

Local & Munl. (189) Department.

PRINTED.

G.O., No. 171 M

DATED 9/2/93

INDEXED. DESPATCHED

[Despatch Abstract]

Fairs & Festivals - Recording with remarks
report of the Karttikai festival held
at Tiruvannamalai in November 18

Recd. 13th

Proof for approval

} 1899.

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G.O., No. 171 M., 9th February 1899.

FEBRUARY.

Fairs and Festivals.

Recording, with remark, the report on the Karthigai festival held at Tiruvannámalai in November 1893.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

LOCAL AND MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT.

Read—the following paper:—

From V. VENUGOPAL CHETTY, Esq., I.C.S., Sub-Collector and Joint Magistrate, South Arcot, to the Collector and District Magistrate, South Arcot, dated Camp, Tiruvannamalai, 18th December 1898, No. 501-D.

I have the honour to report on the annual Karthigai festival of Tiruvannamalai held in November 1898. It commenced on the 18th of that month and closed on the 27th.

2. The number of pilgrims that assembled during the festival may be said to be approximately 40,000, as against 80,000 last year and 60,000 in the year previous. This number was arrived at by a census of pilgrims taken on the last day of the festival at one of the toll-gates on the hill road from 4 A.M. to 4 P.M. and at two gates of the temple. An exceedingly small number of pilgrims (about 5,000) arrived by rail and this is mainly due to the judicious orders of Government conveyed in G.Os., No. 1187 P., dated 27th September 1898, and No. 1401 P., dated 3rd November 1898, prohibiting the sale of tickets to pilgrims from affected districts (including Cuddapah, North Arcot and Salem) to Tiruvannamalai from 1st to 30th November 1898. The annual cattle market attracts a very large number of people every year and its closure coupled with other restrictions imposed by Government as precautionary measures against the importation of plague, has tended to bring about this marked decrease in the number of pilgrims.

3. There were heavy showers of rain for some days before the festival, but during the festival there was bright sunshine and the weather was fair.

4. I proceeded to Tiruvannamalai about ten days before the festival and stayed there till the end. The District Medical and Sanitary Officer, Cuddalore, visited the place once before the festival and again during its course, when he stayed for nearly a week.

5. The sanitary arrangements were all made on the lines indicated by Dr. King, who personally visited Tiruvannamalai before the commencement of the festival. Nearly all of his suggestions were carried out. Owing to the closure of the cattle market, no separate sanitary staff was necessary for the same. A portion of the additional sanitary staff began to work from the 1st November and the number was gradually increased till the full-sanctioned strength was reached. The full staff worked from the 14th till the 29th November, i.e., two days after the close of the festival. On the 29th a portion of this staff was disbanded as most of the pilgrims had left the town by that time. The remaining staff was retained till the 10th December. The full strength of the staff was 5 sanitary inspectors, 4 maistries, including the 2 bill collectors, 6 peons, 112 toties, 63 sweepers, 30 dhooly-bearers, and 2 tank watchmen. The town was divided into four wards, each being put in charge of a certificated sanitary inspector. The local civil apothecary, who was relieved of his work in the hospital, supervised the sanitation of the town as chief sanitary inspector. He was assisted by a sanitary inspector. The town was kept scrupulously clean and lit up by night as usual. Some time before the commencement of the festival, the residents were asked by beat of tom-tom to whitewash their houses and keep their backyards clean. Hotels and chattrams were carefully inspected daily

in view to prevent unwholesome articles of food from being served. Forty-eight temporary "tatti" latrines were put up and provided with water pots, tarred receptacles and lights. A toti was allotted to each. A Jewish latrine was also put up as in previous years. In addition to the hand-drawn night-soil carts, two rubbish carts, each provided with twenty tarred tin-tubs, were used for removing night-soil from latrines.

6. All the tanks and wells in the town were full owing to heavy rains before the festival and their conservancy was very carefully attended to. The tanks were all furnished with sign-boards. Washing of cloths was permitted only on banks. All the sources of water-supply were watched by the police and municipal servants. Unprotected and insanitary wells were barricaded and closed. Iyenkolam, the chief bathing tank, was barricaded as usual, and the usual regulations with regard to ingress and egress to it were observed.

7. Special arrangements were also made for keeping off the bubonic plague. Dr. King was kind enough to send nine sanitary inspectors (with a chief sanitary inspector to supervise their work), who were posted in the nine toll-gates of the town to observe by day and night pilgrims coming by road from infected areas. Due instructions were given them. A peon and a constable were given to assist each of these sanitary inspectors. Two plague sheds—one for a hospital and the other for "suspects"—were erected at some distance from the railway station. Two sheds for relatives of patients, two for attendants, two for kitchens and one for a hospital assistant were also erected close to the above. Four latrines were also provided. Four male and two female ward attendants and two cooks were engaged during the festival. A mantapam was also reserved for the segregation of suspects. One hospital assistant was employed for a month to inspect passengers arriving by rail from infected areas. A Eurasian midwife was also entertained for inspection of female passengers by rail. At Dr. King's suggestion a vigilance committee was started by me for giving information about suspected cases of plague. The success of this was due primarily to the exertions of the Tahsildar of Tiruvannamalai and the Stationary Sub-Magistrate. I personally spoke to most of the members of the committee. The numerous lodging houses and chattrams were inspected daily to find out if any pilgrims had come from infected places. Persons coming from infected areas who were found in the town were turned back. Two persons were prosecuted for evading the plague rules and were convicted by the Sub-Magistrate. The arrangements were as effectual as they could be and the result was that the festival passed off without a single imported case of plague. Here I am constrained to note that the chief sanitary inspector temporarily entertained by the municipality, Swamidoss Pillai, proved to be indifferent to his work and refractory, and that his services were consequently dispensed with after a few days. The other sanitary inspectors engaged for plague duty did their work fairly well.

8. The police arrangements were creditable and there were no cases of theft or other crime during the festival. Mr. Stoddart, the Superintendent of Police, also attended the festival and stopped for four days. Of the 3 inspectors, 200 constables and 20 head constables sanctioned for the festival, 50 constables and 4 head constables were detailed for sanitary duty. Most of the latter were made to guard the different sources of water-supply.

9. There was an entire absence of epidemic of any kind during the festival and the public health was very good. No cases of cholera were reported. One cholera shed and three small sheds attached to it were put up. The necessary medicines both for cholera and plague were kept in readiness. Of the three extra hospital assistants, one was in charge of the cholera shed, another in charge of the local municipal hospital, as the civil apothecary was taken away from there to supervise the sanitation of the town, and the third was as already stated engaged in inspecting trains. Dr. Oliver, the Superintending Physician, and two relieving apothecaries of the South Indian Railway came here during the festival and conducted examination of passengers. Dr. Chalke, the District Medical and Sanitary Officer, also inspected the trains during the latter part of the festival. The Tahsildar, the Stationary Sub-Magistrate of Tiruvannamalai and myself inspected some of the trains.

10. The cost of the festival arrangements made and that of plague establishment and sheds is about Rs. 4,000, while the receipts have been only about Rs. 30 from booth collections. The closure of the cattle-market resulted in a loss to the municipal revenue, the estimated income from that source being Rs. 4,060. The District Board has kindly come forward with a liberal contribution of Rs. 2,500 in addition to the usual contribution of Rs. 500.

11. This year the new car of the god, Sri Arunachaleswarar, was twice drawn during the festival. It is reported that no car was drawn during the past ten or fifteen years. On both the occasions we rendered all possible assistance in averting accidents. The processions of the gods during the festival were brought to a close at an early hour in the night. I attended some of the processions to see that order was kept.

12. As the cattle-fair was stopped, there was no necessity for bringing the Cattle Disease Act into operation during the festival, and there was no outbreak of contagious disease among cattle. There was ample accommodation in the important cart-stands of the town, and special attention was paid to their conservancy.

13. *General Remarks.*—The success which attended these elaborate arrangements is chiefly due to your presence and advice during the whole period of the festival. It is also due to Dr. King's visit to the town a few days before the commencement of the festival and to the valuable suggestions and advice which he kindly offered. The different wards in the town were carefully inspected by me and all defects were remedied then and there.

14. In conclusion, I have to offer my best thanks to the Superintendent of Police Mr. Stoddart for the excellent police arrangements and the hearty co-operation of the police with the Council. I have also great pleasure in recording my appreciation of the valuable assistance rendered and the indefatigable zeal and energy displayed by the following officers:—

- (1) M.R.Ry. C. Krishnaswamy Aiyar, Tahsildar of Tiruvannámalai,
- (2) " V. Rangaswamy Aiyar, Stationary Sub-Magistrate, Tiruvannámalai,
- (3) " T. K. Subramania Aiyar, Sub-Registrar and Chairman-Delegate,
- (4) " Kumaraswamy Pillai, Inspector of Police, Tiruvannámalai,

and by the following non-official municipal Councillors:—

- (1) Rev. H. Jensen,
- (2) M.R.Ry. Arunagiri Mudaliyar, and
- (3) Hazrat 'Abd-ul-ghaffar Sāhib.

15. The civil apothecary's tabular report with remarks of the District Medical and Sanitary Officer is herewith submitted.

No. 384-Eng.

Forwarded to the Secretary to Government, Local and Municipal Department, Madras, through the Sanitary Commissioner, Madras.

2. I went to Tiruvannámalai a few days before the commencement of the festival and remained till the end. Owing to the great reduction in the number of pilgrims, the sanitary and conservancy staff entertained was amply sufficient for the work required of it. The Sanitary Commissioner visited the town and inspected the arrangements made, and his valuable suggestions were carried out as far as possible. The disinfection of the wells created a good deal of misapprehension and alarm in the minds of a section of the Muhammadan community, who persisted for some time in giving credence to the wildest rumours that the well had been poisoned, &c., rather than to the assurances of the Tahsildar, Sub-Collector and myself.

3. Hazrat 'Abd-ul-ghaffar Sāhib, Municipal Councillor, endeavoured to assist me in dispelling their fears and after four or five days the people came to their senses and resumed the use of the well.

4. A consignment of second-hand gunny bags brought from Bangalore was promptly burnt under my orders and a consignment of cumbies imported from the neighbourhood of French Rocks for sale during the festival was disinfected by exposure to the sun.

5. In carrying out my orders on these points and in dealing with the Muhammadans, the Sub-Collector Mr. Venugopaul Chettiyar displayed considerable tact and cool judgment.

6. In superintending the arrangements generally, he was ably assisted by the Tahsildar and Stationary Sub-Magistrate and the gentlemen named in his report.

7. The Police Inspector Kumaraswami Pillai also deserves praise for the excellence of the police arrangements.

8. In conclusion, I have to express my thanks to the South Indian Railway administration and to the Principal Medical Officer, Dr. Oliver, for their assistance in arranging for the inspection of pilgrims arriving by rail.

(Signed) L. M. WYNCH,
Acting Collector.

23rd December 1898.

No. 110-S.

Forwarded to Government.

Every reasonable effort was made by the local authorities to secure freedom from epidemics—more especially plague—during the festival. The result warranted the means.

(Signed) W. G. KING, Lt.-Col., I.M.S.,
Sanitary Commissioner for Madras.

9th January 1899.

REPORT on the Karthigai festival held at Tiruvannamalai,

ENCL-

District.	Name of re- porter.	Name of festi- val and where held.	Date of festival.	Number assembled.	Accommodation and sanitary arrangements made.	Water-supply.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
South Arcot.	S. Muthuswamy Pillay, Civil Apothecary.	Karthigai festival, Tiruvannamalai.	From 18th to 27th November 1898.	40,000.	As usual two temporary sheds (32' X 15') were put up this year to accommodate Yanathis and toties who were specially sent for, for service during the festival. This year only one temporary shed (48' X 15') with a partition in the middle was erected at Thandrapet road for the treatment of cholera cases in the town; and three small sheds were attached to this—one for kitchen, one for the attendants and the other for the hospital assistant. The two temporary sheds (40' X 20' each) of last year for the plague "hospital" and "suspects" were rebuilt this year and improved by effecting a partition in the middle of each shed, by the opening of two more doorways and by placing the toties inside the stone pillars for the cave ventilation as suggested by the Sanitary Commissioner for Madras. There were also two sheds (12' X 10') for relatives, two (15' X 10') for attendants, two for kitchen, one (15' X 10') for hospital assistant and four latrines. They were equipped with an ambulance staff consisting of four male and two female ward attendants, two cooks and four toties. All necessary medicines, twelve bamboo cots with coir ropes, earthen tubs, chatties, tinned mullays, bedding and clothing, &c., were also kept in readiness at the sheds. A mantapam out of the town was also selected and kept ready for any "suspects" should there be any necessity for the same. This year 44 temporary latrines were put up in different parts of the town as against 72 last year. The decrease is owing to the closure of the cattle fair and less number of pilgrims this year. One Jewish system latrine was also provided. All the tanks and public wells in the town as well as those round the hill were full owing to the heavy rain before the festival; of these tanks, seven, excluding the two reserved and watched throughout the year, were temporarily reserved for drinking purposes only and watched by the police. The other tanks were either marked as "bathing" tanks or "closed," for public use and they were also watched by the police. As usual the important bathing tank Iyenkolam in the heart of the town was barricaded with openings on two sides only and this was placed on the platform for the use of the pilgrims who were required to bathe and wash their clothes first outside and then to bathe in the tank itself. As the tanks and public wells had a larger supply of water this year than usual additional quantities of disinfectants (Pot : Permanganas, alum and chunan) were kept in readiness. I disinfect them all once, but when I was completing my second round there was some grumbling especially in the Muhammadan quarters owing to plague scare and hence the disinfection was discontinued under the orders of the District and Divisional Magistrates.	

TIRUVANNAMALAI,
6th December 1898.

i/. i/

SURE.

South Arcot district, from 18th to 27th November 1898.

Conservancy.	Epidemics.	General health.	Recommendations.	Remarks.
8	9	10	11	12
The sanitary arrangements of the town were nearly as elaborate this year as during the previous years. Each of the four wards of the town was under a certificated sanitary inspector (another arrived on 18th November 1898) with a peon, a stretcher with four bearers and sufficient number of rubbish-carts, sweepers, pickers, toties according to the importance of the ward. The total number thus engaged including the permanent staff of the Municipality was 17 rubbish-carts, 63 sweepers, 106 toties, 7 stretchers with 30 bearers, 6 peons and 10 mounted night-soil buckets (as the tin-buckets were found insufficient, two country carts with tinned receptacles were utilized for this purpose). The extra sweepers and stretcher bearers were engaged from the 14th to 28th November 1898, fifty toties were engaged from the 1st November for a month and the other party from 10th November for the same period. The sanitary staffs at the villages of Adiammalai and Keenathur were under the supervision of two road maidries. Two stretchers with eight bearers were deputed for the eight miles round the hill and one stretcher with four bearers for the railway station. A portion of the temporary sanitary staff with the sanitary inspectors is still maintained and will continue to work till the 9th instant. In addition to the above enumerated sanitary staff, a special establishment consisting of nine sanitary inspectors (with one chief whose services were dispensed with from 17th November 1898) nine peons and nine constables were entertained for a month from 1st November for the nine toll-gates to inspect any suspicious cases of fever, &c., among the incoming pilgrims and to turn back those from infected areas. Three hospital assistants were deputed this year for the festival—one to be in charge of Municipal hospital (my services having been utilized for supervising the general sanitation of the town), one deputed to the cholera shed and the other for inspection of trains. A Eurasian midwife was employed for fifteen days for the inspection of female passengers by rail. Fifty constables and four head constables were deputed this year to the sanitary staff to watch tanks, to assist the sanitary inspectors at toll-gates and to prevent nuisances.	No cases of cholera occurred throughout the festival though the same was reported to be prevailing in villages about twelve miles off. The stringent orders of the Government prohibiting the issue of tickets from infected areas, including Salem and North Arcot, to Tiruvannamalai and to two stations on either sides of it from 1st to 30th November, tended in a great measure to keep off the disease "plague." A few pilgrims who got into the town stealthily from infected areas were detected early and turned back.	Good.	I beg to suggest that the floors of the temporary sheds (plague and cholera) may be cemented. The sanitary police were withdrawn on the 30th November 1898. They may be retained for a few days more as suggested in my last year's report.	Forwarded to the Sub-Collector, South Arcot. I was present during the greater portion of the festival and I am glad to remark that all my suggestions were cordially carried out by the Collector and Sub-Collector and that no epidemic appeared during the festival although cholera was prevalent in the surrounding taluka. The necessary medical and surgical appliances, sanitary equipment and sheds with suitable accommodation were in readiness in the event of plague being imported into the town. An Eurasian midwife was engaged on this occasion to inspect all female passengers alighting from the trains and this arrangement, I learn, was appreciated by the native community. The Superintendent Physician, South Indian Railway, and his staff rendered valuable service in inspecting all male passengers arriving at the station. I agree with the apothecary that the cholera and plague sheds should be cemented and I trust that this work will be undertaken soon. The police staff engaged for sanitary duty should be retained for four or five days after the festival.

No 2539.

(Signed)

P. MUTHUSWAMI PILLAI,
Civil Apothecary.CUNDALORE,
8th December 1898.(Signed) G. D. CHALKE, M.D., C.M.,
Sg. District Medical and Sanitary Officer, South Arcot.

ORDER—No. 171 M., dated 9th February 1899.

Recorded.

2. The Government is pleased to note the testimony borne by the Collector to the good services rendered by the gentlemen referred to in paragraphs 5 to 8 of his endorsement.

(True Extract.)

AT
for Secretary to Government.

17299

To
The Public and Judicial Departments for favour
of Counter-initials.

AT
17299

To the Chairman, Municipal Council, Tiruvannamalai.

" Collector of South Arcot.

" Sanitary Board.

" Commissioner.

Editors' Table

The Public Department
Judicial Department
~~Public Works Dept. (Railway)~~
~~Revenue Dept.~~

Papers to be read in Proceedings:—

Again G.O., No. dated 189 ,

Again G.O., No. dated 189 ,

Current No. 163. h. of 1899, dated 18 Dec. 98, from the ch. h. c. Tiruvannamalai.

" " " 189 , " " "

" " " 189 , " " "

P.S.

ORDER.

No. 171 M. 9/2/99

Recorded.

2. The Government is pleased to note the testimony borne by the Collector to the good services rendered by the gentlemen referred to in paras 5 to 8 of his endorsement.

V.R.
7/2/99

AT
8299

To,

The Chairman, Municipal Council, Tiruvannamalai.

The Collector of South Arcot.

The Sanitary Board.

The Sanitary Commissioner.

Editors' Table.

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Judicial Dept.

Dec. 28/2/99

18 Dec 21 103 A

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sent to Press. 26-2-99
returned for signature
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29/2/99
NUMBER OF COPIES REQUIRED, 40
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