

L. Edl (1915) Department.

Mis SERIES.

G.O. No. 919 Edl

DATED 20-8-15

[Despatch Abstract.]
Education of factory children

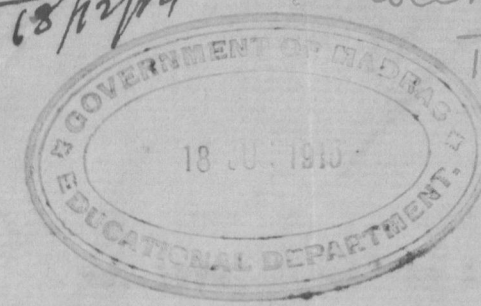
Recording Communication from
the Govt of India forwarding papers
about the action taken in Bengal
in regard to the

To 1447/14 has 2 papers
18/12/14

Coler. 2134

No. 1052 2

19.6.15



Government of India,
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

(Education)
Simla, the 12th June
May 1915.

A copy of the undermentioned papers is forwarded to the
Government of Madras for information in continuation
of this Department endorsement no. 1804, dated the 4th
December 1914.

(K)
info 1447/14
18/12/14

By order,

M. S. S. S.

Asst. Secretary to the Government of India.

Letter from the Government of Bengal, no. 1972, dated the
17th April 1915 and enclosure.

J.B.N.

163
348 1089 159 1447
12 14 12 14

J.B.N.

17th April 1915 and enclosure.

Letter from the Government of Bengal, no. 1372, dated the

Asst. Secretary to the Government of India

By order,

December 1914.

of this Department endorsement no. 1804, dated the 4th

Government of Bengal for information in continuation

A copy of the undermentioned papers is forwarded to the

Stimla, the May 1915

(Education)

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

No. 1972, dated the 17th April 1915.

From--K.C. De, Esq., C.I.E., I.C.S., Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

To----The Secretary to the Govt. of India, Deptt. of Education.

With reference to the correspondence resting with this Govt. letter No. 3135, dated the 18th August 1914 on the subject of the education of children employed in factories in this province, I am directed to forward for the information of the Govt. of India a copy of the report submitted by Mr. G.D.O. Maclear, Inspector of European Schools, Bengal, in which he has submitted proposals for making a beginning in connection with the education of children employed in jute factories. These proposals have met with the general approval of this Government and the Director of Public Instruction has been requested to take the action necessary for the carrying out of Mr. Maclear's proposals. As regards the management of the schools, it has been decided that each of the schools to be established at Titagarh will be placed under a separate managing committee, representative of the Managers and owners of the mills in connection with which the school is to be established, while the schools at Kankinarrah will be controlled by one committee of the Mill Managers and owners of the Kankinarrah Mills. The construction of the school buildings will be carried out by the managing committees, and it has been suggested that the proprietary rights in the buildings should vest in the committees, provided there be no legal difficulty.

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4

The education of the children of labourers employed in the Jute Mills of Bengal.

I.—The Problem.

THE scope of the scheme for the education of the children of the manual labourers employed in the jute mills has been partly defined. As a result of the conference held in January 1913 and the correspondence that ensued between the Government of Bengal and the Indian Jute Mills Association, it has been decided that the first efforts of Government shall be directed towards the education of the children under 9, who do not work in the mills. It is not intended to ignore the claims of those who work in the mills, and Government has stated that facilities for their admission into such schools as may be instituted shall be provided, but attention is to be paid pre-eminently to the education of the younger children. This limitation simplifies the problem. It has also been agreed that the education that shall be given shall be of the simplest possible character and that it shall be conducted in the vernacular. It has been decided in addition that the initial cost of building and equipping the schools and the bulk of the recurring expenditure shall be borne by Government. My task has been to prepare a detailed scheme on these lines after conducting a preliminary inquiry, paying particular attention to the selection of the areas in which the experiment is to be tried, the adequacy of the existing local schools, and the opinions of the managers of the mills in regard to the question whether the new schools should be located inside or outside the mill compounds.

2. Before proceeding to explain the nature of my inquiry and the procedure adopted in regard to it, or to discuss such questions as the utility of existing schools, I will describe briefly, by way of introduction, the problem with which the Government of Bengal is confronted. The question of the education of factory children requires abnormally careful handling. Its most important and most peculiar feature is the almost total absence of a demand for education on the part of the manual workers themselves. The ordinary *coolie* employed in the mills possesses a very limited mental outlook. He is an illiterate, credulous, superstitious individual, who elects to work in a factory solely because he will thereby gain a larger income than if he continued to follow his natural avocation of cultivator. Moreover, he will only work intermittently. His ambition is to obtain as large a sum of money as possible within a prescribed period in order that he may retire to his native village and lead a life of leisure for a space. He regards his children as instruments for the more rapid attainment of this vacation, and desires logically to secure their admission as workers into a mill at an early age. Education does not enter into his *cosmos*. The most that can be expected of him with reference to the question of the instruction of his offspring is that he will regard it from an utilitarian standpoint, and since education of a primary character will not increase their value in the labour market, it is probable that he will not display the slightest enthusiasm. It is possible on the other hand that he may adopt a definitely hostile attitude. I should not be surprised to find the mill *coolies*, and in particular the *Madraasis*, extremely suspicious of the schools. I have said that a demand for education is almost totally absent. The managers of the mills were unanimously of the opinion that while the majority of the workers would prove apathetic, the up-country Muhammadan *mistris* would welcome the provision of greater facilities. This view is supported by the fact that the majority of the existing schools situated in the vicinity of the mills are *maktabs* and are attended by the children of these workers. I discovered that in certain cases these *mistris* had united to establish a little school and secure a teacher. I incline to the opinion that the desire to train their children in the principles of the Muhammadan religion is to a large extent responsible for their attitude, but

I think there is reason to believe that they would take advantage of the schools. That the other workers will approve of the establishment of educational institutions is more than doubtful.

3. The value of the limited education that it is proposed to give is also open to question. The schools that will be established will be lower primary schools. The majority of the pupils will be under the age of 9. I do not anticipate that more than a very small percentage of them, including the children of the Muhammadan *mistris*, will continue to attend after they have begun to work in the mills. No form of compulsion can possibly be employed, and I think it is highly improbable that many will wish to spend even a portion of their leisure in school. Moreover, the parents cannot be counted upon as a propelling force. Consequently the education of the majority of the children will terminate at the age of 9. By the time that they have learnt to read and write easy words and to do very simple arithmetical sums they will leave school. In two years they will have forgotten most of this. I do not wish to condemn the importance of these educational preliminaries, but it is, I think, manifest that unless the course of instruction is to proceed beyond the lower primary stage the institution of factory schools will achieve nothing. I am not advocating anything in the nature of advanced education; but these mill children should continue to attend school after they have entered the mills. They should take at least the complete Upper Primary course. There are difficulties in the way of their doing this, and for this reason I am inclined to think that any scheme of the education based on voluntary attendance will prove sterile.

4. The consideration of the value of a system of education as elementary, as this leads naturally to an examination of the limitations which must restrict the education of the children of the mill-hands. The Indian Jute Mills Association has stated that instruction should be confined to the 3 R's. This is inevitable. Assuming that the *coolies* can be induced to send their children to school, it is, I think, unquestionable that the character of the education must not be such as to draw the children away from the profession which they would adopt if they were allowed to continue illiterate. In other words, it must not render them unfit for *cooly* work. The aim should be to produce a more intelligent type of *cooly*. The stipulation in regard to restriction to the 3 R's. has been accepted by Government, and it may seem unnecessary to lay stress upon the fact that the education must be of an elementary type. I have mentioned it in order that it may be quite clear that, while a Lower Primary course alone will prove ineffective, the primary stage must not be passed. The *cooly* is an unskilled labourer, and an advanced system of education would merely render him dissatisfied with his calling. The economic result of such an occurrence would be serious as the factory labour market is limited.

5. There is another aspect of the problem that should not be overlooked, and that is the possibility that the opponents of British rule in India may attempt to take advantage of the establishment of factory schools to stir up the workers against the Government. This is a point that was mentioned by more than one speaker at the conference of January 1913. As long as the schools remain primary institutions, I do not think that there is much danger that the children themselves will be infected; but if one of the teachers were an active disseminator of disloyalty, he could create considerable trouble among the workers in the mills. For this reason the selection of the teachers will be a matter of very great importance. Later, when discussing the question of management, I shall lay stress on the desirability of placing the schools under the control of the mill authorities, and one of the reasons why I advocate such a course is that the mill managers may be in a position to remove at once any teacher found tampering with the *coolies*.

6. In conclusion of this introduction I would emphasize the necessity of co-operation between the Government and the mill authorities in the execution of a scheme of this character. As I have already said, compulsory attendance is out of the question. The workers can only be invited to send their children to school, and methods of persuasion will have to be employed. In this connection the mill manager will play a most important part.

Without his assistance it will be impossible to fill the schools. His position also makes it necessary to give him a voice in their management and control. He is in charge of the mill area and is responsible for the workers. In many cases he has jurisdiction over the district immediately around the mill. He is the embodiment of authority in the eyes of the *coolies* and is concerned very intimately with the general tenour of their daily life. To him it is of the utmost importance that nothing should disturb them and interrupt the smooth working of the mill, and it is for this reason only right that he should exercise a general control over the educational institutions attended by the children of his labourers. He would not want to determine educational details himself—he is quite willing to leave such questions in the hands of the educational authorities—but the majority of the managers do want, and I think entirely legitimately, to exercise a certain authority over the school and the teaching staff. The schools would be in a sense mill institutions and should as such be under the control of the managers.

7. **Procedure of the Inquiry.**—My inquiry was conducted on the following lines. After a preliminary discussion of the situation with the Committee of the Indian Jute Mills Association and an examination of the census figures for the mill areas, I proceeded to visit the schools already existing in the vicinity of the mills. I obtained in this manner data with regard to the question of the utilization of these schools. I then proceeded to the various mills in turn and discussed the question of the education of the children of the mill hands with the managers. In certain cases circumstances prevented me from seeing the managers, but I was able fortunately to interview almost all of them.

8. **Utilization of existing schools.**—The majority of the schools situated in the mill areas are primary or lower primary institutions. They are generally badly situated, small and ill-conducted. The greater number are *maktabs*, in which, as far as I could discover, elementary instruction in the *Korân* is given at infrequent and irregular intervals. Attendance was by no means confined to mill children, and in many cases the 'outside' element was in the ascendant. Some were in receipt of monthly donations from the mill authorities, but of these only three were of any standing. Attempts had been made in certain stations, notably at Naihati and Fort Gloucester, to provide institutions of a superior character, but these had been entirely monopolized owing to the apathy of the *coolies* by the children of the mill clerks and the middle class in the neighbourhood. A certain number of children working in the mills were found attending school, but the percentage was generally low. I am of the opinion that the existing schools can play no part in the present scheme. The majority are miserably housed and very inefficiently staffed. Better teachers, better buildings, and a different system of management are needed, and I would propose that these schools should be ignored.

9. **Location of the schools.**—The questions of the location of the schools was the most hotly debated matter considered by the conference held in January 1913. Two alternative proposals were put forward, the first, that each mill should have its own school and that the school should be situated within the mill compound, and, the second, that the schools should be independent of the mills. I have discussed the question with the Committee of the Indian Jute Mills Association and with the managers of the mills, and I have come to the conclusion that no definite rule can be laid down. The question is really dependent upon the location of the habitations of the labourers employed by the mills. Some mills provide lines for their *coolies* and others do not. In certain cases the *coolies* working in a particular mill live near the mill within a well-defined area, and in others the labour is drawn from various points in the district. The general tendency is in the direction of the location of the workers near the mills, and the provision of lines by each mill for its own *coolies*. This is natural enough, for the managers desire to obtain as permanent a supply of labour as possible. A division of opinion between the managers of mills, the *coolies* of which live near the mills within a definite area and those of mills which draw their labour from different points, was to be remarked. The former desire separate schools for each mill, and the latter district schools for a group

of mills. In certain localities, for instance Shamnagar, where a considerable proportion of the labour is obtained from Chandernagore on the other side of the river, the *coolies* live outside the mill area, and the institution of schools is an impossibility. Clearly an elastic system is the only solution. A mill that provides quarters for its own workers, or which is fortunate enough to have the bulk of its labour residing in the immediate vicinity, should possess a school of its own, mills that do not will not require a separate school. Fortunately the various mill areas come under one or other of the two heads of districts in which the workers in a particular mill reside near the mill, and districts in which they do not, and it is rare to find one mill in a particular district with its *coolies* living in the immediate vicinity, and the others with their workers residing over the whole area. Of these two classes Titagarh is an example of the first and Kankinarrah of the second. With regard to the question whether the schools should be situated inside or outside the mill compounds, the managers were almost unanimous in favour of their location outside the boundary wall of the mill, but within or close to the *cooly* lines, which are generally situated within 20 yards or so of this wall. The managers object very strongly to the presence inside the compound of children not working in the mills, and in many cases were inclined to regard the possibility that the establishment of schools for these children would prevent the mothers from bringing them inside the mills as the strongest argument in favour of their education. I agree entirely with this view with regard to the situation of the school building, and would suggest that the schools should as a general rule be situated outside the compound in or near the *cooly* lines. Here again, however, I would lay stress on the importance of an elastic policy, and would propose that, if for any reason a manager should prefer a school within the boundary wall, and one or two were in favour of such a course, the school should be established there. The question is one for each manager to decide, and it is immaterial from the point of view of education whether the schools are situated inside or outside the compounds.

II.—Proposals.

10. **Selection of areas.**—The jute mills on the banks of the Hooghly employed at the time of the last census 200,000 hands. Since 1911 the number of the workers has risen. It would be impossible for financial reasons to attempt to carry out at once a comprehensive scheme of education, and even if there were money available to do so, action on a large scale would, in view of the uncertainty of the outcome, be most impolitic. It is therefore necessary to select certain areas for experiment. After careful consideration of this question I have come to the conclusion that the districts of Titagarh and Kankinarrah offer greater facilities than the other stations in which mills are situated. Both these districts are mill districts pure and simple. The two villages have been practically created by the mills, and are inhabited almost entirely by mill-hands and their families. The non-industrial element is almost negligible. I have visited the managers of all the mills in the two areas, and they are all willing to see schools established, and to assist in attempting to make them a success. The conditions are exceptionally favourable. Moreover, the fact that Titagarh is a district in which the *coolies* employed in a particular mill live in the immediate neighbourhood of it, and Kankinarrah is one where the labourers are scattered indiscriminately over the whole area, will render possible a comparison of the relative advantages of the two systems of separate, dependent schools, and district, independent institutions.

11. **Location of the Schools.**—In the preceding sentence I have stated that a separate system of location must be adopted in regard to each of these two districts. I will take the case of Kankinarrah first. In this station there are six mills, the Reliance Mill controlled by Messrs. Ernsthausen, the Kankinarrah Mill controlled by Messrs. Jardine, Skinner & Co., and the four Anglo-Indian Mills controlled by Messrs. Duncan Brothers. The labour employed by these six mills is scattered over the whole district from Bhatpara

to Jagatdal. In other words, the *coolies* employed in the Reliance Mill do not all live in Bhatpara, the sub-district in which the mill is situated, but some live there and others in Jagatdal near the Anglo-Indian Mills. The general opinion was that three or four schools should be instituted at different points in the district, which the children of the mill-hands should attend irrespective of the particular mill in which their parents work. It was also suggested that the schools should be placed under the control of the municipality, of which the managers of the mills are members. This is, I think, the solution. I would suggest accordingly that, as an experiment, four schools should be established at different points within the area extending from Bhatpara to Jagatdal. The mills are not in a position to provide sites for these schools themselves, as they own little beyond the actual mill compound area; but land could be secured within the *cooly* lines, which are situated on zamindari property immediately opposite the mills, and are owned by private individuals, in many cases by the mill *sirdars*. The general impression was that sites could be acquired without difficulty. The position of Titagarh is different. Here the six mills, viz., the Empire and Kelvin (Messrs. Macleod & Co.), the Kinnison (Messrs. Heilgers & Co.), the Standard (Messrs. Bird & Co.), and Titagarh No. 1 and No. 2 (Messrs. Thomas Duff & Co.), possess lines for their own workers. The most satisfactory arrangement would be to establish a separate school for each mill, and this is the policy approved by all the managers with the exception of the manager of the Standard Mill. I would accordingly suggest that five schools should be established, one for each mill, excluding the Standard Mill. The Managing Agents are willing to provide land for the sites, though in the case of the Kelvin Mill I understand that this is dependent upon the cession of land by Government in compensation for a strip of mill property which it is intended to acquire for the high school situated near the mill.

12. **Committees of Management.**—The proposal put forward by Mr. Murray, the Chairman of the Anglo-Indian Jute Mills Association with reference to the management of those schools which are reserved for the children of *coolies* working in a particular mill is that small committees representing the mills should be formed, consisting of the manager and one or more of European assistants, the head clerk, and two or three of the leading *sirdars*. With this suggestion I unreservedly concur. The managers of the mills at Titagarh were in favour of the adoption of this course, though they were not at one in regard to the composition of the committee. Some would welcome the inclusion of one or two of the *sirdars* and others would not. Others again were opposed to the admission of the head clerk. But this is a matter of local arrangement, and does not affect the value of the general proposal that the management of the schools should be in the hands of the mill authorities. I would suggest therefore that the mills at Titagarh should be asked to form a committee to superintend the schools established in connection with them. A similar system cannot be instituted with reference to the schools to be established at Kankinarrah, which, as I have already shown, will be better placed under the control of the municipality, which is dominated by the mills. Small sub-committees might be formed by each mill with the object of encouraging the parents to send their children to the schools, but the schools themselves should be under municipal management.

13. **Size of the Experimental School.**—The schools themselves should not be very large. The object of the present scheme is not to provide education for all the mill children under the age of 9 in the districts of Kankinarrah and Titagarh, but to discover how far education for the children of the manual workers in the mill areas can be provided. Accommodation for 100 children should be sufficient, and I would propose that the schools should be of a size to enable them adequately to accommodate this number. If the demand should prove to be beyond the capacity of the schools, they could be enlarged.

14. **Vernaculars.**—The question of the vernaculars in which instruction should be given is obviously of first importance. The bulk of the labour employed in the jute mills near Calcutta is drawn from up-country, the greater part of it from the United Provinces. A certain number of Uriyas are also to be found in the mills, and in Titagarh many Madrassis. The

Uriyas need not be considered, as they rarely bring their families with them to Bengal. The bulk of the workers in the Kankinarrah mills come from the United Provinces, and those at Titagarh either from this region or Madras. The majority of the *coolies* from the United Provinces are Muhammadans, but a considerable percentage are Hindus. Clearly both Hindi and Urdu must be taught. The employment of Madrassis would seem to involve the complication of a third language, but this is not, I think, the case. The Madrassi *coolies* at Titagarh are, I am informed, picking up Hindustani very quickly, and it would not be necessary to procure Tamil-speaking teachers for the instruction of their children. If each school is divided into two departments, one teaching Urdu and the other Hindi, all the requirements of the situation will be met.

15. **The Teaching Staff.**—I have already referred to the importance from the political standpoint of the question of the quality of the teaching staff. As good a type of man as possible should be employed. I would suggest that higher salaries than those ordinarily given to teachers in lower primary schools should be sanctioned. It is essential that the teachers should be superior to the ordinary untrained *guru*, and I would suggest that salaries ranging from Rs. 20 to Rs. 30 per mensem should be offered. They should have undergone some form of training. The provision of instruction in both Hindi and Urdu will necessitate the division of the schools into two departments. These departments should, I think, be kept rigidly distinct, and I would not recommend the appointment of a head master with jurisdiction over both. As a beginning it will be sufficient, I think, to appoint two masters, one for each of these departments. Others can be secured as they are required. If there is more than one master employed in either the Urdu and Hindi sections, one of the members must act as head master of that section. The teachers should be under the control of the Managing Committee, which should possess the right of dismissal. Government should assist in their recruitment.

16. **Curriculum.**—The curriculum in force in the lower primary schools or Departments of schools in Bengal could, I think, be introduced without modification, and similarly the curriculum of the upper primary classes could be utilized if children continued to attend the schools after they had begun to work in the mills. Particular attention should be paid to elementary instruction in hygiene, drill, and elementary manual instruction. Good readers should be provided. It should be remembered that instruction will be in the vernacular throughout. The hours of work should be for the Kindergarten Section 18 hours per week, and Classes I and II 24 hours per week. I doubt whether the children in the upper primary section, *i.e.*, those working in the mills, will be able to attend for more than 3 hours per day.

17. **Age of admission and admission of Children working in a mill.**—The minimum age of admission should be 5 years. The admission of children below this age would merely prove a source of difficulty to the teacher. Children working in the mills should be encouraged to attend, and the time table should be so arranged as to enable them to do so. At Titagarh, where each mill will have its own school, the arrangement of the time table will be a comparatively simple matter, but at Kankinarrah some difficulty will be experienced as the shift systems of the various mills do not correspond.

18. **Encouragement of attendance.**—Several managers suggested that to popularize the school prizes for attendance should be given each month. This expedient might with advantage be tried. The managing committees at Titagarh and the municipality of Kankinarrah could be asked to consider this proposal and act upon it, if they were of the opinion that it would prove an inducement to the children to attend regularly.

19. **Playgrounds.**—To each school should be attached sufficient land to form an adequate playground for the pupils. This is, I think, a point of the utmost importance. The children need a place in which they can play out of schools hours and in which they can drill. The mills at Titagarh are willing to provide sufficient land to furnish sites for the schools and spaces for playgrounds. The area of the pieces of land purchased at Kankinarrah should be large enough to allow of playgrounds being provided for the schools.

20. **Inspection.**—The schools at Kankinarrah and Titagarh will be within the jurisdiction of the Inspector of Schools, Presidency Division. I would suggest that he should be asked to pay particular attention to these schools during the first two years of their foundation. Their institution will mark an important development in the educational policy of the Government, and it is essential that the scheme should be given a thorough and a fair trial.

21. **Expenditure.**—The capital expenditure that will be involved will be—

- (a) cost of erecting five schools at Titagarh and four at Kankinarrah ;
- (b) cost of purchasing sites for four schools at Kankinarrah ;
- (c) cost of equipping these nine schools.

With regard to (a), I would suggest that the schools should be of the type erected in Eastern Bengal (*vide* plan marked G, only consisting of two rooms, dimensions 30' by 20'). I do not anticipate that they would cost more than Rs. 2,000 each.

With regard to (b), I regret that I am not in a position to give definite figures, but I have been assured by the managers that sufficient land could be obtained for less than Rs. 2,000 in the case of each school. A sum of Rs. 1,000 should cover the cost of the equipment of all the schools. The equipment will be of a very simple character.

The main item of the recurring expenditure that will be borne by Government will be the salaries of the teaching staff. I have suggested that two teachers for each school should be appointed on salaries ranging from Rs. 20 to Rs. 30. I would suggest that the teachers that are recruited from the opening of the school should receive Rs. 30. If additional teachers are required, assistants can be appointed on lower rates of pay.

The following statements show the estimated capital and recurring expenditure involved in the present scheme :—

A.—CAPITAL EXPENDITURE.

	Rs.
(1) Purchase of sites for four schools at Kankinarrah at Rs. 2,000 per site.	8,000
(2) Erection of nine schools, five at Titagarh and four at Kankinarrah (estimated cost of each school Rs. 2,000).	18,000
(3) Equipment	1,000
Total	27,000

B.—RECURRING EXPENDITURE.

	Rs.
Salaries of 18 teachers at Rs. 30 a month per teacher	540 a month or 6,480 a year.
Total	6,480

G. D'O. MACLEAR,
Inspector of European Schools, Bengal.

C. No. 213458 From the Govt of India No. 1052, dated 12-6-1915

SUBJECT.

Papers about the action taken in Bengal in regard to the education of factory children.

Submitted that the papers may be recorded after the D.I.J. has seen them too.

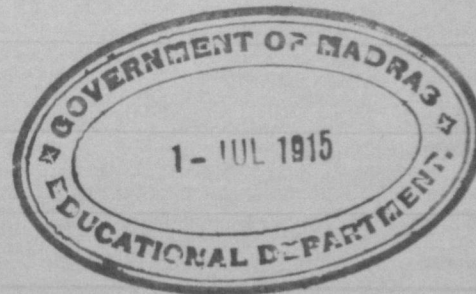
For the papers relating to action taken in regard to this matter in other provinces please see fo. 144-721 18-12-14. In the case of Bengal also there is nothing very suggestive.

D. P. J. Lee for perusal and return

Colno 2134-1

29.6.15

Perusal 1080
35.6.15



Submitted that the current may be

Recorded

HE and Mr. (JST)



The Bengal report (pays 3 to 99 the office month perusal)

When given for copying—
When copied—
When examined—
When signed—

191 .

READ AGAIN G.O. No.
191 .

DATED

CURRENT No.

ENCLOSURES TO C. No.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT

A A A A A A A

LETTER OF GOVERNMENT

STATEMENT WITH DITTO

PAPERS NOT FILED UP, BEING MEANT FOR DESPATCH
IN ORIGINAL.

N.B.—

A = Copy in full.
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