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INTRODUCTION: WHY INDIANS CAME TO SOUTH AFRICA?

The nascent sugar industry for which the coastal belt was admirably suited was ~~thwarted~~ denied all hope of expansion if it did not get the labour it required.

On 8 November 1855 Sir George Grey, the Governor of the Cape, visited Durban, and the welcome address presented to him by its White citizens reads, inter alia: "independently of measures for developing the labour of our own natives, we believe Your Excellency will find occasion to sanction the introduction of coolie or other labourers from the East in aid of the new enterprises on the coast lands for the success of which sufficient and reliable labour is absolutely essential".

On the advice of Sir George Grey the Natal Legislature passed two Ordinances (Numbers 14 and 15 of 1859): one providing for the introduction of Indians into Natal at public expense, and the other enabling White colonists to introduce Indian immigrants at their own expense.

Approaches were now made to the British government to introduce Indian labour. After much persuasion the desired consent was given. As the Indian viceregal government was not enamoured of the idea of encouraging Indians to emigrate under conditions of semi-slavery, it was agreed that the Indian immigrants would be entitled to a free return passage after their first three-year period of indenture: otherwise they could spend two further years under an employer of their own choice and then claim a grant of Crown land should the return passage not be taken up. Housing and medical aid were to be provided. There was to be no punishment by employers and, upon completion of their indenture, the Indians were to/....

were to be treated as all other citizens of Natal, i.e.
"they shall be entitled to the vote, be free to own landed property, enjoy freedom of movement and be completely unrestricted in the choice of schools for their children."

The Indian government grudgingly signed an agreement in 1859 whereby, under the foregoing conditions, the export of Indian male emigrants with a statutory proportion of females was sanctioned. At first only thirty per cent of the women were allowed.

The first batch of Indians, coming from Madras in the s.s. Truro, landed in Durban on 17 November 1860. Not long after, another shipload arrived from Calcutta in the s.s. Belvedere. From then onward there were regular ports of embarkation were Madras and Calcutta, the emigrants were drawn from almost every part of the Indian sub-continent. Speaking a variety of languages, professing, in the main, the Hindu faith, they arrived hopefully in a strange land, bringing with them their labour potential as their only wealth and their cultural heritage as luggage. Migration to them was a leap into the unknown. It was an enormous, emotional commitment. They would learn to have dealings with people essentially different from themselves in the land of milk and honey. They did not know then the scorn and discrimination they were to endure, They found many doors closed to them. But there was manual labour to be done, and they went to work.

The immigrants were allocated to all the planters and to many agriculturalists. A small number found employment with some of the well-known citizens and merchants of Durban. All

All/....

All employers were required to reimburse the Government for its expenditure and, in addition, to pay each labourer a wage of ten shillings per month in the first year, eleven in the second and twelve in the third.

Indian immigration to Natal continued up to 1866 when a general economic depression in the Colony, caused by a world-wide collapse of the sugar market after the American Civil War, temporarily put a stop to it. Between 1866 and 1870 no Indians came. When the first batch of a small number of returning ex-indentured Indians arrived in India in 1870, they presented a sad picture of life and labour in Natal. Thereupon the Indian government forbade further emigration.

In 1872 prosperity returned to Natal and the need for more indentured labour was again felt. The stoppage of Indian labour was proved disastrous to the Colony. The crops failed and the sugar output decreased. Natal made an urgent appeal to the government of India. In the meantime a commission was set up to inquire into the treatment of Indians. An outstanding ~~in the meantime~~ of a Protector of Indian Immigrants, whose function it was to ensure that the labourers were not unfairly treated nor victimised in any form. As a result of concessions the Indian government relented and permitted emigration for the second time. With the resumption of Indian immigration a new era of prosperity was inaugurated in the Colony. The sugar industry was now on its feet again.

Amongst the immigrants were a large number of professional and trading class Indians, known as "passenger" Indians, who came at their own expense to serve the material needs of
their/.....

their countrymen. These "passenger" Indians came mainly from Mauritius and the Bombay Presidency of India. The Indian community was leavened economically by their advent. To the Whites in Natal, the newcomers were not a desirable element as they threatened to compete with them in the economic field. Consequently they engendered a feeling of antagonism in the Whites towards the Indians as a whole. I.

When one looks at the specific areas from which the first recruits were obtained as well as the historical and social circumstances of the time affecting these areas, namely, the situation after the Indian mutiny of 1857, one finds more evidence for the conclusion that the pioneer immigrants were not totally without the experience and the insights necessary to come to grips with political realities. An historian from India has come up with this interesting, though speculative, observation based on sources in India:

It is significant that immigration into Natal commenced soon after the suppression of the historic Mutiny of the Indian Sepoys of 1857. The coolies, employed on the plantations of Natal, belonged like the Indian sepoy, to the agricultural class and were recruited from the areas which were affected by the Mutiny, such as Oudh, Kanpur, Allahabad, Ghazipur, Gaya, Patna, Chapra and Munghyr. The coolie-recruits from these areas, I am inclined to hold, might have included some of the rank and file of the disbanded so-called "Bengal Army". After the suppression of the Mutiny, the sepoy who rose in arms against the British Government came to be subjected to a policy of ruthlessness/.....

of ruthless vengeance. It was not unlikely that some of the sepoys of the disbanded "Bengal Army" might have sailed from Durban to escape prosecution at the hands of the British government. 2

INTERVIEW WITH SUBJECT

MRS JAWOODEEN

The place of origin of my subject is the village called Dabhat. The area of documentation which is closest to the village Dabhat is Ratnagiri. ^(map attached) This area has offices where documents were issued to people. Coming from this area my subject speaks the dialect MARATHI. However, when I interviewed her, it was quite evident that the Urdu language has had an influence on her language. Incidentally, my subject does not speak or even understand any English. It was therefore essential for an interpreter.

According to the information supplied, my subject was born into an extremely poor family. She was born in 1901. She was the sixth daughter born into the family. Her parents did not have any sons and were thus very disappointed at the birth of yet another daughter. Her parents were labourers on the rice fields in Dabhat. At the age of eleven (as she recalls) she was married. Fortunately her husband came from a richer family. They owned rice fields. They had labourers working for them on the rice fields. It was the duty of the woman folk at home to prepare meals and take it to the rice fields for the workers. In 1910 her husband left India and came to South Africa with his father and two other brothers.

They/....

They left India because they were in search of better and prosperous living. It must be remembered that after the indentured Indians had come, their arrival was subsequently followed by "passangers". Many of these people became wholesalers, retailers, and merchants in towns. Some of them were market gardeners and they supplied Durban and the Pietermaritzburg areas. Others joined the coal mines and railways whilst others got domestic employment or earned a living by hawking. My subjects husband first seeked domestic employment. Later he became a hawker and he cut up a sheep and sold it to various people. By this time one of his brothers settled in Cape Town and established a general dealer business, the other settled in Glencoe and he established a take-away business for the mine workers. He lived in what is presently known as Jagen Road in Glencoe.

What is presently known as the Junaid Centre in Grey Street, was at that time a methodist churchyard. When the Church building ~~was~~ went up, a few shops were also built. My subject's husband was given a shop which flourished as a butchery. Looking at his occupation one can regard him to be a trader.

In 1920 (as subject recalls) she had come down to South Africa. Her husband had sent her a ticket. She came in the ship called s.s. KHARAGOLA. They lived in Prince Edward Street. During this time the area was not developed. There was a little building in which people sold their goods. Some of the hawkers brought their goods and vegetables on donkey backs. The horse and cart came around sprinkling water on the sandy roads making

it rather/.....

it rather muddy.

As the family grew they moved to Bond Street and later to Saville Street. Eventually they owned a building in Saville Street which they had to sell because of the Group Areas Act.

In South Africa she had five children. They were three daughters and two sons. They were born Muslims. However my subjects husband respected the other religions. Being an owner of a butchery, he catered for those people of a Hindu faith-he neither stocked nor sold any beef at all as he respected the Hindu religion. He was a socialable person. He spoke Tamil, Hindi, Urdu and Telegu and this made it easy for him to communicate with this customers.

With regards to his religion he worshipped at the Grey Street "Juma Masjid" (Mosque). He aslo made contributions to the mosque. The mosque ~~inxxxx~~ incidently is built on the land which was donated by Abobaker Amod (Jhaveri) who was the first Indian Muslim trader to come to South Africa. Attached is an article taken from the Natal Mercury Quran Anniversary Supplement, December 29, 1967.

With regards to politics my subject's husband did not wish to get involved. He sold his buildings because of the Group Areas Act.

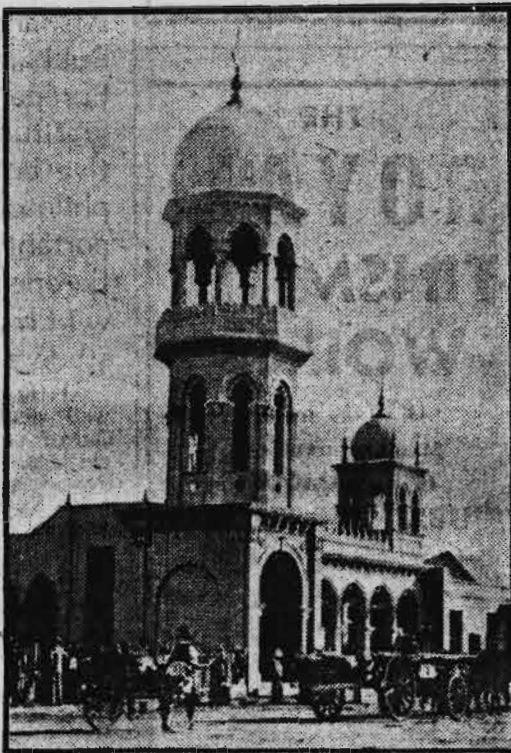
My subject's husband who was also known as Baba died on the 28 April 1967, He leaves behind his wife, children and grandchildren.

Conclusion/.....

CONCLUSION

In attempting this project, I was faced with many problems. The greatest of my problems was to get a suitable subject. Eventually, succeeding in getting a subject to interview, their personal documents were not available to me. Thus, in the project presented the availability of documents with regards to my subject is a shortcoming.

**A VIEW
of the
Durban
Juma Musjid
minaret in
the early
1900's.**



4,000 Can Worship Here

THE history of the Juma Musjid, in Grey Street Durban, goes back to the early 1880s when Aboobaker Amod (Jhaveri), who was reputed to be the first Indian Muslim trader to come to Natal, purchased the site and donated it for a Mosque.

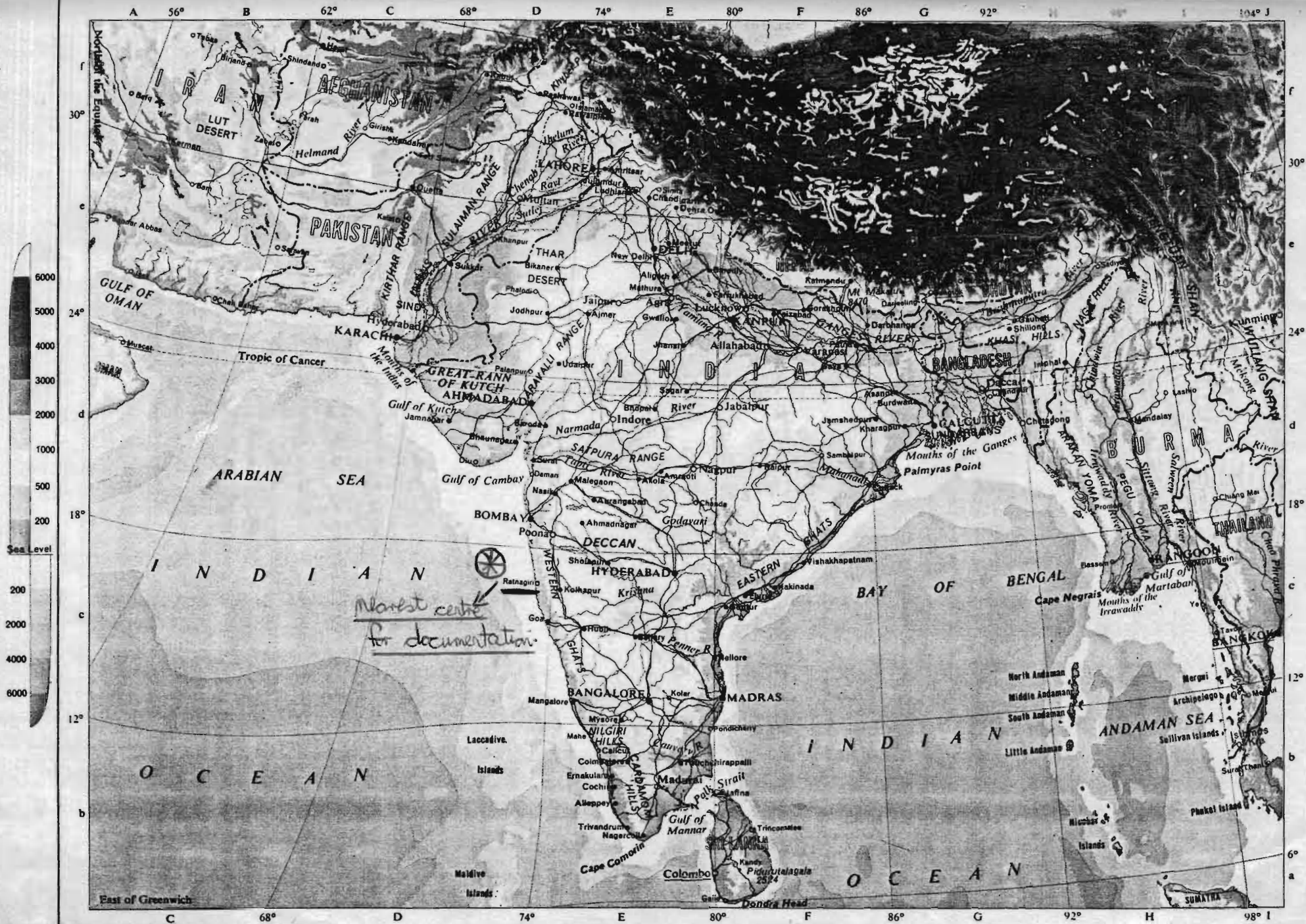
The first building which had space for 110 prayer mats, was built in 1802. In 1884 it was enlarged to accommodate 200 prayer mats, and again in 1903 to accommodate 320 prayer mats.

The Juma Musjid is growing steadily, absorbing a number of different styles. Today it is the largest in the Southern Hemisphere, with space under cover for 2,000 worshippers plus a further 2,000 on the flat roof and in the adjoining courtyard.

In the early days the mosque was flanked by the squatters' market, before this was moved to the present "Indian Market." This close link with trade, which is traditional in Muslim architecture, has continued to this day where the mosque is now completely surrounded by 32 shops, a Madressa for 500 girls, flats and offices. Some of these buildings earn revenue for the Mosque.

R. E. HABBER.

INDIA, PAKISTAN and BANGLADESH Physical



SOURCE LIST:

1. Pillay, K.: Pioneer Footprints, Nasou Ltd., 1978.
2. Pachai, B. ed.: South Africa's Indian: The evolution of a minority, University Press, 1979.