

Is he coming for a talk
with the PM? AISC put
in a minute



FILE

DG

cc: FEO

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

14 June, 1983

Dear Mr. Birla,

I was deeply distressed to hear that your father died on 11 June. He was a most distinguished citizen of India and his passing will be widely mourned. I send my sincere condolences to you and to all members of your late father's family.

Yours sincerely
Raymond Barber

Mr. B. K. Birla.

RM

Kang
Yours I think
13/6

PRIME MINISTER

Mr. G.D. Birla

You agreed earlier to see the above who is a distinguished and powerful Indian industrialist whom you met in Bombay in April 1981. But in the event we had to cancel the appointment.

He is now in London again and will be here until about next Thursday. I do not think that in this busy week you need see him. But do you want to try to fit him in for 20 minutes?

I attach a message of congratulation which arrived from Mr. Birla this morning.

A.S.C.

Not
this week
ms

10 June 1983

Mr. Birla died in London
the weekend. A message is
being considered regarding to his
family. AM 13/6.

(51)

TOP COPY

UNCLASSIFIED

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16 JUN 1983		
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OO NEW DELHI
 GRS 156
 UNCLASSIFIED
 FM FCO 151555Z JUN 83
 TO IMMEDIATE DELHI
 TELEGRAM NUMBER 299 OF 15 JUNE
 DEATH OF G D BIRLA

1. AS YOU WILL KNOW, BIRLA DIED IN LONDON ON 11 JUNE. HIS BODY WAS CREMATED ON 13 JUNE AT GOLDERS GREEN CREMATORIUM. THE PRIME MINISTER, WHO HAD AGREED TO RECEIVE A CALL FROM BIRLA THIS MONTH, HAS EXPRESSED CONDOLENCES TO HIS SON.
2. UNLESS YOU SEE ANY OBJECTION, YOU SHOULD PASS THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO MRS GANDHI.
 BEGINS: DEAR PRIME MINISTER, I HAVE LEARNED WITH SORROW OF THE DEATH HERE IN LONDON OF MR G D BIRLA. AS ONE OF THE ARCHITECTS OF MODERN INDIA HE MADE A UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION TO THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT OF HIS COUNTRY. I MUCH ENJOYED MEETING HIM WHEN I VISITED BOMBAY IN 1981 AND HAD LOOKED FORWARD TO SEEING HIM DURING HIS VISIT TO LONDON. I KNOW THAT HIS LOSS WILL BE KEENLY FELT IN INDIA.

BEST WISHES,
 YOURS EVER,
 MARGARET THATCHER. ENDS

P.A.
 GA 16/82

HOWE

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 MR GIFFARD
 MR DONALD



FCVE SH
A with previous file

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

30 August, 1983

I am writing on behalf of John Coles to thank you for your letter of 27 August about the unveiling of a statue of your father, Mr. G. D. Birla. The Prime Minister was interested to hear of the statue but I am afraid that, given the many demands on her time, she will be unable to accept your kind invitation. As I am sure you will understand, the Prime Minister receives very many invitations of which, inevitably, she is able to accept only a very small proportion.

TIMOTHY FLESHER

B. K. Birla, Esq.

ls

010
B.K.BIRLA

CIMMCO INTERNATIONAL
206 Upper Richmond Rd.
LONDON SW15 6TD

Camp: London
August 27, 1983

Mr. John Coles
Personal Secretary to Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1

Dear Mr. Coles

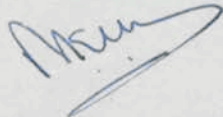
My father Mr.G.D.Birla had the pleasure and privilege of meeting The Rt.Margaret Thatcher, The Prime Minister in Bombay and thereafter in London. Unfortunately he expired suddenly in London on 11th June 1983 at the age of 89. He was cremated here at the Golders Green Crematorium.

As a memorial to him, we are planning to install his statue in bronze in the above crematorium. We expect that this would be ready by about the middle of 1984. We shall be grateful if The Prime Minister will kindly agree to unveil the statue. The exact time and date will be fixed later on as per convenience of The Prime Minister.

We shall be obliged that despite of her heavy engagement The Prime Minister will kindly agree to spare a few minutes for this occasion.

Thanking you and with kind regards

Yours sincerely



B.K.BIRLA

With best complements
& regards

RAMESH KUMAR

Vice President

CIMMCO INTERNATIONAL
206 Upper Richmond Road,
Putney, London SW15 6TD (UK)

Telex: 8813601 GHF G
Tel. Office: 01-785 9919
Res. 01-788 2352

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pp. 5.

PRIME MINISTER

We have received a request from Mr. B. K. Birla, who lives in Zug, to come and see you while you are staying at Schloss Freudenberg. You will remember that Mr. Birla's father saw you at No. 10 a few months ago, shortly before he died.

Mr. Birla asks if it would be possible for him and his wife to call on you on Wednesday 24 August in the afternoon.

Do you wish to see Mr. Birla?

Regner *mt*

Mr. Kalkaka : Zug 21 82 44

Debbie Green

18 August 1983

Mr. Birlar from Zug is at the moment in India. When he returns he wishes to make an appointment to call on the Prime Minister. (When Mr. Birlar's wife died the PM wrote a letter of condolence to him).

The message came through the Consulate in Zurich.

Miss Ann Rackett has told Mr. Lalkaka that the matter is in hand.

Miss Ann Rackett 01 47 15 20

The father is now dead so it is Mr. B. K. Birla and he wrote from Park Towers, Flat No. 2, Brick Street, London, W.1. The FCO advised the PM on what she should send to Mr. Birla at the time of his father's death and there was also a communication to Mrs. Gandhi. The PM wrote on 14 June.

④

Prime Minister

From the Birla Family.

A.S.C. 28.
6

mb

27582 CABOFF G
27582 CABOFF G
21 7421 KICM IN
DR PL PASS ON THE FLG MSG TO
N
MR JOHN COLES,
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE PRIME MINISTER

KINDLY CONVEY GRATEFUL THANKS FROM MYSELF AND OTHER MEMBERS
OF BIRLA FAMILY FOR PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCE
ON SAD DEMISE OF MY RESPECTED FATHER, WHICH WE APPRECIATE
AND VALUE VERY MUCH. HER MESSAGE HAS GIVEN US STRENGTH AND
COURAGE TO FACE THIS CALAMITY WITH FORTITUDE

::: B K BIRLA:::

MSG NO 502 /28.6.1983
PL PASS ON ABV MSG TO THE CONCERNED ATTENTION AND PLS CONFIRM

27582 CABOFF G
DE CABINET OFFICE LONDON
CYD
CFM RCVD AT 281155Z DH
27582 CABOFF G TKU V MYC+ MUCH

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MMMT

28 JUN 1966



010

Dear Mr. Coles,

NO-2/6
h.a.

20.6.83

I am enclosing herewith "THE LAST JOURNEY" published in remembrance and tribute to Mr G D Birla ji.

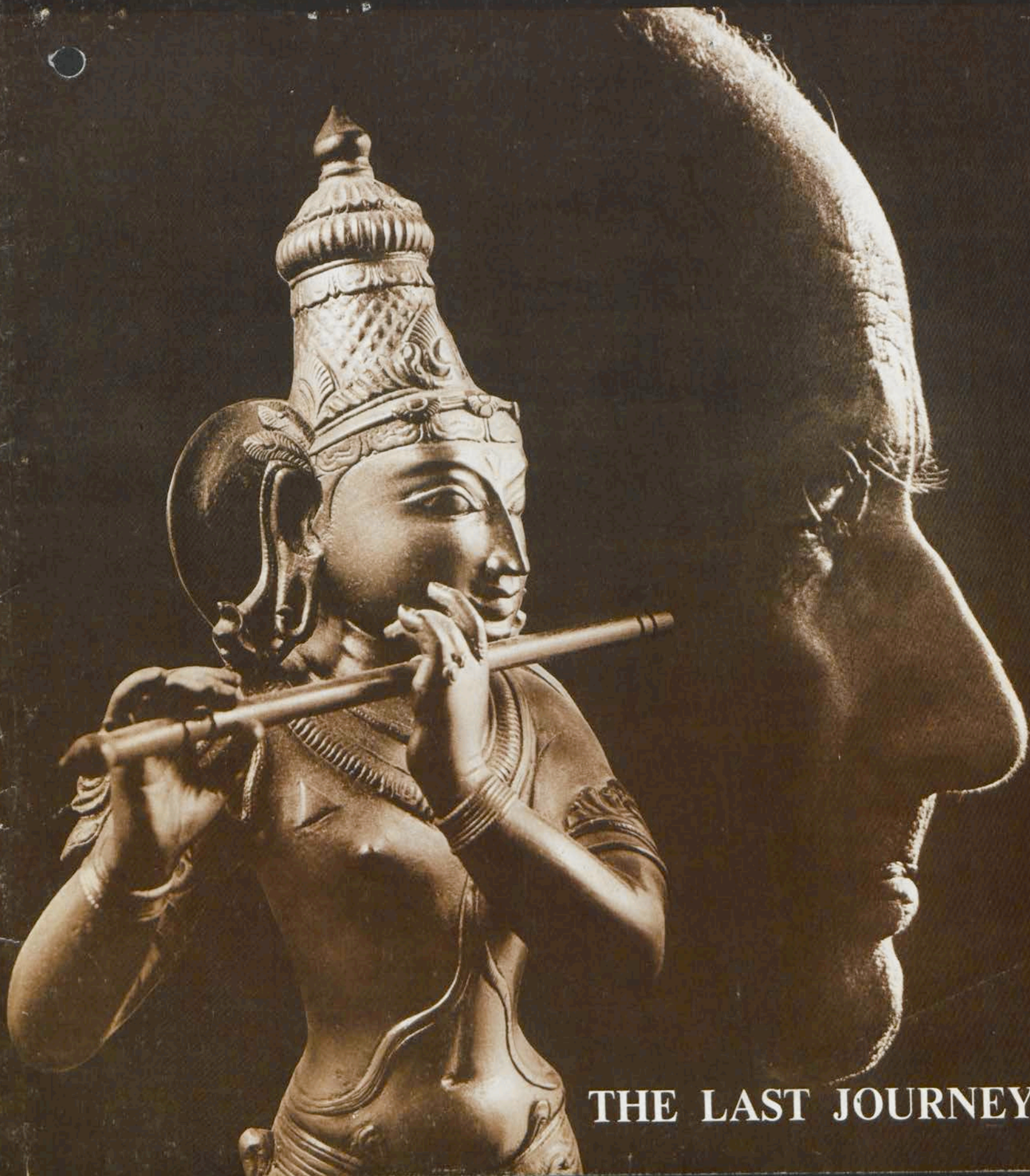
with the compliments of
& kind regards

Ramesh Kumar

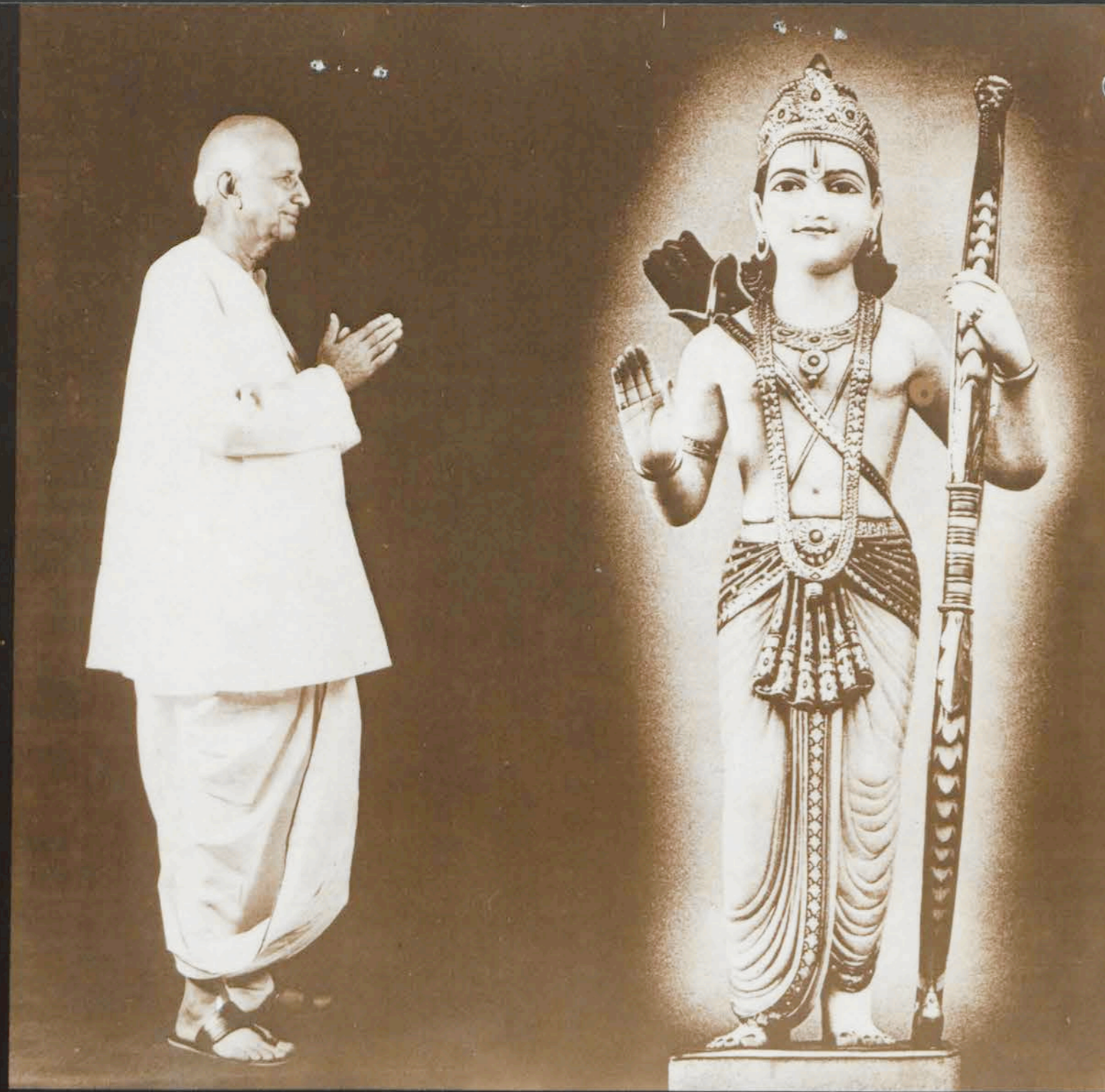
RAMESH KUMAR

CIMMCO INTERNATIONAL
206 Upper Richmond Road,
3rd Floor,
London SW 15 6 TD UK

Tel. (01) 785-9919
Telex 8813601 GHF G



THE LAST JOURNEY



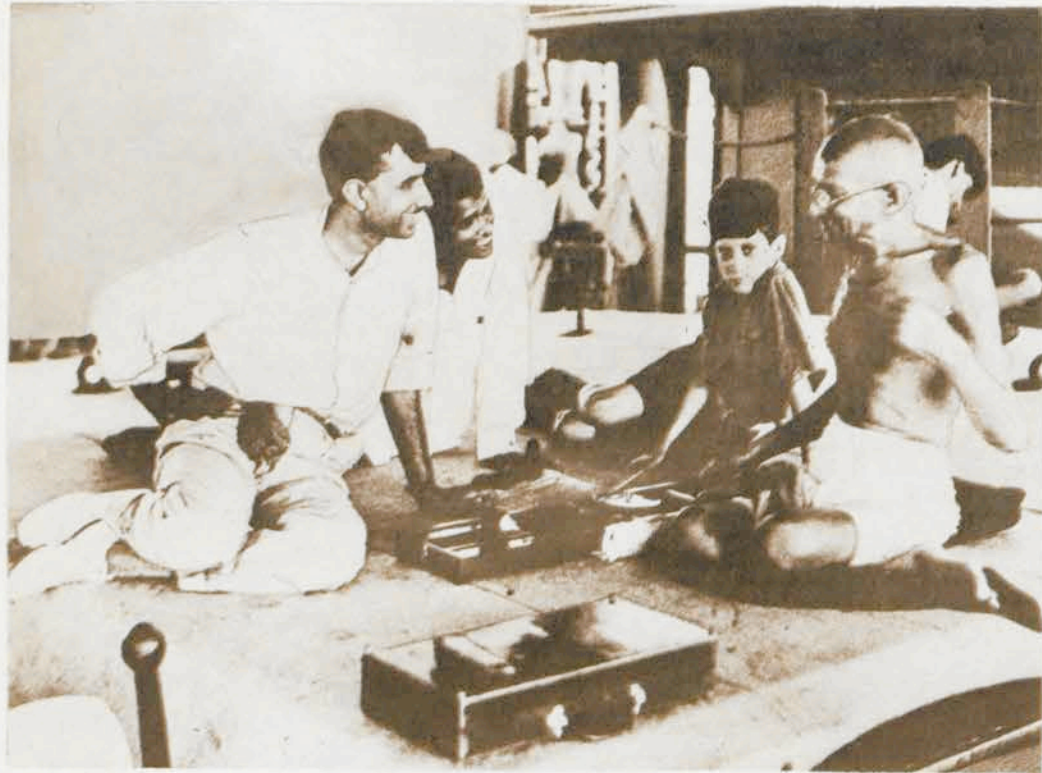
यस्य स्मरणमात्रेण जन्मसंसारबन्धनात् ।
विमुच्यते नमस्तस्मै विष्णवे प्रभविष्णवे ॥

जिनके स्मरणमात्र से मनुष्य जन्म-मृत्यु रूप संसार बंधन से मुक्त हो जाता है, सबकी उत्पत्ति के कारणभूत उन भगवान् विष्णु को नमस्कार है ।

In 1894 a boy was born in a prosperous business family in Pilani. There was nothing unusual in this event except that Pilani was a little known tiny village in the Rajasthan desert and yet could boast of a very large banyan tree with copious branches reaching the earth, the day was the one on which thousands of years ago Purushottam (the best amongst men) Rama was born, and the child, in the words of Wordsworth, was father of the man — G.D. Birla. From time to time inherited genes — like the roll of the dice, roulette ball, the fall of cards — play a thousand million-to-one trick, and turn up a Shankaracharya, a Vivekanand, a Gandhi, a Tilak, who by a further coincidence of time and circumstance, exercises his special genius to ultimate capacity. Pujya Babuji (G.D. Birla) is such a man.

शुभ्रुं जे विंदे दे।ने। खंडे
हाके लो।दि। पाये
ए।लि।ह।दी। शुभ्रुं आ।पकी
देत शुभ्रुं दि।ये। ख।ल।ये
दु।र्गा। शुभ्रुं मनी





20th July, 1924.

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

God has given me mentors, and I regard you as one of them. Among them are some of my own children, some sisters and some others like yourself and Jamnalalji who are grown-up. They all wish me to become a perfect man. Understanding this, how can I be offended with your letter? I want you to always caution me like this.....

Yours sincerely,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

“Gandhiji was a man among men—a rare specimen not produced by the world even once in a century. And yet people have known so little of him as a man. The result was that, although I did not agree with him on many problems, I never refused to obey his wishes. For his part, he not only tolerated my independence of thought, but loved me all the more for it, as a father would his child. Our relations, therefore, became more in the nature of a family attachment, of a father towards a son, which lasted to the end of his life.”

—G.D. Birla



A legend in his own lifetime. So aptly can this sentence convey the legacy of Shri. Ghanshyamdasji Birla's dynamism, humbleness, goodwill and philanthropy; of a man who was an institution by himself; whose enigmatic career could fill exhaustive tomes; of a man who rarely spoke but when he did, never of himself.

G.D. Birla a multi-faceted humanitarian was destined at an early age of 20 to meet a great man, the Mahatma and their fruitful association lasted a little over three decades. This could have lasted longer, had not an assassin's bullet felled Gandhiji, ironically, in the shadow of the Delhi Birla House.

Gandhiji's causes blossomed under G.D. Birla's munificence, and he possessed an uncanny knowledge of Gandhiji's mind. He could never have been termed a sycophant and at times differed from the views expressed by Gandhiji, often speaking with a bluntness only Gandhiji could value.

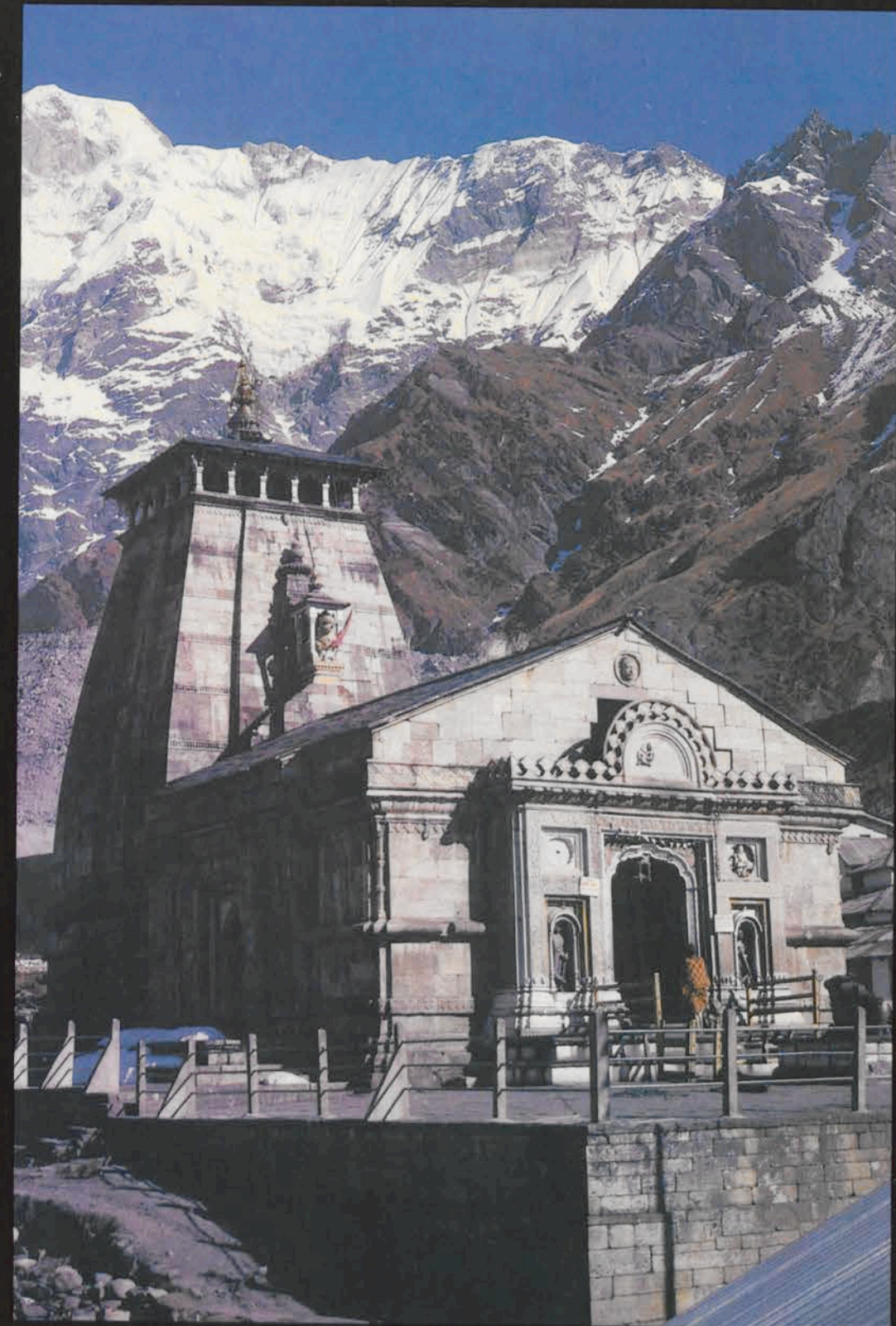
An educationist, author, painter, unofficial diplomat, humanitarian, philanthropist, G.D. Birla presented a complex personality. A self taught man, the captain of industry, he was immensely fond of devotional music, being a deeply religious man.

As the years went by, far from dulling his ardour for his pet passions, each of the several facets deepened and added lustre to his life. So much so, that at a ripe age of 89, G.D. Birla undertook a strenuous and painstaking pilgrimage to the holy temple of Kedarnathji, an effort that could baulk even the staunch hearted. But that was how G.D. Birla lived, and that was how he died. He had the will, patience, courage and the heartfelt desire to please his Maker, and the Gods smiled upon him.

One picture may be worth a thousand words, but it will take a whole collage, a volume of photographs to capture this will-'o-wisp called Charisma.

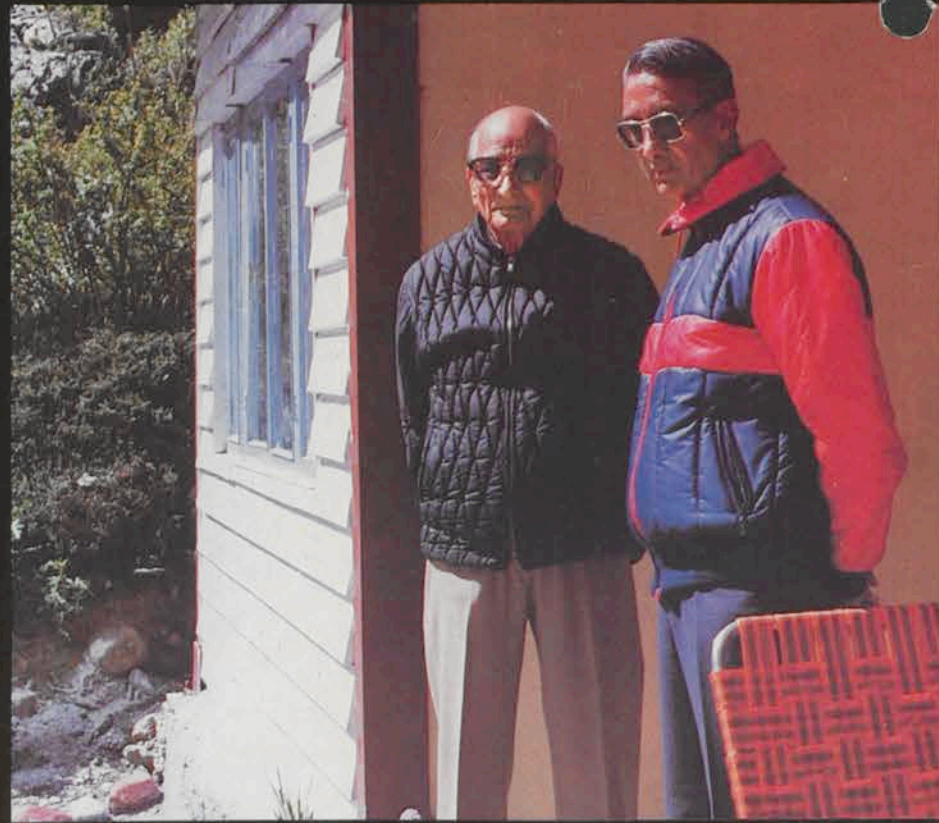
Today, India has lost one of her greatest sons, his God granting him the peace he always sought throughout his lifetime.

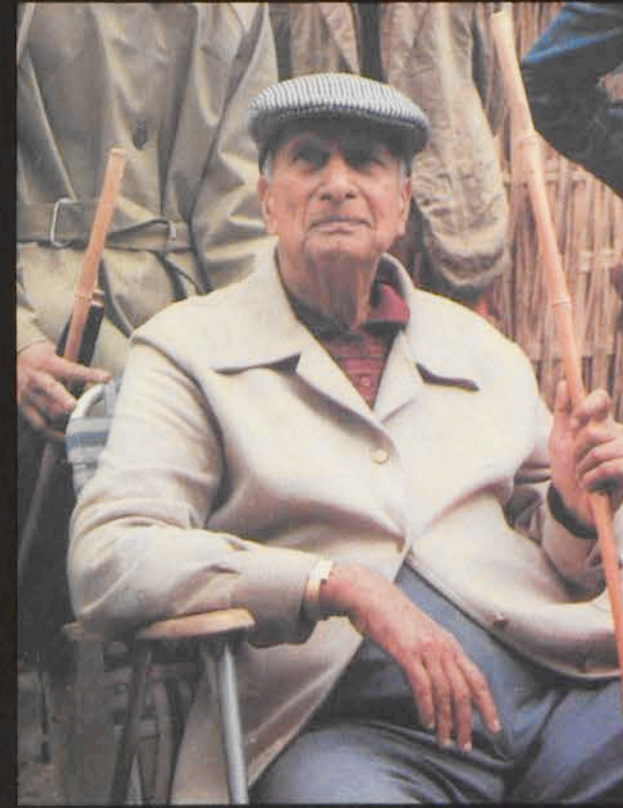
Eternal rest grant to him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him,
we pray. May his soul rest in peace.



The temple of Kedarnathji

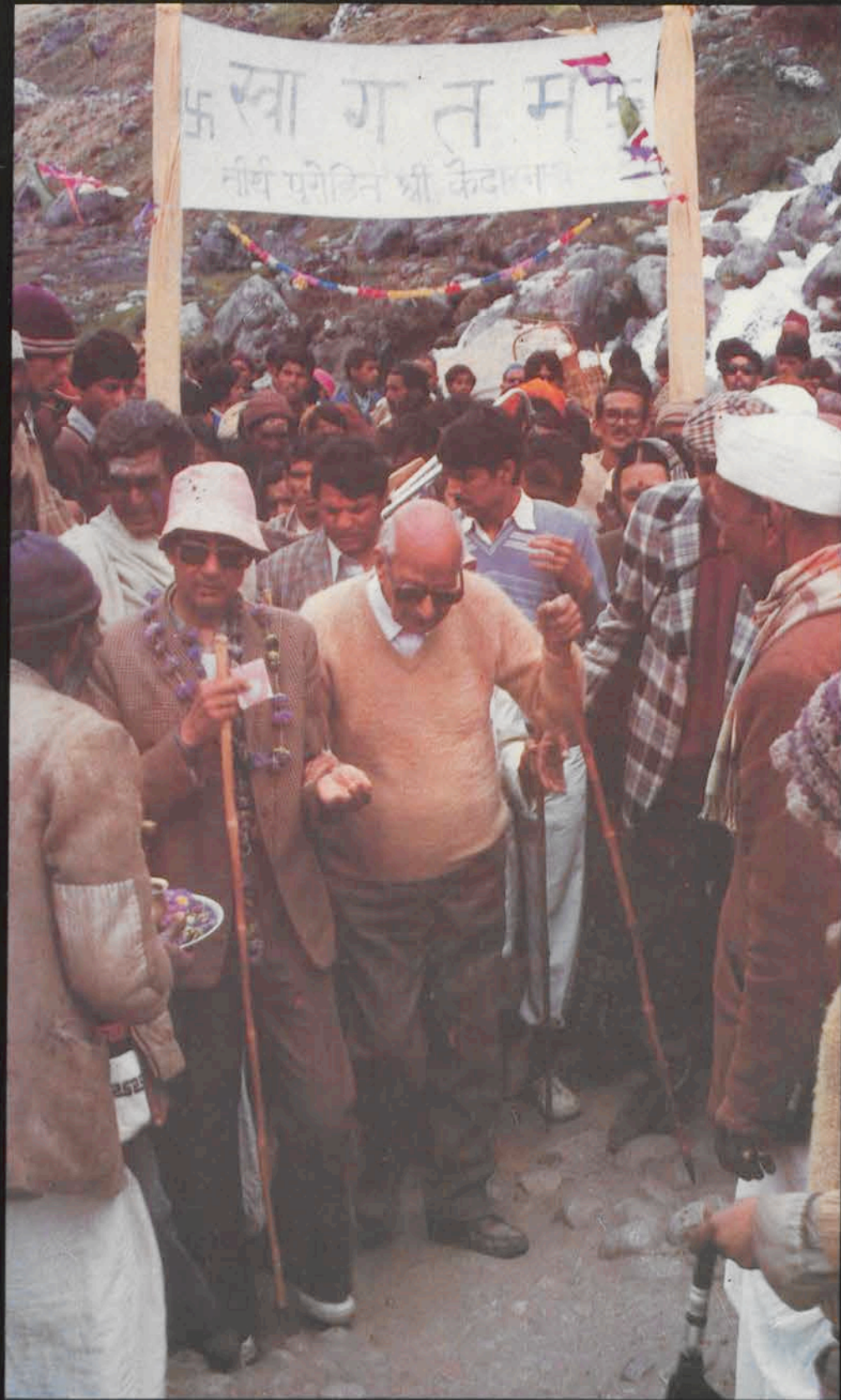
Babuji sets out to the holy temple of Kedarnathji, along with his son Shri Basant Kumar Birla, daughter-in-law Smt. Sarla Birla and his associates.....



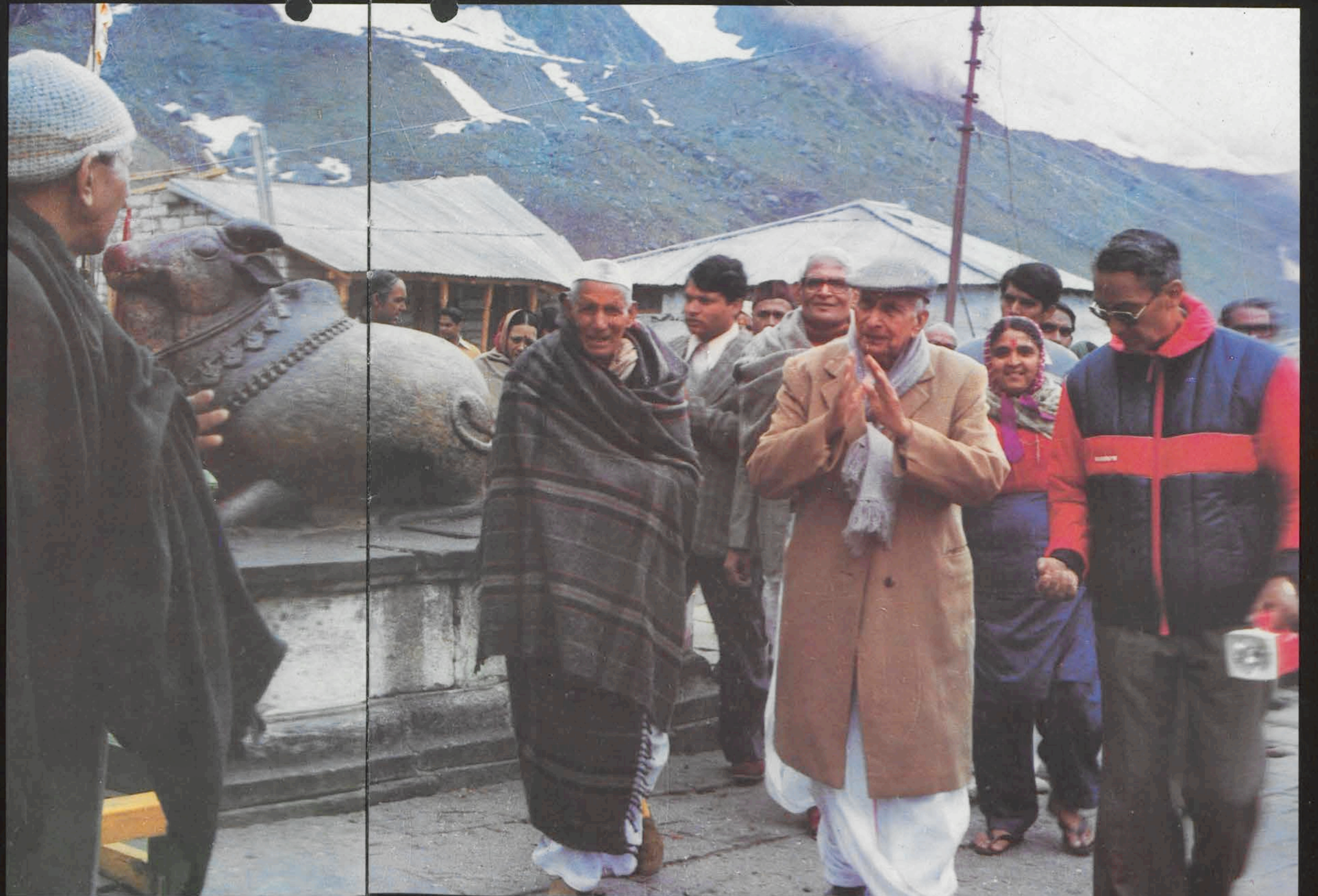


.....trekking through these green hills and trudging through the rough ice, he moves

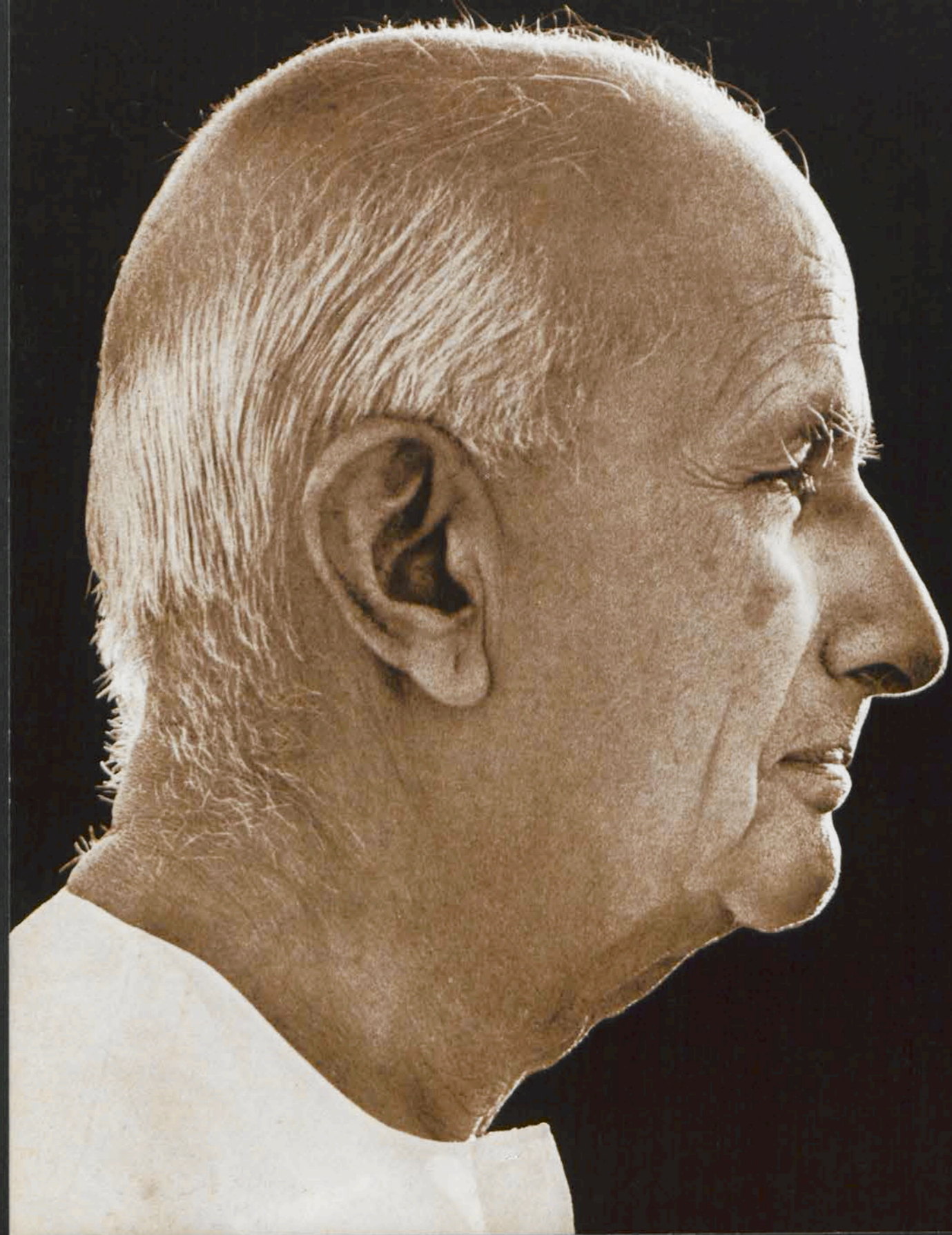
onwards to his much wanted destination.



A sense of peace pervades his being and an all powerful faith in God washes over



his self, at a duty well-done.



पूज्य बाबूजी,

अनुग्रह कर्ता धन्यवाद के पात्र होते हैं, परन्तु जो स्वभावतः ही सब का उपकार करते हैं, जिनके उपकार की क्रिया घड़ी की सुई की तरह निरन्तर ही चलती रहती है उनका आभार प्रदर्शन अशक्य है। सूर्य स्वभावतः प्रकाश फैलाता है, सबको जीवन देता है परन्तु उसका आभार प्रदर्शन कैसे हो? मन से, वचन से, कर्म से, स्वभावतः उपकार करने वाले तो प्रायः आनन्द और दुःख की परिधि से बाहर होते हैं लेकिन उपकार भोक्ताओं को इससे जो आनन्द की अनुभूति होती है उसका प्रदर्शन तो मूक ही होता है। तुलसी के शब्दों में "तेरे मेरे नाते अनेक"। परन्तु वे सब के सब नाते हमारे मांगने के और आपके देने के हैं। अतः "मांगऊं तुलसीदास कर जोरे" की तरह आपसे इस अवसर पर हम लोग आपके मंगलमयी और कल्याणकारी आशीर्वचनों की मांग करते हैं जिससे सब कलाओं से उत्कृष्ट "जीवन-कला" को सीखने और अपनाने के मार्ग पर हम चल सकें।

मैवेरि मैवेरि



WHAT THEY SAID...

THE TIMES MONDAY JUNE 13 1983

OBITUARY

MR GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA

Influential Indian businessman

Mr Ghanshyamdass Birla, one of the most influential of Indian businessmen, who also played an important role in the financing of Gandhi's movement for Indian independence from Britain died, in London on June 11, at the age of 89.

In addition to the main charge of the vast industrial and commercial undertakings of his firm Birla Bros Ltd, he played an important if not very clearly defined role in the background of the prolonged discussions and negotiations which ultimately resulted in Indian independence.

For more than a generation he was in close and affectionate contact with Gandhi, and his *In the Shadow of the Mahatma* (1953) throws light on the attainment of Indian independence from his own particular angle and also on the Mahatma's character with its amazing mixture of simplicity and finesse.

Birla's deep purse was always open to assist Gandhi's schemes of social reform, even when he did not agree with them, and his large donations to Congress Party funds were perhaps prompted equally by patriotism and business acumen. It was in the garden of G. D. Birla's Delhi house that Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated in 1948.

Ghanshyamdass Birla was born in 1894 at Pilani, a remote village in the arid north of the Rajasthan State of Jaipur. His grandfather had migrated from the village to Bombay at the age of 17. In a single room he had an office and dealt with silver and seeds. His only son Raja Baldevdas Birla started business in Calcutta and built up an important export and import agency.

Ghanshyamdass and his three younger brothers took to industrial production under the stimulus of the 1914-1918 War and formed the great firm of Birla Brothers. In spite of many handicaps the business went from strength to strength. When war came again in 1939 the firm was producing 10 per cent of India's vast output of sugar and 4 per cent of her cotton manufactures. Many cotton pressing and ginning factories, a paper mill, a steel factory, and three great engineering workshops were under the direction of the firm, which also did a large amount of insurance and banking business.

Towards the end of the war to the production of cycles and textiles machinery there was added motor manufacture, which gave them an important foothold in the industry which they were to exploit in the first decades of freedom.

Ghanshyamdass was a leading signatory in the middle of the war of the famous Bombay plan envisaging a great advance in the industrialization of his country, chiefly by big business concerns.

After independence Birla Brothers continued to support in financial and general terms the Congress Party of the centre and the states. If, like other industrialists they viewed with some misgivings the early tendencies of Mr Nehru's Government toward nationalizing great enterprises, they chose to remain Congress backers rather than switch to newer right wing political groups. In 1954 the firm took a leading part in negotiations with a group of six British engineering firms for a great expansion of Indian steel production. The Delhi Government, however,

rejected the scheme largely on the ground that private ownership of such a undertaking would be contrary to the industrial policy of the country.

From his early days Ghanshyamdass had taken part in public affairs. He was a member of the Fiscal Commission which in the early twenties recommended a policy of discriminating protection of Indian industries. Later he served on the Royal Commission on Indian Labour.

He was elected to the Bengal Legislative Council and afterwards was a Member of the Indian Legislative Assembly, but resigned in 1930 in protest against legislation for Imperial Preference. When the Preference was lapsing in 1936-37, he was one of the unofficial advisers of the Government who came to this country to promote an Indo-British trade agreement. He was a leading figure in the Bengal Indian Chamber of Commerce and was sometime Chairman of the All-India Federation of such bodies.

He also came near to being the Indian equivalent of a Press Lord and among his successful enterprises in this field were the weekly financial journal the *Eastern Economist* and the *Hindustan Times*, a Delhi daily edited for many years by Mr Devadas Gandhi, a son of the Mahatma.

The Birla Brothers remained faithful to the Marwari tradition of the association of benevolence with wealth. The Birla Educational Trust they founded made a great educational centre of the remote Rajasthan village from which they came. The institutions at Pilani included the Birla College and a Naval School where, during the war, recruits for Government Naval Service were trained at the rate of 500 per annum. Educational benefactions included the establishment of schools and colleges elsewhere in Rajasthan and also in Calcutta the headquarters of the firm, where he also erected a planetarium.

Birla, in his later years in business travelled widely and paid considerable attention to

trade with Russia, a country he studied closely despite his strong aversion to communism. He was deeply ambitious to extend the wealth and power of his commercial empire, and as a financial operator on a country wide scale he had no equal for quickness of mind and decision.

He was made an hon Doctor of Laws by the Hindu University of Benares in 1967.

Mrs. Gandhi lauds Birla's role

Hindustan Times

NEW DELHI, June 13—Prime Minister Indira Gandhi today expressed profound grief over the sudden demise of Mr. G.D. Birla in London on Saturday, and described him as a veteran of Indian business, industry and public life.

In a condolence message sent from Copenhagen, where she is on an official tour, Mrs. Gandhi said "our public life will miss a veteran whose contributions in various spheres of life have enriched the country."

She said Mr. Birla's acumen and dynamism had made him one of the notable pioneers and spokesmen of India industry. In addition to business, he was interested in public affairs and advancement of the Hindi language and was connected with several organisations.

"My sympathies to his sons and other members of the family", she said.

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

BOMBAY, TUESDAY, JUNE 14, 1983

G. D. Birla

In the death of Ghanshyam Das Birla (G. D., to friends) Indian industry has lost its father figure, chief protagonist and authentic spokesman. To say so and no more is to ignore the other sides of a personality who was a veritable colossus. Half the history of Indian industry in the last half a century is the story of G. D. Birla and his accomplishments. Businessman at the age of 12, owner of an independent business at 16, builder of an industrial empire by 40, G. D. Birla's success story is the story of the coming of age of Indian industry itself. A robust commonsense, doughty realism and spectacular optimism have been the basis of his entrepreneurial success.

If modernisation was a passion with him, innovation was his creed. He was one of the first to underline the necessity of technology transfer. No wonder, the Birla industries have always striven to acquire the most modern technology, at least as modern as possible for a third world country. All this came naturally to him because he was inspired by a rare vision, the vision of a mighty industrial nation that India is destined to become. In this sense, he was an inspiration to generations of young men who have had the initiative to enter the industrial field. As one of the signatories to the Bombay plan of 1946, he expressed his view of what the nation's industrial priorities should be. Because of his dominance of the industrial scene, his role as an associate of Mahatma Gandhi and his part in the freedom movement

as a crucial messenger between the viceroy and the national leaders is not so well known. No social reconstruction plan emanated from the Sabarmati Ashram which was not readily underwritten and propagated under the auspices of Birla House. His interest in education partook of the nature of missionary zeal since he was a totally self-educated man. The gigantic Pilani complex is a standing monument to G. D.'s determination to provide the best in science and technology to deserving Indians. Many years ago, an unknown scientific worker from the south of the country approached G. D. Birla with a request for a five-figure sum to purchase some equipment to carry on experiments which would even win him the Nobel Prize. G. D. readily gave the money. The rest is history. The impecunious scientist was C. V. Raman. Whether it be industry, education or social work, activity was his flagship. And vision his beacon light. His was a full life.

INDIAN EXPRESS

Bombay: Tuesday June 14 1983

A man of many parts

THE passing of Ghanshyam Das Birla removes from the scene one of the foremost pioneers of India's industrialisation. He died peacefully in London at the ripe old age of 90, active till the last and as concerned as ever with the country's future and particularly its industrial and economic growth. He was one of the authors of the "Bombay Plan", published on the eve of Independence and calculated to inspire a vision of India's future as an industrial nation.

G. D. Birla was a man of many parts. He was a pillar of the national movement, friend and host of Gandhi and one of the major financiers of the Congress, both before and after Independence. He early recognised the importance of skilled manpower and established a number of educational institutions at Pilani in Rajasthan and elsewhere which remain centres of excellence. He was the doyen among Indian industrialists and saw the House of Birla grow from national to multinational dimensions. His papers and correspondence must constitute a veritable treasure trove. These should be made suitably available to the public in view of their archival importance. This would itself be a fitting memorial to the man and commemorate his services to the nation.

THE TIMES OF INDIA 14TH JUNE 1983

An Important Life

Mr G. D. Birla died the way he lived—mobile and active. And it was characteristic of the man that he should have told his son in advance that his body should not be brought back to India in case he died abroad. He had a distaste for pompous gestures which is what he thought bringing back his body to India would amount to. In this regard, as in others, he did not have many peers in the country. An optimal use of time and resources formed the dynamic principle of his life from the age of 12 when he started out in the family business of jute broking till his last breath in London. In this sense, his was more a highly modernised, even western, mind than a traditionally Hindu one though he had not had formal education. Yet, he read the Gita almost every day, was well versed in the Indian classics and campaigned throughout his long life for the promotion of Sanskrit and Vedic studies. Probably, it was this combination that helped Mr Birla stand out from the crowd of run-of-the-mill traders and industrialists. As he described himself in an interview when he turned 85: "Although I have been in business, I wouldn't say I have been a businessman... I have been a student all my life. I am still a student." This apparently helped him develop a keen business and political sense, though perhaps he was born with it.

‘हाथ काम, मुख राम, हिरदे सांची प्रीत’



मैं यही ब्रह्मा चरुदाजुं वि
तत्कर्म कीतिमें हूँ मगवान का नाम
लनिमे । ईश्वर उपदा मंगल करेगा

सुनरामदास



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

15 June, 1983

India: Death of Mr. G. D. Birla

Thank you for your letter of 13 June. You will already have seen the message of condolence which the Prime Minister has sent to Mr. Birla's son.

Provided the High Commissioner in Delhi sees no objection, I should be grateful if you would arrange for a message to be delivered to Mrs. Gandhi from the Prime Minister in the following terms:

"Dear Prime Minister,

I have learned with sorrow of the death here in London of Mr. G. D. Birla. As one of the architects of modern India he made a unique contribution to the industrial development of his country. I much enjoyed meeting him when I visited Bombay in 1981, and had looked forward to seeing him during his visit to London. I know that his loss will be keenly felt in India.

Best wishes.

Yours ever,
Margaret Thatcher."

R. L. COLES

John Holmes, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

①

PRIME MINISTER

Death of Mr. G.D. Birla

I have submitted to you separately a letter of condolences to his son.

You may also like to send a message to Mrs. Gandhi on the following lines:

"I have learned with sorrow of the death here in London of Mr. G.D. Birla. As one of the architects of modern India he made a unique contribution to the industrial development of his country. I much enjoyed meeting him when I visited Bombay in 1981, and had looked forward to seeing him during his visit to London. I know that his loss will be keenly felt in India."

Agree that this may be telegraphed?

Yes m

A.J.C.

13 June, 1983.



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

13 June 1983

Dear Sir,

India: Death of Mr G D Birla

Mr Birla, the influential Indian industrialist, died in London during the weekend. He was due to call on the Prime Minister later this month. Mrs Thatcher may wish to send a message of condolence to his son, who I understand has been in touch with you, on the following lines:

"I was very sorry to hear of the death of your father. I had been much looking forward to meeting him again. His loss will be deeply felt not only in India but in the international community at large. My husband joins me in sending you and your family our condolences."

/ I also enclose a draft telegram to New Delhi containing a possible message to Mrs Gandhi. We have not been able to check with them whether there is any local reason why such a message would be inappropriate, which is why the telegram gives the High Commissioner a chance to object if he wishes.

Yours ever
J E Holmes

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

UNCLASSIFIED

IMMEDIATE

ZCZC 1 ZCZC
 GRS 2 GRS
 CLASS 3 UNCLASSIFIED
 CAVEATS 4
 DESKBY 5
 FM FCO 6 FM FCO
 PRE/ADD 7 TO IMMEDIATE DELHI
 TEL NO 8 TELEGRAM NUMBER
 9 DEATH OF G D BIRLA
 10 1. As you will know, Birla died in London on 11 June. His body
 11 was cremated this afternoon at Golders Green Crematorium. The
 12 Prime Minister, who had agreed to receive a call from Birla this
 13 month, has expressed condolences to his son.
 14 2. Unless you see any objection, you should pass the following
 15 message of condolence from the Prime Minister to Mrs Gandhi.
 16 **BEGINS:** I have learned with sorrow of the death here in London
 17 of Mr G D Birla. As one of the architects of modern ^{India} ~~India~~ he
 18 made a unique contribution to the industrial development of his
 19 country. I much enjoyed meeting him when I visited Bombay in
 20 1981 and had looked forward to seeing him during his visit to
 21 London. I know that his loss will be keenly felt in India. **ENDS**
 22
 23 PYM
 24 NNNN
 25

///

//

/

NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword
File number	Dept	Distribution
Drafted by (Block capitals) PRIVATE SECRETARY		Minimal
Telephone number 233 4641		SAD
Authorised for despatch		PCD
Comcon reference		PS
Time of despatch		Mr Giffard
		Mr Donald

310
B.K. BIRLA

Camp: Park Towers,
Flat No.2,
Brick Street,
London, W.1

Telephone Nos. 409-2762

12th June, 1983.

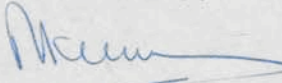
Dear Mr. John Coles,

With deep grief I would like to inform you that my father Mr. G.D.Birla had a heart stroke and suddenly expired at 9.40 AM on 11th June, 1983. My wife and myself have come here with other family members for the cremation to be held tomorrow at 4.00 PM in Golders Green Crematorium.

You could please perhaps kindly inform the Prime Minister about this sad event.

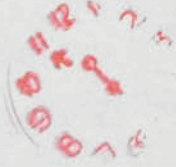
Regards,

Yours sincerely,


(B. K. Birla)

Mr. John Coles,
Private Secretary to the Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
London.

21 JUN 1983





je k

10 DOWNING STREET

10 June 1983

From the Private Secretary

Thank you very much for your letter of 10 June. I shall bring your congratulations to the Prime Minister's attention immediately and know that she will be most grateful for your message.

A&C

Mr. G.D. Birla

G. D. BIRLA

London,
10th June, 1983.

Dear Mr. John Coles,

Under a heap of messages of congratulations that the Prime Minister will receive mine perhaps shall be lost under the pile. Yet I venture to send my most cordial congratulations to the Prime Minister on her massive victory, since mine is from an Indian citizen a great admirer of the Prime Minister.


This great feat has added new responsibilities. I am sure however that God shall guide her towards greater achievements.

Please convey my most cordial regards and congratulations to the Prime Minister.

I am shortly returning to my country.

With my kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,



Mr. John Coles,
Private Secretary to the Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
London.

CIMMCO INTERNATIONAL

206 Upper Richmond Road, Putney, London SW15 6TD (UK)

Telephone: 01-785 9919 Telex: 8813601 GHF G.

✓ Copy to Chris Greenwood FCO

GP

Are there any ppfs?

GR N/T

1 June 1983

D

Mr John Coles
Personal Secretary to the Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

Dear Mr Coles

This is to advise you that Mr G D Birla will be arriving in London today, 1 June 1983. During his stay his address will be as under:

Mr G D Birla
Flat 2
Park Towers
14 Old Park Lane
LONDON W1

Tel No: 409 2762

He may also be contacted through this office.

With best regards

Yours sincerely

Ramesh Kumar

Ramesh Kumar
Vice President

He is here until about 16 June.
I do not think the P.R. will be able to see him before then.

A.S.C. 8/6

Tim

Tried to get Mr. Kumar 3/6 again

Tried again 6/6 - failed. Try 7/6

- ask how long Mr Birla here ;
say no question of a mtg before
9/6 ; will let him know of
Prospect Mearns (can refer
to A.S.C. on 7 or 8/6).

mes 3/6

D Cardina / CS noted
22/4/83

2) John Cole ✓ M $\frac{22}{4}$

FCO have informed me
that Mr Birla will no
longer be visiting London
in May (see FCO letter 11/4)

It has been proposed that
this visit will now take
place in July. FCO
will provide further
details in due course.

Grey

22.4.83

to H. M. M.

10/30

W. M. M.



FILE SW

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

13 April, 1983

Mr. G. D. Birla

Thank you for your letter of 11 April. The Prime Minister would like to see Mr. Birla and we have set aside a period of 30 minutes from 10.30 on Friday, 6 May.

A. J. COLES

R. B. Bone, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

MR



10 DOWNING STREET

Caroline

See P. R.'s minute.

Avella time?

A. J. C. $\frac{13}{4}$

✓

10.30 - 11.00.

on Friday 6th May.

C. J.
13/4

COVERING CONFIDENTIAL



Prime Minister

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

A marginal case.

London SW1A 2AH

Do you want to see Mr. Birla
for 30 minutes at 10.30 on
Monday, 25 April?

11 April, 1983

Yes Sir,

A.F.C. $\frac{12}{4}$

Yes - allow half an
hour - towards the
end of April of the
Sheffield not

Mr G D Birla

Mr G D Birla, the distinguished Indian industrialist, will shortly be paying one of his periodic visits to Europe. A member of his staff has asked Sir Robert Wade-Gery whether Mr Birla might call on the Prime Minister at any convenient time during the periods 24-30 April and 4-10 May.

The Prime Minister met Mr Birla when she visited Bombay in April 1981. On that occasion he presided over the ceremony at which Mrs Thatcher laid the foundation stone for the new Institute of Management Studies at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. He is 89, but though frail he remains alert and influential and very much the Grand Old Man on the Indian scene. He was a close friend of Gandhi and financed him over a long period. His industrial empire is the most important in India. A personality note is enclosed.

We would not wish to press Mr Birla's case too strongly, but if the Prime Minister can spare the time we think she would find him interesting and impressive. He does not waste words and would not stay long. An invitation to call would give Mr Birla great pleasure and would also be seen as a compliment to India. Given his unique stature in India, we do not think this would set a precedent which other Indian industrialists would seek to follow.

[Handwritten signature]

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

A J Coles
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street

COVERING CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

BIRLA, GHANASHYAM DAS

Industrialist.

Born 12 April 1894, at Pilani, Rajasthan. Founder of the Birla group of industries, the largest private industrial group in India comprising of 69 companies valued at Rs 11,711 million. Birlas produce goods and services valued at nearly £2 million per day and employ about 500,000 persons. Increasing involvement in projects overseas.

Formal education ended at the age of 11. After an early concentration on textiles and jute the Birlas came to be established as a family of industrialists after World War II. Their interests now also cover banking, coal mining, machinery manufacture, railway wagons, aluminium, synthetic fibres, chemicals, paper, motor cars, bicycles, sugar, tea, coffee, air conditioners, typewriters, newspapers etc.

A widower, G D Birla has two sons, K K Birla and B K Birla. His favourite is his grandson Aditya Birla, widely tipped for overall leadership of the group in the future. Frugal and puritanical by nature he is deeply religious. Particular about punctuality, he is fond of reading, painting, cooking, singing devotional songs and travel. He was a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi of whom he often speaks. Likes to travel in his Dakota DC-3. Quick perception, clear thinking and capacity for taking calculated risks. He and his family have a reputation for shrewd business deals which need to be examined with care by those negotiating with them. Founder of numerous education and public foundations.

Highly influential and powerful – his arm reaches far and wide. Influences politicians from top downwards who depend on him for funds.