

Local & Munl. (1898) Department.

MISCELLANEOUS.

G.O., No. 5722513P

DATED 25-5-98

[Despatch Abstract.]

Importation of Second hand gunny bags

Forwarding to the Govt. of India for consideration copy of letter from the Sanitary Commissioner Madras recommending that the order removing the prohibition to import second hand gunny bags from plague infected tracts be suspended at least so far as this part is concerned and pending the collection of further evidence on the subject.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

LOCAL AND MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT.

[L. & M.]

200-10-3-93.

Papers to be read in Proceedings:-

Again G.O., No. dated 189 ,
 Again G.O., No. dated 189 ,
 Current No. 757 P of 1898, dated 13-5-98, from Sanitary Commission
 " " " 189 , "
 " " " 189 , "

H.M. & H.R.

ORDER. No 572 P. mis. d. 25-3-98

SA
See to this
please

Further information with, Toubson, be
 collected, as advised by D. King.
 H.H.

The Government of India will be
 addressed.

Letter No 573 P. mis. d. 25-3-98
 To the Secy to the Govt of India
 Home Department. Sanitary

Li

With reference to Mr. —
 Nakan's letter No 332 d/18-2-98,
 stating that H.R. the G.G. Council
 has been advised that the uses
 to which gunny bags are put in
 the course of trade are not such
 as to render them subject to the
 Contamination of plague
 infection and that the withdrawal
 of the prohibition against the
 bringing of used gunny bags from
 plague infected areas areas
 will

1815798

H.H.
20.5.98

Printed in 10-17/P d/9-3-98
 -E-

will not entail any danger, I
am directed to forward for the
consideration of the Govt of India
the enclosed representation on the
subject from the Sanitary Commr
Madras, and to state that this
Government concurs in his
recommendation that the order
removing the prohibition should
be suspended at least so far as
this Presidency is concerned.

17 5-98

Recd
25-5-1898

(Turned out here) "and pending the collection
of further evidence in the subject."

A.S.H.
20.5.98

Issue with H.E.'s
addition
73.5.88

Local & Munl. (1898) Department.

CURRENT No. 75/12

From Surge-Lieut Col. W. L. King
C. In. S.P.M.
Sanitary Commissioner Madras

No. 1062
3

Dated 13th May 1898.
16 MAY 1898

Received 16-5-1898

Registered 16-5-1898

Enclosures

Spare copies.

SUBJECT.

Urging against salt
being imported from
Bombay or Calcutta
in second-hand bags.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

Office of Sanitary Commissioner,
Fort St. George, 13 May 1898.

No. 1062
3

From

Surgeon-Lieut.-Col. W. G. King, M.B., C.M., D.P.H.,
Sanitary Commissioner for Madras,

To

The Secretary to Government,
Local and Municipal Department.

Sir,

With reference to G.O.NO.171-P, dated 9th March 1898,
communicating notification by the Government of India with-
drawing the prohibition against importation of second-hand
gunny bags in this Presidency, I have the honour to represent
that the grounds upon which this order is founded seem in-
complete and, therefore, inconsistent with the safety of a Pre-
sidency not yet affected with plague. I would, consequently, ad-
vise that Government represent to the Government of India the
desirability of not compelling adherence to this order, pen-

Vide Notification by the
Govt. of India No
1033 dated 27th March
1897.

ding the collection of further evidence on the subject.

"Second-hand gunny bags" were originally judged by
the Government of India as likely to carry infection. The
Venice Convention also recognized gunny bags ("sacking") as
one of the articles specially "susceptible". The Government
of India has apparently not been advised that these bags are
not of a nature to favour the retention of infective matter

which

which their original prohibition recognized-but that the uses to which the bags are put do not warrant the belief they would be brought in contact with infective matter. This certainly does not accord with the general opinion as to the treatment gunny bags are subjected to. When distributed by the wholesale merchant, they pass to the hands of petty dealers or private persons, whose places of residence and business are one and the same. Here, stored in dark and damp godowns, they may receive infection from human beings or rats. When in ^{the} hands of the petty dealer, gunny sacking frequently performs the functions of a mat spread on a floor or on a cot to act for bedding, of the purdha of a hut, of the temporary covering of the body during rain or the cold stage of fever, of carpets for gharis used as "transits", and the like. I have conducted sanitary inspections in Bombay, the Central Provinces and Calcutta, and I have no reason to believe that the habits of the people there differ from those of Madras as to the uses to which gunny sacking is put. Once launched on the market as "second-hand", they may continue for sometime to be used for various purposes in dwellings till the advent of men (in the case of Madras) of a special caste known as "Tanapa", who go from street ^{to street} buying up second-hand gunny bags, repairing them and restoring them to wholesale dealers. It seems to me therefore if a gunny bag can be correctly classed in the language of ^{the} Venice Convention as "susceptible" as the Government of India unhesitatingly did class it at the commencement of plague, that there is no reason to believe from evidence of the "life" of a gunny bag that it undergoes no risk of being the bearer of infection. In the case of bags that have been

been kept dry, as would be the case with those employed in transport of flour, it may be that any attached infective matter may rapidly die out. In the case of those employed for importation of salt, however, from Bombay, on account of the deliquescent nature of the article, there may be a tendency to continued dampness of the bag, when there would seem special risk of the vitality of the plague microbe being prolonged. It has been proved by Mr. Hankin's experiments in connection with the plague bacillus that in weak strengths salt has by no means an inimical influence.

3. There is reason therefore not to regard second-hand gunny bags, more especially those containing salt, as devoid of power of conveying infection, and, as no decided answer on this subject is as yet available from bacteriologists, I think it but right that the Government of Madras should act on the side of caution. I would particularly urge against salt being imported from Bombay or Calcutta in second-hand bags, as I find that consignments of salt as soon as received by merchants are distributed far and wide to small villages.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,

Your Most Obedient Servant,

M. B. C. M. D. P. H.

M. B., C. M., D. P. H.,

Surgeon Lieut Colonel,

Sanitary Commissioner for Madras.

Do not 46 9-3-98

Dear Sir King,

The Government of India
has withdrawn its prohibition
against the importation of second-
hand bag gunny bags from the
Bombay Presidency on the ground
"that the uses to which gunny bags
are put in the course of trade are
not such as to render them subject
to the contamination of plague
infection, and that the withdrawal
of the prohibition -- will not entail
any danger". The Madras Govt
has accepted this decision and modified
its order accordingly. A copy of the
The papers will be communicated to
you in the usual course. I am,
however, to tell you that if you ^{think}
that India has made a mistake,
you are at liberty to submit your
views.

M.T.
7398

Long
4/3/98.

Depd 9/8/98

When given for copying _____
When copied _____
When examined _____ 189 .
When signed _____

READ AGAIN G.O., No. _____, DATED
189 ,

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, BRING MRANT FOR DESPATCH
IN ORIGINAL.

N.B.—

A = Copy in full.
B = Not to be copied.
P = Copy abstract only.
Q = Copy heading only.