

## SELECTED WORKS OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

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### **In the Lok Sabha: Arrival of the Dalai Lama<sup>1</sup>**

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru):

The other day, three days ago, I think, when I was speaking about recent happenings in Tibet, I mentioned that I would keep the House informed of every fresh development. In the last two days, day before yesterday and yesterday, we have been receiving a number of messages. They were often delayed because they had to come through a rather devious route.

Yesterday I was thinking of informing the House of a certain development, but then I hesitated to do so, because I wanted it to be fully confirmed; I was waiting for some details. We received them last evening. We could have issued this news to the Press last evening, but I thought I should inform the House first and then the Press can have it.

The facts are that on the 1st April, i.e. day before yesterday morning, we received a message via Shillong dated 31st March evening that an emissary with a message from the Dalai Lama had arrived at our border check-post at Chutangmu in the North East Frontier Agency. He had arrived there on the 29th March stating that the Dalai Lama requested us for political asylum and that he expected to reach the border on the 30th March, i.e. soon after he himself had come. We received the message on the 1st. The same evening, i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> April evening, a message was received by us again via Shillong dated

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<sup>1</sup> Statement on the Dalai Lama, 3 April 1959. Lok Sabha Debates, Second Series, Vol. XXVIII, cols 9559-9561.

1st April that the Dalai Lama with his small party of 8 had crossed into our territory on the evening of the 31st March.<sup>2</sup>

Expecting that some such development might occur, we had instructed the various check-posts round about there what to do in case such a development takes place. So, when he crossed over into our territory, he was received by our Assistant Political Officer of the Tawang sub-division, which is a part of the Kameng Frontier Division of the North East Frontier Agency. A little later, the rest of his party, the entourage, came in. The total number who have come with him or after him is 80. From the 2nd evening, i.e. yesterday, we learn that this Party in two groups is moving towards Tawang, which is the headquarters of that sub-division and that he is expected to reach Tawang the day after tomorrow, Sunday, 5th evening. Shri Braj Raj Singh: I want a clarification, which is a very important one.

Shri Khadilkar: I want a little more information.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: This is the information that the Prime Minister has got just at present. If he gets more, he has promised us that he will place it before the House.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: I want a clarification. There is a news in the Press that the New China Agency had published the very same news yesterday. How is it that the Government of India here did not get this confirmation even till the last evening? The Prime Minister himself said that he knew the information when he was making a statement here yesterday, but he could get the confirmation only last evening. May I know whether we are going to give political asylum to the Dalai Lama?<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> For other statements on the Dalai Lama's arrival, see items 119, 120, 122 and 128

<sup>3</sup> See SWJN/ISS/47/pp. 584-585

Shri Khadilkar: We have given the Dalai Lama asylum here...

Shri Nath Pai: We do not know if we have given him.

An Hon. Member: We have.

Shri Khadilkar: I want a clarification. The Dalai Lama is the temporal and spiritual head of Tibet. Does the asylum confer the same right on him and will he be functioning in the same capacity on the Indian soil? That is a very serious matter.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: So far as Mr. Khadilkar's question is concerned, about spiritual rights, etc., I cannot answer it. It is a complicated matter which will have to be considered. But there is no doubt that he will receive respectful treatment.

Shri Naushir Bharucha:<sup>4</sup> Is it a fact that the Dalai Lama was injured?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: No, Sir; he is quite healthy.

As for the other question, I myself stated that we knew it da y before yesterday evening-in fact, if I may say so, I was not here then, but we knew about his having crossed the frontier, but we wanted certain confirmation about details, whether the whole party had crossed over, where they were, etc., before I mentioned it to this House. Yesterday morning, I was not in a position to do so, although I knew that he had crossed the border. In the evening I was, but I wanted to wait for the meeting of the Lok Sabha today to say so, instead of giving the news to the press.

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<sup>4</sup> Independent, Lok Sabha MP from East Khandesh, Bombay State.

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