Archives I—10,006—16-8-77.

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AMIL NADU ARCHIVES

VERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

PW DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. / B.P. No.	3197-3198	Press. / Mis.
Dated	31. 12. 1881	19 .

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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

31st December 1881, No. 3197 W.

Buildings and Roads.
Civil Works.

Read the following paper:—

No. 101. From Major W. G. CUMMING, R.E., Officiating Assistant Secretary to the Government of India, Public Works Department, (Civil Works—Miscellaneous,) to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, Public Works Department, dated Fort William, 30th November 1881, Nos. 381—94 M.

THE Government of India having decided that it shall be the duty of the Public Works Department, acting under the orders of Local Governments and Administrations, to select works suitable for famine relief purposes, and to keep lists of works ready to be put in hand without delay on emergency, I am directed to request that steps may be taken, with as little delay as possible, towards preparation of the lists and investigation of the projects selected. The list of works should not be limited to tracts where famines have occurred, or are probable, but should cover all districts under each administration.

2. These lists should include a maximum scale of works proportioned to the probable greatest area and intensity of famine in each province, and should show the numbers and percentage of the population for whom employment could be provided for the space of one year.

3. In connection with this subject, I am to invite attention to paragraph 9 of the draft Famine Code which was circulated for consideration with the Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department, letter No. 163—79, dated 18th November 1880.

No. 102. ORDER THEREON, 31st December 1881, No. 3197 W.

ORDERED that the following reply be sent:—

(Here enter No. 3198 W., dated 31st December 1881.)

(True Extract.)

Lieut.-Col., R.E.,
Ag. Under Secy. to Govt., P.W.D.

Fxd. S. T. Austin.
Spare Copies

BUILDINGS AND ROADS.
CIVIL WORKS.

Govt. of (1881) Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

Dated December, 31st.

Issued.

Read. Encl.

G.O., 31st December 1881, No. 3197 W.

DECEMBER.

Nos. 101-102.

Famine Relief Works.—Regarding sel
tion of —.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

Buildings and Roads.
Civil Works.

No. 3198 W.

No. 103.

FROM

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS,
Public Works Department,

To

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
Public Works Department.

SIR,—With reference to the request preferred in your letter, Nos. 331—94 M of the 30th November 1881, that early steps might be taken for the preparation of the lists and investigation of the projects suitable for affording relief during famine for all the districts of this Presidency, I am desired by the Right Honorable the Governor in Council to convey his assurance that his most earnest attention has been, and will be given to this subject.

2. I am at the same time to state that it is the conviction of this Government that no such scheme of works is capable of being devised in what may be called the famine zone of this Presidency, as could even approximately meet the requirements of the case in the event of such a famine recurring as that of 1876-78.

3. The true bearings of the problem will be best seen from the following figures, taken from the official review of that calamity issued by this Government early in the current year.

4. The numbers thrown on the relief works when the famine was at its worst were as follows in the districts named :—

District.	Population as per Census of		Average daily numbers on Relief Works.	
	1871.	1881.	Worst Month.	Daily numbers on Works.
Nellore	1,376,811	1,220,385	January 1877.	55,512
Cuddapah	1,351,194	1,120,118	„ „	194,425
Bellary	1,668,006	1,339,763	„ „	360,597
Kurnool..	959,640	711,557	„ „	298,568
Chingleput	938,184	955,354	July „	29,044
North Arcot	2,015,278	1,817,561	September „	70,485
Madura	2,266,615	2,167,381	August „	24,606
Coimbatore	1,763,274	1,658,567	September „	30,303
Salem	1,966,995	1,599,425	May „	55,824

5. An analysis of the work then executed (see Appendix Q of the Review of the Madras Famine of 1876-78) has made it only too clear to this Government that out of a total outlay on works of Rs. 357,76,401, no less than Rs. 223,57,749 was expended on wholly infructuous work : the greater share of this falling to the districts above named.

6. Although there can be no question as to the great value, and indeed absolute necessity, for preparing as early as possible a scheme of works of the character contemplated by the Government of India, this Government cannot, I am desired to say, conceal from themselves the impossibility of devising useful schemes of anything like sufficient magnitude to afford employment to the multitudes which may be thrown on their hands, if such a calamity as the late famine were to recur.

7. With this office letter No. 1697 W., dated 9th July 1881, submitting a scheme (since then sanctioned) for the normal establishment of this department, a list of projects (Appendix D), most of them being of a "Protective" character, was sent up, and the requisite machinery provided for framing the estimates.

8. There are eighteen projects in this programme, estimated to cost approximately 425 lakhs in the aggregate, but of the works enumerated therein only one really large work, and two small ones, all three of doubtful value, viz., the Bhavani, Hindupur and Roddam reservoirs, fall within the limits of the districts which suffered most in the last famine.

9. The establishment of the four project divisions specially charged with the preparation of the above-mentioned eighteen projects might, it is thought, become available for the preparation of projects in other portions of the Presidency, in two or at most three years; but as some of the estimates themselves will very probably ere that time have been sanctioned, most of the members of the establishment so employed will be required for their execution. It is unlikely, therefore, in the opinion of this Government, that many, if indeed any, of the officers and subordinates now engaged specially on these four project divisions can be counted on for framing estimates for the works suitable for famine relief in other districts. From the evidence, moreover, now before this Government, it is clear that if the preparation of the programme of works outside the four project divisions be thrown entirely on the existing working staff of the department, it may be delayed indefinitely from the want of hands, in spite of the most anxious desire on the part of this Government to push it on.

10. The Right Honorable the Governor in Council has already, I am to observe, instituted inquiries as to the feasibility of establishing, throughout the famine zone, such steam tramways or light railways as may facilitate the distribution of food, when as in the last calamity the cattle have died in large numbers from the absence of fodder and water, but the requisite information is at present wanting.

11. Works of this character cannot be placed in the category of those intended for relief during famine, as to be of value they should as a rule be ready and in working order before the necessity for their employment arises, and even if they were made during famine, from the fact that a large portion of the materials would have to come from England, there would be but little employment for laborers on the spot.

12. Were the investigations connected with works of this class, which are purely "Protective" in character, combined with those needed for an exhaustive inquiry as to the schemes which can be brought forward for relief during famine, especially within the famine zone, the fullest employment would be found for a special staff of officers and surveyors during the next three or four years, and I am now therefore to inquire whether, with this object, the Government of India would be disposed to receive proposals for the entertainment of an adequate establishment.

13. The Government are unwilling to close this communication on a subject of such importance, in connection with famine relief, without adding a word in regard to petty works, which though unsuited for entry in a programme, such as that contemplated by the Government of India, might at first sight be thought to afford a very sensible amount of relief during famine.

14. In addition to the small works in digging out ponds, clearing and sinking wells, making village roads, levelling old forts, &c., there are as is well known all over Southern India innumerable tanks, the raising of the earthen bunds of which would furnish work of an undoubtedly useful character.

15. Some of the works of this description may possibly find their way into the regular scheme of relief works, but it may at once be said that to estimate for the vast majority of these in advance would be wholly impossible, though lists may and should be kept of any that can be foreseen.

16. If supervision were available, and *carte blanche* given to repair every village tank in a famine, no doubt a large amount of work could be found in the aggregate, and great good effected; but to ensure the attainment of the object in view, viz., the *bonâ fide* employment of the labor in such manner as to afford relief from distress, and the proper execution of the work with the comparatively small amount of supervising agency which in all probability will be available, is it is to be feared impossible.

17. With lists of such minor works prepared and constantly revised, Collectors may through such reliable native agency as they may have at command be enabled to tide the people over a scarcity or afford relief during the early portion of a severe famine, but this kind of work cannot be relied on as sufficient or suitable in a famine on any thing like the same scale as that which lately visited this Presidency.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed) R. H. SANKEY, Colonel, R.E.,
Secretary to Govt., P.W.D.

Fort St. George,
31st December 1881.

Exd. S. T. Austin.
Spare Copies

BUILDINGS AND ROADS.
CIVIL WORKS.

Govt. of {1881} Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

THE SECRETARY TO THE
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

dated December, 31st.

ived

Encl.

31st December 1881, No. 3198 W.

DECEMBER.

No. 103.

PROJECTS SUITABLE FOR FAMINE RELIEF PURPOSES IN THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY.—Regarding.

S Rly 9.

This is the Final form copy of text & tables now be found in the Pf I

30/12/81

For orders

The G of I in the annexed letter No 381-24 the 1/30 ultimo calls for the selection of routes suitable for famine relief in every district where previously afflicted by famine or not

This is the first practical step taken towards placing the system of relief advocated by the Famine Commission on a proper basis, but nothing is said as to the character of the works — It is also absolutely necessary that the agency and establishment to prepare the needful projects

On both points my conviction is that any

Circ 10, 12, 19, & 13 [illegible]

Lenins Question will arise

In this Precidency alone the late famine was certainly in its early stages, underrated as regards the detection and execution of works on the principle laid down by the Govt. / Irish (See annexed figured Statements) but on analysing the work then executed as tabulated at the end of the "Review" lately issued by Govt., it is less a Famine than 22½ Labels of Reports was expended on acknowledged injunctions or useless work — and it can scarcely be doubted that a similar review of the works carried out in Bombay and State more so in

provision of useful Works for Relief purposes. In the Famine Warning as that of 1876-78. but that do with drawn attention to the largest Schemes practicable. admitting that it must portable entail an application for Special agency to investigate the projects & plans & estimate the designs & their cost.

I am also inclined to express doubt

Western Districts of Gujarat could possibly be made available for Relief of Distress in the Eastern Districts of Gujarat & Kathiawar & any similar calamity. In Bombay Proper Deccan & Southern Districts Famines are of frequent occurrence & of greater intensity & extent than in Gujarat & Kathiawar & the Famine Funds provided for these Districts should properly be expended in them. Should any serious calamity occur in Gujarat, but I fear

the Land Revenue would yield still more pronounced results

Of utter waste and Extravagance is to be avoided in the management of future famines it would seem to be pre-eminently essential to define before hand but those useful works, which, did the finances admit, would be executed in ordinary years by the annual assignments, should be undertaken

But here a difficulty of the first magnitude at once presents itself in the fact that within the Zone in this Presidency most liable to famine (and if indeed any large work of a really remunerative or useful Character can be projected — and little

that although funds
under do exist in
the shape of various
tanks funds are
are quite too small in
the aggregate to furnish
occupation for the
hundreds of thousands
requiring relief viz.
360,000 in Ballarat
298,000 in Bendigo
(See statistics of last
famine)

Where suitable works
are practicable of re-
production chiefly until
the famine Zone have ceased
would be no further
difficulty in meeting
the demand of the
P.W.I. from that pro-
duced by the strength
of Establishment

To prepare lists of
works needs the pre-
liminary steps of
planning the project
& Estimate. Sometimes

it is a Irrigation
Reticulation & Drainage
that is required
Mainly a simple
limited Extent.

Meanwhile Survey
Lines can be run
& pegged to the purpose
of the Labourers in
Famine Zone ?

Where in our
Q. Of any of Famine Project Lists
certain Projects Lists
the Premiers of N.S. Wales
at Conference resolved
for certain specific
large works (chiefly
for the Benefit of
Main cases beyond
Famine Zone ? Is Rus
These are completed

Then
that attention be
earnest & other labourers
out Slow to
Great Public.

In Ch. Engr C.O. is
licitous
General Superintendent
Supplies for Bath
certain Districts
Possibility of finding
the necessary Quantity
of suitable work
Public buildings
Railway Bridges &c
made or acc. ?

Major Scratton Works
Eng. Bank Explains all
over the Country. Best
the organisation of
Relief work on these
Explains as a Widely
Extended area of
present almost
in the favorable difficulties

and something the same
in each individual
case, a long and tedious
process even under
much larger Powers
of Public Establishment
than we have at
present. It may take
he years before such
a programme could
be complete, though
year after year it
would grow in value

As will be observed
from the foregoing
first the arrangements in
this direction have been
new some time
on foot, and when our
new Project-Division
have completed the
several tasks assigned
to them the Government
will be in possession
of Schemes appertaining
some 425 Labels in
entity, but for work

in great measure outside the limits of what may be called the famine zone

As regards the disposal of the present communication perhaps it will suffice simply to "Record" it, as the whole subject embraced by it will in time be brought under notice by the Famine Code Committee

[initials illegible]

9/12/81

Meanwhile [illegible] from [illegible] village tank in a famine [illegible] at State cost for relief [illegible] purposes in a famine [illegible] cost could be [illegible] in the aggregate [illegible] capable of being effected. [illegible] the extent of supervision needed [illegible] of the object in view [illegible] the bona fide employment of the labour in such manner as [illegible] relief [illegible] of the work.

[illegible] be [illegible] but [illegible] project the largest [illegible] complete scheme of [illegible] [illegible] adoption. [illegible] but [illegible] of the idea that [illegible] with [illegible] adequate relief [illegible] in this form for the [illegible] may [illegible]

[initials illegible]

Co

Col Sankey

I think we should reply in the sense of Mr Hudleston's minute emphasizing our agreement with & desire to assist the Govt of India but pointing out the peculiar difficulties of the Presidency

By the way would it not be convenient to write minutes on only one side of the paper. We are badly served by the Govt Stationer who can't make & India a paper as that which contains Mr Hudleston's & Col Sankey's remarks is as hard to decipher as a palimpsest.

MGD (?)

Dec 14/81

W (?) 14/12

W Dept.

Note "for Orders"

The Government of India in the annexed letter No 381-94 M of 30th ultimo call for the selection of works suitable for famine relief in every district whether previously afflicted by famine or not.

This is the first practical step taken towards placing the system of relief advocated by the Famine Commission on a proper basis, but nothing is said as to the character of the works. It is also apparently accepted that the agency now at disposal will suffice to prepare all

the needful project.

On both points my Convic-
-tion is that many serious
questions will arise.

In this Presidency where
the late famine was certainly
in its latter stages Con-
-ducted as regards the
selection and Execution of
works on the principles
laid down by the Govt
of India, I find (see
annexed figured statements)
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work then Executed as
tabulated at the end
of the "Review" lately
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review of the work carried
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more so in the last Bengal
famine would yield still
more pronounced results.

If utter waste and
Extravagance is to be avoided
in the management of
future famines it would
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essential to define beforehand that none but
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the finances admit, would
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But here a difficulty
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the fact that within
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and that although small
works do exist in the
shape of raising tank
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to furnish occupation for
the hundreds of thousands
requiring relief viz. to
360,000 in Bellary
398,000 in Kurnool
(see Statistics of last
famine)

Where suitable works
are capable of preparation

chiefly outside the famine
zone there need be no
further difficulty in
meeting the demands of
the Govt of India than
that presented by the
strength of Establishment.

To prepare list of
works needs the preliminary
steps of framing the
project and Estimate,
scrutinizing and sanctioning
the sum in each individual
case, a long and tedious
process even with a
much larger and more
efficient Establishment
than we have at present
It may thus be years
before such a programme

would be complete, though
year after year it would
grow in value.

As will be observed
from the papers herewith
put up arrangements in
this direction have here
been now some time on
foot, and when our 4
new Project Divisions
have completed the several
tasks assigned to them
the Government will be
in possession of schemes
aggregating some 425
Lakhs in outlay, but
for work in great measure
outside the limits of
what may be called
the famine Zone.

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of the present Communication
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embraced by it will very
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notice by the Famine
Code Committee.

(Init.) R. H. S.

9/12/89

Note by the Honble W.
Audleston.

14

I really think that
while assuring Govt. of India
that our best attention
has been and will be
given to the subject of
their letter, we should most
plainly state our conviction
that no such scheme of
works is capable of being
devised in what we may
call the Famine Zone
of this Presidency as would
even approximately meet
the requirement of the
case as to the provision
of useful work for
Relief

Relief purposes, in the event of such a famine recurring as that of 1876-78; but that we will do our utmost to devise the largest scheme practicable - adding that it must probably entail an application for special agency to investigate the projects and plans and estimates, the designs and their cost.

I am also inclined to express doubt whether skilled agency could possibly be made available for superintending effectively the execution of such extended schemes of works as may be devised although much of it may be of a very simple character.

No doubt every possible effort should be made to ensure as far as possible that in the event of a future serious famine the expenditure of State funds for Relief purposes shall not be of permanent advantage to the country, but I fear it is altogether a delusion to suppose that this can be attained beyond a comparatively limited extent.

Meanwhile what is being done or can be done to expedite the preparation of these schemes in the Famine Districts?

We have in our W.D. reorganization provided certain Project Divisions the members of which will work up and complete designs for certain specified large works (comparatively few in number and in many cases beyond the Famine Zone) and when these are completed their attention would be turned to other schemes but when will this be practicable?

The Chief Engineers' Circular Order is eliciting information on the general question but the replies put up do not indicate the possibility of finding the necessary quantity of useful work although much addition may doubtless be made on account of minor scattered works e.g. Tank repairs all over the Country but the organization of Relief work on these repairs over a widely Extended area would present almost insuperable difficulty

if carte blanche were given to repair every village tank in a famine district at state cost for relief purposes in a famine year no doubt a large amount of work could be found in the aggregate and immense good would be capable of being effected but imagine the extent of supervision needed to ensure the attainment of the object in view viz the bonafide employment of the labor in such manner as to ensure its relief from distress and the execution of the work.

Of course we must do the best we can, we must project the largest and most complete scheme of work we can for future adoption, but we must divest our minds of the idea that it will be practicable to provide adequate relief in this form for the numbers who may possibly need it.

(Init) W.A.

Note by the Rt. Honble
the Governor.

18

Col: Sankey,

I think we should reply
in the sense of Mr. Anderton's
Minute emphasizing our
agreement with and desire
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By the way could it
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(Init.) W.G.D.
Dec/14/84

Fair copies of
notes by Secretary
& Govt — and by
Consultg Engr

No.

Government of Madras. 19

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

To The Secy. to the Govt. of India
P.W.D.

188

Sir,

With reference to the
despatch proposal in
your Letter No. 381-7 dtd
of the 30th November
1881 that early steps
may be taken for the
preparation of the
list and investigation
of the projects suitable
for affording relief
during famine for
all the Districts

of this Presidency I am desired by the Right Honourable the Governor in Council to convey his assurance that the best attention has been, and will be given, to this subject.

his most earnest

2. I am at the same time to state distinctly that it is the conviction of this Govt that no such scheme of works is capable of being devised in what may be called the Famine Zone of this Presidency as would even approximately meet the requirements of the case as to the provision of useful work

work for relief purposes in the event of such a famine occurring as that of 1876-78.

3. The true bearings of the problem will be best gathered even from the following figures taken from the official Report of that calamity issued by this Govt early in the current year.

Blue Book Review

4. At the period of greatest intensity the numbers thrown on our relief works were as follows in the Districts named.

when Famine was at its worst

District

District	Census 1871	Census 1881	Average daily number on Relief Works — Worst month	Average daily number on Works
Nellore	1,376,811	1,220,385	Jany: 1877	55,513
Cuddapah	1,351,194	1,120,118	Ditto	194,425
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Salem	1,966,995	1,599,425	May —	55,824

5- An analysis of the work then executed (see appendix D of the Review of the Madras Famine of 1876-78) has shewn that out of a total outlay of Rs. -pees 357,76,401 no -lees than Rs 223,57,749 was expended on

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21

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Estimated cost

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viz the Bhadra reservoir
the Handinpur reservoir & the Roddam
reservoirs

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much on 18 Projects

Secretary of State, most of the members so employed will be required for their execution. It is unlikely therefore in the opinion of this Govt, that many if indeed any of the officers and subordinates now engaged especially on these 4 Projects can be counted on for framing estimates for the work & suitable for Famine Relief in other Districts.

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category of those
intended for relief
during famine as
to be of value they
should as a rule
be ready and in
working order

before the necessity for these employments arises, and as from consisting chiefly of new work the execution would not afford relief to large numbers of work people

12- Hence the investigation would be confined to the question of how far the Public Works of this class, which are purely "Protective" in character, combined with those needed for an exhaustive enquiry as to the schemes which can be brought forward for Relief - especially

in the famine districts the full employment would not be found for a special staff of officers and Surveyors for the next three or four years, and I am now therefore to enquire whether with this object the Govt of India would be disposed to receive proposals for the establishment of not less than the following strength-

6

6 Executive Engineers
6 Assistant - Do -
12 Superintendents generally of the Sub Engineer grades to act as Assistant Engineers
54 Surveyors -

13- The Govt are undesirous of closing this communication on a subject of such importance in connection with famine relief without adding a word in regard to petty works which though unsanctioned for a scheme such as

unwilling to do

that contemplates keeping the Govt of India might at first sight be thought to afford very sensible amount of relief during famine

14- In addition to the small works in digging out ponds, sinking wells making village roads burning old fashioned structures are as well known all over Southern India innumerable tanks the raising of the earthen bunds

2b

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as to ensure relief
from distress, and

the proper execution
of the work with the
comparatively small
amount of super-
-vising agency which
is all probability
will be available
pressed so I am to say
in the opinion of
the Executive
-tive difficulty and
a little loss to the relief
must proceed than safety
character of the work
be limited.

17 - With lists of such
works prepared and
carefully revised
Collectors may through
such reliable sources

agency as may have
at command be
enabled to tide the
people over a scarcity
or afford relief during
the early portion of
a severe famine but
neither the work nor
the supervision
of agency needed for
the latter admits
of this kind of work
being relied on as
sufficient or available
to any extent
in famine or the scale of
that which Lachlan made
per Presidency

27.12.74

Canara-6.

Nos. 381—94 M.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

CIVIL WORKS.

Miscellaneous.

To

THE GOVERNMENTS OF MADRAS, BOMBAY, BENGAL, NORTH WESTERN PROVINCES AND OUDH, AND THE PUNJAB, PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

THE CHIEF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CENTRAL PROVINCES, BRITISH BURMA, ASSAM AND COORG.

THE RESIDENT AT HYDERABAD.

THE AGENTS TO THE GOVERNOR GENERAL FOR CENTRAL INDIA, RAJPUTANA AND BILUCHISTAN.

THE ACCOUNTANT GENERAL, PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

Fort William, November 30, 1881.

SIR,

The Government of India having decided that it shall be the duty of the Public Works Department, acting under the orders of Local Governments and Administrations, to select works suitable for famine relief purposes, and to keep lists of works ready to be put in hand without delay on emergency, I am directed to request that steps may be taken, with as little delay as possible, towards preparation of the lists and investigation of the projects selected. The list of works should not be limited to tracts where famines have occurred, or are probable, but should cover all districts under each administration.

2. These lists should include a maximum scale of works proportioned to the probable greatest area and intensity of famine in each province, and should show the numbers and percentage of the population for whom employment could be provided for the space of one year.

3. In connection with this subject, I am to invite attention to para. 9 of the draft Famine Code which was circulated for consideration with the Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department, letter No. 163—79, dated 18th November 1880.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

Major, R. E.,

Offg. Asstt. Secy. to the Govt. of India.

No. 381 R.

To, The Secretary to the Govt. of Madras
Public Works Deptt.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

CIVIL WORKS.

Miscellaneous.

To

Nos. 381—94 M.

Dated November 30, 1881.

Received

Draft Famine Coll.
G.O. 723 W 9th May 0.
" 1292 W 20.5.0
C.G. No 98 - 23.5.0
G.O. 1792 - 9.7.0
" 1794 - 14.7.0
G.O. No 1188-1, 1873 13.0.0
CG 221 - 2.7.0.

Selection of works suitable for famine relief purposes.

No. 446, P. W. D. Press—30-11-81—200.

3197 W

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

UNDER date the 31 December 81

Read the following :—

From the Govt. of India H.S. No 381-94 M dt 30 Nov 81.

Ordered that the following reply be sent.

H.S. No 97

31/12/81

No 3198 W of 31 March/94

Govt. of Madras

Public Works Department

To The Secy to the Govt. of India

P W D

31st 29th December 1894

Sir

With reference to the request preferred in your letter No 381–94 dt of the 30th Nov. 1894 that early steps might be taken for the preparation after visit and investigation of the projects suitable for affording relief during famine for all the districts of this Presidency I am desired by the Right Honble the Governor in Council

S A W

Issue as soon as possible

30/12 Secy Addl

to convey his assurance that his most earnest attention has been and will be given to this Subject.

2 I am at the same time to state that it is the conviction of this Govt. that no such scheme of works is capable of being devised in what may be called the famine Zone of this Presidency, as could even approximately meet the requirements of the case in the event of such a famine occurring as that of 1876—78

3 - The true bearings of the problem will be best seen from the following figures taken from the Official Review of that Calamity

issued by this Govt. early in the current year

4 - The numbers known as the relief works when the famine was at its worst were as follows in the districts named

District	Population as per Census of		Average daily number on Relief works	
	1871	1881	Worst month	Daily value on works
Vellore	1,376,511	1,220,315	Jan.y 1877	55,512
Salem	1,351,194	1,120,118	- do -	194,425
Bellary	1,665,006	1,339,763	- do -	360,597
Cuddapah	959,640	711,557	- do -	298,568
Chingleput	938,184	955,359	July - do	29,044
North Arcot	2,015,278	1,817,561	September - do.	70,485
Madura	2,266,615	2,167,381	August - do.	24,606
Coimbatore	1,763,274	1,658,567	September - do.	30,308
Tanjore	1,966,895	1,599,625	May - do.	55,824

5 - An analysis of the work then executed (See Appendix Q of the Review of the

Madras Famine of
1876-78) has made
it only too clear to the
Govt. that out of a
total outlay on works
of Rs 35,76,401 no less
than Rs 223,57,749
was expended on wholly
unproductive work; the
greater share of this
falling to the districts
above named

6 - Although there
can be no question as
to the great value and
indeed absolute necessity
for preparing as early
as possible, a scheme of
works of the character
contemplated by the
Govt. of India, this Govt cannot
I am desired to say
conceal from themselves
the impracticability of
devising useful schemes
of any kind like Suffi-
-cient magnitude
to afford employment

to the multitudes
which may be thrown
on their hands, if such
a calamity as the late
famine were to recur

7 - With this Office
letter No 1697 W dated
9th July 1881 submitting
a Scheme (since then
sanctioned) for the second
Establishment of this Dept
a list of Projects (Appen-
-dix D) most of them
being of a "Protective"
Character, was sent up
and the requisite
machinery provided
for framing the Estima-
-tes

8 - There are 18 Pro-
-jects in this programme
Estimated to cost Appro-
-ximately 425 Lakhs
in the aggregate, but of
the works enumerated
therein only one really
large work, and two

small ones, all three of doubtful value except the Bowani, Hindupoor and Kodlay reservoirs, all within the limits of the districts which suffered most in the last famine.

9- The Establishment of the 4 Projet Divisions specially charged with the preparation of the above mentioned 18 Projets might it is thought become available for the preparation of projects in other portions of the Presidency in two or at most three years. but as some of these Estimates themselves will probably not be sanctioned most of the members of the Establishment so employed will be required for their Execution - It is unlikely therefore in the opinion of this Govt that many if indeed any of the Officers and Subordinates now engaged specially on these 4 Projet Surveys can be spared on for framing estimates by the ends available for Famine Relief in other districts - From the evidence moreover now before this Govt it is clear that if the preparation of the programmes for the 4 Projet Divisions be thrown entirely on the existing working Staff of the Dept it may be delayed indefinitely from the want of hands, in spite of the most anxious desire on the part of this Govt to push it on

16
34

10. The Rt. Hon'ble the Govt. in Council has already I am to observe instituted enquiries as to the feasibility of establishing throughout the Famine Zone such steam tramways or light railways as may facilitate the distribution of food when as in the last Calamity the Cattle have died in large numbers from the absence of fodder and water but the requisite information at present wanting

11 – Works of this Character cannot be placed in the category of those intended for relief during famine as to be of value they should as a rule be ready and in working order before the necessity for this employment

arises, and even if they were ready during famine, from the fact that a large portion of the materials would have to be sent from England, there would be but little employment for labourers on the spot

12. Were the investigations connected with works of this class which are purely "Protective" in character combined with those needed for an exhaustive enquiry as to the Schemes which can be brought forward for Relief during Famine, especially within the Famine Zone, the fullest employment would be found for a Special Staff of Officers and Surveyors during the next three or four years, and

I am now therefore to enquire whether with this object the Govt. of India would be disposed to receive proposals for the entertainment of an adequate Establishment

13 - The Govt are unwilling to close this Communication on a subject of such importance, in connection with Famine relief, without adding a word in regard to petty works which though unrecited for entry in a programme such as that contemplated by the Govt. of India, might at first sight be tempted to afford a very desirable amount of relief during Famine

14 - In addition

18 ap

to the small works in clearing out tanks, clearing and sinking wells, making village roads, levelling old forts &c. there are as is well known all over Southern India, innumerable tanks the raising of the earthen bunds of which would furnish work of an undoubtedly useful character

15 - Some of the works of this description may possibly find their way into the regular Scheme of Relief works, but it may at once be said that to estimate for the vast majority of these in advance would be wholly impossible, though they may and should be

kept - if any that can be foreseen

16. If Supervision were available, and "Carte blanche" given to repair every village tank in a famine we doubt a large amount of work could be found in the aggregate and real good effected; but to ensure the attainment of the object in view viz: the "bona fide" employment of the labor in such manner as to afford relief from distress, and the proper execution of the work with the comparatively small amount of Supervising Agency which in all probability will be available, is it is to

89 be feared impossible

37 17. With lists of such minor works prepared and constantly revised. Collectors may through such reliable native agency as they may have at Command be enabled to tide the people over a Scarcity or afford relief during the early portion of a severe famine, but this kind of work cannot be relied on as sufficient or suitable in a famine as any thing like the same scale as that which lately visited this Presidency

29.12.81 Atto

Rosu 2/1/82

Govt. of (1882) Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

To

Dated

Issued

Rect. Encl.

G. O. 31st Dec.r 188[illegible] No. 3197 W.
3198 W.

Nos. 101-102
103.

Famine Relief works

Regarding selection
of ——.

——

Projects suitable for
Famine Relief purposes
in the Bijapur Collectorate
Regarding ——.