

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 378

Press

~~Mis.~~

192-193

Dated 18 - 3 - 1864

Not to be folded or roughly handled

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department,
15th March 1864.*

No. 192. Read the following letter from the Honorable D. ARBUTHNOTT, Magistrate of Salem; to the Honorable A. J. ARBUTHNOT, Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Salem, 11th March 1864, No. 9.

I have the honor to forward copy of a letter from the Joint Magistrate Mr. Thomas, regarding the capture of nine notorious dacoits by Mahabala Row, Mutiahdur of Mahendra Mungalum.

2. It is of the greatest importance that all persons, especially large land-holders, should receive every encouragement to seize dacoits who have taken shelter in their villages.

3. I therefore recommend that the rewards proposed by Mr. Thomas, viz., 500 Rupees to Mahabala Row, and 100 Rupees to the Village Moonsiff Vencatappen be sanctioned, and that these sums be expended in accordance with the wishes of the parties.

From H. S. THOMAS, Esq., Joint Magistrate of Salem; to the Honorable D. ARBUTHNOTT, Magistrate of Salem, dated Kaveripatam, 13th February 1864, No. 16.

I have the honor to enclose a petition from Mahabala Row, renter of the Muttah of Mahendra Mungalum, and to solicit your sanction for the payment of a reward to him for the capture of nine dacoits.

2. I have delayed applying to you till I saw in the District Gazette of 6th February 1864, that these dacoits have in Session Court No. 1 of Session held on 4th January 1864, been sentenced to seven years' transportation each.

3. These dacoits were well known and had been long followed in vain by the Police on the rocky and jungly borders of the Darampuri and Kistnagiri taluqs, till at last they took refuge in the jungles in Mahabala Row's Muttah; he soon learnt of their arrival and set spies to watch them till they were reported to have robbed a sheep-fold. This was sufficient for his object of catching them red handed. He kept on his spies to watch their movements, and before they had disposed of their stolen sheep he had assembled upwards of a hundred men of his own villagers to attack them.

4. Police assistance was not at hand, and time was everything so that he could not delay to seek it.

5. The dacoits had taken up their ground on a commanding eminence on which they could not be approached without observation and danger, for they were all armed and known to be resolute; some four of them had loaded muskets, others swords and knives, and others clubs. One of them had been known to cut down a house-holder in a former robbery, and directly they saw the approaching crowd they showed no intention of retreating, but of holding their ground by force of arms.

6. On one side only was their position more assailable than on others. Mahabala Row noticing this left the main body of his villagers where they were in front and in full view of the dacoits so as to attract their attention, while he with 25 men he had detached went round unobserved to the back of the hill and stalked under cover to within 25 yards of them which was open space, across this they made a sudden rush and captured every dacoit there but one; and though the four muskets were levelled at them and the others did not yield without a blow, Mahabala Row and his men armed with stout sticks were too quick for them, knocking down their pieces before they could fire and binding them all but one. They immediately took them to the nearest Police station and delivered them over.

7. I can readily believe this account as the resolute character of the dacoits is well known, and I can myself speak to Mahabala Row's ready courage, more like an Englishman's than a Brahmin, from the bold way in which I have seen him ride wild boar and stalk well, and walk fearlessly within a few yards of wild elephants, &c., &c.

8. Mahabala Row tells me that the best man that followed him that day was Vencatappen, Village Moonsiff Karakanapalli, without whose presence by his side the villagers would have failed to follow in the last rush.

*And Vice General
Inspector General of Madras
Police*

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department,
15th March 1864.

9. Under the authority conveyed in the Proceedings of Government, No. 1380, dated 23rd August 1862, you are empowered to grant rewards for informers, and assisters, and others at the rate of Rupees 100 for every offender apprehended and convicted. This is a case in which special courage was shown in overcoming more than ordinary danger, such as had been too much for the Police for more than a year, and the force brought to bear was such as none but a Muttadar could have commanded at such short notice, so that I trust you will be ready to consider the circumstances call for a reward commensurate with the advantage to the public, with the danger and good conduct of the undertaking, and the social position of the Muttahdar.

10. I propose a reward of Rupees 500 for the Muttahdar Mahabala Row, which he wishes made into a gold bangle with an appropriate inscription, and Rupees 100 to the Village Moonsiff Vencatappen. This will be at the rate of Rupees 80-8-0 for each convicted dacoit, omitting one who escaped conviction and another that escaped apprehension, for the original gang consisted of eleven.

11. Mahabala Row adverts to a former capture of a notorious robber and escaped convict made by him, for which he received no mark of the Government favor, or recognition of his aid. This is a different one from the convict taken by his relation Balaji Row, Muttahdar of Commiyannellur, which convict so fought to the last that he was only taken mortally wounded. The records of those captures are in the Head Assistant Magistrate's office, and I believe that some misunderstanding as to the readiness of the parties to receive a reward was the reason why none was then given; had it been offered in the shape of an ornament to be kept as a memorial instead of payment made in so much hard cash, it would have been received with pride instead of declined in shame. This mistake may, perhaps, be best rectified by liberality on the present occasion.

12. The Muttahdar Mahabala Row has put himself to some expense in himself rewarding the ryots that stood by him on the occasion.

13. If I may be allowed, I will see that the bangle is made after his own wish and awarded openly. I will also ascertain Village Moonsiff Vencatappen's wishes.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) D. ARBUTHNOTT,

Magistrate.

No. 193.

ORDER THEREON, 15th March 1864, No. 378.

His Excellency the Governor in Council has much satisfaction in sanctioning the disbursement of the rewards recommended in the foregoing letter, viz, Rupees 500 to Mahabala Row, Muttahdar of Mahendramangalam; and Rupees 100 to Vencatappen, Village Moonsiff.

2. The Magistrate will intimate to Mahabala Row that the Government highly appreciate the services rendered by him in capturing these dacoits.

(True Extract.)

Chief Secretary.

To the Magistrate of Salem.

- .. Civil Paymaster.
- .. Deputy Auditor and Accountant General.
- .. Inspector General of Madras Police.

Exd. J. Tulloch.

Judicial Department,

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following letter from the
Magistrate of Salem
(Here enter No. March 1864 No. 2204)
Order thereon 15th March 1864 No. 378.

His Excellency the Governor in Council has much satisfaction in sanctioning the disbursement of the rewards recommended in the foregoing letter, viz, Rs. 500 to Mahabala Row, Muttahdar of Mahendramangalam; and Rs. 100 to Vencatappen, Village Moonsiff.
2. The Magistrate will intimate to Mahabala Row that the Government highly appreciate the services rendered by him in capturing these dacoits.

The Magistrate of Salem
The Civil Paymaster
The Deputy Auditor & Acct. General
The Inspector General of Madras Police
Editors to be

deposited
19/3/64

Richard 1864. Department.

No. 3/20

PROCEEDINGS OF GOVERNMENT.

Dated 15 March 1864

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