PROCEEDINGS OF THE PLAGUE COMMISSIONER.

(1898)

PRINTED.

No. 870

DATED 7—12—98
Desp 2 14—12—98.

[Despatch Abstract.]

Used ~~Gunny~~ Empty Bags. and baskets used for exportation of charcoal

Communicating to the Collector of Salem the G. O. accepting the views of the Plague Com. regarding the ~~re~~importation of —— from infected areas of ——

BACK PAPERS.

No.	Date.	No.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

No.	Date.	No.	Date.
2681 of 98 1474			

PLAGUE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE.

(1898)

CURRENT No. 1430

Two corrects
1227 & 1230

From The Sanitary Commissioner Madras

Order

No. 2680

Dated 10-11-1898

Received 11-11-1898

Registered 11-11-1898

Enclosures C.N. 9407 re Th.

Spare copies

SUBJECT.

Recommending the prohibition of the re-importation of the charcoal bags.

BACK PAPERS.

No.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

No.	Date.

[800—5-11-98.]

PLAGUE.

No. 2680/S

Office of Sanitary Commissioner,

Madras, 10th November 1898.

From

Lieut.-Colonel W. G. King, M.B., C.M., D.P.H.,

Sanitary Commissioner for Madras,

To

The Plague Commissioner,

MADRAS.

Sir,

With reference to your endorsement NO. 947 dated 2nd November 1898, I have the honour to refer to my opinion as conveyed in this office letter NO. 1062/S dated 13th May 1898. Copy in Ch. 1227.

My statements as to the dangerous history of "gunny bags" must apply with force to those employed for charcoal, as I understand only such as are in the last stage of decrepitude are used for this purpose; that is to say, they must for a long period have been subjected to the chance of infection attending "second-hand bags".

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your Most Obedient Servant,

W. G. King

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

Lieut-Colonel, I.M.S.,

Sanitary Commissioner for Madras.

8

Ref on C. No 1035 of 1898

Proceedings -

The Sanitary Commr was requested in an Endt dt. 16. June. 98. No 4470. from the Secretary Municipal Dept of the Govt of Mysore if possible further Evidence regarding the conveyance of Plague infection by gunny bags or second hand packing. From some correspondence with the Resident in Mysore, it would appear that there was some suspicion that the Plague in Bangalore may have been first brought by means of goods coming by rail, and possibly the infection may have been derived from the coverings in which the goods were packed. The Sanitary Commr is requested to report whether he has been able to gather any further Evidence regarding the conveyance of infection by gunny bags, & whether any information can be gained in Bangalore which would throw light upon the matter.

6/XI/98

C No 1227

_____ _____ _____ DEPARTMENT.

From

Surg.-Lt.-Col. W. G. KING, M B., C.M., D.P.H.,
SANITARY COMMISSIONER FOR MADRAS,

To

THE Plague Commr.
Madras

Two currents
1227 & 1230

Two orders.

No. 2677/S

Dated 10
Despatched 11
Received

Nov 1898.

ENCLOSURES. Two.

Subject.

Forwarding with remarks
Certain correspondence on the
subject of "Second-hand
Gunny bags".

[500—16-4-96.]

[500—20-1 98.]

Office of Sanitary Commissioner,

No.1062/S Fort St. George, 13th May 1898.

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 withdrawing 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 incomplete and, therefore, inconsistent with the safety of a Presidency not yet affected with Plague. I would, consequently, advise that Government represent to the Government of India the desirability of not compelling adherence to this order, pending the collection of further evidence on the subject.

2. "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 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 the 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

When in the hands of the petty dealer, gunny sacking frequently performs the functions of a mat spread on the floor, or on a cot to act for bedding, of the purdha of a hut, of a temporary covering of the body during rain or the cold stage of fever, of carpets for "gharies" 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 the "Janaper", 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~~ 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 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 etc,

(Signed). W.G.King, Surgn: Lieut Col
Sanitary Commissioner for Madras.

2/ C.No 2557 of 1898

True Copy.
Balagopaljee
Manager & Assistant
Lieut Col I.M.S.

Office of Sanitary Commissioner,

NO.1530/S Fort Saint George, 8th July 1898

From,

Surgeon-Major H.Thomson, M.B., D.P.H.,
Ag: Sanitary Commissioner for Madras,

TO

The Secretary to Government,
Local and Municipal Department.

Sir,

With reference to Memorandum NO.47 P dated 16th June 1898, I have the honour to invite your attention to the concluding sentence of para 1 of letter NO.1062/S dated 13th May 1898 of the Sanitary Commissioner. The "further evidence" therein mentioned is to be obtained by the Government of India and not by the Sanitary Commissioner for Madras. I would therefore request that Government will draw attention to and have corrected the mistake made in letter NO.1407/ dated 8th June 1898 from Secretary to Government of India, Home Department.

2. I fully endorse Surgeon-Lieut Colonel King's opinion regarding the prohibition against the importation of second-hand gunny bags in this Presidency.

I have etc,

(Signed). H. Thomson, Surgn: Major,
Ag: Sanitary Commissioner for Madras.

(True copy).

Lieut-Colonel, I.M.S.,
Sanitary Commissioner for Madras.

risks

[300—5-11-98.]

Office of Sanitary Commissioner,

No. 2677/S Madras, 10th November 1898.

PLAGUE.

From

Lieut-Colonel W. G. King, M.B., C.M., D.P.H.,

Sanitary Commissioner for Madras,

To

The Plague Commissioner,

FORT SAINT GEORGE.

Sir,

With reference to Reference on C.NO.1035 of 1898, I have the honour to enclose the full correspondence on the subject therein referred to. You will perceive that Surgeon Major Thomson, the officer who acted for me, in replying to O.M. NO.47 P, dated 16th June, 1898, pointed out that the Government of India was in error in supposing that in my letter NO.1062/S, dated 13th May, 1898, I had engaged to collect evidence on the point. I had suggested that it was a matter the Government of India had already given definite opinion, and having withdrawn from that opinion, on evidence that did not seem to be applicable to conditions in this Presidency, should order special investigation on the subject; pending which the Madras Government was advised not to accept the views communicated.

2. As you state evidence has been forthcoming in Mysore on the subject, I will ask the Sanitary Commissioner there to kindly give me his data.

3. I do not personally think it is at all necessary to await actual evidence of mischief done, before action be taken in this matter. It has been amply recognized in this Presidency throughout plague operations, that it would be highly inadvisable to interfere with merchandise generally but, in the case of gunny bags, two facts are known to them; they approach closely the character of clothing, as to the "susceptability" of which to convey infection, there is no doubt; and, secondly, they are liable to be exposed to all the

risks incidental to clothing exposed in infected houses. Failing evidence from the Government of India showing that it is impossible to infect a second-hand gunny bag, and for this infective matter to retain its vitality during the few hours necessary for journey by rail or road to this Presidency from Bangalore, I think there should be no hesitation in forbidding the use of second-hand gunny bags.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your Most Obedient Servant,

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

Lieut-Colonel, I.M.S.,

Sanitary Commissioner for Madras.

1
C No 2557 1898

Proceedings of the Plague Commissioner,

MADRAS—1898.

Recd.	1898.	*Enclosures*
Regd.		*Spare copies*

Proceedings, No. 870, 7th December 1898.

DECEMBER.

Empty Bags and Baskets used for exportation of charcoal.

Communicating to the Collector of Salem Government Order accepting the views of the Plague Commissioner regarding the re-importation from infected areas of —.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE PLAGUE COMMISSIONER.

READ—the following papers:—

G.O., Mis. No. 1483 P., dated 30th November 1898.

Read—the following paper:—

From R. B. CLEGG, Esq., Acting Collector and District Magistrate, Salem, to the Plague Commissioner, Madras, dated 1st November 1898, Ref. on No. 5331 P.C.

There is a large traffic between Bangalore and the villages in the Hosúr taluk in charcoal, and after the charcoal has been disposed of in Bangalore, the bags or baskets in which it is carried are brought back by the sellers. Dr. Thomas, the Additional Medical Officer, is of opinion that they should be treated in the same way as poultry baskets. If you consider that there is danger of introduction of infection in this way, I request that the re-importation of the empty bags or baskets, in question, from the infected areas may be prohibited in the same way as poultry baskets are.

Extract from a Note for the Local and Municipal Department, dated 23rd November 1898.

* * * * *

. . . This is a letter from the Collector of Salem, in which he says that there is a great traffic in charcoal from Hosúr to Bangalore and that the bags or baskets in which charcoal is carried to Bangalore return, brought back by the sellers. He thinks that the re-importation of bags and baskets, which have been used to carry charcoal in, into Bangalore should be prohibited, and the Sanitary Commissioner agrees with him.

For myself I don't think we should get much good out of any prohibition of the kind recommended. Even if the re-importation of these articles is dangerous, how is any order prohibiting re-importation going to be carried out? In the case of duck baskets from Bangalore or Bombay, the case is quite different, the baskets come back by train and are empty. These bags or baskets used for charcoal probably come back as often as not filled with other articles, and they come back by cart and not by train. We have not agency for examining all the carts in view to find these bags or baskets, and even if found it would probably be very difficult to prove that they were re-imported. I don't think much good would be done by any order, and a further opportunity will be given for petty blackmailing which is, if possible, to be avoided.

(Signed) M. HAMMICK,
Plague Commissioner.

Order—Mis. No. 1483 P., dated 30th November 1898.

The Government accepts the views of the Plague Commissioner.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) H. TREMENHEERE,
Secretary to Government.

To the Plague Commissioner.

PROCEEDINGS—No. 870, dated 7th December 1898.

The Government Order read above is communicated to the Collector of Salem with reference to his letter, Ref. on No. 5331 P.C. of 1st November 1898.

4/12/98

for Plague Commissioner.

To the Collector of Salem (A).

Copy to all other Collectors (A).
" the President, Municipal Commission, Madras.
" the Sanitary Commissioner.
" the Surgeon-General.

Exd. A. Rungasawmi Aiyangar.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE PLAGUE COMMISSIONER.

READ—the following papers:—

From R. B. CLEGG, Esq., Acting Collector and District Magistrate, Salem, to the Plague Commissioner, Madras, dated 1st November 1898, Ref. on No. 533/P.C.

There is a large traffic between Bangalore and the villages in the Hosúr taluk in charcoal, and after the charcoal has been disposed of in Bangalore, the bags or baskets in which it is carried are brought back by the sellers. Dr. Thomas, the Additional Medical officer, is of opinion that they should be treated in the same way as poultry baskets. If you consider that there is danger of introduction of infection in this way, I request that the re-importation of the empty bags or baskets, in question, from the infected areas may be prohibited in the same way as poultry baskets are.

Ref. on C. No. 947.

Forwarded to the Sanitary Commissioner, Madras, for favour of opinion.

2nd November 1898. (Signed) M. S. MASCARENHAS,
for *Plague Commissioner.*

Extract from a Note for the Local and Municipal Department, dated 23rd November 1898.

* * * * *

. . . This is a letter from the Collector of Salem, in which he says that there is a great traffic in charcoal from Hosúr to Bangalore and that the bags or baskets in which charcoal is carried to Bangalore return brought back by the sellers. He thinks that the re-importation of bags and baskets, which have been used to carry charcoal in, into Bangalore should be prohibited, and the Sanitary Commissioner agrees with him.

For myself I don't think we should get much good out of any prohibition of the kind recommended. Even if the re-importation of these articles is dangerous, how is any order prohibiting re-importation going to be carried out? In the case of duck baskets from Bangalore or Bombay, the case is quite different, the baskets come back by train and are empty. These bags or baskets used for charcoal probably come back as often as not filled with other articles, and they come back by cart and not by train. We have not agency for examining all the carts in view to find these bags or baskets, and even if found it would probably be very difficult to prove that they were re-imported. I don't think much good would be done by any order, and a further opportunity will be given for petty blackmailing which is, if possible, to be avoided.

(Signed) M. HAMMICK,
Plague Commissioner.

G.O., Mis. No. 1483 P., dated 30th November 1898.

Read—the following paper:—

From the Plague Commissioner, dated 23rd November 1898.

ABSTRACT.—Stating that the prohibition of the importation of the used gunny bags from the plague-infected parts into Madras would, as expressed by the Government of India, do no good, and that any order prohibiting the re-importation of the charcoal bags would be impracticable of being carried out.

Order—Mis. No. 1483 P., dated 30th November 1898.

The Government accepts the views of the Plague Commissioner.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) H. TREMENHEERE,
Secretary to Government.

To the Plague Commissioner.

PROCEEDINGS—No. 870, dated 7th December 1898.

The Government Order read above is communicated to the Collector of Salem with reference to his letter, Ref. on No. 533/P. C. of 1st November 1898.

L. E. BUCKLEY,
Plague Commissioner.

To the Collector of Salem (A).
Copy to all other Collectors (A).
" the President, Madras Municipal Commission.
" the Sanitary Commissioner.
" the Surgeon-General.

Exd. A. Rungasami Aiyangar.

Ref. on No. 533/P.C.

SALEM COLLECTOR'S OFFICE,
1st November 1898.

FROM

Robert B. Clegg ESQ.,
ag. COLLECTOR AND DISTRICT MAGISTRATE,
Salem,

To

THE SECRETARY TO THE COMMISSIONER OF
Plague
Fort Saint George,
Madras.

SIR,

There is a large traffic between Bangalore and the villages in the Hosur Taluq in charcoal and after the charcoal has been disposed of in Bangalore the bags or baskets in which it is carried are brought back by the sellers.

Dr. Thomas, the additional medical officer is of opinion that they should be treated in the same way as poultry baskets. If you consider that there is danger of introduction of infection in this way, I request that the re-importation of the empty bags or baskets, in question, from the infected areas may be prohibited in the same way as poultry baskets are.

I have the honor to be,
Sir
your most obedient Servant,

D. V. Gopalaswamy
For ag. Collector

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF MADRAS
No. 3882-S
7th NOV. 98

FROM

THE COLLECTOR AND DISTRICT MAGISTRATE,

Salem,

To

~~THE SECRETARY TO THE~~

The Plague COMMISSIONER OF

Madras.

Ref. on Cno. 947/2-11-98

Forwarded to the Sanitary Commissioner, Madras, for favour of opinion.

Dr. Ramachandra Rao
for Plague Commissioner
(to be returned)

Dated 1st November 1898

Ref. No. 533 P.C.

ENCLOSURE

SUBJECT

Requesting that the re-importation of the charitable bags may be prohibited

Extract from the Note for the Local and Municipal Department.

Note for the Local & Municipal Department.

It will be remembered that the Government of India objected to maintaining the prohibition against the importation of used gunny bags from plague infected parts into Madras. (G.O. 669 - dated 14-VII-98). Sir Henry Bliss in a note dated 21st September asked that I should find out whether we had any further evidence on the matter to lay before the Government of India. It will be seen from Col: King's letter dated 10th November '98 that he has actually no further evidence on the matter. The idea therefore of addressing the Government of India may drop.

A

A second point, however, comes up in connection with current 1230. This is a letter from the Collector of Salem in which he says that there is a great traffic in Charcoal from Hosur to Bangalore and that the bags or baskets in which Charcoal is carried to Bangalore return, brought back by the Sellers. He thinks that the reimportation of bags and baskets, which have been used to carry Charcoal in, into Bangalore should be prohibited and the Sanitary Commissioner agree with him.

For myself I don't think we should get much good out of any prohibition of the kind recommended. Even if the reimportation of these articles is dangerous, how

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is any order prohibiting re-importation going to be carried out? In the case of duck-baskets from Bangalore or Bombay the case is quite different, the baskets come back by train and are empty. These bags or baskets used for Charcoal probably come back as often as not filled with other articles and they come back by cart and not by train. We have not agency for examining all the carts in view to find these bags or baskets and even if found it would probably be very difficult to prove that they were reimported. I don't think much good would be done by any order and a further opportunity will be given for petty blackmailing which is if possible to be avoided.

Lady Ll. Hammick

23. 11. 98

PLAGUE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE.

(1898)

CURRENT No. 1847

From The Local and Municipal Department

Order

No. 1483 P. Mch

Dated 30 - 11 - 1898

Received 2 - 12 - 1898

Registered 2 - 12 - 1898

Enclosures C to 947, 1227/1280 retd

Spare copies

SUBJECT.

Stating that Gaut accepts the views of the P. C. in stating that the order prohibiting the re-importation of the Charcoal bags would be impracticable of being carried out &c

BACK PAPERS.

No.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

No.	Date.

C No 1847

[25]
1,000—23-3-98.

LOCAL AND MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT.

48

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

READ the following paper:—

From the Plague Commissioner dated 23rd November 1898, stating that the prohibition of the importation of the used gunny bags from the Plague infected parts into Madras would, as expressed by the Government of India, do no good and that any ~~other~~ order prohibiting the re-importation of the Charcoal bags would be impracticable of being Carried out.

Order No. 1483. P. Mis dated 30-11-98

P. C.
2-DEC. 1898

The Government Accepts the views of the Plague Commissioner.

(True Extract.)

A Edgington
For Secy to Govt.

To the Plague Commissioner with ~~two~~ three enclosures returned.

V.P.
30.11.

Chs 1847 60

Chs 947, 1230, 1227, 1847
Refer to Chs 1035

~~NOTE FOR THE~~

Prep ltr 8/10 8/7 12 28.

The G.O. read above is Communicated to the Colls of Salem with reference to his letter ltr Ref on his 533/PC of 1 Nov 1838

I.D.
Lieut Staff

I to
Nav Colls of Salem (A
Copy to all Other Colls (A) ✓
- President Bd. M.C ✓
- Surg Cancer ✓
- Surgeon Genl ✓

First copy sent to Press. 7 · 12 · 98

Returned for signature.

Despatched in print.

Number of copies required. { Order complete. / Letter only. / Order complete with Letter.

Sign copies — 26
Spare do — 130

WANTED AGAIN ~~No. Entered at 2.11.98~~ ~~1035 6.11.98~~ ~~Note 4-L-Lett. Dept. 23.11.98~~ } ~~A~~ only the extract marked in blue pencil.

H.S. 12.12.98

CURRENT No. 947 ~~1035~~ ~~1227 with 2 encls~~ } A Press.

1847

Blue and Croft

H.S. 7.12.98

ENCLOSURES TO C. No.

N.B.—

A = Print in full.
B = Not to be printed.
P = Print abstract only.
Q = Print heading only.