

**Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru**

Series 2 Volume 11

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**To Syama Prasad Mookerjee<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi

2 June 1949

My dear Syama Prasad,

I have almost decided to go to Ladakh early next month. I am going there on the occasion of the big annual fair at the Hemis Gompa Monastery<sup>2</sup>, which is the biggest monastery in Ladakh. There will be a large collection of people there from surrounding territories, including Tibet and possibly Central Asia. It is not easy to get there and it involves some trekking in high mountain altitudes.

Somebody suggested to me that it would be worthwhile to take the Buddha relics to this place on that occasion. The Lamas from Ladakh mentioned this to me also. I am not at all sure that this is feasible, as the way is difficult, and I should not like to leave them there. But I should like you to consider this matter and advise me.

Yours Sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

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**To Vallabhbhai Patel**

New Delhi 30 May 1949

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<sup>1</sup> File No. 2(275)/48-PMS

<sup>2</sup> The Hemis Gompa, forty-four kilometers from Leh, was built by Chapgon Gyalshas and is known for its summer festivals.

As I told you, I have promised to go to Leh early in July. On further enquiry I found that the place I am supposed to visit is 25 miles from Leh. This means marching along a mountain path, and is normally two day's march, though it can be done in a day. A visit thus will take longer than I had thought at first. At the same time I discovered that the occasion for this visit is important from the point of view not only of Ladakh but of larger areas all round, including Tibet. There is a big Buddhist fair held at the Chief monastery at Ladakh. I think I should go there. Altogether it will mean six day's absence from Delhi from 3 July to the 9<sup>th</sup>.

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### **Letter to the Premiers of Provinces**

New Delhi

June 3, 1949

...9. I am thinking of paying a visit to Ladakh<sup>3</sup> early next month on the occasion of the great Buddhist fair at the Chief monastery of Ladakh<sup>4</sup>, a little beyond Leh. This fair attracts Buddhists from round-about areas, Tibet and Central Asia also. It is not particularly easy to reach there and my visit will mean by absence from Delhi for about a week. But I think this will be worthwhile from many points of view. From an entirely personal point of view, I am looking forward to it greatly, as a trek in the mountains at 12000 feet altitude is an exhilarating experience.

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<sup>3</sup> Nehru visited Ladakh from 4 to 8 July 1949

<sup>4</sup> Hemis Gompa

... 12. In the little State of Sikkim, which is not on the same level as the Indian States<sup>5</sup>, there has been trouble between the Maharaja<sup>6</sup> and his people, with the result that there is hardly any effective administration functioning there. Under pressure, the Maharaja agreed to appoint a ministry. But this ministry is totally inadequate to meet the situation and trouble is feared. At the request of the authorities in Sikkim, we are thinking of appointing an administrator there. Meanwhile we have taken the precaution to send a company of troops there from Darjeeling. The future of Sikkim is tied up completely with India and we can accept no other basis for it. The best course for Sikkim would be to accede to India, as other States have done. But, unwisely, the people there hesitate to accede. The only other course for them, we have pointed out, is to have a treaty with India which is tantamount to accession on the three subjects. We are considering this treaty<sup>7</sup>.

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**To Vijayalakshmi Pandit<sup>8</sup>**

New Delhi

May 31, 1949

Nan dear,

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<sup>5</sup> Sikkim had signed a Standstill Agreement on matter of common concern existing between the Crown and Sikkim as on 15 August 1947 were to continue between them.

<sup>6</sup> Tashi Namgyal (1891-1963); Maharaja of Sikkim 1914-63

<sup>7</sup> By the treaty signed the Government of India and Sikkim in December 1950, India assumed responsibility for external affairs, defense and communications of Sikkim

<sup>8</sup> J.N. Collection

I came back from Kashmir yesterday after two days in Srinagar. It was very delightful there and though I was kept very busy, I enjoyed my visit. On the whole, I found conditions somewhat better there than previously. Quiet a number of our ambassadors have gone there and Srinagar, though still rather empty, has some air of normality. Of course the main problem pursues us and we shall probably have to face some new development in the course of the next week or two. I have almost decided to pay a visit to Leh in Ladakh early in July. I shall really have to go beyond Leh to a famous monastery where a big fair is being held. This attracts Buddhists from Tibet and surrounding areas. This visit will take almost a week, even though I go to Leh by air. I am looking forward to it greatly, as it would involve some little trekking at high altitudes.

I continue to get invitations from America. All these are referred back to your Embassy. Obviously no program can be arranged now and we must wait. It is my intention to go to the U.S.A. via London. I have no particular desire to go there on my return. The real reason for my going via London on my way to U.S., though I want to go there on my return. The real reason for my going via London is to take advantage of Air India as far as I can. I see no reason to pay money to an American airline if I can help it. Dollars are very precious commodity nowadays. Even during my visit to the U.S., I want to do things as economically as possible so as to spend as few dollars as I can. This mention of dollars leads me to ask you to impress your Embassy staff to be as economical as possible about dollars. This has become a major problem for us and I want to set an example when I am in America. I should like to avoid buying anything there.

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### **China and Tibet<sup>9</sup>**

In view of developments in China, we should keep in close touch with their reactions in Tibet, and we shall think of the policy we should pursue there in case anything happens. The first thing to do is to get fairly full reports from Kashgar as to what is happening there. I do not know if you have received any such reports. If so, I should like to see them.

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### **Stand on China<sup>10</sup>**

Reference telegram 185 dated 10<sup>th</sup> June from Indembassy, Nanking.  
2. In paragraph 4, the American Ambassador is reported to have said that the Indian Government had promised to cooperate with the U.S.A, in China. We have of course done no such thing. Our Ambassador might be informed that we do not proposed to align ourselves with anybody in regard to China.

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<sup>9</sup> Note to the Foreign Secretary, 5 June 1949, J.N Collection

<sup>10</sup> Note to the Secretary General, 19 June 1949, File No. 46(15)-AWT/48, M.E.A., N.A.I