

# In honour of Sanjay Gandhi

13/5/77

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It is common knowledge by now that the government machinery was widely used to mobilise crowds to attend public rallies addressed by Mr Sanjay Gandhi during his frequent political junkets around the country.

What is not known is to what extent the local governments went to mobilise vehicles and people to make Mr Gandhi's rallies among the best attended ever.

A note on official paper written by Mr Shiv Prasad Singh, Transport Minister in the Uttar Pradesh Government to the Transport Commissioner, UP on March 21, 1976, shows how it was done in at least one instance.

It reveals that truck operators used on previous political occasions had not been paid what they were promised, and were reluctant. So, "to meet this situation" the Minister told the Transport Commissioner it had been decided "after thoughtful consideration... that police help be sought through Senior Superintendent of Police who should by persuasion make vehicles available to us... In any case the availability of

The note also speaks of mobilising 50 state buses "in addition to whatever arrangement the Transport Commissioner is able to make..."

Mr Sanjay Gandhi arrived in Lucknow to a well-organised welcome on March 28, 1976.

The text of the 'Immediate' note to the Transport Commissioner is as follows:

"It has been suggested to me that a meeting of truck operators be called at the Transport Commissioner's level in his office which should include the Stage (sic) Carriage operators as well as those who have applied for National permits and the Transport Commissioner should be good enough to request them to extend their full cooperation.

"As far as diesel is concerned, I hope arrangements for that will be made prior to 27.3.1976. I think the amount required for this purpose will be roundabout Rs 40,000. Please take immediate action and keep me in touch with the development and also inform me about the action taken.

"Mr H. C. Gupta, Managing Director of Motor Sales (Commercial), may also be requested to extend

may take some time. Therefore, Mr H. C. Gupta should be requested to provide diesel to trucks being used for the purpose.

"I hope you will see me some time after this evening convenient to you to enable me to explain things concerning arrangements.

"I am afraid, because of arrears of payment to the truck operators, it is quite likely that they may not turn up even after giving assurance. To meet this situation after thoughtful consideration we have arrived at this conclusion that police help be sought through Sr Superintendent of Police who should by persuasion make vehicles available to us for this purpose.

"In any case, the availability of 100 trucks must be ensured by 25.3.1976.

"Besides whatever arrangement has been thought of, it is also proposed that arrangements of some buses may also be made with the help of private Stage (sic) Carriage operators. The Chairman, UPSRTC, may also be requested to extend us the help of at least 50 buses to meet this situation in addition to whatever arrangement the Transport Commissioner is able to make for this purpose.