

Marine (1899) Department.

G.O., No. 344 Mar

DATED 24th April 1899

28/4/99

[Despatch Abstract.]

British ships in distress.

Endorsement of the Govt of India, Finance and Commerce Dept., forwarding copy of extracts from a despatch from the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India laying down that ——— should not be refused admission into a British Harbour, commd to the Presidency Port Officer & the Chairman, Harbour Trust Board.

[100-251-98]

10/3

28/4/99

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<i>Recd.</i>	} 1899.	<i>Enclosures</i>
<i>Regd.</i>		<i>Spare copies</i>

G.O., No. 344, 24th April 1899.

APRIL.

British Ships in Distress

Endorsement of the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department, forwarding copy of extracts from a despatch from the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India laying down that — should not be refused admission into a British harbour, communicated to the Presidency Port Officer and the Chairman, Harbour Trust Board.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

MARINE DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following paper:—

Proceedings of the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department, dated Calcutta, 25th March 1899, No. 1413 S.R.

Read—the following paper:—

Extract paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 from a Despatch from Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, dated the 23rd February 1899, No. 5, Revenue.

2. The facts appear to be as follows: The S.S. *China* was wrecked in the Red Sea; she was salvaged, and her salvors proposed to bring her into Perim harbour. The Perim Coal Company, who also do salvaging business but apparently were not the salvors of the *China*, protested that the steamer, if admitted into the harbour, might cause loss to shipping and to themselves (the Perim Company) by foundering in the harbour. The Company further represented that the damages to the *China* were more serious and urgent than had been first supposed, and the risk of her sinking in Perim harbour had been greatly enhanced.

3. After consulting the Advocate-General, your Government telegraphed that the *China* could not be allowed to enter Perim harbour until her owners had entered into agreement to indemnify the Government against claims for damages which might be caused by the *China* if she became a wreck in the harbour. Subsequently, on receipt of telegraphic instructions from me, the *China* was admitted into Perim harbour, she was found to be fairly watertight, and she was berthed where she could not interfere with shipping even if she foundered.

4. It should, I consider, be recognised that in no circumstances can a British ship in distress be refused admission into a British harbour. In any future case of the kind, I request that effect may be given to this view. To afford shelter is one of the primary objects for which harbours are maintained. If in the present case the *China* had foundered outside by reason of being refused admittance into harbour, the consequences would have been in every way deplorable.

Ordered that extract paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of the despatch be forwarded to the Governments of Madras, Bengal and Burma, for information and guidance.

(Signed) F. A. ROBERTSON,
Offg. Asst. Secy. to the Govt. of India.

ORDER—No. 344, Marine, dated 24th April 1899.

Communicated to the Presidency Port Officer and the Chairman, Harbour Trust Board.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) A. W. SMART, Colonel, R.E.,
Ag. Secy. to Government.

To the Presidency Port Officer.
„ Chairman, Harbour Trust Board.

Exd T. K. Narayana Aiyangar.

Kare (1899) Department.

CURRENT No. 464

From

The Government of India
Finance & Commerce Dept.

No. 1413 S.R.

Order

Communicated to

the Presidency Port Officer Dated 25 March 1899
and the Chairman, Harbour Trust Board.

Received

Registered

Enclosures

Spare copies

SUBJECT.

British Ships in distress
Forwarding Copy of an Extract
from a despatch from the Secy of
State for India laying down that
— should not be
refused admission into a
British Harbour

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

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Extract paragraphs 2,3 and 4 from a Despatch from Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, No.5 Revenue, dated the 23rd February 1899.

Para.2. The facts appear to be as follows. The S.S."China" was wrecked in the Red Sea; she was salved, and her salvors proposed to bring her into Perim Harbour. The Perim Coal Company, who also do salving business but apparently were not the salvors of the "China", protested that the steamer, if admitted into the harbour, might cause loss to shipping and to themselves (the Perim Company) by foundering in the harbour. The Company further represented that the damages to the "China" were more serious and urgent than had been first supposed, and the risk of her sinking in Perim Harbour had been greatly enhanced.

3. After consulting the Advocate General, your Government telegraphed that the "China" could not be allowed to enter Perim Harbour until her owners had entered into agreement to indemnify the Government against claims for damages which might be caused by the "China" if she became a wreck in the harbour. Subsequently, on receipt of telegraphic instructions from me, the "China" was admitted into Perim Harbour, she was found to be fairly watertight, and she was berthed where she could not interfere with shipping even if she foundered.

4. It should, I consider, be recognised that in no circumstances can a British ship in distress be refused admission into a British harbour. In any future case of the kind, I request that effect may be given to this view. To afford shelter is one of the primary objects for which harbours are maintained. If in the present case the "China" had foundered outside by reason of being refused admittance into harbour, the consequences would have been in every way deplorable.

18.
No. 1413-S.R.

Government of India.

FINANCE and COMMERCE DEPARTMENT.

Calcutta, the 23rd March 1899.

Read-

Despatch from Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India
No. 5 Revenue, dated the 23rd February 1899.

Ordered that extract paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of the despatch
be forwarded to the Governments of Madras, Bengal and Burma for
information and guidance.

J. A. Johnston
Offg. Asstt. Secy. to the Govt. of India.

*Subs.
464/99*