

**SOME EXCERPTS from official correspondence of the EIC during the rebellion of 1857-58 relating to the situation in Bihar and the defiant Maharani INDRAJIT KUER of Tikari (d-1878)**

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Inclosure 249 in No. 1.

*The Secretary to the Government of Bengal to the Secretary to the Government of India.*

Sir,

*Fort William, November 18, 1857.*

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th October last, on the subject of the enforcement of the Arms Bill Act XXVIII of 1857.

2. The proposition made by the Lieutenant-Governor on the 23rd September was to enforce the last thirty sections of the Act on and after the first of the following month.

3. This was assented to by his Lordship in Council, except as to section 26 of the Act, and as the assent did not reach the Lieutenant-Governor till the 16th October, the enforcement of the Act was notified on the 20th idem, as to take place from the date of the notification.

4. Regarding section 26, the instructions of the Governor-General in Council were in the following words :—

“ Before extending the provisions of section 26 to the Lower Provinces, I am directed

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to request that the Lieutenant-Governor will name a day after which his Honor proposes that the possession of cannon shall become unlawful. There are places near to which it will be desirable to have the means of enforcing this section at once.”

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8. A case is now before the Lieutenant-Governor in which guns are known to have been collected in the fort of Tikaree in the zillah of Behar, so as to require artillery to enforce their surrender, if surrender should be otherwise refused. But the Lieutenant-Governor has no means of judging how soon it may be possible to obtain the assistance of artillery for this purpose.

9. This letter should obviously have been sooner submitted. I am directed, therefore, to explain that the delay has arisen from an accident, for which the Lieutenant-Governor desires to express his regret.

I have, &c.

A. R. YOUNG.

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Inclosure 2 in No. 12.

*The Secretary to the Government of India to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal.*

Sir,

*Fort William, November 30, 1857.*

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 18th instant, relative to the enforcement of Section 26, Act No. XXVIII of 1857, in Bengal.

2. The intention of the Governor-General in Council is, that the Lieutenant-Governor should name beforehand to the Government of India, the day from which he would propose to make the possession of cannon unlawful in any part of Bengal; in order that, at places where resistance is expected, a force may be at hand to exact obedience to the law. The Government of India would then supply such a force, if possible; if not possible, it would probably request the Lieutenant-Governor to delay the enforcement of the surrender of such unlawful cannon.

3. His Lordship in Council did not contemplate having a force at every place where the surrender of private cannon may have to be enforced. But, to take the instance cited by the Lieutenant-Governor, it is very little desirable that section 26 should be proclaimed as in force in Behar, and that no notice should be taken by the Local Government of the guns in Tikaree Fort, or that if notice be taken it should be ineffectual. This last his Lordship in Council believes is likely to be the case if the Government should have no force at hand; whereas, if there be a force at hand, it may be expected that a prompt example made at Tikaree will have its effect throughout Bengal.

4. At the present time, the Government of India has not at disposal any European troops or artillery to send to Tikaree, and, therefore, his Lordship in Council is of opinion that no good object would be gained, but that some discredit to the power and authority of Government would be risked, by professing to put in force Section 26.

5. The Lieutenant-Governor shall be informed, as soon as a force is available

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for Tikaree. Meanwhile the Governor-General in Council will be glad if his Honor will ascertain, as far as possible, the places at which it is likely that the surrender of cannon will have to be enforced. It should not be difficult to learn approximately in Bengal where artillery is in the possession of private persons, and how the owners may be expected to meet the demand for its surrender.

I have, &c.

C. BEADON.

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Inclosure 284 in No. 1.

*Narrative of Events.*

DURING the week ending on the 14th of November, the public peace remained unbroken throughout the Lower Provinces of Bengal, except in some places in the Chota Nagpore Division, and in Tuppah Beloonjah, in the District of Behar.

4 On the 12th of November the Magistrate of Shahabad reported that that district appeared to be resuming its former state of tranquillity, and that Umeer Sing was stated to have been wholly deserted by his rabble, and to have joined the 32nd mutineers in Chynepore. This latter intelligence was communicated also by the Deputy Magistrate of Sherghotty, who reported by telegraph that the two detachments of the 32nd had been joined by Umeer Sing and his party, adding that large bodies of mutineers and rebels were said to be collecting in Palamow and Budyghur, and among the hills south of Rhotas.

5. The Rance of Tikaree was reported, upon good authority, to have been raising men armed with firelocks. She was known to have four cannons mounted on one of the

gates of her fortress, and three jungals, and was said to have others concealed. It was also reported that she was making powder, and increasing her stock of arms. These proceedings seeming to be of a suspicious character, the Commissioner called upon her to submit an immediate explanation of her conduct, and without hinting that he suspected her of any disaffection to the State, but affecting to believe her preparations were directed against a Begum with whom she is at enmity, warned her against resorting to any violent measures. Mr. Samuells recommends a detachment of troops being sent to, and retained at, Gya, until matters are satisfactorily settled, and the extension of Section 26 of Act XXVIII of 1857, to the districts of his division, so as to give him a ground for demanding the surrender of the Ranee's guns, without appearing to aim the measure exclusively at her.

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65. A communication received from Mr. Samuells, submitting his observations, and those of Mr. Farquharson, on the matters noticed by Mr. Tayler in his letter of the 2nd October, as calculated to endanger the safety of the Province of Behar, was forwarded to the Government of India in the Home Department, with the Lieutenant-Governor's remarks.

66. Thirteen intercepted letters were forwarded to the Foreign Department.

A. R. YOUNG,

Fort William, November 28, 1857.

Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

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Inclosure 296 in No. 1.

*The Commissioner of Patna to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal.*

(Telegraphic.)

Patna, November 12, 1857.

ALL quiet. Sewan force has moved to Mirwah. Four officers leave Patna this evening. Disturbances in Palamow should be looked to. Teharee Ranee said to be enlisting men and practising her guns, one burst and wounded one of her men; not clear weather; these preparations are against Government, or the Begum, or simply for her

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own protection. I have written to her. English's brigade should stand fast, lest troops may be wanted. Will Robert Stendale and young Hennesy, at Agra, do for the Patna Police Corps?

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Inclosure 298 in No 1.

*The Commissioner of Patna to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal.*

Sir,

Patna, November 12, 1857.

I HAVE the honor to report all quiet in the division.

2. The rumours of disturbances at Patna have died away; they appear to have originated entirely in the desire of one party of intriguers to injure another. I have still got the Sikhs (about 40) in the opium-godown; the "Jumna" lying just below the godown, and the "Patna" off one of the principal ghauts, about a mile farther down.

3. Reports from the neighbourhood of Palamow mention that much anxiety is felt in consequence of the state of affairs in that district. The tribes called Cheeroo and Khurwar are said to be in arms, to the number of 5,000 or 6,000, and to be attacking the zemindars, they are burning and pillaging in all directions. It is very desirable that a small force should move against them without delay.

4 The Ranee of Teharee is reported, upon good authority, to be raising men armed with firelocks. She has four guns mounted on her western gates and three junjals, and is said to have others concealed. It is also reported that she is making powder, and laying in a stock of arms. She exercises her people at the guns daily, in firing at a mark; one of them burst a few days ago, and wounded a golundauze of the name of Torab Ali, but she concealed the man in the zenana, and put the police off with evasions when they called on her to produce him. She has surrounded the house of the Begum, Modenaram's mistress, and allows no one to leave it. These proceedings, it must be owned, are of a very suspicious character, and unwilling as I am to believe that a woman who showed such prudence, and so much fidelity in the early part of these disturbances, is now going to adopt a course which must lead to her speedy ruin, it behoves us to take care that her folly does not prove injurious to ourselves, and that she is not allowed to form a nest of traitors in the heart of Behar. I have called upon her to submit an immediate explanation of her conduct, and without hinting that I suspect her of any disaffection to the State, affecting, indeed, to treat her preparations as directed against the Begum. I have warned her strongly of the danger of the course she is pursuing. I have also sent for Hetnaram and spoken to him, although, as the Lieutenant-Governor is aware, he exercises little or no influence over his wife. I would strongly recommend either that Major English's brigade should be directed to stand fast at Gya, or that a similar detachment should be sent to that place until this matter is settled.

5. I would also recommend that section 26 of Act XXVIII, of 1857, should be extended to these districts. This would give us an excuse for demanding her cannon without appearing to aim the measure directly at her, and the Ranee would not feel the prohibition so much as if it applies only to her.

6. The fort of Tikaree is situated on high ground, with earthworks all round, brick walls, and a wet-ditch of considerable breadth; any force proceeding against it should be accompanied by a 25-pounder. If the 26th section of the Arms' Act, however, is extended to this part of the country, and troops are held in readiness to act at Gya, I do not believe that it will be necessary to employ a military force. This matter is one of some gravity, and I request early orders regarding it.

7. Mr. Money must be provided with a small body of trustworthy men, with whom he can move about in his district, and restore order. I have requested Captain Rattray,

if he can do so without weakening his own force to a dangerous extent, to send Mr. Money fifty rank and file of the Sikhs, under a steady native officer, and to keep the Gya detachment at that strength. I am not sure that Captain Rattray himself, with the chief portion of his party, would not now be more useful at Gya than at Dehree. Umur Sing, by the latest accounts, has not above 100 men with him. A small force under Captain Stanton, and one of Captain Rattray's Lieutenant's would suffice, with the constant presence of Europeans on the Trunk Road to keep Umur Sing in check, and to prevent him from descending into the low country. Captain Rattray's presence would be most useful at Gya.

8. I have not yet received any official account of Captain Rattray's action with the 32nd. The demi-official account, however, which I forwarded to the Lieutenant-Governor, has put him in possession of all the material facts. The village into which the 32nd threw themselves is, I have since learnt from Mr. Wake, an exceeding strong place, full of ruined huts, with walls about 4 feet high, which formed a natural breastwork.

9. Captain Rattray and Mr. Wake abandoned the pursuit of the 32nd after following them as far as Behta. They found that the sepoys had made a tremendous march on the night of the engagement, and got quite beyond their reach. Mr. Wake has returned to Arrah and Captain Rattray to Dehree.

I have, &c

E. A. SAMUELLS.

P.S.—I see a statement in the papers that twenty-five Europeans have been selected to form a mounted police corps at Gya, but I have not heard anything on the subject from your office, nor have any instructions regarding the military defence of the Gya district, which you mention in a recent letter to the Magistrate of Gya, reached me as yet.

E. A. S.

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Incloſure 300 in No. 1.

*Petition of Syed Mohammed Wazed, 1st Grade Moonsiff, of Sewan, to the address of the Commissioner, dated November 9, 1857.*

SINCE the opening of the cutcherries I have been conducting my duties at Sewan, and I feel assured that you will have been informed by Mr. Lynch of what is going on here

2. The rajahs, zemindars, and others, of Sarun and Sewan are heartily loyal to Government, and are prepared to assist it. The European troops and Goorkhas at this station are all in good health, and they receive a sufficient supply of provisions here. The fifty Sikhs who were at Sewan have lately been located at Thannah Dooroomee, and everything is going on well. The Deputy Magistrate and the Opium Sahib are both in charge of their duties, and the Collector has, also, lately arrived here.

3. The following is a report on the state of Goruckpore. A person named Mosurruf Khan, who was confined in jail during the time of the English Hokims, and who was set at large along with other prisoners, has won the favours of Mahomed Hossein Khan, who has styled himself to be the nazim and chuckledar. In consequence of the oppressions of those two persons, the moharajuns, zemindars, &c., have become helpless, and the names of the parties who have been assaulted, whose houses have been pulled down, and who have been robbed of many lacs of rupees, are mentioned in the margin.\*

4. I know it to be certain that the chuckledar has thirteen guns with him, two of which are at Medo, two at Burrail, and the rest are at Goruckpore. Two of these guns were brought from Lucknow, and the rest are those which Mahomed Hossein found in the collectorate, and which he plundered from Shah Sulespore and others. He has 5,000 or 6,000 fighting men with him, and the rest are merely a rabble. The total number amounts to 10,000 or 12,000 men. The brother of Rajah Koer Sing, whose name is, perhaps, Ruttehojun Sing, has 700 mutinous sepoys with him, and he has now encamped at Burelet Bazar, and is now getting provisions collected at Selimpore. He has given out that he will soon reach Selimpore. The chuckledar is now at Goruckpore.

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6. The troops of Mr. Benny, the Magistrate of Azimghur, are at Doobooree, but they have not yet come in contact with the 2,000 mutineers at Burrail. The brother of Rajah Koer Sing, who was formerly at Burrail, has now encamped at Baretch Bazar. He is repairing an old fort belonging to the Rajah of Mujhowlee, and is collecting supplies by plundering the villages. He has 700 mutinous sepoys with him, and, besides the above, the Rajah of Nurporpore's men, and others, amounting on the whole to 1,500 men, are with him.

7. Of the several Rajahs of Goruckpore, only the Rajah of Sattaocoe has mutined, and joined the chuckledar with his troops. The rest of the Rajahs, namely, the Rajahs of Bysee and Gopalpore, are heartily loyal to Government. They have recently been compelled to make some presents and pay some money to the chuckledar for the safety of their life and property. The Maharajah of Mujhowlee has been loyal, he has received no assistance from Government, and his villages and Buretech Bazar have been plundered. The intentions of the Rajah of Tomkooee are not known.

8. I am glad to learn that the arrival of the Government troops at Sewan, and the location of the Sikhs at Dooroolee, have spread alarm among the mutineers, and that many of the chuckledar's men intend to relinquish his service.

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## Inclosure in No. 7.

*Special Narrative of Events, dated January 2, 1858.*

1. *Patna Division.*—ON the 5th December the Central Government telegraphed that they had received intelligence that upwards of 2,000 sepoy were about to cross the Gogra, near Burlea Ghaut, with the intention of passing into the district of Shahabad. About the same time the Magistrate of Ghazeepore also sent a rubocaree to the Magistrate of Shahabad, communicating intelligence to the same effect, and mentioning further, that the sepoy had two guns with them, and had collected 200 boats for crossing the river. This intelligence getting abroad, gave rise to considerable alarm throughout the district, particularly as it was coupled in the minds of the people with the long-floating rumours of Koer Sing's return. Measures were at once taken by the Commissioner to meet the threatened attack. The steamer "Patna" was ordered up to Buxar, with all speed, and Lieutenant Batt was requested to place two guns on board, and a party of seamen, and to cruize off Bhojypore. Captain Rattray was instructed to call in his detachments at Burhee and Sherghotty, and that at Gya also, if necessary, and to hold himself in readiness to march to Arrah, if called upon to do so by the Commissioner. It eventually turned out, however, that the story about the 2,000 sepoy, and their contemplated invasion of Shahabad, had no foundation.

2 Ummer Sing having heard of the approach of British troops in the direction of Palamow, was reported to have fled from Rhotas, to a village named Rugooburgam. Shah Kubeer-ood-deen reported that he was doing all he could to catch him, and was directed to make it generally known that a reward of 1,000 rupees had been offered for his capture. A reward of 300 rupees was also offered for the capture of Surnam Sing, another ringleader of the rebels in those parts, who had recently attacked the Telcup indigo factory, and murdered three of the factory servants, and one police burkundauze.

3 In the district of Behar the warlike preparations of the Ranee of Tikaree were said to be progressing steadily, and it was reported that the fort at Tikaree was garrisoned by 1,000 matchlockmen, and about 100 sepoy. The Ranee was also stated to have bought up all the sugar-cane crops on her estate, to feed the elephants of the rebels, whom she expected shortly from the north-west, and to have made arrangements for storing grain in large quantities.

No 8.

*The Governor-General of India in Council to the Court of Directors of the East India Company.*

*Fort William, January 23, 1858 (No. 13.)*

IN continuation of our letter No. 10 of 1858, dated the 20th instant, we have the honor to forward, for your information, the Narrative of events furnished by the Government of Bengal for the week ending on the 19th December, 1857.

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Inclosure in No. 8.

*Special Narrative of Events, dated January 22, 1858.*

1. *Patna Division* —In the Patna division, the only actual disturbance which occurred during the week ending on the 19th December, was caused by the crossing of the Gogra by a small body of rebels at Goothmee, a post on the Sarun frontier, which was held by a detachment of fifty-five Sikhs under a native officer. This party seems to have been surprised and panic-struck, and, under the impression that a large force was upon them, they fled, without offering any resistance to the enemy, who succeeded in burning down their lines, and it was feared would carry off or destroy the ammunition they had abandoned. A portion of the Naval Brigade, with 2 guns and 200 Goorkhas, was immediately sent forward from Myrwa by Colonel Rowcroft to drive back the insurgents. But the latter did not await their arrival, but recrossed the river and fled as soon as the reinforcement made its appearance. The greater part of the ammunition stored at the post was recovered.

2. The Ranee of Tikharee had evidently given up the hope, if she ever entertained any, of a rebel army coming down from the North-west, and was reported to have filled up the new embrasures in her fort, hidden many of the guns, and discarded some of her men. Rajah Hetnaraih, moreover, had given the strongest assurances that nothing beyond the defence of her own fort was ever intended by the Ranee. The Magistrate of Behar, however, still recommended the diversion of some European troops from the Grand Trunk Road for the purpose of taking possession of the fort. He was informed in reply, that the Government would take the earliest opportunity of furnishing him with the means of pacifying his district, and that arrangements were being made for the dispatch of a party of 100 European seamen of the Indian Navy for employment at Gya.

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Inclosure 2 in No. 14.

*Special Narrative of Events, dated March 20, 1858.*

1. THE march of Her Majesty's 35th Regiment through the district of Behar being considered a favorable opportunity for disarming the Tikaree fort, the permission of the Government of India in the Home Department was obtained for extending the provisions of section 26 of Act XXVIII of 1857, to the fort and town of Tikaree; and the military department were requested to issue orders to the 35th Regiment to halt at Gya for the purpose of escorting any guns which might be seized, and for detaching two companies to Tikaree, if required to do so.

2. The Lieutenant-Governor authorised the dismantling of the stockades in the opium godown at Patna, the garrison having been withdrawn.

3. The Nepal Durbar acting upon the suggestion of Maharajah Jung Bahadoor had directed all the passes into Nepal to be closed during the Sheeratree festival, to prevent any parties of rebels escaping into that country from the plains.



*The President in Council to the Court of Directors of the East India Company.*

*Fort William, April 9, 1858. (No. 49)*

IN continuation of our letter No. 41 of 1858, dated the 23rd ultimo, we have the honor to forward for your information the Narratives of events furnished by the Government of Bengal for the weeks ending on the 13th and 20th March, 1858.

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Inclosure 1 in No. 16.

*Special Narrative of Events, dated April 3, 1858.*

1. *Patna Division.*—The Commissioner of Patna submitted a report from Mr. Money relative to the expedition undertaken for disarming the Tikaree Fort, as noticed in the Narrative for the week ending the 27th of February. The Ranee was stated to have evaded the delivery of the guns by every means in her power, and Mr. Money was obliged to break into the places where they were concealed before he could obtain them. Proceeding in this manner he succeeded in securing 20 guns, 33 matchlocks, and 59 firelocks and jingalls, which were all at once removed and made over to the Adjutant of Her Majesty's 35th Regiment. A large quantity of ammunition also was discovered and removed. Mr. Money was strongly convinced that there were more guns and ammunition remaining concealed. The place, however, was reported to be as large as Fort William, and the facilities for concealment such, that no search made in the absence of entire and perfect information, which could only be afforded by a few of the Maharanee's own people, was likely to be of much use. It was therefore proposed by Mr. Samuells that the fortifications, either entirely or in part, should be blown up; and as strong presumption of disaffection existed against the Ranee, he further recommended that she should be removed from the place and kept under surveillance in her husband's house at Patna, and the estate placed under the Court of Wards, Rajah Hetuaran being incompetent to manage it properly himself. The Lieutenant-Governor was not disposed to adopt any such extreme measures, and, in fact, as the provisions of Section 26 of Act XXVIII of 1857 had been extended to the Tikaree Fort, and the guns had been seized in accordance with those provisions, it is doubtful whether any other penalty than that therein prescribed could be enforced. As regards the presumption of disaffection arising out of the possession of these arms and their concealment, it was pointed out to Mr. Samuells that the unprotected state of the Behar district at one period, and the inability of Government to afford adequate protection to its subjects in that part of the country in which Tikaree is situated, rendered it justifiable, if it did not indeed make it incumbent on all persons possessing property to take their own measures for protecting that property, while the attempt to conceal the guns could be accounted for by a vague terror as to the consequences of their being found in the fort after the publication of the notification calling for their surrender. The other surmises on which the Commissioner rested his suspicions that the Ranee was disaffected, were, as he himself admitted, such as there was no possibility of establishing by proof.