Mohammed Ali is justly regarded as one of the first Asian modernisers, remarkable for his vision and organizing abilities. There is however one chapter of his career and work which has been neglected, but on which the Maharashtra Archives at Bombay have much information, namely, his policy towards commerce between Egypt and India. This had interesting potential for the expansion of Indo-Arab trade; but the later construction of the power of Mohammed Ali made it into a mere episode.

As an introductory to this study, we might begin by noting that Mohammed Ali’s interest in commerce was not only as a ruler but also as a participant. It is little known that he himself had ships plying over the Arabian Sea, and that he invested considerable sums in this commerce. Facts on this come again principally from the Maharashtra Archives.

Before coming to power as the ruler of Egypt in 1805 Mohammad Ali Pasha had already engaged in commerce. His ships plied in the Mediterranean and traded with Malta.
1810 Mohammed Ali, with conclusion of a provisional treaty with the East India Company, received for his household use Indian goods worth Rs. 10,00,000 through the Company's agents. Until this time he seems to have established no direct link with Indian ports. Mohammed Ali's contact as a trading magnate with Indian ports is said to have begun in 1816 and in the first round his ship brought from Bombay "A richly comparisoned" elephant which he gave as a present to the Sultan of Turkey. Burkhardt (1814-16) is of the view that the Egyptian ruler was "disposed to speculate on his own account".

In 1818 Mohammed Ali is said to have sent a fleet of seven vessels to Bombay which carried a million dollars, half of which amount was entrusted to the care of W. Martinice and the other half to a Greek agent. The remittance of such a big amount was described as a preliminary of such a big amount was described as a preliminary trial for future investment at Bombay.

1. *Secret and Political Department Diary No. 366 of 1810*, pp. 766-67
3. *Secret and Political Department Diary No. 307 of 1818*, pp. 734-35. The document also mentions the Pasha's two vessels being taken by the Wahabis. Henry Salt, the author of the letter, says the Pasha felt it absolutely necessary to use force against the Wahabis for having created trouble in the Red Sea. Mohammed Ali's ships also frequented Bushire where they were made to pay annually the "Light House" charges and pilotage fees of Rs. 40. (Bombay Superintendent Office, 27 July 1826. *Political Department, Vol. 258 of 1826*, pp. 124-25).
Transactions through agents were the main features of the Pasha's business with Indian ports. In 1818 the Pasha's main agent at Bombay was Martruce who also served as general agent for English Firms like Messrs Brigg, Schatz & Welona, both having their business houses at Cairo and also for Messrs Briggs Lee and Co. of Alexandria, who operated between Egypt and India in conjunction with Messrs Forbes & Co. of Bombay. Martruce had originally travelled to India on Mohammed Ali's behalf for commercial transaction. Mohammed Ali had another agent who looked after his business and lived at Sanaa. His elder agent at Jedda on the Red Sea was Hassan Agha and the "Vakeel" who replaced him was Mohammed Zurgham.

As Mohammed Ali became a shipowner in the Indian Ocean, his ships plied between Bombay and the Red Sea carrying cargo to various ports of the Arabian Sea and vice-versa. We have list of his ships and their tonnage. A list dated 1 July 1818 gives dates of ships' arrivals and departures from the port of Bombay to the Red Sea and vice-versa. The ships on their voyage between Bombay and Jedda also called at other ports of the Red Sea.

1. Secret and Political Department Diary, No. 307 of 1818, pp. 734-35
2. Ibid, p. 735
3. Political Department, Vol.238 of 1826,p.132; also Political Department, 57 500 of 1831:32/33, p. 74.
4. Secret and Political Department Diary, No. 307 of 1818, Customs Master to Warden
One of Mohammed Ali’s ships was ‘Suakin’ whose captains were Hussain and W.O. Martruce. It was a cargo ship of 200 tons. The information in the East India Company’s record reveals that the ship under the Turkish flag sailed from Suez, calling at Jedda and Mokha, and arrived at Bombay in September 1816. It then sailed in convoy with a “Brig” named Ibucle (“J. buck” = James buck?) of 150 tons whose captain was Hamid. This ship too made voyages under Turkish colours. These ships sailed from Bombay in February 1817 for Surat where they loaded their cargo and finally left on their return voyage for the port of Suez.¹ Another of his ships was “Alest Raymov” of 500 tons, whose earlier name was “Bay of Bombay”. The captain of the ship was Hussein and it was purchased in December 1816 by Mohammed Ali from Mrs. J.M. Taskeehy Hussein Aga for Rs. 1,30,000. The ship too carried the Turkish flag. It was cleared from Bombay for Suez in April 1817. It was freighted principally by Premjee Purshootum, “a respectable native firm” of Bombay. The ship sailed again from Bombay in January 1818 for Surat. After having completed her cargo it cleared out for Suez.²

¹. H. Shank, the Customs Master to Warden, 25 June 1818, Secret and Political Department Diary, No. 307 of the year 1818. It appears the chief commander of both the ships was W.O. Martruce.
². Secret and Political Department Diary, No. 307 of the year 1818
Yet another cargo ship “Carbrant” of 300 tons under the command of one Cassim arrived at Bombay under Turkish colours in September 1817. The ship along with other European ships, cleared from Bombay for Suez in October 1817. It was freighted by “Mahomed Alee Caiva”, a respectable “Mogul merchant” of Bombay. The “brig”, “Futtee Eslan”, of 133 tons, under Turkish colours, with Captain Abdul, arrived at Bombay in September 1817 directly from Suez. It cleared from Surat for Suez in October 1817.1

Mohammed Ali’s personal interest in Indo-Red Sea commerce was probably an important factor behind his attempt to control areas across the Red Sea. He vigorously extended his authority over the Western portions of the Arabian peninsula. The Turkish marauders’ efforts to frustrate the administration of Mohammed Ali was brought to an end by his complete rout of them by the third decade of the century.2

It may be recalled that by the beginning of the 19th century the Wahabis had become so powerful that they got exempted from payment of customs at Jedda.3 After a pitched battle with the Egyptian army, their power came to an end.4

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1 Secret and Political Diary, No 307 of 1818, pp 714-15 The second decade of the 19th century is marked by construction of a large number of ocean-going and coasting ships by Red Sea merchants at Bombay which may be taken as index of the volume of trade between India and the Red Sea.
2 Political Department, 57 500 of 1831 32/33
3 See Burkhardt, op cit.
4 Political and Secret Department Diary, No 473 of 1819, p 5676
During 1804-05 there was considerable flow of treasure from Mokha and Jedda. The Wahabis depredation during this period had become unmanageable and therefore the Indian merchants sent their liquid assets to Bombay. Campaign against the Joasemese was also launched by Pasha's son Ibrahim Pasha in collaboration with the British military and naval power.

In December 1820 the Pasha seems to have taken control of the province of Hejaz. This act of his must have further extended his power in the Red Sea. Mohammed Ali further deployed an army under the command of his son Ibrahim Pasha to establish full control over the coast of Red Sea as far as Aden and Mokha.

Keeping in view the enterprising ventures and the benefit that Egypt could derive from the presence of the British, Mohammed Ali allowed them rights of free entry into his ports. However, in view of the political situation prevailing in Europe he also maintained neutrality. This factor again prevented any friction from British, though this phase was very short-lived. Initially it was owing to his plan to construct the

1. Report on External Commerce of Bombay for the year 1804/5
2. Arabia and Mocha Diary. No. 323 of 1819-1821, folio 1-1A & 2
3. Political Department, No. 14 of 1820-21, p. 174
4. Ibid. No. 98 of 1823
5. Secret and Political Department. No. 103 of 1800, p. 7691
6. Secret and Political Department Diary. No. 366 of 1810, p. 6786
Suez with his own investment, that he opposed the idea of its construction by other powers.

His prohibition of import of the West Indies coffee in Egypt implied that the ruler wished to encourage Yemeni coffee. Thus his openness to British trade was not unqualified. This view is reinforced by some other measures taken by Mohammed Ali.

In 1831 Mohammed Ali thought of a plain to transfer the customs of Jedda to Suez and thereby control direct trade relations between India and Egypt. The other reason for the transfer was thought of to put a check of the flow of large amount of treasure which was sent to Jedda for purchase of Indian commodities by Cairo merchants.1

The Pasha discouraged import of such goods as were or could be produced locally. Wellsted noted in 1833 that Mohammed Ali prohibited importation of essential commodities from India to Yembo and made the people of Yembo purchase them from Egypt, at price fixed by Mohammed Ali himself.2 Severe penalties were pronounced if any one imported essential commodities to Yembo.3 The rigour of such a strict regulation

2. Ibid, p. 216.
3. Ibid.
is borne out by the fact that the cloth that did not bear the Pasha’s stamp, if used in Yembo, was liable to be seized. This may be taken as a token of protective measure of the Pasha to safeguard his own developing textile industry.

Measures were also taken to check smuggling. Officers were appointed to keep watch over the people carrying contraband.

Trade of the Red Sea with India seems to have accelerated between 1806 and 1816. The Customs Master of Bombay in correspondence of 25 June 1818 says that in this period the English and Arabs were the principal traders between the port of Bombay and Mokha and Jedda.

At the turn of the 19th century India’s main ports of suppliers to the Red Sea were Calcutta, Surat and Bombay. Jedda by and large was the chief port for Indian goods which were supplied onward to Egypt. Jedda merchants purchased Indian goods in wholesale after the arrival of Indian fleet in the beginning of May. These merchants were advanced credit by Cairo merchants for their purchase.

1. Wellsted, pp. 216-17
2. Ibid., pp. 215-16
Merchandise that was purchased at Jedda was finally shipped to Suez and sold at Cairo from where these were further supplied to the Mediterranean. The returns for these goods were made in dollars and sequins with which the Indian fleet returned to India. This caused an acute scarcity of silver in the Egyptian market. According to the Customs Master’s report of 1814/15 there was unusual export of Mokha coffee to the value of upwards of Rs. 171,000 from the Red Sea to India destined for the United Kingdom which again caused scarcity of coffee in the Egyptian market.

The first private English export to Suez from Bombay was made by Messrs Forbes and Company of Bombay in February 1815 on a ship “Danish Beggy”, whose owner was Mohammed Ali Cawa, a respectable native merchant, resident at Bombay. Mohammed Ali rendered cooperation with Messrs Brigs in 1818 in their plan to establish a commercial company with its base at Cairo. The aim of those interested in this venture was to supply the Mediterranean with Indian produce through Egypt.

There seems to have been considerable trade between Bombay Presidency and the Red Sea 1816-18 as shown by a statement from Bombay Custom’s House dated 25 June 1818.

2. Bombay, 25 June 1818, Secret and Political Department Diary, No. 307 of 1818, pp. 709-10
3. H. Shank. Customs Master to Warden, Bombay, Secret and Political Department Diary, No. 307 of 1818, p. 708
The volume of trade in 1815 at the port of Jedda alone was worth 4 million Dollars of which the major part should have comprised imports from India. There was a sharp upward movement in the volume of trade from 1815 till 1838, when we have another estimate. Jedda still enjoyed its position as the leading port, and the major trading activity in the Red Sea centred here. In 1833 Jedda had ten thousand tons of shipping beside large *baglas* which also carried the same amount of shipping.

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1 Wellsted. Vol II. p 297
Taking 1801 as the base year the English export from Bombay to Red Sea had by 1921 increased three times while imports to Bombay had just doubled.¹

Mohammed Ali’s customs policy may now be considered. In 1798 the rate of customs at Mokha on import of goods of the East India Company and British merchants was 3% advalorum. This rate was exactly in accordance with customs of 3% charged in 1730 if not earlier from the Europeans.² The valuation of goods for customs in all respects was made only in accordance with its market price. Surat piece-goods, imported by the East India Company or by British merchants, were charged 3%. But the customs in this instance was paid not by the importing agency but by the purchaser who was made to pay the customs.³ Customs on piece-goods from “mussalman natives” was exacted at 7.5% in Spanish Dollars or in German Crowns. The rate again coincides with the figure for 1730 when it varied from 5 to 7.5% and that too realized from the “Muslim and Hindu”.⁴ The Hindus (“Hindoo”), taken as distinct trading

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3. *Secret and Political Department Diary. No. 366 of the year 1810*, p. 6807
4. Ibid. also K.N. Chaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 370
community at Mokha, were subjected to a duty of 8½% in 1798.¹

The mode of customs at Jedda paid by merchants in the year 1798 again shows variations. They paid 16% advalorem or piece goods which is in sharp contrast to the rate charged at Mokha in the same period. Native merchants were charged at 11% advalorem. On other descriptions of goods like drugs, cotton, sugar candy and soft sugar including those articles which were calculated by weight. The East India Company and other European merchants paid 8% advalorem on all kinds of goods.²

A change was brought about by Mohammed Ali’s treaty with East India Company in 1810. Clause 14 of the commercial treaty stipulated that Indian raw materials and Indian manufactured goods imported into Egypt would pay a uniform duty of 3% advalorem either in “kind or coin” whichever was demanded by the customs. The duty was deemed payable only after the arrival of goods at Cairo.³

¹ Secret and Political Department Diary, No. 366 of the year 1810, p. 6807.
² Ibid.
³ Ibid, p. 6762. Clause 8 of the treaty exempted English merchants from payment of duty on goods that only passed through Egypt from India to Europe and vice-versa (Ibid. p. 6807). But the customs-incharge was empowered to check goods unloaded from British ships belonging to British subjects. These ships as a rule had also to carry an exact note or invoice of goods. On the other hand, in case goods thus carried sustained any damage the Egyptian Government was liable of payment of compensation for the damage.
Clause 16 shows Mohammed Ali's desire for increasing trade with the British Empire. As token of encouragement he agreed to more customs concessions to the English subjects than the native merchants. As such the clause has a provision of 15% deduction in customs of goods of Yemeni or Abyssinian origins brought by the English subjects into Egyptian territory for sale.¹ The rate of customs on British subjects continued to be 3% as in the past. But the demand for a further cut in the rate by the English persisted. Clause 17 of the treaty set a reciprocal rate of 3% on goods of Egypt exported to Indian ports.² The provision further stipulates, that all articles coming from Europe or other parts of Turkey, Syria which have paid import duty shall not pay any customs on their being re-exported from Suez and Cossair. Clause 18 relates to exports of goods by British merchants from India, Abyssinia or the states of Yemen to Europe or Turkey via Alexandria or Domeitta. On such goods as were exported from these countries, customs could be exacted only at the time of export. But the customs thus charged were to carry a "Terchit receipt" (clearance receipt?) to avoid further levies particularly on goods exported to Turkey.³

¹ Secret and Political Department Diary, No. 366 of the year 1810, p. 6762.
² Ibid.
³ Ibid. p 6765.
Clause 19 for all practical purposes specifies a customs of 3% advalorum on export goods for consumption in Egypt or for re-exportation of items like vine and American tobacco coming from Malta. The same rate of 3% was fixed for “the wine of Indies” as well.¹

Clause 20 of the treaty of 1810 stipulates that those of the subjects of the Sublime Porte and those natives of Egypt could only trade with India in British ships if they agreed to abide by the laws of the East India Company. But ships under Turkish colours and with a Turkish crew were deemed at liberty to traffic with the subjects of the Indies in every respect at the rates allowed to the Company.

If the Indian goods arrived at Mokha after March 25 (after 20\textsuperscript{th} of Nauroz) customs on those goods increased by 50% (i.e. 50% of the usual duty). The Customs Master of Surat thought the customs charged at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ from Europeans and $7\frac{1}{2}\%$ from Mohammadan subjects to be quite reasonable.²

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¹ Foul dealing by customs authorities of the Red Sea ports, however, cannot be ruled out. Besides other anomalies, the customs officers for their personal gain brought down the cost of goods by 15 or 20%, Secret and Political Department Diary. No. 372 of the year 1811. op. cit., p. 1606.

² Surat January 10, 1811, Secret and Political Department Diary. of 1811 No. 372.
The rate of customs of the year 1811 seems fairly high on piece-goods at Jeddah. Indian, Arabian and Muslim merchants paid 15% on piece-goods. Large bales of Surat, Cambay and Patan paid a specified fee of four, six and eight dollars at Jeddah, Mokha and Basra respectively. Customs on Indian spices like pepper, ginger and cinnamons was charged 10% with an additional fee of 2½%. As against the high rate of customs on Indian piece-goods the English goods were charged 8% ad valorem.¹ Small bales of Surat, Cambay and Patan were charged at 1.25 (S.P. $1.25?) each at Jeddah, Mokha and Basra. Bengal rice paid 10%. The rate had just doubled in 1811 as against 1773 when the import duty on Bengal goods of all descriptions was 5% in Egypt.²

The aggregate collection of Jeddah port customs in 1814, even after much diminution owing to duty-free passing of goods, has been estimated at 4,00,000 annually which according to Burkhardt would put an annual import of

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¹ Customs Master at Surat to Deputy Secretary to Government, Surat 10 January, 1811, Secret and Political Department Diary, No. 372 of the year 1811, p. 1606.
² Imperial Record Department, Calcutta, Persian Correspondence (being letters which passed between some of the Company’s servants and Indian rulers and notables, preserved at the National Archives, New Delhi), p. 121. Also Secret and Political Department Diary, No. 372 of the year 1811, p. 1601.
approximately 4 million dollars, “a sum certainly below rather than above the truth”. Burkhardt says that the customs rate was uniform at all ports under the jurisdiction of the Pasha of Egypt during his visits.\(^1\)

In a second treaty formally ratified, with the merchants of Jeddah, a demand for payment of joint-customs by ships, both of Suez and Jeddah at the customs house of Suez was made by the Pasha of Egypt. The rate of customs was initially fixed at 12% but was reduced to 9% upon all imports into Suez from India which was 6% more than the usual customs charged on European goods at the ports of the Turkish Sultan. The arrangement was hopefully made to bring about an opening of brisk commerce with Egypt.\(^3\)

A treaty was signed between Captain Bruce with the Imam of Sanaa on 15 January 1821. The Imam agreed to a reduction of 2¼% against previous rate of 3% on all British

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1. John Lewis Burkhardt, *Travels in Arabia* (2 Vols.), London, 1829, Vol. 1, p. 94. Out of the total collection of customs of Jeddah 1/3 and subsequently ½ of it was shared by the Sherif of Mecca. The term for customs at Jeddah was ashour and it was fixed at 10% but abuses sometimes led to over-rating and sometimes under-rating (Ibid., pp. 88-89). Burckhardt is of the view that Pasha of Egypt took possession of all harbours and customs houses of Hejaz. He was under the impression that the Pasha was aiming to shift the customs of Jeddah to Suez, a prelude to a plan to maintain direct link with India. But the Jeddan merchants would not let the scheme be given practical shape (Ibid., p. 38)
exports and imports. Madodas Ransordas in his petition of 4 April 1821 to Charles Coville, acting Governor in Council, says that the *Imam* of Sanaa levied tax on pilgrims besides exactions on coffee. Thus the total income accruing from customs alone amounted to a sum of 12,000,00 (Rs.?).\(^1\)

However, the customs rates charged at Mokha and Jedda for some years following Burkhardt's visit to the Red Sea regions are not available. The subsequent information is related to the year 1822. In this year a commercial treaty signed between Hutchinson, the British Resident at Aden, and the Sultan of Aden (Lohaje) stipulates fixation of a uniform rate of customs of 2\(\frac{1}{4}\)% on all imports and exports by British subjects, Europeans or Indians.\(^2\) British ships according to the treaty were exempted from payment of anchorage duty as well.

The British Resident at Mokha in his letter of 22 August 1824 addressed to the Chief Secretary to the Government at Bombay says the rate of customs charged by the *Imam* was 3% on all imports and exports above which a nominal amount of *hatta* also was charged. This action of *Imam* in the opinion of the Resident was in violation of the provision of the treaty of 15 January 1821, which stipulated in its article 7 that "no more

\(^1\) *Political Department, Vol. 14/34 of 1820-21*, pp. 398-99.
shall be levied than $2\frac{1}{4}\%$ upon Imports and Exports".\(^1\) However, before the reduction to $2\frac{1}{4}\%$, the normal duty charged on British exports and imports at Mokha had been $3\%$.\(^2\) The same rate of customs of $2\frac{1}{4}\%$ was also charged from French at Mokha.

The superintendent at Bombay writing to Mountstuart Elphinstone, Governor in Council, dated Bombay, July 27, 1826, says that Mohammed Ali's merchant ships that came from Jedda to Bombay harbour paid the customary "Light House dues" annually, and pilotage fee, forty rupees more than English merchants ships.\(^3\) Besides, as a token of reciprocal measure the East India Company levied the same rate of customs on Jeddan vessels at Bombay which the Company paid at the Jedda port.\(^4\) Evidence suggests that the rate of customs charged at the ports of Mohammed Ali and the Sherif of Mecca and that on Indian ports under the jurisdiction of the East India Company was reciprocal:

"Instances have occurred where the Shereef of Jedda has exacted heavy duties of the Company's

\(^1\) Political Department, Vol. 22/166 of 1824, pp. 398-99.
\(^2\) Mokha Residency, 22 August 1824, Political Department, Vol. 22/166 of 1824, pp. 120-23
\(^3\) Political Department, Vol. 238 of 1826, pp. 124-25
\(^4\) Ibid., pp. 68-69
woolens and we have retaliated by directing the same duties to be levied on the Judda vessels trading at Bombay and Surat".\textsuperscript{1}

J.R. Wellsted (1831) informs us that the rate of customs of Jedda and Yembo (another port under the Pasha's jurisdiction) was 10\%. But goods imported into Yembo from Jedda under "Exemption Certificate" by the Customs master of Jedda was let in duty-free at Yembo.\textsuperscript{2} Commercially Aden had dwindled by the third decade of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, only waiting to be declared as British protectorate in 1838. However, the customs duty there too was 2½\% on all imports and exports besides normal harbour dues.\textsuperscript{3} Makalla, another Red Sea port under Mohammed Ali charged a uniform rate of 10\% in 1834. Ships called at Makalla to evade exorbitant rate of customs charged at other ports of the Red Sea.\textsuperscript{4} Owing to his policy of customs concessions Mohammed Ali is said to have lowered the rate of customs of Makalla from 10\% to 5\%.\textsuperscript{5}

From a treaty between the British and the Turkish Government in 1856 it appears that dual jurisdiction prevailed in the Red Sea, that is, of the Ottomans and that of the

\textsuperscript{1} Mocha Residency, a minutes of 11 May 1826 by W. Warden, \textit{Political Department, Vol. 238 of 1826}, pp. 68-69
\textsuperscript{2} J.R. Wellsted, Vol. II, pp. 215-16
\textsuperscript{3} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 397
\textsuperscript{4} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{5} \textit{Ibid.}
Egyptian ruler. The treaty deemed the British commerce in the Red Sea exempt from all charges except the regular customs duties.¹

It can be seen that Mohammed Ali's efforts were largely successful in establishing a fairly regular customs structure, with such exceptions as Yemen, where he did not exercise much control. This effort accorded with British commercial interests in the region, so that no conflict could arise. Egypt was still economically too weak commercially and industrially to benefit from such protective measures as Mohammed Ali undertook domestically. Perhaps, this was the reason why his customs measures do not particularly reflect a real policy of protection.

¹ Secretary to Government to the Acting Vice-Consul, Bombay Castle, April 1, 1856. Political Department. Vol. 34 of 1856-57. p. 79.
(B) Merchants In The Arabian Sea Trade, First Half, 19th Century

As we have seen India had considerable trade with the countries of the Middle East. The records of the East India Company give us detailed accounts of their shipping which also shed some light on indigenous shipping, magnitude of trade and nature and composition of commodities as well as commercial practices in Indian and overseas markets. Such information has, however, to be culled from documents relating to individual cases.

We may begin by considering the case of Madowdass Ransordass, a banya merchant and inhabitant of Bombay who carried on regular trade with the Red Sea, both with ports under the Imam of Yemen and other ports of the Red Sea, particularly Jedda. The correspondence of Madowdass with the official of the East India Company at different intervals of time, deals often with claims against the authorities of Yemen on account of losses sustained by him.¹

In a letter of 5 April 1820 referring to Madowdass Ransordass’s earlier petition, Francis Warden, Chief Secretary

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¹ Political Department, op. cit., Vol. 28/33 of 1820, p. 97
to the Bombay Government, speaks of having forwarded his petition to the officer in charge of the Residency at Mokha who was directed to make use of his good offices with the Imam of Sanaa for the recovery of his claims.\(^1\) Another petition concerns the plunder of cargo of his ghorab Bombay Merchant. It is addressed to Mountstuart Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay. Madowdass says that after having called at the ports of Mokha and Hodaida the vessel arrived at the port of Lohaja on 26 June 1820 where beduin Arabs attacked the vessel and plundered cargo belonging to him worth $15000. The goods of several other merchants as well were plundered. Madowdass requests the chief secretary to help him obtain compensation from the Imam of Sanaa.\(^2\) In another petition to Elphinstone 19 August 1820 he first refers to the Bombay Government’s blockade of the port of Mokha and other ports under the Imam of Sanaa. Long before the proclamation of the blockade Madowdass had dispatched to Mokha his cargo on the ghorab (brig), the Bombay Merchant, and merchandise worth Rs.130,000 on other vessels from Bombay and Calcutta. The goods were consigned to his agents Gangadass Munjee and Jairam Dayal who had left Bombay for Mokha and other places in the Red Sea in December 1819: they were to dispose off the

\(^1\) Political Department, op. cit., 28/33 of 1820-21, p. 72
\(^2\) Ibid.
goods and send return cargo purchased from the proceeds of sale. He solicited the protection of his cargo and vessels by the officers in charge of the blockade since they formed property of a British subject. The commander of the squadron was thereupon asked to protect the vessels upon the application of the ships' captains and the agents of Madowdass Ransordass, provided they were within the limits of the area of blockade.¹

Madowdass again submitted a petition to Francis Warden, Chief Secretary of Bombay, dated Bombay, 21 March 1821. In the petition hope is expressed for speedy recovery of the amount of his claim provided his agent at Lohaja or Mokha could manage to get the claim admitted by the Imam.² If so Madowdass would accept it in instalments from the customs collected at Mokha.³

Madowdass Ransordass wrote to Charles Colville, the Acting Governor, on 29 March 1821. Here he identifies himself as a ‘Banya’, and informs the Governor of the departure of many vessels of the season, expected to sail to Mokha within 3 or 4 days. He asked for British Residents intercession at Mokha on his behalf.⁴ Colville received another petition from Madowdass Ransordass dated Bombay, 4 April 1821. This

1. *Political Department, Vol. 28/33 of 1820*, pp. 29-30
thanks Government for help in recovering losses sustained at Lohaja. Madowdass further claims to have conducted trade for many years with the ports of the Red Sea. He has also knowledge of the financial resources of the Imam which he derives from customs: coffee duties and tax on pilgrims to Mecca. Thus the total income accruing from all the above sources amounted to $12,00,000. Finally the petitioner requests the acting Government to help him get indemnification for the loss that he has sustained. In the post script he also informs of the schedule of the sailing of a ship from Bombay to Mokha.¹

In another letter of 21 July 1820 to Francis Warden, Madowdass seeks his indulgence in the matter of his claims on the Government of Sanaa regarding his property plundered at Lohaja. The petitioner expressed strong hopes of some satisfactory arrangement through the British authorities for collection of his claims out of the customs of Mokha in instalments.²

Another petition was submitted to Elphinstone, on 27 September 1821. The petitioner (Madhowdass) says that in March 1820 he sent from the port of Bombay his ghorab,

¹. Political Department, Vol. 28/33 of 1820-21, pp. 70-71
². Ibid., p. 78. The petition of Madowdass Ransordass, however, was directed by the Governor in Council to be translated by the petitioner to the Resident at Mokha, Francis Warden, Chief Secretary to the Resident at Mokha, 20th November 1821. Political Department. Ibid., p. 91.
Bombay Merchant whose Captain was Henry William Hyland. The cargo consisted of goods bound for the ports of Mokha, Hodaida and Lohaja under the jurisdiction of the Imam of Sanaa. The Bombay Merchant having touched the ports of Mokha and Hodaida arrived at the port of Lohaja in June 1820 and landed her cargo there. The cargo consisted of sundry goods, pearls and dollars. The petitioner refers to having sent several ships prior to the Bombay merchant.

Soon after having landed from the Bombay Merchant the petitioner's super-cargo was made aware of the appearance of "wandering Arabs". Henry William Hyland requested the Daulah (port governor) to refund customs paid to enable him to reload the unloaded cargo, but the Daulah refused to grant permission, assuring the super-cargo of protection from any disturbance. But the Arabs made a surprise attack and plundered all the goods of petitioner which amounted to about $15,000 in value as well as dollars in coin together with goods of several other merchants which ran into lakhs. The plundered property amounted to 10 lakhs of dollars. This statement was supported by an affidavit from the master of the petitioner's Ghorab, W. John Lawrence Morley. Madowdass, a subject of the English holding a passport issued by the Company's
authority, requested the Government to submit a claim on petitioner’s behalf to the Imam of Sanaa.¹

The petition by Madowdass is referred to in the letter of Francis Warden, addressed to the Resident at Mokha dated 20 November 1821. Madowdass also submitted a copy of the petition on 12 November respecting his claims against the Imam of Sanaa.²

In another petition (12 November 1821) submitted to Francis Warden Madowdass thanks the chief secretary for his favourable response (July 1821) regarding his claim on the Imam of Sanaa for his property plunder of cargo at Lohaja.³ He also expresses hope of some arrangement by the British authorities at Mokha would pay him out of the customs of Mokha.⁴

After a period of six years Madowdass Ransordass was still in the hope of recovery of the claim of the losses. He was of the view that the Governor Mountstuart Elphinstone could

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¹ The petition of the claim submitted by Madowdass is further confirmed by the letter of Francis Warden, Chief Secretary to the Government, addressed to the Resident at Mokha. Madowdass seems to have submitted a copy of the petition on 12th of November representing his claims on the Imam of Sanaa. The letter was written on 20 November 1821. Political Department, Vol. 28/33 of 1820-21, p. 81, 97-98
² Political Department, Vol. 28/33 of 1820-21, p. 81, 97-98.
³ A correspondence of Francis Warden, Chief Secretary to the Government, dated 21 July 1821 is in response to the Secretary Henderson who is said to have made inquiry of Madowdass Ransordass. The reply is obviously not encouraging as far as recovery at Lohaja is concerned. Political Department, vol. 28/33 of 1820-21, p. 76.
⁴ Ibid., p. 78
have secured indemnification from the Imam of Sanaa. In a strongly worded statement he says that only through the board of the Governor was indemnification possible. If the Company’s authority failed to effect recovery, “the English flag will be poor protection to commerce”.\(^1\) He proposes that the duty on goods he was sending to Mokha be freed of tax towards liquidation of his claim.\(^2\)

Owing to the blockade of the ports of the Imam and embargo against vessels entering those ports, Indian merchants suffered considerable losses. The blockade of Sanaa by the squadron of the East India Company took place in April 1820. Its main purpose was to stop the flow of trade of all the ports of the Imam of Sanaa and inflict punishment on the offending Daulah of Mokha, indemnification of losses sustained by the Company and individuals and satisfaction for other offences and injuries.\(^3\)

In a letter by the Secret Department of the Company to the Chief at Surat written from Bombay Castle, 18\(^{th}\) July 1820, describes the plan of the blockade. The native merchants of

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1. *Political Department, Vol. 18/203 of 1825*, p. 162
2. Madowdass Ransordass (sig. in Gujarati), Bombay, 15 November 1825 to Mountstuart Elphinstone, President and Governor in Council, *Political Department of 1825*, pp 162-63
Surat were warned not to venture out to trade with the ports belonging to the *Imam* of Sanaa.¹

There is a petition by 24 merchants, resident at Surat, who were regular traders with the ports of the Red Sen. It is addressed to Mountstuart Elphinstone, August 1820. The names of some of these merchants are Abdullah Wakil, Mulla Ruknuddin Ali, Ibrahim bin Ahmad and Al-Sayyid Abdur Rahman. It recites that the Surat merchants were informed by the Chief of Surat that owing to war between the Company’s troops and the *Hakim* of Sanaa the traders had to keep themselves away from the ports of the *Imam*. The Representative’s report suggests that there had been very meagre demand for goods sent to Mokha and Hodaida the previous season. The agents also communicated that only 50% of goods could be sold by them and the other 50% had to be stored in the ware-houses of their agents. These agents included Abdul Karim, Virjee, Ranchorjee Chuttortbhija, Girdher Bhanjee, Ukbhoy Vussomjee, Moolji Khodudof, Sewchund Chuttortbhiz, and Roopjee Frecomjee Velljee. The petitioners, being apprehensive of the plunder of their goods by

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the Ruler of Sanaa, requested the President and Governor in Council to instruct the officers incharge of the blockade to ensure protection of their goods and ships together with the agents themselves.

The petitioners agreed that the remaining 50% of their goods could be stored at Mokha though much loss was caused to them on this account. Money too remained uncollected owing to which there would be adverse effect on their credit with the bankers.\(^1\) In response to this petition the Chief Secretary to the Bombay Government (18\(^{th}\) August 1820), repeated a warning to guard against their embarking on trade with the ports belonging to the Imam of Sanaa at the opening of the season.\(^2\)

Prajee Guness, yet another petitioner, tells of having sent good and merchandize to the ports of the Imam of Sanaa from Mandvee and Mongrol worth approximately Rs. 60,000. The goods were consigned to the petitioner’s agents Herchand Moolchand and Primchand Iacckad and Kanjee Vatta in different vessels. Prajee Guness, apprehensive of serious

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\(^1\) Political Department, Vol. 28/33 of 1820-21, p. 40. The petition was addressed to the Governor in Council by the merchants trading to the Red Sea. This was dated Surat 9 August 1820, Political Department, Vol. 28/33 of the year 1820-21, p. 41

\(^2\) Political Department, Vol. 14/34 of 1820/21, pp.92-93.
consequences to his cargo and vessel, requested the Bombay
Government to communicate to officers incharge of blockade to
protect his goods as well as those of his agents which had been
landed there. The petitioner also requested permission to carry
on trade with such other ports not under blockade as the
officers of the squadron might deem expedient.¹

Motichand Ameechand writes to Francis Warden, Chief
Secretary to Government, Bombay, 20th August 1820, informing
him that he had shipped to Mokha and other ports under the
Imam of Sanaa considerable quantities of merchandize before
the declaration of the blockade. He too is apprehensive of
severe loss of cargo, and complained that the British authorities
should have permitted the vessels to clear out before the
declaration of the blockade. He expresses the hope that the
Government would communicate to the officers incharge of the
blockade to ensure safety of his vessels and goods and help
prevent confiscation of goods loaded in the Imam's territories.
Subsequently, he requests the Secretary to allow him to trade
with such territories of Imam as were not under blockade.²

¹. Prajee Guness. Bombay 20 August, 1820, to Francis Warden, Chief
Secretary to Government, Political Department. Vol.28/33 of 1820-21,
p.27
². Political Department. Vol. 28/33 of 1820-21, pp. 31-32
Dhrumsey Hemchand in his petition of 20 August 1820 addressed to Francis Warden, Chief Secretary to Government, seeks protection of his ships and its cargo worth Rs.65,000. Before the declaration of blockade the consigner had shipped his cargo to the ports of the Imam, comprising considerable quantities of merchandise from Bombay, Bengal and Porebander to the value of approximately Rs.65,000. These were consigned to the petitioner’s agents Guness, Mogchand and Moteechand Vuchraz and Dual Amerchand. The petitioner was apprehensive of most serious loss, since the “Dow Dhamee” and different other vessels are still in the Red Sea.¹

Another petition to Francis Warden, is from Ameechand Kemjee written Bombay 22 August 1820. The petitioner refers to the late proclamation declaring Mokha and other ports belonging to the Imam of Sanaa under the state of blockade. He submits that before the proclamation the petitioner had shipped to the ports of the Imam considerable goods and merchandize from Porebander and Bombay worth nearly Rs.50,000, consigned to his agents Modowji Verji, Tayroz Damoder Iewa Lowjee and Damoder Anjee for the ‘Dinging (Dingy) Bombay named Gunesspura, belonging to the petitioner. It sailed to the

¹. Political Department., vol. 28-33 of 1820-21, pp.33-34.
ports under the *Imam* of Sanaa together with other vessels. The petition too sought the Company’s help to prevent confiscation of the goods landed in the territories of the *Imam* and permission to trade in the areas the Company’s officers might deem expedient.¹

In a dispatch of 22nd August 1820, I. Henderson, Secretary to Government, wrote to Captain Bruce, perhaps Resident at Mokha, enclosing a copy of the letter from Ameechand Kemjee.² A petition Bombay 22nd August 1820 was submitted by Maow *Seaskaran* Heerjee, the East India Company’s broker at Mokha. He says in his petition that long before the proclamation of *Imam’s* ports being placed under a state of blockade, he had dispatched cargo on board the vessels sailing from Bombay, Porebandar, Mangalore and Kutch, for Mokha, Hodaida and other ports. These goods were to the value of some lakhs of rupees to be delivered to the petitioner’s own shop at Mokha but consigned to *Seaskaran* Heerjee, the Company’s broker at Mokha, for disposal at other places as well. The petitioner requests the president to order the officers

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¹ Ameechand and Kemjee to Francis Warden, Chief Secretary to Government, Bombay, 22 August 1820, *Political Department, Vol. 28/33 of 1820-21*, PP.24-25.
employed in the blockade to protect the vessels and goods and property belonging to him as a British subject. But this could only be done on the application of the commanders of the petitioner's vessels either on his behalf or on the behalf of his agents, wherever they are within the limits of the proclamation.¹ The letter was forwarded by I. Henderson from Bombay Castle on 22nd August 1820 asking the Mokha Resident, Captain H. Bruce, to protect the property of the petitioner.²

In his petition of 23 August 1820 to Francis Warden, Chief Secretary, Bombay, Heerji identifies himself as the Company's broker at Mokha. He explains that money had been extorted from him by the Daulah of Mokha with a promise to allow the petitioner a credit in the customs. Instead the Daulah put a chain in his neck regardless of the consideration that he was the Company's broker. The Governor also fined the petitioner's men who were on their way to Mokha from India on business.³ Seaskaran Heerjee further speaks of having sent several vessels from Bombay, Cutch, Porbander, Veraval and Mangalore for Mokha. In his petition he requests the Chief

¹ Nanjee Seaskaran for Maow Seaskaran Heerjee at Mokha, the Company's broker, Bombay, 22 August 1820, to Mountstuart Elphinstone, Political Department, Vol.28 33 of 1820-21, p. 22.
² Ibid.
³ Ibid., p. 36.
Secretary to Government to grant him a letter so as to enable him to send it to the officers in charge of the blockade seeking their assistance against any injury from the Arabs. He also requests the Secretary to the Government to instruct the English authorities at Mokha to obtain reimbursement of the money extorted from him by the Daulah and take measures against further molestation.¹ In another letter to Francis Warden, Bombay 28 August 1820, Heerjee reports a famine in Yemen owing to which there was little sale of goods especially piece-goods that he had obtained from Surat. He further reports the dispatch of an army from Yemen and plunder of Lohaja for 15 days. Owing to the plunder merchants had fled to upper country and some to Kamran.² The market at Jedda also was unfavourable for the sale of Bengal and Surat piece-goods. The coffee price had risen to 110-112 and 115 a bhar. He speaks of sending his dhow Salamat Ras. He informs the Chief Secretary for having sent one bag of coffee of 50 lbs. and a jar of preserves on his ship and hoped the addressee would accept

1. Political Department, Vol. 28/33 of 1820-21, p. 36.
2. The incident finds mention in another letter of Seaskaran Heeji addressed to Mountstuart Elphinstone dated 6th Sharavumud 1876/29 August 1820. It mentions the plunder of Sohar by the Imam’s army (27th June–10th July) and fleeing of the banya and Arab merchants to the island of Kamran and of the great losses sustained by them. Translation in Political and Secret Department, Vol. 36 2 of 1820-21, pp. 224-234.
it and favour him with a letter.\textsuperscript{1} Yet another letter of Seaskaran Heerjee addressed to the Governor Elphinstone is dated 5\textsuperscript{th} of Mahasood/8 February 1821. In this letter he says the present times were unfavourable owing to a very low state of trade. The household expenses were very high.\textsuperscript{2}

Bheemjee Callianjee was the son of Seaskaran Heerjee. He commanded great respect among the Bombay merchants, and the East India Company owed a large sum of money to his firm. By the end of the 1820s the firm was already 150 years old.\textsuperscript{3} At Mokha particularly the firm had always supplied broker's services to the British Factory and Seaskaran Heerjee could with pride appeal to the Records of Government in proof of these services.\textsuperscript{4} Seaskaran was always loyal to the English East India Company, and transaction between the Imam and the Company were generally executed through him. He enjoyed protection of the Company as well. Seaskaran in 1817 also saved a European vessel and its valuable cargo from plunder. He complained of the conduct of the Daulah, on the basis of which the Daulah was dismissed and the property of the vessel restored to the English authorities.\textsuperscript{5}

\textsuperscript{1} Political and Secret Department (Turkish Arabia and Mokha), Vol. 36/2 of 1820-21, p 219
\textsuperscript{2} Ibid., p 38
\textsuperscript{3} Political Department, Vol 57/500 of 1831/32/33, p19.
\textsuperscript{4} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{5} Ibid.
Bhimjee Callianjee in a letter to G.W. Anderson, Governor in Council (undated) reminds him that in 1824 the petitioner then resident at Mokha shipped on board the *Brig May Anne* under commander Lingard, a large quantity of coffee in 100 large bales and 25 small bales, to his agents at Bombay. While on her voyage the ship was seized by pirates of Barbara and plundered. Callianji says that he is aware of the fact that considerable sums of money had been recovered from time to time by the English Government from the “smattee” tribe of Barbara. He requests that a portion of the amount so recovered be paid to the petitioner. Captain Lingard himself came to Bombay in 1825 when the General Pay Master was directed to advance a sum of money for support under a promise of repayment after the recovery of the property or its value from the chiefs of Barbara. The first estimate of the total loss according to Captain Lingard submitted to the English Government was S.$37,833 (Spanish Dollars), subsequently various categories of losses such as profit, interest, etc. were added to the total and the amount of claim was enhanced to S.$72,732. But the petition for the enhanced amount was rejected by the Governor in Council. In any future settlement of Captain Lingard's claims the Government was to be guided only by the first statement of the loss.
On account of stern measures taken by the English, the Shaikhs of Barbara on 6 February 1827 entered into an agreement with Captain Brumer, the commander of H.M. Tomar and agreed to pay S. $15,000 (Rs.32,227.2.63) in full payment of all demands which were made upon them on account of the plunder of Mary Anne.

The total amount received by Captain Lingard towards his claim from 1st to last as compensation for his losses was S. $33,718.3.20 which was equivalent to Rs.14,91,000.0.57 which is said to be in excess of the amount recovered by the Government from the Shaikhs of Barbara.¹

In his notice of information to the Board Captain Lingard gives the following inventory of goods which was consigned to Bombay on board his Brig. Mary Anne: Bheemjee’s 100 large Muscati Bales of coffee, that of Residency Moonshi’s large English Bales of coffee and an Arab merchant’s 27 large Bales of Gum Arabic. All these goods were taken aboard at Mokha and consigned to Bombay. These were seized along with the property of Captain Lingard. In response the instruction was communicated to Captain Bremer on 20 December 1826 to proceed against the Shaikhs of Barbara. Captain Ligard thus

reposed his confidence and property under the protection of the British flag.

Captain Bremer in his report says that a compromise was arrived at with the Shaikhs for a sum of S. Rs.15,000 (Rs. 32,227.2.63) which was less than the moiety of the admitted claims submitted by Captain Lingard. A sum of Rs.1491.0.57 was actually paid to Captain Lingard by the Government so that the Government was a looser to the extent of the latter amount in addition to the expense of the measures adopted against the Shaikhs.¹

We have then a petition to George Arthur Bart, Government and Resident in Council, by Bheemji Callianjee (a Hindu merchant formerly of Mokha and now of Bombay) dated 10 October 1842. He acknowledges receipt of reply in response to his application from the Secretary Willoughby dated 18 June 1842 that the petitioner’s claim on account of the loss of his coffee by the plunder of the Brig Mary Anne in 1824 by the

¹ Political and Secret Department, Vol. 1260 of 1841 and 1842, p. 110. In the post script there is a reply to Bheemjee’s earlier petition by Secretary, Government of Bombay, 21 June 1842, in which he refuses to entertain his claim after such a considerable lapse of time. A forwarding letter by the solicitor of Bheemjee is also mentioned in the document. It is addressed to L.R. Reid, Secretary to Government. The solicitor refers to a petition of his client relative to return of cargo shipped by him at Mokha in 1824 (1825?). The cargo was shipped on board the Brig Anne and was plundered by pirates. Ibid., op.cit.
natives of Barbara could not be entertained owing to the delay in advancing his claims, a settlement of the claims of victims of the plunder of that ship having already been made. Bhimjee asserted that he had submitted his claim well in time but the procedure adopted by the Government for the recovery of the goods seized by the Barbara Arabs was made known to the petitioner by the Chief Secretary only after his return from Mokha to Bombay.\(^1\) Bheemji, however, says that he was as much a sufferer as Captain Lingard. But the latter was compensated to the amount of about Rs. 35,000 for his losses. He accuses British Government of acting with partiality in such cases as the one under consideration. He blames the Government for not making him aware of even the amount that the Government received from the Shaikhs of Barbara. Whatever amount had been received should have been divided among all the victims.\(^2\)

It appears that Company withdrew its favour from Bheemjee after he had left its service. In one of his petitions Bheemjee is seen complaining that his firm has suffered on account of the authorities at Mokha for having withheld

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business from the House of Seskaran Heerjee whereas the fact was that the Company still owed a large sum of money to the firm. From the period the Company’s affairs were conducted by the House of Seaskarn Heerji, money was owed by persons in authority both at Mokha and other ports in the Red Sea.¹

Bheemji Callianji left Mokha in 1827 leaving the firm under the charge of his brother Petamber Callianji: The English Factory too was removed from Mokha to Aden. Bheemji’s request to the Company to appoint his brother permanently as broker went unheeded. Instead he was dismissed from his temporary service as broker and in his place another person was appointed. Meanwhile Bheemji’s brother died of plague.²

By 1827 the Establishment of Seaskaran (Seshkurn) at Mokha and in the Red Sea had fairly well prospered.³ However, Bheemji took his removal from the Company’s service as broker as a disgrace for a man of his stature. He, therefore, suspected conspiracy behind it and wanted to know the charges. But his plea went unheeded. From 1827 up to 1832 Bheemji remained at Porebnander. He desired a relation of his,

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1. Political Department, vol. 57/500 of 1831/32/33, p. 22.
2. Political Department, vol. 57 500 of 1831/32/33.
3. Ibid., p. 22.
Russordas (Ransordass) Ameechand to be appointed broker, as representing the House of Seaskaran Heerji, at Mokha. He also requested the Governor in Council to order his subordinates at Mokha to provide protection to the firm that it may carry on its business peacefully.\(^1\) Bhimji’s pleas were again rejected by the Governor in Council on 22 April 1832.\(^2\)

One may insert here a tabular statement of goods shipped by Indian merchants from Bombay on board the *Ghorab* or *Brig*. *Bombay Merchant* under the command of Captain Henry William Hyland and plundered at Lohaja as showing the kinds of goods that were exported from Bombay to the Red Sea during the first half of the 19\(^{th}\) Century:

### GOODS OF PRAGEE GANESH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>QUANTITY</th>
<th>TOTAL VALUE (Rs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cambay piece goods</td>
<td>2 Bales</td>
<td>6025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surat piece goods</td>
<td>1 Bale</td>
<td>1325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malabar gagrey</td>
<td>16 Robbins</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapoor kachery</td>
<td>2 Chests</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The expenses, charges or freight fee on the above goods at the rate of 35% a hundred: Rs. 2636

Total Rs. 10165

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1. *Political Department, vol. 57 500 of 1831/32/33*, p. 25
GOODS OF DHARAMSEY HEMCHAND

<table>
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<th>ITEM</th>
<th>QUANTITY</th>
<th>TOTAL VALUE (Rs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Cambay piece goods</td>
<td>1 Bale</td>
<td>3025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutch piece goods</td>
<td>5 Bales</td>
<td>1350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The expenses, charges or freight fee on the above goods at the rate of 35% a hundred: Rs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Rs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>5905</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

GOODS OF RAMCHAND LALLJEE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>QUANTITY</th>
<th>TOTAL VALUE (Rs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cambay piece goods</td>
<td>1 Bale</td>
<td>2750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The expenses, charges or freight fee on the above goods at the rate of 35% a hundred: Rs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Rs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>3712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total Rs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>19782</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The personal assistant to the Resident, Mokha in a letter dated 1st October 1825 to Chief Secretary to Government refers to a complaint made by several merchants of the use of force and violence in the Mokha Customs House. The *Nakhuda* of the ship concerned was persuaded to let the cargo remain on board the ship till some arrangement with the *Daulah* was made. It was soon settled that payment of customs be made, and there should be a deduction on account of the annual purchases of goods for the household of the *Imam*. He was, however,

1. *Political Department, Vol. 14:34 of 1820-21, p. 428 (No.2 of 1821)*
2. *Ibid., Vol. 238 of 1826, pp.7-9.*
surprised to learn that the merchants had landed every bale, paid Rs. 8,000 in advance of customs and sold to the Daulah voluntarily double that amount in goods to the very person against whom such a serious complaint had been lodged.

These merchants wrongly asserted that they had taken the Qazi's security for the payment. So far as the settlement of accounts was concerned, the Daulah declared his inability to pay more than a portion of the claim against him and agreed to return the rest of the goods. Therefore the merchants were recommended the terms offered by the Daulah, awaiting a reference to the Imam. However, they agreed to the former suggestion and left a claim against the local Government of nearly $8,000, but it was difficult for them to recover this sum.¹

Another document is a letter written by Chief Secretary to the Resident at Mokha, B. Dominicitte addressed to Henry Meriton, Superintendent of Marine. The letter is undated. It reports the arrival of Derria Beggy to Mokha from Jedda, it being understood that her destination was Bombay. Indian merchants as well as Ramsay and the writer were of strong belief that the vessel belonged to Mohammad Ali Khan whereas

¹ Political Department, Vol. 238 of 1826, pp. 7-9
the ship was engaged by Abdur Rahman Azil. The ship was loaded with cargo of coffee for the East India Company and Surat merchants. Coffee was also consigned to other ports in India (the names of ports not mentioned). The specie consigned to Bombay by the ship amounted to G.C.(German Crown) 2½ lakhs.¹

The Derria Beggy would be the first vessel that would sail from Mokha to India positively on or before 29 July 1824. But immediately after a letter of protest jointly signed by the merchants arrived from Jedda asking the Company not to allow their treasure being put on board the Derria Beggy because the ship was sailing under suspicious circumstances and belonged to a man of a bad character.² Not even a single merchant at Jedda would deem it safe to trust their money on board the Derria Beggy. The merchants were alarmed when Said Aqil publicly asserted that the Derria Beggy was an enterprise of his eldest brother, the Daulah of Zofar (Dofar). The English were in search of that man since much earlier. As the merchants expressed serious concern over the safety of their money there had also cropped up some misunderstanding between the

¹. *Political Department, Vol. 22/166 of 1824, p.50 (48-106).*  
². *Ibid., Vol. 22/166 of 1824, p.50 (48-106)*
English and the Mokha Government. The merchants assembled at the Factory. They were advised by the Chief Secretary to adhere to their own judgements to act as they thought best, as the property was their own. Thus on 23 August 1824 the merchants landed back their money though they had paid the freight charges to the Nakhuda, and these were not refunded. In the meantime the Derria Beggy seems to have completed loading its cargo. The reason for the vessel’s further delay on Mokha road for a fortnight was not made known. According to the information available to the Chief Secretary the news circulated in Mokha that Said Abdur Rahman did so and that too intentionally to collect the entire goods and treasure and make his way to Zofar where he would share it with his eldest brother and sell the vessel and escape into the interior. The Chief Secretary was therefore not in favour of Derria Beggy leaving Mokha for Bombay.

The Nakhuda of the vessel visited the Factory but once only.

Coupled with the reasons stated above and Said Aqil’s breach of agreement to sail on the 19th or 20th July 1824 the

1. Political Department, Vol. 22 166 of 1824, p. 53.
2. Ibid.
Chief Secretary sent his men for the purpose of preventing any more freight coming on board the ship. From reliable sources the Secretary was informed that it was for more treasure that he remained on the roads. He was also of the intention that he would stop till most of the vessels bound to different ports of India had taken their final departure from the Red Sea. Curiously enough, the *Derria Beggy* also had on board a valuable investment of the Company.¹

In a letter of 5 May 1827 by the Secretary to the Bombay Government to the Resident at Mokha, the Secretary says that the Resident was to exercise his power for the recovery of the money of the Surat merchants which was the primary object of the policy in relations to the states in the Red Sea. Even use of force was justified.² But through various sources it is quite apparent that the financial position of the *Imam* of Sanaa was so bad, that the claims of the merchants could not be met. These merchants were victims of losses of their cargo by the plunder of Lohaja. The *Pasha* of Jedda too had a claim of 5,000 dollars³.

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1. *Political Department*, vol. 22/166 of 1824, pp. 48-106.
The East India Company’s Resident at Mokha in his letter to Devidass Herjeevandass says the Imam could not satisfy his whole claims owing to the anarchy prevailing in Yemen. But Devidass Herjeevandass, the Bombay merchant, was expected to be allowed reduction of \( \frac{1}{4} \) from duties on goods imported and exported by the Vizir of Devidass Herjeevandass. The Imam was also requested to give some concessions to Herjeevan’s trade at Mokha and Hodaida but that too was doubtful.\(^1\) There is information about the claims of the Surat merchants in the correspondence of Resident at Mokha. It is stated that according to the stipulations made with the Resident by the late Daulah, Amir Bashir, for $21,000, which was \( \frac{2}{3} \) of the original claims, which during the season (in August 1828), had been liquidated but with some difficulty. The balance would become payable on or before the conclusion of the season. But the Resident again describes the very deranged state of the Imam’s Finances and the realization of the balance at the conclusion of the season seemed to be difficult. The only possible resort was to stop the trade of the Imam’s ports.\(^2\)

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The trade of Yemen deteriorated to such a great extent by 1827 that Sultan Mohsin of Lohaj (Capital of Yemen) asked the Resident at Mokha to revive the trade of Aden which had declined considerably. The situation was further aggravated and became chaotic by the presence of the Turkish agent who showed much harshness towards the Yemen merchants. Commodities of Yemen were brought with much difficulty to the coast nor could the Indian goods reach the interior in consequence. The Sultan adopted some measures to revive the trade by reducing the duties for the following two years to 3% and after that period not more than 5%. On goods carried by ships of the British flag 2 1/4%, the same amount as at Mokha, was to be paid.¹ He made declaration of withdrawal of allegiance from the Sublime Porte and extended friendship to the English restoring the old relations that had been established during the period of the Imam’s father.²

Next we hear of the situation prevailing in 1833 through private Akhbar (news) from Mokha received 31 July 1833. This informs of return of Albanians under Bilmas from Hodaida to Mokha. This move they had made on the refusal of the Shaikh

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¹ Political Department, Vol. 23/278 of 1827.
² Ibid.
of the Aseree Arabs to cooperate with them in their attack on Jedda and Mokha. Thus the entire shipping of Surat and Bengal remained detained at Mokha up to 31 July 1833 (25th of Saffer), and the report said that they were about to return to India with their "Larges" undisposed of. It also was made known by the Secretary to Governor of the arrival of Mohammad Ali Pasha at Jambo.1 We have information about the return of four vessels to Surat from Mokha on 28 September 1833. The news received is dated 28 October 1833. But the nature of cargo they contained does not find mention.2 Just before the above information (dated 31 July 1833), another document mentions the arrival of the Bengal and Surat traders at the port of Mokha during the shipping season.3

1. Political Department, Vol. 57/500 of 1831/32/33, p. 32.
2. Ibid, p. 45
3. Bengal and Surat traders to Jedda, April-June (season of trading at Jedda), Ibid, p 28