

Hunger-strikers' Demands

Bhagat Singh

24th June, 1929

Central Jail Lahore

24.6.29

WE, BHAGAT SINGH AND B.K. DUTT, WERE SENTENCED to life transportation in the Assembly Bomb Case, Delhi, on the 19th April, 1929. As long as we were undertrial prisoners in Delhi Jail, we were accorded a very good treatment from that jail to the Mianwali and Lahore Central Jails respectively, we wrote an application to the higher authorities asking for better diet and a few other facilities, and refused to take the jail diet.

Our demands were as follows:

1. We, as political prisoners, should be given better diet and the standard of our diet should at least be the same as that of European prisoners. (It is not the sameness of dietary that we demand, but the sameness of standard of diet.)
2. We shall not be forced to do any hard and undignified labours at all.
3. All books, other than those proscribed, alongwith writing materials, should be allowed to us without any restriction.
4. At least one standard daily paper should be supplied to every political prisoner.
5. Political prisoners should have a special ward of their own in every jail, provided with all necessities as those of the europeans. And all the political prisoners in one jail must be kept together in that ward.
6. Toilet necessities should be supplied.
7. Better clothing.

We have explained above the demands that we made. They are the most reasonable demands. The Jail authorities told us one day that the higher authorities have refused to comply with our demands.

Apart from that, they handle us very roughly while feeding us artificially, and Bhagat Singh was lying quite senseless on the 10th June, 1929, for about 15 mts., after the forcible feeding, which we request to be stopped without any further delay.

In addition, we may be permitted to refer to the recommendations made in the U.P. Jail Committee by Pt. Jagat Narain and K.B. Hafiz Hidayat Hussain. They have recommended the political prisoners to be treated as "Better Class Prisoners."

We request you to kindly consider our demands at your earliest convenience.

- By "Political Prisoners", we mean all those people who are convicted for offences against the State, for instance the people who were convicted in the Lahore Conspiracy Cases, 1915-17, the Kakori Conspiracy Cases and Sedition Cases in general.

Yours
Bhagat Singh
B.K. Dutt

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[Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutt were sentenced to transportation for life in the Delhi Assembly Bomb Case. After conviction they were transferred to Mianwali and Lahore jails respectively. They started hunger strike for better treatment to political prisoners in jails. After a few days Bhagat Singh was also shifted from Mianwali to Lahore Central Prison. Dutt was already there. They jointly addressed this letter to the Home Member, Government of India, enumerating their demands. From here started a period of prolonged struggle for better treatment to political prisoners in jails.]

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