

SECRET.

DELHI RECORDS.

1

1921.

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.
HOME DEPARTMENT.**

POLITICAL—A.

Proceedings, April 1921, nos. 319—321.

Hunger strike of one Bhagwandin in the Seoni jail who was sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment for a seditious speech.

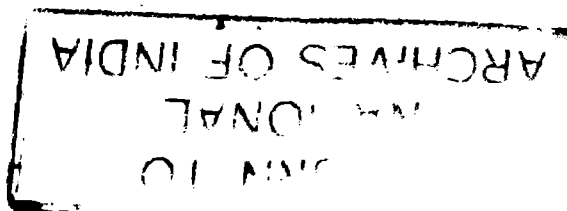
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PREVIOUS REFERENCES.

Political A., January 1918, nos. 1—30-A.
Political B., June 1919, nos. 119—143.
Political A., August 1920, nos. 431—439.

LATER REFERENCES.



NOTES.

POLITICAL—A., APRIL 1921.

Nos. 319—321.

HUNGER STRIKE OF ONE BHAGWANDIN IN THE SEONI JAIL WHO WAS SENTENCED TO 18 MONTHS' IMPRISONMENT FOR A SEDITIOUS SPEECH.

TELEGRAM FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CENTRAL PROVINCES, DATED THE 3RD APRIL 1921. Pro. no. 319.

For information. The Central Provinces Government ask for instructions as to the mode

* Political A., August 1920, nos. 431—49. of treatment of prisoners that go on hunger strike.

The case of Pir Mahbub Shah* will, however, be remembered. This man to start with went on hunger strike for about five days and in view of the trouble he caused, the Bombay Government enquired whether he should be forcibly fed or allowed to die of inanition. In accordance with the policy adopted in Bengal and accepted by the Government of India, that Government was instructed to continue forcible feeding and apparently the same course should be pursued in this case, if and when, Bhagwandin goes on hunger strike.

J. McD.,—4-4-21.

The course proposed by the Inspector-General of Prisons is, I think, the best. As far as I recollect, Pir Mahbub Shah recanted, and the Bengal prisoners very soon desisted from hunger striking. We need simply reply that the course proposed by the Inspector General in this instance is approved. There is no need or occasion to wire general orders.

C. W. GWYNNE,—4-4-21.

Submitted for His Excellency's consideration.

The Hon'ble Home Member to whom I have spoken, considers that the course proposed by the Inspector General of Prisons of the Central Provinces should be approved. If His Excellency approves, the Central Provinces Government may be informed accordingly.

S. P. O'DONNELL,—4-4-21.

Private Secretary to Governor-General.

Yes.

R[EADING],—13-4-21.

TELEGRAM FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CENTRAL PROVINCES, DATED THE 14TH APRIL 1921. Pro. no. 320.

1. We are now informed that Bhagwandin has refused food and water for two days and that it is likely he will die if he continues on hunger strike; still no concession is recommended. The papers about Pir Mahbub Shah of Hyderabad of last year are put up. Please see specially the telegram from the Bombay Government, dated the 6th August 1920. Of the four alternatives recommended in this case, release was considered out of the question as this would be absolutely fatal to authority if prisoners accused under the ordinary law were permitted to extort this concession by means of a hunger strike. This case was taken in Council when it was decided to resort to forcible feeding till it was declared dangerous by the medical adviser. The Secretary of State was informed and approved of the policy adopted.

Political A., August 1920, nos. 431—49.

2. As Hon'ble Member is in Lahore as also His Excellency, we may repeat this telegram to him and ask for instructions. Draft submitted. (Bhagwandin's case was mentioned in the last weekly telegram.) The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* states that he has been on hunger strike since

* Vide K. W.

31st March which is apparently incorrect

J. McD.,—15-4-21.

Issue the draft to Hon'ble Member.

C. W. GWYNNE,—15-4-21.

Telegram no. 654, dated Simla, the 15th April 1921.

From—The Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department,
To—The Home Member, Lahore.

(Repeated to Viceroy's Camp.)

Clear the line.—The file containing the telegram from the Government of the Central Provinces, dated the 3rd April, regarding the hunger strike of Bhagwandin was sent to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy from Delhi on the 5th instant for approval of the suggestion that forcible feeding of the prisoner who refuses jail diet, should be resorted to. The local Government just report he has refused food and water for two days and that he is likely to die unless his request to be supplied with food from outside is granted. The Inspector General of Prisons recommends no concession. Local Government ask for instructions. I suggest that no concessions be allowed and that prisoner, if necessary, should be forcibly fed unless and until it is declared dangerous by the medical authorities. Please wire orders.

Telegram dated Lahore, the 16th April 1921.

From—The Private Secretary to His Excellency the Viceroy,
To—The Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, Simla.

Clear the line.—Your clear line of 15th April to Home Member. Bhagwandin. Please wire if file since received.

The draft telegram below may now issue.

J. McD.,—16-4-21.

Issue telegram to the Central Provinces.

2. Issue draft below to the Private Secretary to His Excellency the Viceroy.

C. W. GWYNNE, —16-4-21.

PRO. NO. 321.

TELEGRAM TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CENTRAL PROVINCES, NO. 662, DATED THE 16TH APRIL 1921.

Telegram no. 663, dated the 16th April 1921.

From—The Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department,
To—The Private Secretary to His Excellency the Viceroy, Viceroy's Camp.

Clear the line.—Your clear line telegram. Bhagwandin file just received and telegram sent to Central Provinces.

Ex. by—K.C.M.
878HD

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
HOME DEPARTMENT, APRIL 1921.

Hunger strike of Bhagwandin.

[Pro. nos. 319—321.]

HUNGER STRIKE OF ONE BHAGWANDIN IN THE SEONI JAIL WHO WAS SENTENCED TO 18 MONTHS' IMPRISONMENT FOR A SEDITIOUS SPEECH.

Telegram P., dated the 3rd April 1921.

Pro. no. 319.

From—The Chief Secretary to the Government of the Central Provinces,

To—The Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department.

Bhagwandin, the favourite disciple of Gandhi and on whom he conferred title of Mahatma, has been sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment on charge of sedition. He pleaded not guilty and refused to defend himself. He refused to take food unless he was permitted to obtain it from outside the jail. It is reported that he observed a hunger strike in Jullundur in 1920. The Inspector General of Prisons proposed providing him with special diet sufficient for his health but to refuse his request to get his food from outside. If necessary, he will have him forcibly fed by stomachic tube. As general orders have not yet issued for treatment this class of offender, local Government desire to receive instructions from Government of India.

Telegram P., dated the 14th April 1921.

Pro. no. 320.

From—The Chief Secretary to the Government of the Central Provinces,

To—The Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department.

Please refer to my telegram* of the 3rd April regarding Bhagwandin. He has

* Above.

refused food and water for two days and is likely to die unless supplied with non-Government food from outside. Inspector-General of Prisons recommends no concession. Please telegraph instructions.

Telegram no. 662, dated Simla, the 16th April 1921.

Pro. no. 321.

From—The Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department,

To—The Chief Secretary to the Government of the Central Provinces, Nagpur.

Clear the line.—Correspondence ending your telegram 14th instant. Government of India agree to course proposed by Inspector-General Prisons for treatment of Bhagwandin.

Encl. by—K.C.M.

ST:HD