

Appendix – IV

Letter Date 17.9.1949

From Maharaja Bodh Chandra

To Sri Prakasa, Governor of Assam, soon after reaching at Redlands, Shillong.

Here I am now today.

I heard while at Gauhati that your Excellency too would return to Shillong only today. I feel that I would not disturb your Excellency today when you must have felt so tired by reason of the journey as I do though the time scheduled has been this evening.

Could I request that your Excellency will kindly fix some time tomorrow that will be convenient to your Excellency?

Letter Date 17.9.1949

From Sri Prakasa

To The Maharaja.

I am most grateful to your Highness for your very kind letter of date just received. I myself came back only this afternoon and was looking forward to the pleasure of meeting your Highness this evening. I do hope this long journey from Imphal to Shillong was comfortable.

I shall be most happy to receive Your Highness at 11 in the forenoon tomorrow. I do hope the time will be convenient. You will please not trouble to reply if it is so.

Thanking you again for all your courtesy and kindness

Letter Date 18.9.1949

From Sri Prakasa

To the Maharaja

I should be glad if Your Highness will kindly come to Government House tomorrow morning at 9.30 a.m., when we may complete the discussion of this morning. I have been given definite instruction by the Hon'ble Minister of State, to the effect that the negotiations must be completed by the 20th of this month positively, and I have, therefore, no alternative but to insist that the matter be finalized without delay.

Hoping that Your Highness and party are comfortable.

Letter Date 18.9.1949
From the Maharaja
To Sri Prakasa,

The subject matter under reference involves the fate of future Manipur. I have received a number of representations and resolutions from the people concerning this important affair. I enclose some of the copies in original for Your Excellency's kind perusal, which may please be returned when done with.

Now that the sovereignty of the State has been vested in the people it would be in the fitness of things to hear the people's voice and learn their sentiment so that the time of action may not in any case be unconstitutional.

It is highly gratifying to learn from Your Excellency's Adviser through my Private Secretary that should the administration of the Manipur State be taken over by the Centre. I shall be entitled to a sum of Rs. Two Lacs and twenty-five thousand per year as my privy purse for my life-time, but as I have no personal property worth mentioning it would be more grateful for the Government of India if it is raised to the extent of Rs. Four Lacs.

I, therefore, request that Your Excellency will kindly allow me to have matter settled at the earliest time when the position as envisaged in paras I & II is properly studied.

This is what I would lay before Your Excellency when I meet Your Excellency tomorrow at 9.30 a.m. and nothing more. I confidently hope that Your Excellency will kindly enable me to expedite the matter by returning to Imphal tomorrow since I do not wish to lose time.

'URGENT' Letter Dated 19.9.1949
From the Maharaja
To Sri Prakasa

Please refer to my letter of yesterday night.

Since no reply has come to the contrary I think Your Excellency, recognizing my difficulties, has kindly allowed me to go back to Imphal without meeting Your Excellency again.

With Your Excellency's kind permission I am leaving here this afternoon to expedite matters. The papers connected with my yesterday's letter may kindly be returned to Imphal.

Letter Dated 19.9.1949

**From Sri Prakasa
To the Maharaja,**

I duly received your letter of September 18 late night informing me that Your Highness will come to me this morning at 9.30 a.m. in response to my letter sent earlier in the day, when we could have our final talk.

As the letter was very definite, no reply was needed; and I was expecting to receive Your Highness when I get your letter of date from which I gather that Your Highness was expecting a reply. I shall be happy if Your Highness will kindly come at once in order that the matter may be finalized.

I communicated to Delhi to the State Ministry yesterday all that transpired at our meeting in the morning, and I have my very strict instructions that the negotiations must be completed before Your Highness leaves Shillong. I am confident that I shall have Your Highness fullest co-operation in the matter.

Wish kind regards.

Letter Dated 19.9.1949
**From the Maharaja
To Sri Prakasa,**

Thank Your Excellency for your letter just received.

I have cancelled my programme of leaving Shillong for today. The matter becomes very serious. It appears that the Government of India seems to be rather unkind and unsympathetic to me in giving me such a short period for me to ponder over this major problem and I am also quite unfortunate in not getting from the Government of India even the slightest indication of the subject matter to be discussed in Shillong and as such I have deprived of the legal advice from my legal Remembrances and the voice of the popular Assembly.

If I am compelled to work independently of my people my action will be quite unjustifiable.

If I see Your Excellency I shall have to repeat the same tune as conveyed in my letter of yesterday and I am afraid Your Excellency may be annoyed with it – a line of action I would like to avoid.

It seems to me that the best course would be to allow me to go back Imphal and arrange to bring about a very speedy solution of the matter.

Letter Dated 19.9.1949

**From Sri Prakasa
To the Maharaja,**

I have just received Your Highness' letter. I am sorry that I should have had to cause Your Highness any inconvenience, but, as I have already explained to Your Highness, I am under the strict orders of the Government of India to have the negotiations completed without further delay. Your Highness will remember that Your Highness yourself originally requested me to grant an interview to your Highness at Shillong regarding the affairs of Your Highness' State, and it was in compliance with Your Highness' own request that the meeting was arranged. I have had the opportunity, since, to have discussion with the Hon'ble Minister of States and have, therefore no alternative but to communicate the decision of the Government of India to Your Highness and negotiate the final settlement of Your Highness' Privy Purse on the lines of the instructions that have been given to me.

2. The Government of India have, throughout, dealt with Your Highness directly, as the Ruler of the State, and are not prepared to make any deviation at the present stage from the procedure hitherto followed. Your Highness may rest assured that the Government of India will take complete responsibility in the matter of meeting whatever objections may be raised by the people of the State. That is the policy that the Government of India have followed in their dealings with the other States of India, and that is the policy that they have decided to follow in the case of Manipur. Your Highness need, therefore, have no apprehensions regarding the reaction of the people to the negotiations that are now in progress. Your Highness will be afforded every protection by the Government of India, and will continue to enjoy the same personal rights, privileges, dignities and titles that Your Highness has been enjoying hitherto. It is because the Government of India are desirous of having Your Highness' cooperation rather than to take ex parte decisions that might be prejudicial to the interest of Your Highness, that they have drawn up an agreement in the most liberal and generous terms, and instructed me to see to it that, in the fixation of Your Highness' Privy Purse, I should make ample provision to ensure that Your Highness may be able to maintain Your Highness' dignity and status as befits the Ruler of a State of such glorious tradition and history as the State of Manipur.

3. I must conclude, therefore, by repeating what I have already stated above, that the very delicate task that I HAVE TO PERFORM IS ON THE SPECIFIC ORDER OF THE Government of India, and that in view of all the circumstances, it will be to Your Highness' ultimate interest to see that the negotiations are completed without further delay.

I find I have previous engagements for the whole of this afternoon and evening which I regret I cannot cancel. I shall be therefore glad to receive Your Highness at 9 a.m. in the morning tomorrow. After 10, I am again engaged. The negotiations must be finally completed at our next meeting.

Letter dated 20.9.1949
From the Maharaja
To Shri Prakasa.

I thank Your Excellency for your letter of 19.9.1949.

The subject for discussion was thought to be of internal affairs of the State. But Your Excellency in spite of my prior request for an opportunity of hearing me first, has disclosed the decision of India Government to be the topic. Unfortunately, therefore, for me it has rather unhinged me.

Direct dealing with me was feasible when sovereignty was vested in me but, after the introduction of the State Constitution Act 1947, the sovereignty and administration of the State has been shifted to the people.

Under Rule No. 28(ii) of the Manipur Administration Rules now force in the State as approved by the Governor of Assam, H.H. the Maharaja of Manipur and the Council of Ministers have Joint-responsibility for such matters.

I am merely a constitutional head of a full responsible Government under the Constitution Act approved by the Government of India and as such the voice of the Majority is my voice and it shall be constitutionally and legally binding on me not otherwise.

The question of Tripura and Coach Bihar and that of Manipur are different in as much as the administration and responsibility of the former lay, if I am right, solely in the hands of the Rulers whereas in the case of Manipur, by virtue of the Constitution Act, Administration Rules and other agreements between the Government of India and the Manipur State responsibility and administration is vested in the people based on full responsible government with a fully elected House on adult suffrage and joint electorate highest form of government of democracy of which I am proud as having made a glorious contribution to the realization of India's long expected goal.

Our common end is dependant on the voluntary and conscientious co-operation of the people. I am for the people and the government in my State is the people's government for the people by the people.

- (1) I have to finalise the matter it should be done jointly with the Council.
- (2) In any major transaction like this, if not supported by the people's Council and sentiment, the relation between the people and myself is severed and consequently it amounts to having a Ruler without the people.

Your Excellency will kindly well surmise how delicate and difficult my position in between the wishes of the Government of India and the people whose will is considered as the deciding criterion as is evident from Pandit Nehru's remarks on treaty rights of Princes in his Presidential address: "The only final authority and paramount power that we recognize is the will of the people....."

Your Excellency may rest assured that I shall try my level best to secure the fullest co-operation of the people with the India Government in consultation with the Council or the representatives of the people within the shortest time possible.

Lastly I pray for Your Excellency's kind permission to release the full text of the correspondences between Your Excellency and myself to the Press.

Letter dated 20.9.1949

From the Maharaja.

To Shri Prakasa, which was sent separately but received by the Governor at the same time along with the above letter.

As desired by Your Excellency I shall come today at the appointed time but will be only paying respect to Your Excellency since all that I should say has been incorporated in my letter so far addressed to Your Excellency.

I am sorry, with my poor knowledge of English and Hindustani. I find it difficult to interchange thoughts between Your Excellency and myself.

Letter dated 20.9.1949

From Sri Prakasa

To the Maharaja.

I am sorry that I should have caused Your Highness any inconvenience during your stay in Shillong. Our discussions have been on a subject of the greatest delicacy; and I quite understand the strain which these last few days must have been for Your Highness. Your Highness is naturally concerned that what is done should be in the best interest of your State and also that such arrangements as are reached, should not be derogatory to the prestige and honour of Your Highness' self. I have done my best to assure Your Highness that Your Highness may always count upon the support of the Government of India's one and only objective is the ultimate interest both of Your Highness and of Your Highness' State.

I shall give myself the pleasure of calling on Your Highness at 5 this afternoon and I very much hope that Your Highness will be so good as to make it convenient for Your Highness to receive me. I am most anxious that our friendship

should remain and that Your Highness should feel that Your Highness continues to enjoy my fullest confidence.

With kind regards.

Letter dated 20.9.1949

**From the Maharaja
To Sri Prakasa,**

I thank Your Excellency very much for your letter of today.

I feel myself greatly honoured that Your Excellency will take the trouble of calling on me today at 5 p.m. But I again feel greatly pained that I being a stranger herewith a small residency only in name, I am afraid, I may not be able to give comfort to Your Excellency. The other House is still being requisitioned by the Assam Government which otherwise would somehow enable me to receive Your Excellency to the extent I desire. Anyway since Your Excellency has kindly expressed the desire of visiting me I too would gladly receive Your Excellency. What I feel worrying for is that it might disclose the under servingness of the place. Your Excellency may kindly come at the time appointed.

Like all other patriots of India I too am a great Lover of the Indians for whose welfare I am always anxious. The Manipuris are also Indians. I therefore always have the good of the people and India at heart. It is also in the best interests of India that the will of the people ought to be taken into consideration. As I spoke to Your Excellency and as Your Excellency better knows, the people of Manipur are educationally utterly backward. If they are fully convinced that the measure would be in their interest then there is no reason why they should be not agree and co-operate with us.

I affirm my full confidence in the Government of India whose worthy representative in Your Excellency and I always have been co-operating with Your Excellency.

More than that I consider that I have a guardian in the person of Your Excellency who guides and help me in my endeavour towards ameliorating the welfare of my people. The only thing is that this being a great change it would be done constitutionally and democratically with an eye to the will of the people whose co-operation I confidently hope we will secure.

It is hoped that the matter will be expedited with minimum delay in the same manner as I have already shown to Your Excellency during our discussion.

‘IMMEDIATE’D.O. No 1578-C

Dated 20.9.1949

**From Mr. N. K. Rustomji, Adviser
To the Governor of Assam to Mr. Gourahari Singh, Private
Secretary to the Maharaja of Manipur.**

If there is any further point which His Highness would like clarified in connection with the discussions this morning, I shall be glad to be of assistance. You may, if your wish, contact me at my office. My telephone number is 158. I trust that, in view of the position as it now stands, there will be to the best interests of His Highness an all concerned. As His Excellency explained during this discussion with His Highness, the Government of India insists that there should be no further delay in the conclusion of the necessary agreements.

—

‘CONFIDENTIAL’LETTER

Dated 20.9.1949

**From Mr. Gourahari Singh
To Mr. Rustomji,**

I thank your very much for Your D.O. No. 1578-C of the 20th September, 1949.

But I am very sorry indeed that owing to pressure of urgent business here in connection with H.E.’s visit here this evening I have not been able to contact you.

To add to my hopelessness, H.H.’s residency here has no telephone connection.

Kindly excuse me.

—

Letter dated 20.9.1949

**From Sri Prakasa
To the Maharaja,**

I write to express my most grateful thanks for the very kind generous welcome that Your Highness was pleased to extend to me and my party at your residence this evening. It was a great pleasure to me to meet Your Highness again. Your Highness has had, I know, a very busy day, and I fear I have trouble Your Highness very much. I am therefore specially thankful for the readiness with which Your Highness agreed to receive me. I am glad indeed that we have been able to arrive happy conclusions to our discussions; and I thank Your Highness' co-operation and goodwill.

I shall be glad to receive Your Highness tomorrow morning as already arranged. I shall expect Your Highness at 9. a.m., unless I hear from Your Highness that any other time in the morning would be more convenient.

Assuring Your Highness of my highest consideration.

Letter dated 20.9.1949

**From Mr. N.K.Rustomji
To the Maharaja. Mr. Rustomji, for once, did not sign in his usual illegible scrawl.**

I am most grateful to Your Highness for Your Highness' very kind welcome to us at your residence this evening. I am particularly grateful to Your Highness for Your Highness' kind words to me personally as we parted. I only hope I may always be privileged to enjoy Your Highness' friendship and would ask Highness to forgive me for any inconvenience that may have caused to Your Highness during these last few days.

I shall never forget Your Highness' Parting words to me at Imphal last March—"remember Manipur". I assure Your Highness that the interest of Your Highness' State will always remain most dear to my heart and that my service, for what they are worth, will always be at the disposal of the State.

Thanking Your Highness once again for Your Highness' kindness.

Letter dated 21.9.1949

**From the Maharaja
To Sri Prakasa,**

I thank Your Excellency very much for your letter of yesterday night.

Owing to the strain caused I am sorry I shall not be in a position to come in the morning today.

I am therefore coming to Your Excellency at 2.30 p.m.

Hoping this will not cause inconvenience to Your Excellency.

Letter dated 21.9.1949

**From Sri Prakasa
To the Maharaja.**

I am grateful to your Highness for your very kind letter of date that I have just received. I can quite understand the heavy strain that has been caused to you and I shall be happy to receive Your Highness at half past two this afternoon instead of in the morning as arranged yesterday.

I have got the document typed incorporating all the additions and amendments made therein accordance with Your Highness' desires. I have every confidence that this will meet with Your Highness' wishes and will be found complete and satisfactory.

Thanking Your Highness again for all your courtesy and kindness, and wishing you all well.

Letter dated 21.9.1949

**From Sri Prakasa
To the Maharaja.**

I am deeply grateful to Your Highness for Your Highness' co-operation and goodwill in the speedy completion of our negotiations this afternoon. I am particularly glad that we have been able to reach such a happy conclusion to our discussions; and that was entirely due to Your Highness' spirit of co-operation and generosity.

I am sending Your Highness a copy of the agreement as promised. I shall let Your Highness have the final copy, signed by the political Adviser to the Ministry of States, as soon as it is received back from Delhi. The documents are being sent to the Ministry of States, who have already been informed that Your Highness has signed the necessary agreement. I have informed the Hon'ble Minister for State of Your Highness' desire that no announcement regarding the decision reached this afternoon should be published until Your Highness returns to Imphal. I am also declining to give any indication to the Press representatives in the Province of the decisions that have been reached inspire of their persistent enquiries.

I shall call on Your Highness tomorrow morning before Your Highness leaves Shillong. I very much hope Your Highness will be in position to come to Shillong again in the new future, when we may be able to renew our friendship.

Thanking Your Highness once more.

Letter dated 24.9.1949

**From the Maharaja
To Sri Prakasa,**

I thank you very much for the fruits, vegetables and flower plants you so kindly sent to me the other day.

I love them so much that I am taking some of them to Imphal also for Shree Gobindajee.

Letter dated 24.9.1949

**From Sri Prakasa
To the Maharaja,**

I am very grateful to Your Highness for your kind letter of September 24 just received. To me it has been both a source of embarrassment at the strange position in which I found myself carrying on delicate negotiations with Your Highness, and also a source of great pleasure that I could see Your Highness at such close quarters and come in such friendly touch with you. I shall always cherish the memory of these days with great gratitude for yourself. I am most thankful to Your

Highness for Your personal consideration for me for the great courtesy you invariably extended to me, and for the co-operation you gave me at every step.

I am hoping to be able to visit Your Highness once again before you leave. I fear, however, my time is more than full up these days. I have therefore regretfully to deprive myself of meeting Your Highness again. I bid you farewell through this letter and assure you that you carry with yourself my very best wishes for all health and happiness for yourself and for your great and historic State.

As desired by Your Highness, my plane will come from Calcutta to take you from Kahikuchi (Gauhati) to Imphal tomorrow. Two cars will be at your service early in the morning at 'Redlands'; and I hope you and your staffs would be able to go down to Kahikuchi in comfort. If Your Highness should like any other arrangements to be made, you have only say so I am unreservedly at your service.

I am very grateful to Your Highness for your token of goodwill in the present of the sovereign and the respect that you have made. I shall keep them as treasured possession with myself. I am also hoping that the Andhra Khadi Dhoti and cloth that I had the pleasure of presenting to Your Highness will be utilized by you and will be of some service to you. I am grateful to Your Highness for having accepted them. I am also glad to find that you liked the fruits, vegetables and the flowers of the Government House and they cannot be used to better purpose than as gifts to Sri Gobindajee. I am grateful to Your Highness for having sent me such delicious and welcome Prasad from your family temple. I very much appreciate it and greatly value your kind thought.

Hoping all is very well with Your Highness.

Letter dated 24.9.1949

**From the Maharaja
To Mr. Rustomji,**

I thank you for your kindly arranging to send me some vegetables from His Excellency's garden.

Indeed I felt greatly delighted with them.
