

AFRICA
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INDIA OFFICE

POSITION OF INDIANS

1920
8th June

Last previous Paper.
10/2848

Trans extracts from Bombay Madras and Bengal newspapers on subject of

1 Quarter letter from
25 contd of yesterday

L. N. Head L. J. Fiddle

Please see no 28532.

If the number of Indians in
Portuguese E. Africa is more so
delectable it must be due to
our having drawn I.O. attention
to the conditions prevailing therein

Oct 4. 6. 20.

W. H. G. 11/26/20

Answered 16 June to 28532 ✓

Next subsequent Paper
10
28532

Communications on this subject should be
addressed to—

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE,
Public DEPT.,
INDIA OFFICE,
LONDON.

and the following number quoted—

J & P, 314B.

Reference to previous correspondence:
Indians in East Africa
Larger ^{to} the India Office of the
India

28387
JUN 20

INDIA OFFICE
8 June 1920.

Sir,

I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council
to transmit to you, for the information of the Secretary of
State for the Colonies
copy of the papers noted below, on the subject of Indians in
East Africa.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

~~FRANCIS W. DUKE~~

F. W. Duke.

Under Secretary of State,
Colonial Office.

Date	Description
3.5.20	Extract from Bombay newspapers*
8. 4.20	" "
11.4. and 1 & 3.5.20	Report on Madras newspapers
and 22. 4. 20	" Bengal

References on this subject should be
made to

Reference to previous correspondence:

SECRETARY OF STATE,
Public Dept
INDIA OFFICE
LONDON.

Letter to
FROM the India Office of the

28387

INDIA OFFICE.

7 June 1920.

Number quoted

& P. 3148.

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Colonial Office

Date

Description

Extract from Portray newspaper

and 1 & 3.5.20

Report on Madras newspapers

and 2. 4. 20

Bengal

*21. "Mr. Andrews' statement regarding the anti-Asiatic campaign in Africa is most disquieting. Whilst we have on the one hand Colonel Amery assuring us that 'all peoples living in the colonies could develop their well being and were equally entitled to care and consideration of the Colonial Office', we have on the other hand

The anti-Asiatic campaign in East Africa. *Mahratta* (c). 2nd May.

Lord Milner promising to the members of the East African Indian delegation that Indian grievances should only be mitigated. Is this then the fruit of our being equally entitled to care and consideration? But more disconsoling (?)

than this is, the fact, stated by Mr. Andrews, that in Portuguese East Africa the Indians are treated 'with every courtesy and consideration.' He continues: 'Equal rights have been granted them in practically every sphere of life, and Indians from Goa have been appointed to some of the highest positions in the colony. There are no racial distinctions.' This means that even foreign governments treat Indians better than the kinsmen of our own governing class! With the knife we offered in war, helped them with men and money, and fought with them shoulder to shoulder. At that time their honeyed tongue called us comrades. But as soon as victors was complete, these very moral wretches treated these very comrades and their kinsmen worse than any civilised government could think of doing. And the present position in East Africa is that Indians are sought to be expelled from that colony! To excel comrades and brothers is thus the morality of the East African whites! And Lord Milner is not ashamed to say that these revolting grievances should only be mitigated. Well the question is still under consideration and we are thus compelled to be silent on it. One thing, however, is certain that if East Africa and other colonies resolve to become 'white,' India too will have to do its duty in retaliation by insisting on expelling every colonial from its trade, services and other walks of life. The spirit of retaliation is brooding over this question for long, and with such material it is sure to wreak its vengeance on those who have offended."

22. "The case of Indians in East Africa continues to agitate the public mind. While non-official contributions to the press of the country reveal startling facts and give glimpses of a grave state of affairs, the Government remains unmoved from its calm composure, so much so that it finds itself at leisure to practise provoking camouflage with respect to it. It is generally believed in this country that Sir Benjamin Robertson, who has gone to South Africa in connection with the

The Government of India and the position of Indians in East Africa. *Gujarati Punch* (20) 25th Apl. Eng. cols.

Commission *re* Indian grievances in South Africa, will pay an official visit to British East Africa after he is free from his present duties; but reading in an editorial of the *East African Chronicle* of 13th March 1920 that Sir Benjamin was coming to East Africa only as a visitor, Mr. Dhanwantrao B. Desai addressed a letter to the Government of India to know the truth in the matter, and the reply which he has received from the sympathetic Government of Lord Chelmsford is as follows: 'I am directed to say that Sir Benjamin Robertson is proceeding to British East Africa as a Representative of the Indian Government and will make a report to this Government on the position of Indians there. In the absence of the Governor of the Protectorate and pending the Conference between him and Lord Milner in London, Sir Benjamin's discussions with the authorities in British East Africa will be informal.' (Italics are ours.) And so while the Governor of the Protectorate is busy consulting Lord Milner about a suitable plan of 'rewarding' the Indians for their war services, Sir Benjamin Robertson carries on an informal discussion with the authorities in B. E. A. 'What more do we want?'

10. Reiterating the fact that it was the Indians that settled in East Africa prior to the Europeans and reclaimed the soil there, the *Swadesamitran*, of the 1st May, compares the conduct of the Europeans there in trying to oust the Indians to a guest turning out the host and observes:—It will be legitimate on the part of the Indians to demand that, by virtue of their being the prior settlers in the country and their having improved it, they should be granted certain special privileges. But they do not do so and all that they ask for is equal treatment with others. The

Europeans, however, being the favoured ones, demand special conveniences to themselves to the prejudice of the Indians. With the hope of getting justice, a representation of their grievances, some Indians from East Africa went to London and interviewed the Secretary of State for India and the Secretary for the colonies and it appears the former expressed his sympathy for them, while the latter was not prepared to do even that. He seems to have added that no details of their interview should be published and we do not know why. If the demand of the Indians is legitimate, can they get it or not?

Referring to the news that it has been notified in German East Africa now under the control of the British Government that any one in the Colony may be asked to quit it within a stated period on penalty of undergoing imprisonment for six months and paying a fine of Rs. 5,000 and to the remark of the Rev. Andrews that this will affect the Indians most, the *Lokopakari*, of the 15th April, observes:—Can any European say that the Indians had no share in conquering the German East Africa for the British? It is a grievous sin to insult, on account of difference in colour, the Indians who joined with the Europeans and hoisted the flag of victory. The European war was the result of the atrocities committed for a long time by the world. Still the world has not yet learnt a lesson.

Remarking that the whites in the Colonies are puffed up with the pride that they have been sent by God to wield power on earth and, therefore, consider the Indians to be slaves and treat them as such, the *Desabhaktas*, of the 3rd May, refers to the Indians in South Africa having been treated worse than animals prior to the intervention of Mr. Gandhi and to the statement of the Rev. Andrews who has recently returned from a tour in Africa that the inimical feeling now smouldering in the hearts of the whites there against the Indians, may at any time blaze into a flame and observes:—Do the whites there know why the British took up arms against Germany? Have they not learnt any lesson from the European war? When will they come to have a spirit of equality? The South African question is ever wounding the feelings of the Indians. Will this wound be healed at least in the 'new era'?

THE *Dainik Basumati* (Calcutta) of the 21st April writes:—In an interview with a representative of the *Bombay Chronicle* an Indian Moslem member of the East African Legislative Council has declared that by passing the Undesirables Ordinance, the East African Government has seriously prejudiced the interests of the Indian emigrants. All India ought to stir up an agitation over the matter.

Referring to the deputation that waited upon Mr. Montagu to protest against oppression on Indians in East Africa, *Ibid.* the *Dainik Basumati* (Calcutta) of the 22nd April

writes:—We hope that English statesmen will not turn a deaf ear to the earnest prayers of those who brought about the present prosperity of East Africa by promoting agriculture, commerce, etc.

DAINIK BASUMATI
April 21st, 1920

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