



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

22 August, 1983

Prime Minister:

Agree to see Mr  
Rao?

JH 24/8

Dear Tim,

Visit of Indian Minister of External Affairs

The Indian Minister of External Affairs, Mr Narasimha Rao, has accepted an invitation to visit the UK as a guest of Government to attend the ceremony on 2 November at which HM The Queen will unveil a statue of Earl Mountbatten of Burma. Mr Rao will attend the subsequent reception in the Banqueting House and the luncheon at Buckingham Palace.

A detailed programme has not yet been arranged. But we expect Mr Rao to arrive in London on 1 November and to leave late on 3 November or on 4 November. Sir Geoffrey Howe will hold official talks with him and host a lunch in his honour on 3 November.

Mr Rao has been Foreign Minister since January 1980 and called on the Prime Minister during his last official visit to the UK in November 1981. Since then, our relations with India have continued to improve, as evidenced most recently by the £250 million contract awarded to Westlands and British Aerospace to supply Sea King helicopters and Sea Eagle missiles. We have also been seeking a closer political dialogue with the Indian Government. It would therefore seem appropriate for Mr Rao to call on the Prime Minister during his forthcoming visit. The timing would be particularly opportune, some three weeks before the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Delhi.

I should be grateful to know whether a call of say 30 minutes by Mr Rao on the Prime Minister would be possible. I understand that the Prime Minister might be free at 9 am on 2 November before the unveiling ceremony. Other alternatives would be the afternoon of either 2 November or 3 November.

Yes

No

Yours ever

(J E Holmes)  
Private Secretary

JH Holmes

T Flesher Esq  
10 Downing Street



file

BCC

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

26 August 1983

Thank you for your letter of 22 August about the forthcoming visit of the Indian Minister of External Affairs. The Prime Minister has agreed to see Mr. Rao at 1630 hours on 2 November. I should be grateful if you could arrange for briefing to reach this office by 31 October please.

BP

(Timothy Flesher)

John Holmes, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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10 DOWNING STREET

~~John~~ *ma*  $\frac{14}{6}$

Protocol section (FCO)  
rang to say that the  
Indian Minister for External  
Affairs will be bringing  
a small present for the PM  
during his visit on Nov 2nd  
(16.30hrs)

Steve

14/10/83



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*From the Private Secretary*

7 November, 1983.

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for the most beautiful book "Eternal India" which you so kindly sent to 10 Downing Street.

Mrs. Thatcher will much enjoy reading this lovely book.

Timothy Flesher

Mr. Narasimha Rao