

No. 46 FDS 48 Pt II

038

GOVERNMENT OF THE UNION OF BURMA

FOREIGN OFFICE.

Case File No. 46 FDS 48 Pt II

Subject.— *Muslim Insurrection in Buthidaung and Maungda
Townships.*



237 P.F.

SPECIAL Branch:

Prev. File Reference:

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
ARCHIVES

Accession No. 1258 Date 4-9-75
Reference Code Group/Series 21 (P.V.)
Reference Original List 46/48 PFD A

Initial of Officer.



"BURSPEL" - DIG.SB
"SECCON" - ADIG.II

SOUTH 717 - DIG.SB
" 467 - ADIG.II

160 (46 FDS 48) 154
NO. 4018/Indian
SPECIAL BRANCH II
SECRETARIAT BUILDINGS
RANGOON.

Dated the 9th Dec. 1948.

Copy of the following is forwarded to the :-

1. Chief Secretary Ministry of Home Affairs.
2. Permanent Secy., Foreign Office.
3. Inspector General of Police, Burma.

for information.

Removal
9/12

Wah. Lynsdale

(WAH. LYNSDALE) S.P.
for D.I.G. of Police, S.B. Burma.

ADDRESS PRESENTED BY JAMIAT UL ULEMA NORTH ARAKAN.
ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF NORTH ARAKAN
TO

THE HON'BLE PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNION OF BURMA ON THE
OCCASION OF HIS VISIT TO MAUNGDAW ON THE 25TH OCTOBER 1948

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY.

On behalf of the vast majority of the people of North Arakan which includes Maungdaw and Buthidaung Township, we are elated to feel honoured by this kind visit of You Excellency to our land and it is to us and honour rarely accorded by a Head of the Government to welcome him with unbounded loyalty and devotion amidst us.

In humbly tendering this heartiest welcome on behalf of our people of this part of the Union of Burma we most emphatically wish to express our people unstinted loyalty and devotion to the Union of Burma, the people of which we are a part. In expressing this loyalty and devotion to this country of ours, we have in mind to dispel any misunderstanding that has been created about us amongst some of our brethren inhabiting other parts of the Union of Burma. There has been some propoganda going round about that we are as a people, labouring to unite with Pakistan or that we are creating a state of things directing towards the disruption of the Union. On behalf of our people, we wish to clear this misunderstanding once for all and declare that we as a whole never want to be seceded from the Union. We emphatically say that we will always be within the Union of Burma as her most Loyal Citizens.

We feel that we should appraise your Excellency of the Historical background of our people in this part of the Union so that there may not be any doubt as to our rights and status. We are dejected to mention that in this country we have been wrongly taken as a part of the race generally known as Chittagonians and as foreigners. We humbly submit that we are not. We have a history of our own district from that of Chittagonians. We have culture of our own. Historically we are a race by ourselves our religion of Islam was propagated amongst our ancestors by the Arabs since 788 A. D., in this land of ours.

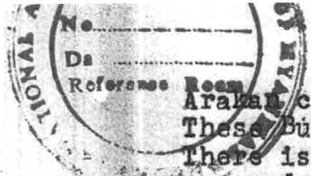
The Arabs settled down in Coastal places in Arakan first in 788 A.D. They brought with them the religion of Islam. By inter-marriages with these Arab settlers and by conversion the religion of Islam became a living force amongst us and now we have at least 95 percent of our people professing this great religion. The existence of curious Arab Mosques known as "Buddar Mukan" revered by Buddhists and Chinese as well as Mohammedans along the Arakan coast

MMFA

(File in Arakan inscription - file after we have seen)

File 9/12

2/4/



Arakan coast testify the truth of this historical fact. These Buddar Mukans date back to the tenth Century A.D. There is still a Buddahar Mukan standing in Akyab Town, revered by all the communities in Akyab. His living fact testifies the existence in this country of the religion of Islam in tenth Century A.D. The descendents of these early Arab settlers were known as Ruwangyas or Rushangyas. Our people and most of the people professing Islam in Akyab district are the descendents of these Ruwangyas or Rushangyas and converts. The religion of Islam was recognized and respected by many of the Kings of Arakan. In the middle ages, many of the Arakanese Kings adopted Islamic names for themselves, such as Ali Khan (1434-59), Kalama Sha (Ba Sawpyu) (1459-82), Hussain Sha, (Minkhamaung) 1612-22) and Min Bin as Sulton (1531-58). These kings while introducing coinage system, inscribed "Kalama" the Mohammedan confession of faith in Persian script on their coins. The Court language was Persian. All these facts, we most humbly submit, conclusively show that we are as a race not new comers or settlers in this part of the country. Our race is as old as any other races in Arakan. There are many villages and places in Maungdaw, Buthidaung and Rethedaung Townships bearing Arabic names side by side with those of Arakanese, and to quote a few instances, Arabic Nurullah village, in Arakanese Tetuch-aungywa, Arabskah village, in Arakanese Hlaphawza ywa, Hanifa-tanki and so on. There are other historical facts and legends also, with which we do not venture to load this humble address of ours, to show out racial status in Arakan.

Our spoken dialect is an admixture of Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Arakanese and Benglis. This admixture in our dialect came to be adopted as we are a border race and which generally happened with other border races of the Union.

Our ancestors used Arabic script and this fact also shows the descent of our ancestors from the early Arab settlers.

Our spoken language is different from that of Chittagonian and the Bengalis. We have adopted Urdu as our written language only very recently while the Chittagonians have Bengalis as their written as well as spoken language. At present we have adopted and formulated a scheme for the introduction of Burmese as our written language. We venture to submit that lack of teachers and schools for the working of the scheme, retarded its progress.

In the last war, during, the North Arakan campaign our people of Maungdaw, Buthidaung and Kyauktaw sacrificed their lives and properties and fought against the enemy and gave it a crashing blow, for the attainment of freedom of Burma and their brilliant and heroic records will, certainly, go down to history like other races of Burma.

Our people inhabit the area comprising Maungdaw and Buthidaung Townships and that part of Rathidaung Township to the West of Mayu River. At least 95 per cent of the population in this area are our people. The population according to 1931 census is not less than 250,000. This census does not include the population of some 12 villages in Maungdaw Township, in which 12 villages no census was taken at all. This in fact shows that the population of our people inhabitation the area geographically defined above having a character of its own is in no way less than the population of the Chin Special Division which has 220,410 inhabitants.

Our people had been neglected and oppressed under the Alien British Rule and when our country regained its freedom our people were jubilous and at once felt that all the ills of a Foreign Rule would be cured and that our people would enjoy fair play and sympathetic understanding in the hands of the free Government of our country, the Union of Burma. The divide and rule Policy of an Alien Govt. had created in the past a large measure of misunderstanding and distrust between our people and our Arakanese brethren. This Policy culminated in the massacre of 1942 of our people residing in various parts of Akyab District. This unhappy episode brought in, in its tail, communal fends through out the whole

whole of Akyab District. We are at pains to rub this unhappy happenings from the minds of us all and come to an amicable settlement between our people and our Arakanese brethren. We venture to submit that to achieve this happy result certain unbalanced things in the administration of our area needs Your Excellency's sympathetic attention and change for a better understanding.

We feel that it is our burden duty to appraise Your Excellency in this visit of the said unbalanced nature of the administration in this area where we reside so that Your Excellency may be able to pour Your Excellency's kind heart ~~xxx~~ for any redress that may be necessary.

Since the days of British Administration, we have been an oppressed people, oppressed by the Officialdom under the British. We are sorry to find that traces of these ills are still in existence. In our Township Advisory Committee, we are given 2 representatives as against 11 for our Arakanese brethren, though our people forms 95 percent of the total population in the Township. Our people are placed under Arakanese Headman in villages where we are in great majority. We had officers and other personals professing our faith in the Administration of our area before a Member of our Arakanese brethren was posted to Arakan as a Commissioner and during his Administration almost all the officers and personals were withdrawn from the Administration in our area and they were replaced by Arakanese Officers and personals. Our people have not been considered for appointments in the Union Military Forces. These are, we are sorry to submit, some of the ailings attacking the minds of our people. Besides these, very recently, we are sorry to learn, that for the coming General Election, Buthidaung ~~the~~ Township with a population of over 80,000 is allotted one seat and Maungdaw Township with a population over 120,000 was allotted two seats for the Chamber of Deputies, whereas Akyab and Rathidaung Township with a population of about 120,000 combined, are given three seats, and Myohaung and Kyauktaw with a population of about 180,000 combined are given three seats. We have undergone great pains at heart to learn this unequal treatment given to us and we venture to submit that on population basis alone Maungdaw and Buthidaung Townships re entitled to be allotted not less than five seats in the Chamber of Deputies. After due consideration and meditation we are driven to feel that there was and is discrimination operating against our people in several fields of life in Arakan. We fervently hope that all concerned irrespective of race, and creed will work to eliminate this unbalanced discrimination in the land of ours. This state of affairs created certain amount of apprehension and dissatisfaction in the minds of our people. The existence of these elements amongst our people was taken advantage of and played upon by undemocratic and law-less forces of Arakan and a few of the weak minded members our people fell a prey to the preachings and persuasions of these law-less forces.

Our people are peace-loving and while there was campaign of non-payment of Revenue through out Arakan, all our people have been loyal and paying Revenues to the Government regularly.

Only very recently lawlessness and undemocratic forces crept into our midst, and we are sorry to state that many of our innocent people in the villages are suffering on account of these lawless elements. These are the little things which can be classified as the effects of the causes of dissatisfaction previously addd. We venture to submit that it is our burden duty to bring these misled members of our people back into the realm of democracy. We declare we shall work ~~xxxxx~~ for the realization of this aim.

Your Excellency's Government has recently set up a Commission for the purpose of ascertaining the aspirations of the people for the claims of autonomy in Arakan and of solving problems arising there from. As stated before, our people possess the qualifications and characteristics of a territory having a defined geographical area with a character of its own unity of language and culture different from the Arakanese community of

historical traditions and a fairly large population with a measure of economic self sufficiency. The desire of our people forming 95 percent of the population inhabiting the area consisting of Buthidaung and Maungdaw townships and that portion of Rathidaung township to the West of Mayu River, is to maintain the distinct identity of this area as a separate administration unit within the Union of Burma. The paramount will of our people of this area is to place it under the direct control Government of the Union of Burma, even if the rest of Arakan enjoys the status of a separate state or an Antonomus Region of the Union. Our area being one on the border of the Union, we feel that we will be better protected from the inroads of the people of a Foreign State, if we are directly under the protection of the Government of the Union. Our area is already too thickly populated and we do not desire to have any addition of immigrants to our area. We are economically self-sufficient it is not necessary for us to import agriculture and other labourers as is required in other parts of Akyab District. We do not depend upon Foreign labour for our agricultural purposes as is necessary in other parts of Arakan. We submit that the creation of the area inhabited by our people as a separate Administrative unit is the only means to solve the deverse problems facing us here.

If this proposition is not practicable in the opinion of Your Excellency's Government, we further crace leave to represent that our area may be created as a separate district with local autonomy on equal Region of Arakan. Statistic support our case that our area returns sufficient Revenue to run it as a separate district. Akyab district as it now is an oversized district in the Union of Burma with its population of 76,000 the largest population of any one district in the Union. As a separate district our area will compare favourably well with that of Insein.

We are conscious that the Union of Burma at this juncture of her History requires the greatest of National solidarity needed by any nation for her very existence, we are conscious that there should be complete unity amongst all the races of the Union, we cannot and well never appreciate and encourage any lawlessness in the country. We assure Your Excellency that our people will co-operate with Your Excellency's Govt. to the obliterate lawlessness in the country. We are one with Your Excellency when Your Excellency addressed the Regional Autonomy Commission, that "What then is the foundation of which the national unity should be built? To put it in a nut-shell the firm foundation is no other than the satisfaction of all the firm foundation is no other than the satisfaction of all nstionals To put it briefly, satisfaction is not other than conviction by each national group that it is receiving fair and just treatment at the hands of others. Mere lip service cannot get satisfaction; it must be implemented by deeds."

On behalf of our people in offering this address of Welcome to Your Excellency to our humble land, we also offer our prayer for Your Excellency's long life and we pray "Long live the Union of Burma, and she may ever be guided by the wisest of all statesmen".

We ever remain loyal servants of
the Union of Burma.

President and members, on behalf
of the Jamiat-UL-Ulema.