

Government of Madras

HOME DEPARTMENT (EDUCATION)

G.O. No. 1187, 29th September 1919

Address

Recording notes on the address presented to His Excellency the Governor by the Municipal Council of Coimbatore regarding the introduction of free and compulsory primary education.

ORIGINAL
Government of Madras

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Order—No. 1187, Home (Education), dated 29th September 1919.

Recorded.

(True extract)

R. RAMACHANDRA RAO,
Secretary to Government.

NOTES CONNECTED WITH G.O. No. 1187, HOME (EDUCATION).
DATED 29TH SEPTEMBER 1919.

[SUBJECT.—Free and compulsory primary education.]

*Address to be presented to His Excellency the Governor by the Municipal Council,
Coimbatore.*

6. We consider the time is come for the introduction of free and compulsory primary education in all municipal areas. Additional cost involved to the municipalities will not, we think, be an insuperable objection. But some elasticity and variety in the curricula of studies and in the hours of instruction so as to suit the needs of the various communities will, we are sure, remove other difficulties.

Collector's note.

Paragraph 6—Free primary education.—In December 1915, when submitting the budget estimate of the municipality for the year 1916-17, the Municipal Council, in its resolution No. 338, dated 18th December 1915, decided that no school fees should be collected from the pupils in elementary schools and that they should be given free education; and the provision of Rs. 120 made in the budget under receipt of school fees was accordingly omitted. But the Government in paragraph 1 (4) of their Order No. 404 M., dated 25th January 1916, ordered the provision to be retained with reference to the remarks of the Director of Public Instruction.

Again in May 1916 when submitting the administration report of the municipality for the year 1915-16, the request was repeated, but Government in paragraph 5 of their Order No. 1323 M., dated 28th July 1916, expressed their inability to reconsider their previous orders, making the following observation:—"This is a question which has been fully discussed in the Legislative Council. The Government have decided to abide for the present by the policy laid down by the Government of India that the time has not yet arrived when it is practicable to dispense wholly with fees. The question whether a remission of fees would cost much or little to an individual council is not a matter which can be considered in deciding 'the main question of a policy.' It was urged by the Chairman that in view of the fact that the income from school fees was very small and the Municipal Council would not be put to loss but on the other hand by giving free education in the schools under its management some pupils would be benefited, the Government should be pleased to reconsider the order favourably. In G.O. Mis. No. 690 M., dated 29th April 1918, the Government however regretted that they were unable to approve of the council's proposal to make primary education free in the municipal elementary schools. At the same time the attention of the council was drawn to section 122-1 of the Madras District Municipalities Act, 1884, under which the municipality can adequately deal with the case of individual pupils whose parents or guardians satisfy it as to their inability to pay the fees.

HOME (EDUCATION) DEPARTMENT.

Secretariat note.

1. *Introduction of free and compulsory primary education in municipal areas.*—The Elementary Education Bill, which is now under the consideration of Government provides for the introduction of compulsory primary education by local bodies in the areas administered by them with the previous sanction of the Local Government. The Bill, however, does not now provide for free primary education. In 1913 the Government of India considered that the time had not yet come for making

elementary education *entirely* free, as such a step would retard the provision of schools in villages without them. They, however, desired Local Governments to extend the application of the principle of free elementary education amongst the poorer and more backward sections of the population. Subsequently in reply to a question asked at the Imperial Legislative Council on the 7th March 1917, that Government stated that they did not wish to interfere in the discretion already possessed by Local Governments and local bodies to take such steps as were necessary in the matter of the remission of fees in respect of particular areas and classes when these might be considered educationally and financially desirable.

2. The Hon'ble Mr. A. S. Krishna Rao moved a resolution at the meeting of the Madras Legislative Council held in November 1915 urging the introduction of free and compulsory education in municipal areas of the Presidency. The resolution was opposed by Government and was finally put to vote and lost. A few local bodies have, however, recently applied to Government for sanction to the total or partial abolition of fees in elementary schools under public management on the ground that the income now derived from fees is small and that the abolition or reduction will tend to popularize education among the poor. The Government have decided, in that connexion, that the general question of the abolition of fees in elementary schools should be examined in its various aspects. The Director of Public Instruction

* Dated 5th August 1919.

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L.D.

was therefore asked to submit a note* on the subject; this has now been received and is being dealt with separately. Till a decision is arrived at no definite reply can now be given to the council.†

3. It may, however, be mentioned in this connexion that under the existing rules children belonging to the castes and classes which have been declared by Government to be backward are admitted in *elementary* schools under public management without payment of fees and Muhammadans and Oriyas are required to pay only half fees. In connexion with a similar request made by the Cuddapah District Board in the address recently presented by that body, His Excellency the Governor stated that the Elementary Education Bill "does not provide for free primary education, but before compulsion is introduced this question of the levy of fees or their abolition will receive very careful consideration."

4. *Curricula of studies and hours of instruction in schools.*—The council apparently refers to the curricula of studies and hours of instruction in elementary schools. Rule 20 of the Madras Educational Rules states:—

"The course of studies (in elementary schools) should be arranged and the time-table drawn up in consultation with the inspecting officer. No curriculum is prescribed for elementary schools. A scheme of studies from which selections should be made, will be issued by the department from time to time. Due regard should be paid to local circumstances especially in rural areas where school hours and vacations should be suited to agricultural conditions." The rule thus allows sufficient latitude in these matters; and the scheme of studies published by the Director of Public Instruction provides for a variety of subjects.

S.K.—26-8-19.

N.K.—26-8-19.

C. RAMANUJA ACHARIYAR—27-8-19.

R. RAMACHANDRA RAO—27-8-19.

L. D[AVIDSON]—28-8-19.

OFFICE OF THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

Returned with the following extract from His Excellency's reply:—

"In reply to your suggestion that the time has come for the introduction of free and compulsory primary education for your municipality, I can only say to you as I said in answer to an address in Cuddapah on the same subject a few months ago that Government has under careful consideration a report of the Director of

Public Instruction on the general question of the abolition of fees in elementary schools, and the Elementary Education Bill which is now under the consideration of Government provides for the introduction of compulsory education by local bodies with the previous sanction of Government. The Bill does not provide for free primary education but before compulsion is introduced this question of the levy of fees or their abolition will receive very careful consideration."

A. C. DUFF—20-9-19.

HOME (EDUCATION) DEPARTMENT.

These notes may be recorded.

S.K.—22-9-19.

N.K.—24-9-19.

C. RAMANUJA ACHARIYAR—26-9-19.

R. RAMACHANDRA RAO—29-9-19.

[G.O. No. 1187, Home (Education), dated 29th September 1919.]

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C. No. 2, From the 2, No. 2, dated 1911

ORDER

No. 1182, dated 29-9-191

Imm.

Recorded

(27) R. R.

29.9.19

Printed for
recording only.

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DATED 29TH SEPTEMBER 1919.

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ORDINARY.

PRESS SLIP.

PREFERENCE.

URGENT

DEPARTMENT.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SECRETARIAT

Current No. dated 191
G.O. No. 1187 dated 29-9-1919
(b)
Number of MS. pages sent { Correspondence
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Notes

Brief subject

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(b) Each letter, memorandum, or order, or set of orders, in the file of correspondence should be headed in succession with the Roman numeral I, II, III, etc., the number being written in red ink or blue chalk above the item. The particular papers to be printed in the special issue-copies should be indicated by the Roman numeral (I, II, etc.) by which that item has been headed in the correspondence file. All matter, including marginal remarks or references, to be printed should be written in ink and matter which should not be printed should be encircled. Initials and signatures that are not quite legible should be re-written distinctly.

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† Copies distributed on ‡ (Press Despatcher).

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Referencer.
Clerk.

Supdt.

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As the matter is clear manuscript and has been carefully edited, (b) proof need not be sent. Please print and supply number of copies as indicated.

Type may be released after usual interval.

Referencer.
Clerk.

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Corrected proof received for striking on.....		10/10/19	
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