

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.

246

Press
Mis.

Dated

7. 5. 18

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Marine Department,
from 1st to 10th June 1859.*

No. 25. Read the following letter from J. J. FRANKLIN, Esq., Superintendent of Marine ;
to T. PYCROFT, Esq., Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated
3rd June 1859, No. 2172.

I have the honor to inform you that Lieutenant Sweny, Indian Navy, Commanding Her Majesty's Surveying Brig "Mutlah" now employed in examining the Southern part of the Pulicat Shoal, has reported that on the 28th Ultimo, three of his Officers who had been on shore on survey duty since the 25th, endeavoured to engage a Boat at or near Ennore but without success. The launch was sent in for them as far as the outer surf and the Officers tried to persuade the inhabitants of the first village North of Ennore to take them to it in a Catamaran, but as a demand of, first ten and subsequently of 20 Rupees was made for the service, the terms were not accepted. The Officers then proceeded North with the intention of trying the next village, but on their way finding a Catamaran on the beach they launched it and made three attempts to pass through the surf to the launch. Failing in these, they were about to make a fresh effort, when the natives of the first village came up and attacked them with sticks and paddles, and it is said that they were beaten to the endangerment of their lives. At any rate they are all three laid up unfit for duty in consequence.

2. Lieutenant Sweny requests that the assailants may be punished, and that to prevent, the recurrence of a similar outrage a Peon may be attached to his vessel to procure Boats, Coolies, &c., as may be required.

3. As regards punishment, I imagine it will be very difficult to trace out the delinquents and even could this be done they will of course aver that they were only protecting their property, for although the Officers can hardly be blamed for endeavouring to reach their Boat as they did, the natives have some shew of reason on their side in what they did. Being Government Officers employed in public duty, the head man of the village ought to have assisted them in procuring what was required; and I think it would be advisable that the Collector of Chingleput be directed to enquire why such was not done, and, if he is found to have connived at the attempt at extortion in the first instance and at the subsequent maltreatment, that he be in some way punished.

4. With respect to the supply of a Peon, I must explain that a survey, such as Lieutenant Sweny is now employed on, requires constant communication between the shore and the Ship and to secure this communication a Masulah Boat and Crew were with great difficulty engaged to keep in company with the vessel when she was last here. The men, however, so disliked the service and there was so much trouble in keeping them to their duty that I considered it better on this occasion to direct Lieutenant Sweny to engage such Boats as he could in the vicinity of his operations, paying for the same; and I requested the Collector of Chingleput to have all facilities rendered to him in his progress along the Coast. So long as the vessel was off Pulicat the arrangement seems to have worked well; but subsequently they failed. I would recommend therefore that the Collectors along the line of Coast to be surveyed be directed to appoint a Peon, or some one in authority, to be in attendance abreast the Ship's position, to afford assistance in the engagement of Boats and coolies when required; full payment being made at the time. It would also be of use if the head men of the villages along the Coast were warned that it would be their duty to aid in procuring Boats when called upon.

5. Lieutenant Sweny's original letter is forwarded for perusal.

From Lieutenant M. A. SWENY, Indian Navy, Commanding Her Majesty's E. I. Surveying Brig "Mutlah"; to Captain J. J. FRANKLIN, Superintendent of Marine, Madras, dated 31st May 1859.

I have the honor to bring to your notice that on Saturday last the 28th Instant, three of my Officers who had landed on survey duty the previous Wednesday, being unable to procure a Boat at or near Ennore to return on board, hoisted a flag on the beach to express their want; I accordingly sent my launch to them with instructions to the coxswain to anchor her on the outer edge of the surf.

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My Officers then asked the natives of the 1st village North of Ennore for a Catamaran to reach the launch; they however demanding the exorbitant price of first 10 and then 20 Rupees, it was not to be thought of; indeed the Officers had not the money.

Whereupon they set off Northward for another village when finding a Catamaran on the beach, my Chief Officer with his Madras servant launched her and with one paddle tried to reach the launch with the view of, if possible, bringing her into the Ennore creek. Failing however to get through the surf three times, they were about to try again, when the same natives came up and seeing that they were about to be outdone, maltreated my Officers and their servants with sticks and paddles so much so as to endanger their lives.

They are even now so bruised in consequence, that all three have to lay up, and as my only other Officer is in Hospital at Madras, my work is quite at a stand still.

To prevent the recurrence of such outrages, I would ask that a Peon may always be attached to my vessel, from the nearest district, with authority to procure Boats, Coolies, &c., for which, (as I have always most sedulously done) proper payment would be made.

In conclusion, while admitting that the catamaran should not have been taken without the natives' leave, I would not say that considering no one was at hand at the time to ask, the zeal of my Chief Officer in thus trying his utmost to return to his duty on board may surely be his excuse, and would earnestly beg that such an outrage may not be allowed to pass unpunished.

No. 26.

ORDER THEREON, 7th June 1859, No. 246.

The above letter and its enclosure will be communicated to the Magistrate of Chingleput, in view to his enquiring into the conduct of the Headman of the village, at which the outrage, brought to the notice of Government, was perpetrated.

2. To prevent a recurrence of the difficulty and delay which the want of Boats and Coolies has occasioned to the progress of the operations in which the "Muttah" is engaged, Government consider it advisable to adopt the suggestion of the Superintendent of Marine, and direct the Collectors of the Districts on this Coast to appoint a Peon, or other Officer to be in constant attendance abreast the Ship's position, and also to warn the heads of villages along the Coast, to afford assistance to the Officers of the vessel in procuring Boats and coolies. Mr. Franklin will keep the Collectors informed, as far as he can, where the Surveying vessel is likely to be from time to time.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

No. 246.

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List of 17 June

*Pis of 10th June.
Marine Dept 1859*

*From
The Superintendent of
Marine
to
The Chief Secretary
to Government
Fort Saint George*

Dated 3^d June 1859

Recd.

No 2172 No 235

*States that St. Lawrence, now em-
ployed in examining the Southern
part of the Puteat Shoal has
reported that three of his officers
who had been on shore on Survey
duty were under the circumstances
detained attached by the natives
of the village with sticks and
paddles to the endangerment of
their lives & submits sugges-
tions for the compliance with
requisitions for boats and
coolies when required by
that ship.*

With an Order.

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