

BARI KACHAHRI
113B, MANOHARDAS KATRA,
BARA BAZAR, CALCUTTA-7

(9)

March 27, 1971

Jatuh

My dear Onno Mesani,

I am truly delighted to receive your letter. It brings back a flood of memories of all days and the dear old friends. Though the world is getting over-crowded, old persons like me feel that it is getting quite empty. Practically all my friends are gone - the latest casualty being Sampurnanand. Only three persons of my age group remain in Banaras. All are ailing, and so we are able to meet each other with difficulty. In the whole of U.P. there is only one person still alive of the old days of the Congress besides myself. ^{That is Dr. Jawahar Lal.} If I feel old and desolate, there is nothing to be wondered at.

I don't know what is your age: perhaps 60. Even you are of the next generation. I am numbering my 81st year. There are only a few ^{even} in their sixties. I really have no desire to live any longer. I feel that all the work for 50 years of the older generation, has gone down the drain. The Earth has slipped from under our feet, and the conduct of affairs has come in dangerous hands from the very early days of the freedom struggle. Rajaji is the sole survivor, and though alert in mind, he is also broken hearted as his latest writings in Swarajya testify.

I can understand the gloom that surrounds you. It is natural that you should want to quit your office. But where will they find another - so able, so devoted, so efficient - to fill your place? Perhaps they will insist on your continuing. I wish I were 20 years younger. ^{I would have then joined you.} Janta had a son Karan and scrupulous. He had regard & affection for his friends & colleagues. I wish I could say the same of the

Daughter. Someday if we meet, I will tell you how
venerably Government have pursued me as I function-
ed as Chairman of the British India Corporation. I
could not have expected that of any decent Government.
I cannot acquit Indira Gandhi of her share in this.
any day I am out of active work, & only now want
to die in peace. I am now really good for nothing.

As I hate Delhi and never go there, we have not
been able to meet otherwise we could have met during
the days you so valiantly ^{cause} struggled for the right in
Parliament. I have been hospitalized in Calcutta
for the last 8 months undergoing three major operations
after being an inmate of the hospitals at Dehra
Dun, Lucknow & Danapur since October 1969 when
I had to suffer many painful surgical procedures
besides an operation as well. I cannot say if I am
any the better after all these ordeals. ^{The main prostate trouble persists.} My general health
however is not bad for my age. I can sit up and write
type & get easily tired. I wish you every health and
joy, and strength of mind & body to carry on your good
work.

I am leaving the hospital tomorrow. I refuse to
stay here longer. I shall however remain over in
Calcutta for another fortnight as the doctor wants to
watch ^{my prostate} ~~my prostate~~ ^{as an example at the top.} I hope to get back to Danapur in a fortnight
and if well enough to push on to my quick retreat in
Dehra Dun. ^{I write to the press as a hobby. That is my only recreation now.} I wish I could meet you. We have so much
to compare notes about. Do remember me to the family.
I find Shekuntala is Capricious (R) and the Don & Societism.
Still you have a happy family and that is something
mine is completely broken & I am absolutely alone.
Pardon excuse this long letter. With kind regards,
Yours very sincerely,
M.R. Prasad
Eric Prasad