Archives I—10,006—16-8 77.

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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

PW DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. 3827 (W) Press.
~~B.P. No.~~ Mis.

Dated 30. 9. 1878 ~~197~~

VA

Not to be folded or roughly handled

3827
1

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

30th September 1878, No. 3,827 W.

Buildings and Roads.
Civil Works.

Read the following paper:—

No. 322. From the District Engineer, Vizagapatam, dated 14th September 1878, No. 1,418, complaining of the action of the President of the Local Fund Board in connection with short outlay on Road Repairs in the Vizagapatam District.

No. 323. ORDER THEREON, 30th September 1878, No. 3,827 W.

THE Government having exonerated the Public Works Department from blame in the matter in question do not think it necessary to pass any further orders.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) E. A. FOORD, Colonel, R.E.,
Secretary to Govt., P.W.D.

(True Copy.)

Major, R.E.,
Under Secy. to Govt., P.W.D.

To the District Engineer, Vizagapatam.
„ Financial Department.

Encl. E. C. Shunker.
Spare Copies

BUILDINGS AND ROADS.
CIVIL WORKS.

Govt. of (1878) Madras

PUBLIC WORKS

To

THE DISTRICT ENGINEER,
VIZAGAPATAM.
&c., &c., &c.

Dated September 16th.

Rec'd

Read

Entd.

G. O., 20th September 1878, No. 3827 W.

REFERENCE.
Nos. 323 323.

By direction of the Local Fund Board
[illegible] Public Works Department, Vizagapatam
[illegible] Executive Engineer.

No. 1418

District Engineer's Office
Waltair 14th September 1878

From

3827
2

The District Engineer
Vizagapatam

To

The Chief Engineer P.W.D.
Buildings & Roads Branch
Madras

Sir,

I regret exceedingly that after mature consideration, I have to respectfully make the request, that this letter may be submitted to Government for their orders. I do so, because I think the public interests will suffer, by the continuance of a course of conduct, which the Acting Collector, Mr Goodrich, thinks proper to pursue in reference to the P.W. Department associated with him in the business of the Vizagapatam District.

2

2. In my letter No 1181 dated 24th August 1878, which related to the proposed transfer of the Trunk Road within the Ankapilly Municipal limits, from the P.W.D. to the charge of this newly created Municipality, I alluded to the same matter. Since the despatch of that letter, I have received the District Gazette, containing the Proceedings of the Local Fund Board, Vizagapatam Circle, on 28th June 1878, and I beg to annex an extract which affords a further and much more serious illustration, of the subject of my present representation.

3. The extract is as follows:-

Present

(1). H. St. A. Goodrich Esqre. ——— President

(2). M.R.R. Sri D. Narayana Gajapatiraju Garu } ——— Members.

(3). M.R.R. K. Krishnamurti Puntulu Gara - Deputy Inspector of Schools - Vizianagram Range }

A Public Work. 3827

(1). Read G.O. (P.W.D.) No 2140 dated 13th May 1878, observing that the explanation afforded by the District Engineer, in regard to the short outlay on road repairs in the Vizagapatam District, is satisfactory.

The neglect to prosecute work on the Nathavalasa Road, which might have been done all the better in the drought of the late hot weather, is most unfortunate and only excusable on the ground of want of supervising staff.

Here the extract ends.

4. It would appear, therefore, from these proceedings, that the Local Fund Board, (that is really, Mr Goodrich, for the two native gentlemen who attended the meeting would scarcely oppose his expressed wishes) consider, that they have a right to revise the decision of Government and to animadvert on

on the P.W. Department, when its Local head was expressly absolved by G.O. 13th May 1878, Nº 2140 M, from the blame which the President of the Local Fund Board had attempted to attach to it, in his letter Nº 200 dated 23d March 1878, printed in C.Pr. Financial Deptt 5th April 1878, Nº 656.

5. It is true, that the remarks of the Local Fund Board, apply in strictness, to work which was executed during the present official year, and as Mr Goodrich has thus challenged public attention to the road in course of construction between Vizianagram and Nathavalasa, and has thereby implied that the Local Fund Board, as representatives of the District, have just and weighty cause for complaint against the P.W.D. in this particular case, I hope I may be excused for troubling Govern-

ment

Government, with the whole history of the commencement and continuation of work upon the road. 3 & 4

6. Towards the end of August 1877, Mr Goodrich, officially informed me, that the distressed state of the District, obliged him to propose, that certain Public Works should be undertaken as measures of relief, and among these works, he named the construction of the Vizianagram – Nathavalasa Road. A few days later, he requested me to commence the works he had previously specified.

7. I have no hesitation in saying, that Mr Goodrich was utterly mistaken, in supposing that measures of relief were at that time called for and I have very good reason for believing that the reports of Mr Goodrichs' Assistants, will bear out the assertion which I have made, should a reference to these be considered necessary. I

beg

by no means wish to overstep the limits of my own duty, but the foregoing statement, together with others which I shall subsequently make in this letter, are perforce exacted from me, so that, I may clearly show, how utterly facts have been misrepresented in the record of the Local Fund Board, that appears in the 3rd para of this letter.

8. The complaint states, that the "neglect to prosecute work on the Nathavalasa road, × × × is × × × only excusable on the grounds of want of supervising staff" the truth being, that in this particular locality there was no want of P.W. supervising staff. What was really wanting was labor to execute the work; although the implication in the statement of the Local Fund Board is that the P.W.D. withheld employment from necessitous people, during the past Rob Season!

3-2-2)

9. Early in September 1877, I went to Vizianagram to mark out and start the construction of the Nathavalasa road. The labor I supposed would flow in, though I had some doubts on this point, owing to the fact of there then being two road repair estimates in course of execution near Vizianagram, on which fewer workpeople were obtainable than could have been wished. However, I had the word of the Collector, that work was urgently required for necessitous laborers and the road was commenced forthwith.

10. What took place upon the opening of the work, was described to me by the Range officer in charge. The whole of the six or seven hundred (or more) indigent and semi-infirm paupers, together with pensioners of a better class, who are usually (as I am informed) supported by the bounty of H.H. the Maharajah of Vizianagram, were driven on to the work; for the purpose apparently of showing the —

desperate

desperate state of the population of the Viza-
gapatam District! Mr Deckhorgan, the
Range Officer, who has more opportunities
than any other official European, of knowing
what is going on within the Maharajahs'
duftar, further told me, that the usual charity
of H.H. the Maharajah was not withheld from
these, its recipients, while they were working
or pretending to work on the road; which in
spite of anything he could do to prevent them,
they persistently quitted at irregular hours,
in order to go and draw their accustomed
rations or possibly their money doles! It
is useless to blink the fact, that the scenic
effect, which I have described, was expressly
elaborated by the manager of the Maharajahs'
Estate, P. Jaggannath Raz, because he thought
he would, thereby please the Collector of the
District. I myself, when at Vizianagram, at
the time in question, said to P. Jaggannath Raz,
that "he must not get up (as I call it) famine,

or people would be laughing to him". His
rejoinder was, that Mr Goodrich must not
be allowed to be removed from the District
just then. On this head there was an idea
current, that Mr Goodrich was about to be
transferred to another Collectorate.

11. During the month of September
1877, I believe that about Rs 1000 were paid
away to the people who were sent by P. Jaggana-
Raz to the work. Mr Goodrich, who had pro-
cured the above sum as an advance from
the Range Officer, eventually gave up making
payments by Civil Agency, after which the
work was carried on as an ordinary Public
Work and its management fell entirely
into the hands of the P.W. Officer; who because
there was little labor to be had, expended
scarcely more than Rs 1000 between October 1877
and the end of March 1878. In my adminis-
tration report for the past official year, the
following remarks, which explained this small
expenditure

expenditure, were made. "Constructing Road from" "Vizianagram to Nathavalasa Estimate Rs 30,836." "Expenditure in 1877-78 Rs 1059. This was com-" "menced as a famine relief work, though" "such relief was certainly not required." "About 1000 people came to the work in" "the first instance, but when it became" "understood that they had to work and not" "merely to receive pay, they vanished."

12. Having said so much about the mistake, which was made in commencing this road, as a Famine Relief work in 1877-78, it remains to deal with the specific statement of the Local Fund Board, that the Public Works Establishment neglected to prosecute work on the Nathavalasa Road during the appropriate season, in the drought of the hot weather. The Progress Reports, show, that the expenditure from 1st April 1878, to end of July, was close upon

(P2

* Rainfall for July 1878 — 19.5 inches
Mean rainfall of seven previous years for July — 5.2 inches

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Rs 1500; but as little or no work could have been executed during the exceptional rains of July,* the sum named really represents the value of the labor employed during the preceding hot months, April, May and June. It is thus seen, that Rs 600 on the average, were spent during each of these months and this expenditure, I do not hesitate to say, is quite satisfactory. I have had some occasions to complain of Mr Dectorgan, but in this particular case, I consider he is entitled to praise rather than to blame. The allotment of the work for the year 1878-79 is Rs 5,000 only and the outlay that has been incurred, is therefore seen to be very fair, and thoroughly disposes of the statement made by the Local Fund Board, that there was neglect in executing the work during the hot season. As regards the work that has been done, the Assistant Collector

Mr

Mr Willock having seemingly nothing else to say, reported to his superior Mr Goodrich, that he considered that "its quality was better than what was required."

13. Although Mr Goodrich, in speaking of the neglect of the P.W.D. to prosecute the construction of the Nathavalasa Road, during the past hot season, does not plainly say there was plenty of labor to be had, which the P.W.D. should have employed during the months of April, May and June, such is evidently the gravamen of his charge. I have already shown, that considered as an ordinary budgeted Public Work, very good progress was made upon the road and that no such neglect took place, as is asserted in the record of the Local Fund Board.

The question, whether famine, caused a much greater number of laborers than usual, to demand employment during the past

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past hot season, is one for Mr Goodrich rather than for me to answer. If he replies in the affirmative, as the censure he casts on the P.W.D. and his recent report to Government regarding the distress in the District, would imply; it was his duty, not mine, to take steps to provide the necessary relief. I myself do not believe, that in 1878 appreciably greater numbers of the population required work than in 1877. My reason for so thinking, is, that though I have seen some Coolies of both sexes and numbers of habitual mendicants and semi-house-ridden people in a half-starved condition, I have scarcely seen a single person of the ryot class, whose physical appearance indicated any local distress. Independently, therefore, of no relief-works having been opened by the Collector, during the past hot weather, I am of opinion, that though there was distress among the poorer urban classes, there was no greater necessity for Famine Relief

Relief for the agricultural population, in the present year, than there was during the past year. What necessity there was for commencing the Nathavalasa road as a relief work, just twelve months ago, I have shown in the 10th and 11th paras of this letter.

14. When considering, however, the fearful calamity which has been desolating Southern India, and the persistent apprehension which for some time past, has possessed Mr Goodrich, that the District under his charge, was suffering in the same way, the maurnful gravity of the words, "most unfortunate", suggests that, in penning them, he "had some monster in his thought too hideous to be shown". Vague glimpses of a catastrophe, in which starving people were done to death and over which official exigency, has cast a merciful veil, are presented to the vision of the humane and indignant reader. Such, if anything, is the purport of the Proceedings of the Local Fund Board of the Vizagapatam Circle. And yet, I venture to say, that no tittle of evidence, exists to show, that any man, woman or child, suffered inconvenience — much less starvation — from the proceedings of the P.W.D. on the Elijanagram — Nathavalasa road.

15. In recounting, at some length, the grounds on which I respectfully ask the intervention of Government on behalf of myself and my subordinates, with Mr Goodrich, my object has been to submit the plainest statement (compatible with a sufficient exposition of the facts), in order to show the recklessness and injustice of the aspersions which in this case have been made and circulated in the Local Gazette, to the public by the Head of the Vizagapatam District. In erecting such institutions as

as Local Fund Boards and Municipalities it can scarcely be supposed, that the Government intended to call into existence an authority superior to their own, or that formal judgments passed by them, should be set aside and revised by such Local Boards. I would therefore respectfully request, that the President of the Local Fund Board of the Vizagapatam Circle, be directed to expunge from their records, the extract from their Proceedings which I have quoted in para 3 of this letter.

16. In para 3 of my letter No 1181 dated 24th August 1876, I begged the favor of Government directing, that I should be furnished with a copy of the Proceedings of the meeting of the Anakapilly Municipality, at which the decision was come to, that Mr Goodrich reported

reported in his letter, No 589 dated 18th July 1876. As I do not wish it to be supposed, that this request was made in bad faith, I beg to say, that since the despatch of my letter, I have carefully gone through the Municipal sheets of the Local Gazette, of the existence of which I was unaware, when I made the request. I have failed to find any mention whatever of the subject, in any one of the eight reports of the meetings of the Anakapilly Municipality, which took place previous to the date of Mr Goodrich's letter. I have also seen the Golconda Range Officer, who is a member of the Anakapilly Municipality and who informed me, that he had heard of no discussion having taken place at any meeting on the state of "hopeless disrepair," in which the road running through the Anakapilly Municipality, was stated by this public body to have been kept by the P.W.D.,

according

according to Mr Goodrich's letter! The sole comment which I beg leave to make, on the assertion contained in the letter, is, that the assistance of the Range Officer has been asked by the Ankapilly Municipality, to frame for that body, the estimate for the repairs of this very road, which was previously in his charge, and which was so unfavorably described.

17. Although there is thus a ludicrous side, to the questions treated of in this letter, for those who may be behind the local scenes, I beg respectfully to submit for the consideration of Government, that no District Engineer, who endeavours to do his duty, can pass by without grave remonstrance, proceedings which must result in destroying the legitimate local influence of his official position, perhaps in ruining his professional reputation

1827

reputation, and almost certainly in disheartening those who are working under his orders. No one better knows our shortcomings, or is more anxious to remedy them, than myself; but the perverse and venemous detraction, which Mr Goodrich thinks fit to indulge in, in reference to the local P.W.D. is much more likely to add to our faults, than to correct them, and bids fair to destroy all harmony in the administration of the Vizagapatam District.

I have the honor to be
Sir
Your most obdt. Servant,
B. M. Wood Major R.E.
District Engineer
Vizagapatam

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1827

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Your most obdt. Servant,
B. M. Wood Major R.E.
District Engineer
Vizagapatam

G.O. No 2140 W. dt/13 May/78
Mis — 1865 W — 17 April —
G.O — 1307 — 26 May/76
C.E. 3995 - 6-9-78

Buildings & Roads.

From

The District Engineer
Vizagapatam

To

The Chief Engineer & Secy.
Buildings & Roads Branch
Madras.

No. 1418

Dated 14th September 1878.

Rec'd 21st

No. of Enclosures None.

Public Works in the Vizagapatam District

Forwards a letter for submission to Government regarding the interference of the Collector with the

Lr to Govt 21-9-78 Rec'd 2-10-78
Cir 25-9-78 Rec'd 30-9-78

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

Letter from the District Engineer, Vizagapatam,
No. 1418 dated 14th Sept. 1878.

FOR ORDERS, whether notice is to be taken in the Public Works Department of the conduct of the Local Fund Board in passing a Resolution in direct opposition to the orders of Government in this Department No 2140 dated 13th May 1878, or whether the subject is to be dealt with in the Financial Department.

I direct that this
may direct opposition
Govt to the G.O. dated
13th May 1878 and
the Collector's interference
in giving effect thereto
be brought to the notice
of the Govt. & explain
the Collector's
action.
It is highly desirable that
orders issued by Govt.
should be carried out
subject. The D.E. says the
work has since ceased

25th Sept

Ea and Lr
Secy to Govt Mad

FOR ORDERS.

No 3827

Public Works Department.

38 27 13

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

UNDER date the 30 Sept 78

READ ~~the following:~~ letter from the District Engineer, Vizagapatam, No 1416 dated 14th Sept 1878 complaining of the action of the President of the Local Fund Board in connection with short outlay on Road Repairs in the Vizagapatam District.

The Government having exonerated the Public Works Department from blame in the matter in question do not think it necessary to pass any further orders.

GAT 30/9

To the Secy to Govt Vizagapatam Dist
Fmil - Dept. No 17
PA

Dept 9-10-78

1054 9

Govt. of [1878] Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS

Dated

Issued

Read. Encl.

G. O. 30th Sept. 1878. No. 3827

Nos. 3222 & 23

The inReference of the Local Fund Board with the D.D Vizagapatam intimating that no further steps remain to be taken on the letter from the Engineer regarding the improvements

Intimating that no further orders are necessary on —