

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series 2, Volume 61

June 1- July 31, 1960

Bhutan and Sikkim

184- To B.V. Keskar: Radio Station in Gangtok¹

25 June 1960

My dear Balkrishana,²

I enclose a copy of a letter I have received from the Maharaja of Sikkim.³

Apa Pant⁴ has also written stressing the importance of having a radio station in Gangtok. This station, of course, will be under our control.

What is the position? Please let me know so that I can send a reply to the Maharaja.

Yours sincerely,

Jawaharlal Nehru

185- Tashi Namgyal: Sikkim Radio must be under Indian Control⁵

30 June 1960

My dear Maharaja Sahib,

I received your letter of the 17th June⁶ a few days ago. I referred it to our

¹ Letter.

² Balkrishna V. Keskar, the Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting.

³ See Appendix 37.

⁴ Political Officer of India in Bhutan and Sikkim.

⁵ Letter.

Minister for Information & Broadcasting, Dr. B.V. Keskar, in order to find out what the position was. Dr. Keskar has now written to me on this subject of establishing a radio station in Sikkim.⁷

This business of radio broadcasting is a highly technical matter and is also allied to the international system of broadcasting. It is only within the limits of the frequencies agreed to internationally that a country can function. As you must know, radio broadcasting has developed in many foreign countries into television. This is even more intricate and complicated. We in India have not been anxious to go in for television because we thought that we should concentrate on other nation-building activities first. All we are doing is to try to put up a small experimental station in order to learn the technique to some extent for future use when this may be possible. We have thus been deliberately slow because, in our opinion, other matters were more important.

I mention this to bear out to some extent what you have yourself said in your letter to me. Radio broadcasting in Sikkim can only be undertaken with high technical skill and in conformity with international arrangements which have been agreed to between India and international organisations. I understand that there have been some talks about this matter and even some detailed discussions between our Minister, Dr. B.Y. Keskar, and the Maharajkumar.⁸ Apparently at that time no final arrangement was agreed to. Later, the Maharajkumar visited Delhi and had discussions on this subject with the Director-General of the All India Radio.⁹ It was then, I believe, pointed out that the All India Radio could only agree to the starting of a radio broadcasting station in Sikkim provided the control of the station and the policy to be followed was under the control of the Government of India, although there should of course be close collaboration with the Sikkim Durbar. There was another aspect to be

⁶ See Appendix 37.

⁷ See Appendix 52.

⁸ Paldon Thondup Namgyal, the Maharajkumar of Sikkim.

⁹ J.C. Mathur.

borne in mind. Unless we could manage to get the agreement of the International Tele-Communications Union to a certain frequency for the radio- station in Sikkim by the middle of 1961, this offer would lapse and there would be little chance of getting this frequency later.

Dr. Keskar visited Sikkim in May last when he had a talk with the Maharajkumar on this subject. He gathered then that the Maharajkumar was agreeable to the proposal he had made. But apparently nothing further has been done in this respect.

I presume that it is in continuation of these last talks that you have been good enough to write to me now on this subject and that Your Highness is agreeable now to the starting of a radio station in Sikkim by the All India Radio on the conditions which have been already stated by the External Affairs Ministry. In your letter you mention that "for the present" your resources would not permit you to establish and undertake such a project and, therefore, you would like the Government of India to do so. I do not quite understand what the words "for the present" refer to. So far as we are concerned, we shall gladly endeavour to put up the radio station on the conditions which have already been stated, that is, the station will be under the control of the Government of India and the policy also would be determined by the Government of India. If these conditions are accepted then we shall take the necessary steps. I take it that Your Highness is agreeable to these conditions.

I have ventured to write to you at some length so that there might be a full understanding between us. If Your Highness or the Maharajkumar would be good enough to intimate your wishes in this matter to me or to the External Affairs Ministry, we shall convey your wishes to our Ministry of Information & Broadcasting.

I am happy that there is all round progress in the development activities of Sikkim.

I trust that Your Highness is keeping well.

With all good wishes and regards,

Yours sincerely,

186. To Subimal Dutt: Interpreting Bhutan Treaty¹⁰

(Question No. 218)

I agree with you. The Speaker might be requested to disallow this question. The question depends on the interpretation of certain Articles in our Treaty with Bhutan. We do not agree with the interpretation put on it in the statement made by the Prime Minister of Bhutan¹¹ at a Press Conference. Our position is well known in Bhutan. We do not wish to enter into a controversy on this subject with Bhutan, as that can only be advantageous to those countries and others who desire to loosen the bonds of India and Bhutan. Therefore, we would request that this question be not allowed.

187. To M. Elias: Sikkim and Bhutan Borders¹²

20 July 1960

Dear Shri Elias,¹³

On the 6th July you sent me a cutting from the Bengali newspaper Jugantar dated July 4. I have had the article examined by our experts here and enclose a note on the subject.¹⁴ You will see that although the area under consideration was ceded by Bhutan to India by the Treaty of Sinchula, 1865, the cession never became effective and the area did not

¹⁰ Note, 8 July 1960.

¹¹ Jigme Palden Dorji.

¹² Letter.

¹³ Mohammed Elias, CPI, Lok Sabha MP from Howrah, West Bengal.

¹⁴ See Appendix 99.

become part of Indian territory. The British Government of India decided more than forty years ago to award a portion of the area to Sikkim and let the remainder remain with Bhutan.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

China

428. To N.R. Pillai: Indian Troops at Nathu La and Kongka¹⁵

I think some answer should be sent to the attached telegram¹⁶ in which complaint is made about our aircraft etc.

2. So far as I know, no Indian troops have crossed beyond Nathu La, which might be verified from Defence. As for our aircraft flying over Kongka Pass, you might find out from Air Marshal Mukerjee but we need not have any kind of a specific or detailed answer. We may inform our Ambassador¹⁷ that our aircraft are performing their normal duties on our side and visit some of our posts for supplies.

3. You might inform our Ambassador that I propose to pay a very brief visit to some of our border posts in Ladakh early next month.¹⁸ He need not inform the Chinese about this. This is only for his own information.

¹⁵ Note, 26 June 1960.

¹⁶ CCB No. 7887; it has not been traced.

¹⁷ G. Parthasarathi, the Ambassador of India to China.

¹⁸ For Nehru's speech to the officers and men of the Indian Army at Leh, 4 July 1960, see item 78.

429- To V.K. Krishna Menon: China Attack on Nepal Border¹⁹

Your telegram 239 June 30th about Nepal-Tibet border incident. There has undoubtedly been serious incident there and this has produced strong reactions in Nepal and India. Exact facts not known yet but it appears only one Nepalese killed by Chinese firing. A number of other Nepalese arrested and taken away by Chinese.²⁰ Even Chinese admit certain breach of recent treaty with Nepal which laid down demilitarized zone on either side border.²¹ They admit having come into this zone in pursuit of some refugees. In addition to this their firing on Nepalese appears wholly unjustified.

2. It appears that large-scale fighting has been going on within Tibet between rebel elements and Chinese soldiers.

3. We do not think that recent Nepal-Tibet border incident indicates any particular forward policy. But it does indicate that general attitude of Chinese in Tibet is very objectionable. They throw their weight about and do not care much for frontiers and the like.

430- To B.P. Koirala: Nepal-China Incident of 28 June²²

10 July 1960

¹⁹ Telegram, 1 July 1960, sent through the High Commission of India to Ghana. Krishna Menon was in Accra at the time. The telegram was repeated to the High Commission of India to the UK, and copied to N.R. Pillai and M.J. Desai.

²⁰ The *Times of India* reported on 30 June and 4 July 1960 that Chinese troops attacked inside Nepal, near Mustang, on 28 June, killing one Nepal Army officer. The Nepal Government claimed seventeen civilians missing; China admitted to taking only ten prisoners.

²¹ By the Treaty of 21 March 1960, 20 kilometres on either side of the border was demilitarized.

²² Letter.

[My dear BP],²³

Thank you for your letter of the 7th July which reached me yesterday through our Ambassador.²⁴

We have, of course, followed with the greatest interest the recent developments on your border and the incident there has attracted world attention. The incident itself perhaps was not of major significance. But the whole context of things leading up to that incident and subsequently is, I think, of considerable significance. When I heard of this shooting by the Chinese and killing a Nepalese citizen and capturing others, I did not think that this was a prelude to some kind of invasion. But I did think that the general aggressive attitude of the Chinese was persisting and they had not got rid of their method of bullying and throwing their weight about. This was a bad outlook for the future.

I came to the conclusion some time ago that it is not at all an easy matter to understand the mind of the Chinese Government. They think and speak in a language which is different from ours (I am not referring to Chinese, but rather to the method of thinking and the use of words which have different meanings to what they mean to us). On the one hand they are convinced of their own rightness and consider people who might disagree with them as being either fools or knaves.

On the other hand, they have not yet got over the first revolutionary phase of their movement. They are quite extraordinarily one-sided in their outlook and have no room for what the other party might think. Urged by their revolutionary fervour as well as the sense of growing power that they possess, they inevitably tend to be expansive. A secondary reason is their enormous population which grows. They seem to believe that every piece of territory that once belonged to the Chinese Empire must now or in the future revert to them.

We came to the conclusion, some considerable time back, that the right

²³ The Prime Minister of Nepal.

²⁴ Harishwar Dayal.

way to deal with China is to be friendly and courteous and at the same time to be completely firm. They do not appreciate weakness and always try to take advantage of it. We have tried to follow this policy with them, but naturally the emphasis varies and depends upon the particular circumstances then prevailing.

I do not think that China intends to risk a major war. But wherever they can, rather quietly and stealthily, occupy some territory, they try to do so. It is in this way that they have occupied some of our mountain territory in Eastern Ladakh and on a basis of distorted history they lay claim to it. We reject that claim and we have taken adequate steps now to prevent any further incursion. We are fairly strong on our borders at present and our strength will increase. Our main difficulty has been the lack of communications in these distant regions. We have, therefore, undertaken a massive programme of road-building throughout our border regions. This, of course, is a major undertaking which takes time. Nevertheless, we are expediting it.

The position, therefore, insofar as we are concerned, is that we are progressively strengthening our long border with Tibet-China, and it is not an easy matter for the Chinese to push through anywhere without a major military effort. I do not think they will make that major effort because that will involve not only for us but for them also far-reaching consequences. But I am quite sure that if we slacken anywhere on our border, they will try to creep in. This, however, will not now be an easy matter anywhere for them.

The other question still remains, that is, what we are to do about the area of what we consider our territory which is already occupied by them. This is, in extent, considerable, but is remote and very sparsely populated. It is difficult of access because it lies principally between 13,000 and 19,000 feet in altitude. The question becomes for us principally a military one, apart from the political aspects. I cannot give an answer now as to what we may do at a particular time in the future. For the present, we are prepared for any contingency and go on strengthening ourselves.

Premier Chou En-lai's letter addressed to you was a curious one.²⁵ The apology, as far as it went, was satisfactory. But even if there was some confusion about the exact border, what business had his troops to shoot down people on the border, even if they were refugees. He seems to take this for granted. Then again his statement that the Nepalese group was mistaken for Tibetans is not easy to believe. I imagine, though I am not sure, that in appearance and in clothing the Nepalese would be different. But, anyhow, when they had captured some of your people, surely they must have found out immediately that they were not Tibetans. Why then did they hold on to them for a number of days? From no point of view was this correct. Why also should they come into the de-militarized zone, even if Tibetan refugees had gone there? That is no justification for their troops to come in. What is more, they want the right to come into part of that zone even in the future.

According to our information, the military build-up of the Chinese in Tibet is considerable and extends to the borders. I do not think that this represents an attempt to prepare for an invasion of Nepal or India. But the mere fact of that build-up necessarily leads to apprehensions to both our countries.

All this thinking leads to the conclusion that we must guard our borders. This does not mean that large armies should be placed there, though any kind of intrusion should be met by a check-post. Numbers do not matter much in this connection except that they should not be too few. We are not placing these check-posts with a view to engaging in battle, but rather as symbols of our sovereignty over that area. The Chinese can only come in by violating that symbol and committing clear aggression.

In Ladakh, where I went recently, our forward sentries are within almost a stone's throw from Chinese sentries. Behind sentries on either side, there are larger posts. There is not much chance of either side, therefore,

²⁵ The letter, dated 2 July 1960, is published in R.K. Jain (ed.), *China South Asian Relations 1947-1980*, Vol. 2 (New Delhi: Radiant, 1981), pp. 331-333; the source is not mentioned.

marching forward without coming into conflict with the other party. Of course, we have forbidden any such advance because we wish to avoid incidents. But the Chinese know very well that any attempt on their part to advance will be opposed vigorously.

As you perhaps know, some of our officers are in Peking at present examining the factual data in regard to our borders. It is a very laborious and time-consuming process. The Chinese methods even in dealing with a simple issue of fact are very peculiar.

With warm regards to you and to your wife,

Yours sincerely,

Jawaharlal Nehru

(b) Tibet

431- To Swami Vidyananda Saraswati: Pilgrimages to Manasarovar²⁶

27 June 1960

Dear Swamyji,²⁷

I have your letter without date.

From such reports as we have been getting, internal trouble is continuing in Tibet, sometimes leading to conflicts between the Tibetan rebels and Chinese authorities. I imagine that it is because of this that the Chinese authorities have announced that pilgrims should not go to Manasarovar or Kailash.²⁸ It does not seem to me proper for pilgrim tours to be organised

²⁶ Letter.

²⁷ Of Sri Geeta Satsang Kailasksetra, Naini Tal.

²⁸ *The Times of India* reported on 15 June 1960 that China had informed the Indian Consul- General in Lhasa that it would be unsafe for pilgrims to go to Kailash and Mansarovar. This had been done in 1959.

when the authorities there are against such tours. It is not a question of not wanting any facilities from the Chinese Government. The Government might well stop these pilgrims from going there and this will no doubt bring much hardship on the pilgrims. It will not be fair to the pilgrims to be asked to go there when it is known that they might not be able to complete their yatra. Our advice, therefore, would be that such tours should not be undertaken this year.

You say something about Chinese currency being made available. I do not understand this and we cannot ask the Chinese Government for any such facility when they have themselves said that pilgrims should not go.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

432- To Satya Narayan Sinha: Nepal-China Incident for Parliament²⁹

30 June 1960

My dear Satya Narayan,

I have your letter of June 30th with which you have sent me Ranga's³⁰ letter. I think you might tell him that you referred his letter to me. Should a situation arise on our borders or elsewhere which requires an early consideration by Parliament, we would certainly advise an earlier summoning of Parliament.³¹ But although new developments are taking place in Tibet and also on the Nepal border, I do not think that the time is quite ripe for a Parliamentary discussion. The major fact appears to be that there have been internal troubles in Tibet. The other fact is of a

²⁹ Letter.

³⁰ N.G. Ranga, elected Congress Lok Sabha MP from Tenali, Andhra Pradesh, in 1957; from June 1959, Swatantra Party MP; President of Swatantra Party.

³¹ The Parliament Session was to begin on 1 August 1960.

border incident on the Nepal frontier with Tibet. So far as internal troubles in Tibet are concerned, we may refer to them but we can hardly discuss them in Parliament with any profit. So far as Nepal frontier incident is concerned, I am not at all sure that the Nepalese Government would like our discussing that incident in a big way. Therefore, I do not see any advantage in specially summoning Parliament which is going to meet anyhow in a month's time. To do so may well create a false impression in the country about the actual situation.

This applies also to a meeting of the Consultative Committee of Members of Parliament. There is very little that we shall be able to tell them in the way of facts apart from what has appeared in the press. If, however, some further development takes place, we shall certainly consider convening a meeting of the Consultative Committee.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

433. To Shankar Prasad: Ladakh Militia³²

15 July 1960

My dear Shankar Prasad,

I enclose a letter from Kushak Bakula about the Ladakh Militia³³ and a copy of my reply to him.³⁴ Who is in charge of the Ladakh Militia? Is our Defence Ministry responsible for them? I do not know what their pay and allowances are. If, apart from the major question which I have dealt with in my reply to Kushak Bakula, any other grievances have to be looked into, you can forward these papers to the authority concerned.

³² Letter to Secretary, Kashmir Affairs.

³³ For details, see Indian Army website: <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/LAND-FORCES/Units/Infantry/116-Jak-Li.html>; accessed 21 February 2014.

³⁴ See item 434.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

434. To Kushak Bakula: Ladakh Militia and Regular Army³⁵

15 July 1960

Dear Bakulaji,

I have your two letters of July 13 and 14.

So far as the Vihara at Delhi is concerned, we shall try to collect some money.³⁶

Your second letter deals with the Ladakh Militia, and you say that they have some grievances, in particular in regard to pay, because they do not get as much as our regular troops. I am surprised to read this. Of course, they do not get the same as our regular troops. In no part of India does a militia get the same pay as regular troops. The regular troops have to undergo very long and special training while the militia stand on a different footing, and is not meant for the same purpose as the regular troops. The two cannot be compared.

It should also be remembered that the regular troops have to go far away from their homes and are cut off from their families, some times for years.

This would also apply to pensions. .

But if there are any other grievances which can be remedied, they will be looked into.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

³⁵ Letter.

³⁶ See also items 273, 277, 285 and 289.

435. To Kesho Ram: Kailas Pilgrimage³⁷

Please reply to this letter as follows: -

"Dear Swamiji,³⁸

The Prime Minister has received your letter of the 11th July. He has already conveyed to you the request of the Chinese Government that no pilgrims should go to Kailas this year because of internal troubles in Tibet.³⁹ If any pilgrims, nevertheless, go there, they will do so on their own responsibility. The Government of India cannot insist on the Chinese Government providing safe escorts.⁴⁰

Yours sincerely,"

436. To The Dalai Lama: Education of Tibetan Children⁴¹

28 July 1960

Your Holiness,

I received your letter of the 10th July some days ago. I am sorry that I could not reply to you earlier.

I entirely agree that the existing facilities for the education of Tibetan children are inadequate. Even before the receipt of your letter I had asked that steps should be taken without delay to expand these facilities. I therefore welcome your proposals to start a school at Dharamsala and to

³⁷ Note, 16 July 1960.

³⁸ Swami Vidyananda Saraswati.

³⁹ See item 431.

⁴⁰ According to *The Times of India* of 6 and 17 July 1960, on 4 July, Sampurnanand wished bon voyage" to Swami Vidyananda Saraswati and fifteen pilgrims who set out from Naini Talon 15 July; five more were to join en route.

⁴¹ Letter.

expand the existing school at Mussoorie. One of our senior officers has been placed on special duty to review the question of the education of Tibetan refugee children in India and to suggest immediate steps for improving them. He is visiting Kalimpong, Sikkim and other areas where there are Tibetan refugees. I am told that he will also visit Dharamsala early in August. We shall ask him to call on you and have a personal discussion with you. You can rest assured that the Government of India will do everything possible to look after the needs of the Tibetan children.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru