

Trading with India

The Indian Trade Agencies in Tibet



The Indian Trade Agency in Yatung

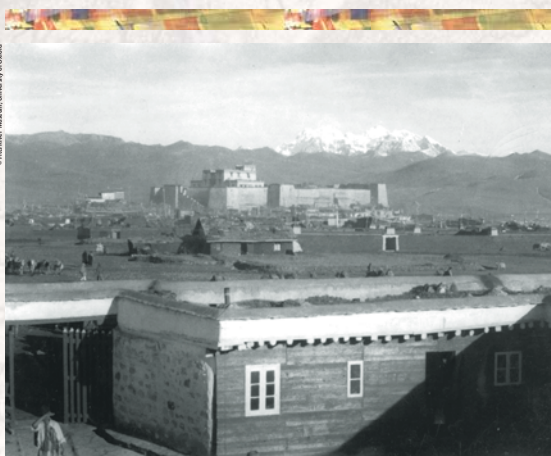


Indian staff relaxing in front of the Trade Agency

Under the Lhasa Convention (1904), it was agreed that Tibet and British India would open three Trade Agencies in Gyantse, Gartok and Yatung. The latter was strategically located in the Chumbi Valley, near the Sikkim border. Between 1904 and 1947, officers from the Indian Political Service functioned in Gyantse and Yatung under the supervision of the Political Officer in Sikkim.



Indian wireless station in Gyantse



Dak Bungalow in Phari with Dzong (fort) at the background

During the summer, an Agency was also maintained at Gartok in Western Tibet where an officer, usually a native from the Indian Himalayas, was posted as the Trade Agent.

In 1936, a full-fledged mission of British India was opened in Lhasa.



K.C. Johorey, the Indian Trade Agent in Yatung hoisting the tricolour flag



The Tibetan Trade Agent visits the Indian Agency in Yatung

Tibet was a coveted posting; the mystery and isolation of the Roof of the World attracted many young adventurous officers. After Independence, the British officers were progressively replaced by Indians from the Ministry of External Affairs and Indian Administrative Frontier Service.



A godown in Gangtok



Staging Post at Tuna



The Political Officer's Residence in Gangtok