

PANCH MAHALS APPLIED TO
JUSTICE LOVING PERSONS OF THE
PRESIDENCY CASE OF OPEN INJUSTICE

GODRA:
AMALGAMATION LEAGUE

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S. I. S.

Godhra, 25th December 1933.

Sir,

We, the undersigned members and sympathisers of the Non-amalgamation League desire to put before you the report in brief of the work done by this institution in connection with the Government's decision to amalgamate Broach and Panch Mahals and Government's selection of Broach as a place of Head-quarter of the amalgamated District.

We have expressed our protest by constitutional methods against Government's decisions as those decisions were against the interests of the people of this District. Powerful as they are, our protests have fallen on deaf ears, even though our case is strong, our cause is just and our object is right.

We are not at all disappointed or dejected at Government's stiff attitude. We have decided to continue the constitutional fight as long as the wrong done to us is not righted by Government. Our case is a clear case of open injustice. In this our fight at this stage, we feel, we stand in need of sympathies, good will, help, aid, assistance, advice and blessings from those Justice-loving persons and personalities who believe in constitutional agitation and from those institutions whose object is to help the weak against the strong in the right cause and especially in the fight for Justice. We appeal for help in various ways to those persons who believe in constitutional fight. We hope leading persons of the Presidency who desire to see victory of right over wrong and Justice over injustice will help us in our cause.

We beg to put before you our case for your perusal with a request to go through it even though you may be busy with multifarious activities. On reading it minutely if you are convinced that we are in the right, please stand by us - stand by Justice. If you are convinced of the righteousness of our cause and our justification in continuing the fight to the finish, do help us in every possible way.

We hope we will be helped in this struggle by the whole Presidency as our fight is a fight for a principle. We mention below the whole case in brief to enable you to judge and give your honest opinion.

REPORT

It was in 1931 or so that the Government decided to appoint a committee to go into the details of every Government Department with a view to lessen the top-heavy expenditure of the Bombay Presidency. This committee was known as the Retrenchment Committee. This Retrenchment Committee submitted its report with some suggestions to Government. Among many suggestions, proposal for amalgamation of some of the Districts was made by this Committee. The Bombay Government was very seriously considering this proposal of amalgamation of Districts. They were seriously thinking of amalgamating Broach with Panch Mahals and Kolaba with Thana. On the 17th February 1932 His Excellency the Governor of Bombay addressed the Bombay Legislative Council wherein he stated: "My Government decided to take steps to follow up the work of the Retrenchment Committee and are now arranging to secure expert advice on reorganisation of the whole administrative machine. This will not only secure the future examination of such recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee as have not yet been adopted but will also ensure a broad survey and detailed examination of the organisation of the most important Departments". On the 11th July 1932 the Finance Committee appointed a Committee to secure expert advice on the question of retrenchment and the reorganisation of the whole administrative machinery. As the Honourable Mr. G. A. Thomas C. I. E., I. C. S. was the Chairman of the Committee this Committee was called the Thomas Committee. This Thomas Committee minutely went through the whole report of the Retrenchment Committee and discussed threadbare all the proposals submitted to the Government by the Retrenchment Committee. We are here concerned with the question of amalgamation only and we will see what remarks this Thomas Committee has made on it. The Committee states as follows in its report in para 326:-

" District Organisation. "

"Suggestions have been made for the amalgamation of Districts. The Bombay suburban District has already been united with the collectorate of Bombay City, and arrangement which we think can be made permanent and we think Government have at present under consideration the question of amalgamating Broach with Panch Mahals and Colaba with Thana. We do not propose to discuss the practicability of either of these two proposals, as that would not be possible without a local examination of the many interests concerned. In our opinion, a Collector, who is also the District Magistrate has with one or two possible exceptions, already as large an area as he can effectively administer. We think there would be both greater economy and efficiency, if instead of extending a Collector's Jurisdiction the present system of Sub-dividing a district into what are known as Prants, each under an Assistant or Deputy Collector were abolished altogether. We think that any amalgamation of even small Districts would be impracticable if this abolition took place and we therefore take this opportunity of suggesting to Government that they should