

EAST AFR. PROT

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India Office

1915

3 March

Last previous Paper

Seditious Indians in East P. A. P.

Forward evidence as to the cases

of Kabi Shal and Uthman Singh.

Enc. ~~Paper~~ Sir J. Fiddes

I must confess that I cannot see very much in this. Kabi Singh says that "for his own safety, he prays for the British all night and day", while Uthman Singh, to induce from his letter, is a lunatic rather than a seditionist.

But I send copy of all this to Com. E. A. P. for any action which he may think desirable & so inform L. O.

E. A. P. 4/3/15

I think that this is enough to warrant enquiry

J. R.

along R. 4/3/15

Next subsequent Paper

Copies to Com. East P. A. P.
to P. O. 6 March

Any further communication on this subject
should be addressed to—

Public

The Under Secretary of State for India,
Department,
India Office,
London, S. W.

and the following reference quoted—

C. & P. 758

INDIA OFFICE

WHITEHALL

LONDON, S. W.

Confidential.

3 March, 1915.

Sir,

I am directed by the Marquess of Crewe to transmit, for the confidential information of Mr. Secretary Harcourt, and for such action as he may consider advisable, a copy of two letters received from the Government of India, with reference to Indians in the East Africa Protectorate named S. S. Kabir Shah and Uttam Singh.

His Lordship would desire to suggest that the case of Uttam Singh in particular might be the subject of enquiry.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

J. W. Alderson

The Under Secretary of State,
Colonial Office.

282, 25th
January, with
enclosure.

342, 28th
January, with
enclosure.

CONFIDENTIAL

No. 282.

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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

HOME DEPARTMENT.

(Political)...

DELHI . . . the 25th January, 1915.

To Sir T. W. Holderness, K.C.B., K.C.S.I.,
His Majesty's Under Secretary of State for India.

Sir,

I am directed to forward, for the information of the Secretary of State, an abstract translation of an intercepted letter addressed to a tahsildar in the United Provinces by one S.S. Kabir Shah, a surveyor in the Cadastral branch of the Survey Department at Nairobi.

2. I am to suggest that, with the permission of the Colonial Office, the authorities in British East Africa may be made aware of the anti-British sentiments of the writer of the letter:

I have, etc.

(Sd) H. Wheeler,

Secretary to the Government of India.

Abstract translation of a letter addressed to
Saiyid Ahsan Shah, tahsildar of Gonda, written by one S.S. Kabir
Shah, surveyor, Cadastral branch of the Survey department
at Nairobi.

The writer first acknowledges the receipt of a letter and expresses his inability to write earlier owing to his being involved in a civil suit for the last four months. He says that he spent all he had on the case which has in the long run been decided in his favour by the council court. He next refers to the distressed condition of the people who have been thrown out of employment there owing to curtailment of staff by Government in all its departments including Railways and workshops. Most of the people, he says, are reported to have embarked for India, but some are still there who have no money to pay for their passage home and to buy daily food. These people are said to be in a pitiable condition owing to the ill-treatment of the authorities.

Since hostilities have broken out between England and Turkey, the Christians look towards Muhammadans with "an evil eye" and do not engage them. He is continuing as usual in the Survey Department, but in case he is dismissed

and

and not made a prisoner of war, he will proceed to the "Capital of the Islam". He prefers going to Turkey to returning to India which he calls "Kafiristan", though the condition requiring to obtain a passport has to be faced.

From Reuter's daily report, it appears that the Turks have destroyed some Russian and French vessels. It has also been reported that seventy merchant vessels and some warships have been captured by the Turks independently of the Germans. It is hoped that the promises in Koran for the victory of the Islam will again be fulfilled in the case of the Turks.

He refers to the report received by him some three months ago about the despatch of the Indian soldiers to the front, who he calls "goats" especially of the Imperial Service Troops. He expresses regret that they should have accepted their death at the hands of Kafirs instead of the frontier Pathans. Pity, that seven rupees should have made them undergo all this misery and as a result lose their worldly as well as religious gain, according to the saying "A dhobi's dog belongs neither to the home nor to the Ghat".

He does not expect that the Indian Government will support the widows of the seventy thousand troops.

He deplores the treatment accorded to Zafar Ali Khan, the editor of the "Zamindar".

He reports that the Germans have sunk a ship in the Victoria Nyanza Lake and have thrown bombs in Uganda. He says that those who are opposed to the Germans here are beheaded by them, and for his own safety he prays for the British all night and day.

The Africans have also sided with the Germans against the British.

He refers to the difficulties in which the King-Emperor is at present involved, and observes that Christ is either averse to helping His followers or is unable to do so.

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The Africans have also sided with the Germans against the British.

He refers to the difficulties in which the King-Emperor is at present involved, and observes that Christ is either averse to helping His followers or is unable to do so.

Confidential

No. 342

Government of India

Home Department

(Political)

Delhi, the 28th January, 1915.

To Sir T. W. Holderness, K.C.B., K.C.S.I.,
His Majesty's Under Secretary of State for India.

Sir,

I am directed to forward, for the information of the Secretary of State, a rough translation of a letter addressed by one Uttam Singh from the Uganda Railway in British East Africa to one Hari Singh, Public Works Department mistri, Kashmir State. The letter contained a copy of the "Ghadr" newspaper.

2. I am to suggest that, with the permission of the Colonial Office, the matter should be brought to the notice of the authorities in British East Africa.

I have, etc.

(Sd) H. Wheeler.

Secretary to the Government of India.

Rough translation of a letter sent by one Uttam Singh from Africa, Uganda Railway (Sarban Chhap?) dated the 6th November, 1914.

My dear brother S. Hari Singh,

Fateh to you - I am all right here and I wish your welfare always from the Almighty. I received your letter and noted its contents. It has infused a new life to my dead mind. Your letter gave me so much pleasure that all the shocks and sorrows were removed from my mind.

My dear brother, undoubtedly you would have been extremely sorry to hear the death of Kartar Singh, as the proverb goes that he who suffers from the pain feels it. I cannot express the state of my mind at this time. The world is all dark to me just as everything becomes dark by the solar eclipse. It is difficult to remove the shocks of my mind. But there is no other remedy except sorrow (patience). It is true that man has to die one day, but even death may come at some suitable time. The shock affects the man's mind in the same way, as the worm (weevil) does to a tree and the "Rishis" too say the same thing. (The writer of the letter then repeats some Punjabi verses of one

Varia-

Waris-Shah poet in support of the above fact). Dear brother you can just think of the state of my mind.. Kartar Singh has left an everlasting shock on my mind which would never be healed up. It is out of my power to express in words the sorrow and grief with which I am overwhelmed. Brother, the family life seems pleasant but it is full of trouble and sorrow. (The writer here gives some story of Rama in the support of his views to the above effect). When the idea of Kartar Singh strikes my mind, it becomes hardened with grief and I am at a loss what to do.

Dear Brother, the battle is going on in this country at its hottest. From Mowasa to Qibo there is a jungle extending over 500 miles and every kind of animal is found therein. It is so thick and dense that even in the daytime there appears to be all dark like a night. Anyhow the place has been inhabited by these people to the extent of 2 or 3 miles along the Railway line and also the place called Victoria Nianza Lake. These are the German possessions and the English carry on their trade therein to some extent. The cotton is produced in abundance. The chief articles of trade here are, the skin of the wild animals such as goat, cow,

buffalo, seed of sesamum (Til), peppers, ivory, etc. These people (The English?) have got three workshops, viz:- at Mowasa, Niraubi and Qibo? The Viceroy of this country imposed a tax of Rs.15/- on each individual, but it was not paid at Niraubi, and it was paid twice by the people of Mowasa and Qibo? Now these people (the emigrants) stopped all the work there. No work was done at Niraubi, Mowasa and Qibo for about a week. This information reached the German (Emperor) so he invaded the country and said to the Viceroy "You are not a king, if you are really a king come and fight with me". The Emperor called the English as effeminates as they are receiving the money from the subjects by oppression which is not an act of royalty. Then the German (Emperor) sent his son and his consort to Australia for a visit. They were both killed by these people. The German Emperor said to them. "I was making necessary arrangements for you from the last 33 years, and I was looking for an opportunity which I have got now. Either you will remain (rule) here or I. Six warships were sent from this place and the news of 6th November says that they were destroyed by the Germans, and a place called the (Kasi?)

was

was looted and fire by the Germans. There is a very big German fort at Moanza and all the ships pass below that fort. When these ships pass by, they are destroyed and sunk by the cannon fire (by the Germans). It is near from us.

But the second battle is raging fiercely at Makati Line near Niraubi and the third place is Boti which is near Mowasa.

The Germans defeating Italy, Australia, France, Belgium and other petty dominions, have reached near England. Fourthly the German is lying ready at Zanzibar and Darul-Islam which are the seaports here. They have spread sea mines (bombs) there - whenever any British cruiser comes from or goes to Bombay and it comes in contact with the wire, which gets fire suddenly and the bomb explodes and reduces the ship to pieces. This wire is not visible, it remains under water 5 feet deep from the surface and the ship goes 10 feet deep in the water.

Again there is a large Indian army here. The armies of the Naba, Patiala and Jammu States are all collected here. But the Rajas who accompanied them have been kept under custody (kazarband). Because the English told them, that "you are the Sikhs you should go to the front and fight in the battle". Upon which they replied,

was looted and fire by the Germans. There is a very big German fort at Moanza and all the ships pass below that fort. When these ships pass by, they are destroyed and sunk by the cannon fire (by the Germans). It is near from us. But the second battle is raging fiercely at Makati Line near Niraubi and the third place is Boti which is near Mowasa. The Germans defeating Italy, Australia, France, Belgium and other petty dominions, have reached near England. Fourthly the German is lying ready at Zanzibar and Darul-Islam which are the seaports here. They have spread sea mines (bombs) there - whenever any British cruiser comes from or goes to Bombay and it comes in contact with the wire, which gets fire suddenly and the bomb explodes and reduces the ship to pieces. This wire is not visible. It remains under water 5 feet deep from the surface and the ship goes 10 feet deep in the water.

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"you should do so first and when you will be killed there, then our turn will come" and thus there arose a dispute, and now these Rajas say that they would help the Germans.

Again many persons who were working here in the workshops have been expelled from this country at their own expense, and it has also been announced to us that if we want to go to India, we can do so at our own expenses, but we have to pay Rs.150/- to the Government. But we the Indians replied that we should be sent back in the same way in which we were brought here and we should also be given some guarantee entitled to us.

The condition of the country is such that sometimes we hear that the enemy has come to such and such place today at another we hear that they will be at another place tomorrow. Brother it is a question of life and death with us. I will see you if I would return safe otherwise there is no hope. You would kindly send a letter to the house so that it may give some satisfaction to them. I have written to you a full account and I am not certain whether you will again get my letter or not. I have received the dak after a couple of months, and inform Ratan Singh fully about

Karan

Karan Singh and his whereabouts. A letter from Karan Singh was received along with yours but therein he wrote that he was going out and he will inform his future whereabouts, but he did not do so. Dear brother I do not want to write a letter, my ambition is to reach my country but everything depends upon fate.

P.S. I send you a newspaper. Read it yourself or tell your other friends.

Yours obediently,

(Sd) Uttam Singh.

EAP.

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DRAFT.

EAP Secret

Con. Believed

MINUTE.

Mr. Egan 4/3/15

Mr. Read 4/3/15

Mr.

Mr.

Sir G. Fiddes.

Sir H. Just.

Sir J. Anderson.

Lord Islington.

Mr. Harcourt.

for any such

as you may

desirable to

copy of a
enclosed, con-

from the 2d

with regard to

Indians name

S. J. Baker M.

Uttam Singh

in the EAP.

10. 3 March
(all enclosed)

10300 EAP

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6. March 1915

Confidential

DRAFT

The U.S. of S.

Public Dept

India Office

MINUTE

Mr. Ellis 4/3/15

Mr. Read 4

Mr.

Mr.

Sir G. Fiddes.

Sir H. Judd.

Sir J. Anderson.

Lord Islington.

Mr. Harcourt.

Sir,
I am etc to act.
rel. of your letter of
March 3rd (No 1 and
P. 758) with regard
to the attitude of
two Indians named
S. J. Kabi Shah
and Uttam Singh
residing in the E.A.P.
who inform me that
the papers have
been referred to the
Gov. of the E.A.P. for
such action as he
may consider
advisable

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