

File No. 2/400 III-L-44-1

1949-50

Collection No.

of No. 44 ✓

Pres.
Serial Nos.

[1]

III-L-44-1

Subject.

Activities of Mullaji Sateb of
Dawoodi Bohra Community

Previous References.

Later References.

TOP SECRET

D.O.No.222-DPM/50.
New Delhi, the 10th April 1950.

My dear Morarji,

Please refer to your letter, dated the 12th January 1950, regarding the activities of Mullaaji Saheb of Bohra community.

I am sending herewith copies of the letters which we have received from the Custodian General and the Prime Minister.

I think, for the time being, the best course would be to ask Mullaaji Saheb to explain the conduct of himself and the members of his family and warn him that, if, on examination, we find that he has rendered himself liable to action under the Evacuee Properties Ordinance, and decide to take action, nobody would be to blame for it except himself. He might also be asked to see that all the capital which he and members of his family might have transferred to Pakistan should be repatriated to India. After you have had a talk, let me know what the result is. In the meantime, some time may have elapsed and we will know where we stand in regard to the Agreement which was announced today.

Yours sincerely,

Shri Morarji Desai,
Home Minister to the Government of Bombay,
Bombay.

R.

(X)

TOP SECRET

D.O.No.223-DPM/50.
New Delhi, the 10th April 1950.

Please refer to your letter No.279-P.M. dated the 8th April 1950 regarding Kullaji Saheb of Bohra community.

I am sending herewith a copy of a letter which I have written to Morarji.

The Hon'ble Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru,
Prime Minister,
New Delhi.

R.

(X)

PRIME MINISTER,
INDIA.



TOP SECRET

NO 279 P.M.

New Delhi,
April 8, 1950.

Sardar Vallabhbhai,

I have your letter of the 8th April about the Mullaji Saheb of Bohra community. I have no sympathy for the Mullaji and I have little doubt that he is doing something undesirable. It is not quite clear to me however how we can come in the way of a person sending money to Africa or opening business there. I suppose sending money to Karachi would be different.

It would certainly be a good thing for Morarji Desai to send for him and warn him and in fact to ask him what exactly he is up to. Later, if necessary, action can be taken against him under the Evacuee Properties Ordinance. There is no doubt, however, that such action would shake up that community and it would be preferable not to initiate it in the present context just after the troubles in Bombay and the signing of this agreement with Liaquat Ali. Meanwhile Morarji can go ahead and ask him for a explanation etc.

Yours
Jawahar

The Hon'ble
Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel,
1 Aurangzeb Road,
New Delhi.

TOP SECRET.

No. 218 -DPW/50
New Delhi,
8th April 1950.

My dear Bhabha

Some time ago I received some information concerning the activities of the Mullaji Sahab of Bohra community and some of his close relations. I passed it on to Morarji for investigation. I am enclosing a copy of the letter which I have received from Morarji and of the further reports which we received from the Government of Bombay. I consulted the Custodian General, a copy of whose letter I enclose. My own feeling is that we must allow the law of Evacuee Property to take its course and if the Mullaji Sahab and members of his family have, in any way, contravened the law or come within its four corners, we should not interfere. Quite naturally the Government of Bombay do not wish to take up this matter if they are compelled subsequently to withdraw from the proceedings. They would, therefore, like to have an assurance that we would not intervene in this matter. My own feeling is that we should not, but before writing to Morarji I thought I would consult you.

Yours,

U. Vallabhbhai Patel

The Hon urable
Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru,
Prime Minister,
New Delhi.

(X)

SECRET.



5
Secretariat, Bombay, 1,
12th January 1950.

My dear Sardar Vallabhbhai,

Please refer to your letter of 23rd November 1949 in regard to the activities of the Mullaji Saheb.

2. Enquiries made through the Commissioner of Police have revealed that some property has been purchased by the Mullaji Saheb and members of his family in Karachi and that his son Yusufbhai has purchased some ginning and pressing factories, two rolling mills and two printing presses in Karachi in the name of the Saifee Development Corporation Ltd. It is also learnt that some of his other relatives have gone to East Africa with their wives and it is suspected that their intention is to settle down in Africa or in Pakistan and invest their monies in suitable businesses there. There seems sufficient material to declare the Mullaji Saheb and his two sons as intending evacuees, and it is therefore proposed to take action against them accordingly under section 19 of the Administration of Evacuee Property Ordinance, 1949, but before such action is taken I intend to call him and to advise him to desist from such disloyal conduct and to ask him to recall his son and other relatives to India and to dispose of the properties purchased by them in Pakistan and elsewhere. I would make it clear to him that if he takes no heed of the advice given to him, we would take necessary action under the law. It is possible that when a regular enquiry is made under the provisions of section 19 of the Ordinance, evidence may be forthcoming which would make it necessary for us to notify the property of the Mullaji Saheb and his relatives as evacuee property. I, however, hope that the Mullaji Saheb will see sense and retrace the steps he has taken.

3. If we do not act promptly, it is possible that some more relatives and other followers of the Mullaji Saheb will leave India and manage to invest their monies in foreign countries. As the Mullaji Saheb is the religious head of the Dawoodi Bohra Community, I would request you kindly to let me know as soon as possible if the Government of India would have any objection to the course we propose to adopt for preventing the flight of capital from India and the possible use of a part of it for purposes of anti-Indian propaganda.

Yours sincerely
Morarji Desai
(Morarji Desai)

The Hon'ble Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel,
Deputy Prime Minister,
Government of India,
NEW DELHI.

SECRET.

D.O.No.0/(29056)-G.
Home Department.
Bombay, 19th January 1950.

Dear Shankar,

Please refer to the letter of 12th January from Mr. Morarji Desai to the Deputy Prime Minister.

I am to forward in its continuation copies of two reports from the Commissioner of Police, Bombay, Nos. 17895/Hyd and 18439/Hyd, dated the 20th and 31st December 1949, respectively, on the activities of the Mulla ji and his family.

Yours sincerely,

(V.T. Dehejia).

V. Shankar, Esq., I.C.S.,
Private Secretary to the
Honourable Minister for
Home Affairs, New Delhi.

SECRET.

No. 18439/Hyd.

Special Branch, C.I.D.,
Bombay, dt. 31-12-49.

Dear Mr. Dehejia,

Please refer to my D.O.No. 17895/Hyd, dated the 20th December 1949.

Syed Yusufbhai, son of the religious head of the Dawoodi Bohra Community who is in East Africa now, is reported to have called Mr. Tyebji Abdul Quayum, the Manager of the "Saifee Development Corporation Ltd.", Karachi, to East Africa. A proposal appears to have been mooted out to supply goods to Pakistan by both these persons. It is not known for the present whether Mr. Tyebji Abdul Quayum will accompany Syed Yusufbhai to U.S.A. from East Africa or whether he will directly return to Pakistan.

The rest of the party returned to Bombay from East Africa on 26th December 1949.

I am sending herewith a translation of an article in Gujarathi appearing in "MASTI SAHAR" in its issue of December 1949 bearing on the visit of Yusufbhai and the members of the Mullaaji Saheb's family to East Africa.

Yours Sincerely,

Sd/-
(K.D. BILLIVORIA).

V.T. DEHEJIA, Esqr., I.C.S.,
Secretary to the Govt. of Bombay,
Home Department (Special),
BOMBAY.

PGJ/-

SECRET.

No. 17895/Hyd.

Office of
the Commissioner of Police,
Special Branch, C.I.D.,
Bombay, 20th December 1949.

Dear Mr. Dehejia,

Please refer to your D.O.No.0/(29056), dated the 2nd December 1949, forwarding an application from Mr. Mahmaddally Allabux regarding the Mullaji Saheb and his family.

2. Sardar Syedana-Taher Saifuddin Saheb, the present religious head of the Dawoodi Bohra Community, instilled the spirit of Pakistan into his followers during the days of agitation for Pakistan. He enjoyed the confidence of the late Mr. Jinnah, contributed generously to the Muslim League Funds and preached in favour of Pakistan in religious meetings of the Bohras.

3. Towards the end of 1947 his son Yusufbhai Nazamuddin went to London in connection with an appeal in the Privy Council regarding the Burhanpur Darga Case. Last year Yusufbhai and Mr. Mahmadbhai Abdullahbhai Munim went to Karachi and opened a Tools Factory there under the name of "Saifee-Development Corporation Ltd." Machinery worth lakhs of rupees was purchased in the United Kingdom for this factory during Yusufbhai's London trip. Their original intention was to open this factory at Rampur, but as the Rampur State acceded to the Indian Union they changed their minds. Besides this Corporation, it is learnt that they have purchased some ginning and pressing factories as well as two Rolling Mills and two Printing Presses at Karachi.

4. Actually the "Saifee Development Corporation Ltd.", was registered in Bombay about two years ago, the capital for this business being raised in Bombay. The trend of subsequent events made them transfer the same to Karachi. It appears that it was represented in Karachi that the concern belonged to Mr. Tyabji Abdul Qayyum, who is the brother-in-law of the Mullaji Saheb.

5. There are other properties in Karachi which belong to the Mullaji Saheb and his family as per particulars given below:-

- (1) One Building at Ranchor Lines, Karachi, which has been purchased in the name of one of his sons. This was purchased for a lakh of rupees.
- (2) One Bungalow at Pawan Chakki, Karachi, which was purchased in the Mullaji Saheb's personal name and sold subsequently to the Agent of the Hyderabad Government in Pakistan for Rupees two lakhs and sixty thousand.

(3).....

- (3) One Building at Sadar Camp, Karachi, which was purchased in the name of one of his sons for Rupees two lakhs.

6. ~~Tanerchai~~ Saheb Bin Yayabhai Saheb and Yayabhai Saheb Bin Abdul two sons-in-law of the Mullaji Saheb along with their wives have proceeded to East Africa with Mahmadbhai Abdullabhai Munim, Hardware merchant, Saranj Street, Bombay, and Mr. Rahimbhai Fatawalla of Nagdevi Street, Bombay.

7. Amongst the other relatives of the religious head who have proceeded abroad are Vallji Jiwaji Sarawalla, owner of a tin factory in Piru Lane, off Bhendy Bazar, Bombay, and Salebhai Abdul Husein Lillamwalla, an auction seller & purchaser who resides at Bhaji Pala Lane, Bombay.

8. Those who have gone to East Africa are expected to return after a month but Yusufbhai is likely to proceed to U.S.A. as he is interested in investments.

9. This is the first time that the near relatives of the Mullaji Saheb have left India in large numbers.

10. They are presumably preparing a ground to have as many investments as possible in Pakistan and other countries with a view to settle down there permanently in course of time.

11. It is learnt from a reliable source that majority of the rich muslims and Bohras have transferred an appreciable share of their capital to countries out of India.

Yours sincerely,

Sd/-

(K.D. BILLIMORIA).

V.T. DEHEJIA, Esqr., I.C.S.,
Secretary to the Govt. of Bombay,
Home Department, Bombay.

SECRET.



Secretariat,
Bombay, 5th December 1949.

9

My dear Sardar Vallabhbhai,

I have received your secret letter No.813-DPM/49 dated the 23rd November 1949 regarding the present activities of Mallaji. I am getting enquiries made in the matter and will let you know the result as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Moray Desai
(M.R.Desai).

The Hon'ble Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel,
Deputy Prime Minister,
New Delhi.

Secret

Ms. 813-DM/49.

NEW DELHI, 23.11.1949.

10

My dear Morarji,

I am sending herewith in original a letter which I have received from Mohamadally Allabux. I feel that the matters referred to by him in so far as they relate to the present activities of Mullaji require looking into. If Mullaji is found out, we should deal with him as he deserves to be. Please have enquiries made and let me know the result as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

St. Vallabhbhai Patel

Shri Morarji Desai,
Home Minister,
Govt. of Bombay,
BOMBAY.

G.

11
Ret. Custodian-General's letter of
24th March 1950.

We sent some papers to him
re. Mulla's Sahib, and requested
for their return. They do not appear
to have been received.

File

29/3

PS to BM

Received them for

their return

UP

29/3

My have since been recd. 9th papers re. Mulla's Sahib's activities
24/4/50 PS and are bundled below.



TOP SECRET.

12
D.O.No. 48-2K/50

Minister House,
New Delhi,
24th March, 1950

My dear Shr: Vijay Shankar,

I am very sorry for the delay in acknowledging
your letter dated the 15th.

2. Personally I see no reason why proceedings under
Section 19 should not be taken against the person concerned,
i.e. Bulaji Sahib of Dawoodi Bazar and members of his
family. Any action taken against them under the aforesaid
Section will, of course, have my fullest support. I mentioned
the matter to H. I. for prohibition when the Joint
Secretary, Mr. Dantwaj had also present. H. I. did not
offer any remarks. He, however, appeared to acquiesce in
the observations made by Mr. Dantwaj which were to the
effect that H. I. could have no objection, but that in so far
as the political repercussions of the proposed action were
concerned, it was the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the
Ministry for Home Affairs that could be ^{interested} ~~entrusted~~.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

Achirum Ram
(Achirum Ram)

To
Shr: Vijay Shankar, I.C.S.,

Private Secretary to the Hon'ble Minister, Home Affairs,
New Delhi.

13
TOP-SECRET.

New Delhi, 14th March 1950.

My dear Achhru Ramji,

Please see the attached papers relating to the activities of the Mullaaji Sahib of Dawoodi Bohras and members of his family in regard to the acquisition of property in Pakistan. I am sorry for the delay in referring this to you, but the papers got mislaid and I could lay my hands on them only the other day. The point of reference is whether, if the Government of Bombay have to resort to the provisions of Section 19 of the Ordinance, they will have the support of the Central Government and yourself. I would be most grateful if you would kindly let me know whether on this point H.M. could give an assurance to the Home Minister of Bombay.

I would be grateful for a very early reply, and return of the papers.

Yours sincerely,

sd.
(V. Shankar)

Shri Achhru Ram,
Custodian General of India,
Ministry of Rehabilitation,
Nizam's Palace, New Delhi.

New Delhi,
16th March 1950. 14

My dear Dehejia,

Please refer to your
letter No. O/(29056)-G dated the
8th March 1950.

2. The matter has been
referred to the Custodian General
and I am awaiting his reply. As
soon as I get it, H.M. will send
a reply to your H.M.

Yours sincerely,

(V. Shankar)

V. T. Dehejia, Esq ICS,
Secretary, Home Department,
Government of Bombay,
Bombay.

Secret.

D.O.No.0/(29056)-G.
Home Department.
Bombay, 8th March 1950.

15

Dear Shankar,

Please refer to the correspondence ending with my demi-official letter of even number of the 19th January.

I am to invite your attention to the letter of 12th January from the Honourable Mr. Morarji Desai to the Deputy Prime Minister and to enquire when the Government of Bombay may expect a reply thereto.

Yours sincerely,

V. T. Dehejia
(V.T.Dehejia).

V.Shankar, Esq., I.C.S.,
Private Secretary to the
Honble Minister for Home Affairs,
New Delhi.