

Indian Workers Association Great Britain

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YOUR REF:

9th February, 1984

Mr. David Waddington M.P.,
Home Office Minister for Immigration,
House of Commons,
City of Westminster,
London.

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you, on behalf of the Central Committee of the Indian Workers Association Great Britain. The purpose of this letter is to request you to meet a delegation of the Association which would like to discuss the question of a sharp rise in the refusal of Entry Certificates to husbands and finances especially from the Indian Sub-Continent.

It is hoped that all the points related to the issue in question would be raised at the suggested meeting. However, I think it worthwhile to draw your attention to some of the salient ones herein, beforehand.

The rise in the refusal rate is causing untold miseries coupled with social stresses and strains and economic loss, to girls who wish to have their fiances from abroad join them in Britain with a view to starting a new life of their own choice in matrimony.

All the Immigration Rules stand in opposition to the values and traditions concerning the marriage system prevalent in the communities who originally come from the Indian Sub-Continent. For example, the provision "that the parties to the proposed marriage have not met" can only be fulfilled if a girl goes abroad to meet a boy because no boy can come to Britain for this purpose in the wake of harsh immigration control.

This provision has put parents of such girls in a situation whereby they have no other option but to take them to their countries of origin. In this process they have to incur an enormous amount of money. Even this circuit proves to be a futile exercise because success rate in the cases of this category is extremely limited.

"That the primary purpose of the intended marriage is to obtain admission to the United Kingdom" is another condition enshrined in the Immigration Rules. This provision is being widely used to refuse Entry Certificates at the present moment in time. This, too, has no relevance whatsoever, to the realities of the arranged marriage system. Suffice it to say that a person who tried previously to come to this country as a visitor to meet his close relatives settled in Britain is not likely to qualify as his first attempt may be

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interpreted as the primary purpose, not being marriage. Paradoxically, in most cases, the people with relatives could become fiances because of the required mediation on the part of the relations. Many of such fiances might have already tried to come to this country, hence no Entry Certificate. Statistics relating to husbands and fiances from the Indian Sub-Continent for the first, second and third quarters of 1983, released to Clare Short M.P. in December - 1360 out of which only 780 applications were granted, do not cause any concern to a "numbers game" protagonist even.

They are far more less than a drop in the ocean.

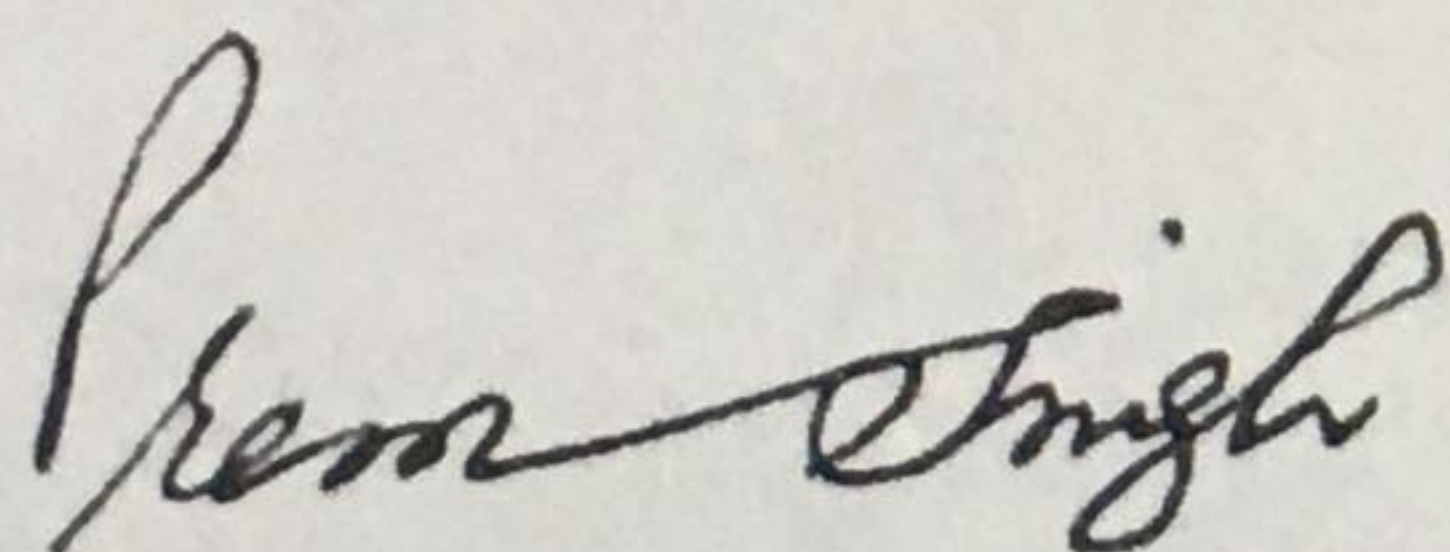
Under these circumstances, the imposition of further stringent immigration policy by the Government, the policy out of which wholesale rejection of such applications emanates, has no feet to stand on.

It is anticipated that you will consider the points mentioned above sympathetically and take steps to find a remedy for the anomalies being suffered by the divided families including fiances and fiances in Britain and abroad.

Please accept our request for a meeting and suggest some dates and a venue suitable to you.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours faithfully,



Prem Singh