the territory.

Town hall, the 11th January 1947
Sd/-V. GNANA (President)
BALASOUPRAMANIEN
Secretary