Public Works (1897) Department.

G.O., No. 1694 W

DATED 25 June 1897

[Despatch Abstract.]

Roads of the Bhadrachalam Taluk: Proc:

Revenue Dept Recording Board's Proc:
Submitting a letter from the Collector of
Godavari reporting on the condition of
the - and the measures to be taken for
their relief, Comm^d to Sr. I Cuk.

[P.W. 25. 5,000—30-11-06.]

Indexed.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

Public works (1897) department

Current No: 5778

Government (1897) of Madras.

REVENUE.

No. 1086 W dy 27-4-97
952 W dy 3-4-97
834/A W dy 22-3-97
569 W dy 20-2-97

Recd. 14. 6. } 1897.
Regd. 14. 6 }

Enclosures

Spare copies 16.

G.O., No. 398, 27th May 1897.

No. 1694 S 3
25-6-97

Communicated to

MAY.

the Inspector I Circle

Cn copy
17/6/97.

S.S. I Circle
v.no 510
24/6/97

Koyas of the Bhadrachalam Taluk.

Recording Board's Proceedings submitting for the information of Government a letter from the Collector of Gódávari reporting on the condition of the — and the measures to be taken for their relief.

O.L.S. 214
R19/6

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Read—the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture), dated 12th May 1897, No. 362 :—

Read—the following letter from V. A. BRODIE, Esq., C.S., Collector of Gódávari, to the Famine Commissioner, dated Dummagudem, 1st May 1897, Ex. No. A-Ver. :—

I have the honour to report for your information that I arrived here late at night the day before yesterday and from enquiries I have made so far am afraid we must do something, and that promptly, for the relief of distress; for the Assistant Engineer, Public Works Department, informs me that the Koyas have lately come to him in increasing numbers for work and to some extent supports the statement of the Revd. J. Cain that the people are suffering. He, however, asserts that the poorer Malas and Madigas are suffering more severely than the Koyas.

2. The great difficulty is to shroff the applicants for relief and distinguish the deserving from the undeserving, for Mr. Cain's generous charity has made every one hopeful of getting something by asking for it. In consequence the Koyas are coming to me by villages headed by their headmen, every individual alleging he or she has nothing to eat and wanting charity. Curiously enough I have not yet seen an emaciated Koya and when asked whether they are prepared to work for support there is, by no means, great enthusiasm or unanimity shown as whilst some say they are ready to work others say they have their podus to attend to, &c. The Assistant Engineer gives it as his opinion that their main object is to get gratuitous relief and that the Koyas will not work at all regularly on famine wages if they ever come to work whilst the Malas and Madigas will.

3. Village relief might be the best course but how is it to be distributed when every villager from the headman downwards claims to be entitled to it. It would be easy if one could get half a dozen villagers to admit they were not in want of assistance and form them into a committee to advise upon the claims of others, but that is out of the question, nor can one entertain the claims of the old and infirm without inquiry, for all come forward alike whether they have persons to support them or not and whether those supporting them are well-to-do or not.

4. As against Mr. Cain and the Assistant Engineer, the leading people of Dummagudem, the superior proprietor's agent (Naib) and the Curnam all assure me first that the Koyas are not half so badly off as they say, and next that if they would work they could all earn something as some of them are doing by bringing firewood and thatching grass for sale, &c.

5. In some cases I have caught the headmen telling the most glaring falsehood, *e.g.*, that they have no cattle and no bandies in their villages, whilst the Revenue Inspector's report shows their villages possess both. I have now ordered the Tahsildar and my clerk to make a house-to-house inquisitorial census of some villages and report the number of inmates, the cattle and bandies they possess and the amount of food they have in store and will see the result and check it myself in one or two instances. At the same time they are not above concealing their stores of cholam and ippa flowers and whilst the Tahsildar and Revenue Inspector deny that in this quarter, where their podus are more or less level lands, they lost their crop altogether, they with one voice assert they did not get a single grain and in much the same way they allege they got no ippa flowers almost, though the abkári contractor informs me that he has purchased 30 putties this year of dried flowers and the fruit on the trees shows there were some flowers.

6. One village having complained to me that they had absolutely nothing to go on with and must have some food, I made them a present of Rs. 2 and sent my duffadar along with them to the bazaar to see the amount invested in cholam. He reports that he got them 27 seers at $13\frac{1}{2}$ seers per rupee, but also reports that they invested a further Rs. 2 which they had with them at the same rate !!

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8. The silt clearance of the canal can hardly be called a relief-work for it is within 3 or 4 miles of their villages and the work is easy, but the relief-work which Mr. Hughes attempted and which was sanctioned will never do for them as it begins at Latchigudem, which is over 10 miles from here, and water has to be brought there from a distance of several miles. Moreover, the area of greatest distress according to Mr. Cain ends before we reach Latchigudem and there was no work suitable for women and children on it as cutting out stumps and felling trees is hardly woman's work even among the Koyas, whilst the distance renders it out of the question for women and children. Mr. Cain and the Assistant Engineer both say that the earth-work of the proposed Mahadevapuram tank about 4 miles from here is far the most suitable work as it is the most central, the best off for water, provides light work such as somewhat weak people can tackle, and is the only scheme likely not only to be remunerative but a protection against famine. Any roads now constructed are likely to be overgrown with jungle again, they say, in a few years. Unfortunately the Mahadevapuram tank plans and estimates are not sanctioned. I have asked the Assistant Engineer to send in such plans and estimates in connection with it as are ready for early sanction leaving out those for masonry work which are not yet ready. The Latchigudem-Kolanugudem road will do for the people of that quarter if they want relief, but as yet no one from that locality has come near me and the Tahsildar says they are not so badly off as the people about here, even though he alleges the people here to be exaggerating.

9. A serious difficulty is the lowness of the river. There is more than enough of cholam in the taluk to feed every one and to spare, but we cannot get hold of it now as the owners are more or less under the influence of a famine scare and the stocks in the hands of the merchants here are not large. Prices, on the other hand, have, I hear, fallen in Rajahmundry. I, therefore, propose getting up 400 bags or about 40 putties as this we shall want even if relief is limited to village relief only to the poor and infirm and to this extent we must give aid, for there are, no doubt, many cases of the kind though it needs a little care and will take a few days to ascertain them.

10. Under the above circumstances I am sending you a telegram asking for an allotment of Rs. 10,000 which can roughly be apportioned into Rs. 3,000 for gratuitous relief and Rs 7,000 for relief-works and request sanction by wire. I will not spend all unless this course is necessary, and if the amount is insufficient I will address you again.

11. As it is clear that the taluk staff needs strengthening as the different Koya hamlets must constantly be visited to see how things stand, I have ordered up two Revenue Inspectors from the plains to assist the Bhadráchalam and Marrigudem Inspectors, whose ranges are very big. Rékapalle, I still believe, can weather the storm without assistance as the riverside villages did well and the inland population is scanty and has more productive and more extensive jungle to fall back on than the people have here. I have also ordered the Special Assistant up as it is no easy task for me to do inspecting and attend to details and at the same time get through my district work, especially as my health is not all I could wish, though I am feeling decidedly better than I did.

Read—also the following telegram from the Famine Commissioner, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, dated Waltair, 4th May 1897:—

"Brodie wires: message begins—'Please allot Rs 10,000 for famine relief. Bhadráchalam must probably begin spending in anticipation; letter follows. Kindly wire reply'—message ends. Please wire Brodie direct, sanctioning funds."

Resolution—dated 12th May 1897, No. 362.

Submitted for the information of Government.

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(True Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) L. E. BUCKLEY,
Famine Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
Copy to the Collector of Gódávari.

Order—No. 398, Revenue, dated 27th May 1897.

Miscellaneous.

Recorded.

(True Extract.)

for Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture).
,, the Public Works Department.
,, the Local and Municipal Department.
,, the Financial Department.
,, the Accountant-General.

Exd. Shaik Karim.

80 Copies.

Public Works Department.

Government {1897} of Madras.

REVENUE.

Recd.	1897.	*Enclosures*
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G.O., No. 398, 27th May 1897.

No. 1694 dt. 25-6-97
Communicated to the
Supdg. Engr. I circle.

MAY.

To
The Supdg. Engr. I circle.

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5. In some cases I have caught the headmen telling the most glaring falsehood, *e.g.*, that they have no cattle and no bandies in their villages, whilst the Revenue Inspector's report shows their villages possess both. I have now ordered the Tahsildar and my clerk to make a house-to-house inquisitorial census of some villages and report the number of inmates, the cattle and bandies they possess and the amount of food they have in store and will see the result and check it myself in one or two instances. At the same time they are not above concealing their stores of cholam and ippa flowers and whilst the Tahsildar and Revenue Inspector deny that in this quarter, where their podus are more or less level lands, they lost their crop altogether, they with one voice assert they did not get a single grain and in much the same way they allege they got no ippa flowers almost, though the abkári contractor informs me that he has purchased 30 putties this year of dried flowers and the fruit on the trees shows there were some flowers.

6. One village having complained to me that they had absolutely nothing to go on with and must have some food, I made them a present of Rs. 2 and sent my duffadar along with them to the bazaar to see the amount invested in cholam. He reports that he got them 27 seers at 13½ seers per rupee, but also reports that they invested a further Rs. 2 which they had with them at the same rate !!

7. The only course that I can see open to me is to test their statement that they are ready to work for food at famine wages, for it is agreed on all hands that no Koya will work if he can help it. I have, therefore, told all who have been to see me that they must prove their words and that all who choose to come will be given a day's work on Monday in cleaning the canal of silt. As one day will prove nothing I propose on Monday to tell them they can come again next day in order to see how many absent themselves.

8. The silt clearance of the canal can hardly be called a relief-work for it is within 3 or 4 miles of their villages and the work is easy, but the relief-work which Mr. Hughes attempted and which was sanctioned will never do for them as it begins at Latchigudem, which is over 10 miles from here, and water has to be brought there from a distance of several miles. Moreover, the area of greatest distress according to Mr. Cain ends before we reach Latchigudem and there was no work suitable for women and children on it as cutting out stumps and felling trees is hardly woman's work even among the Koyas, whilst the distance renders it out of the question for women and children. Mr. Cain and the Assistant Engineer both say that the earthwork of the proposed Mahadevapuram tank about 4 miles from here is far the most suitable work as it is the most central, the best off for water, provides light work such as somewhat weak people can tackle, and is the only scheme likely not only to be remunerative but a protection against famine. Any roads now constructed are likely to be overgrown with jungle again, they say, in a few years. Unfortunately the Mahadevapuram tank plans and estimates are not sanctioned. I have asked the Assistant Engineer to send in such plans and estimates in connection with it as are ready for early sanction leaving out those for masonry work which are not yet ready. The Latchigudem-Kolanugudem road will do for the people of that quarter if they want relief, but as yet no one from that locality has come near me and the Tahsildar says they are not so badly off as the people about here, even though he alleges the people here to be exaggerating.

9. A serious difficulty is the lowness of the river. There is more than enough of cholam in the taluk to feed every one and to spare, but we cannot get hold of it now as the owners are more or less under the influence of a famine scare and the stocks in the hands of the merchants here are not large. Prices, on the other hand, have, I hear, fallen in Rajahmundry. I, therefore, propose getting up 400 bags or about 40 putties as this we shall want even if relief is limited to village relief only to the poor and infirm and to this extent we must give aid, for there are, no doubt, many cases of the kind though it needs a little care and will take a few days to ascertain them.

10. Under the above circumstances I am sending you a telegram asking for an allotment of Rs. 10,000 which can roughly be apportioned into Rs. 3,000 for gratuitous relief and Rs. 7,000 for relief-works and request sanction by wire. I will not spend all unless this course is necessary, and if the amount is insufficient I will address you again.

11. As it is clear that the taluk staff needs strengthening as the different Koya hamlets must constantly be visited to see how things stand, I have ordered up two Revenue Inspectors from the plains to assist the Bhadráchalam and Marrigudem Inspectors, whose ranges are very big. Rékapalle, I still believe, can weather the storm without assistance as the riverside villages did well and the inland population is scanty and has more productive and more extensive jungle to fall back on than the people have here. I have also ordered the Special Assistant up as it is no easy task for me to do inspecting and attend to details and at the same time get through my district work, especially as my health is not all I could wish, though I am feeling decidedly better than I did.

Read—also the following telegram from the Famine Commissioner, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, dated Waltair, 4th May 1897:—

"Brodie wires: message begins—'Please allot Rs 10,000 for famine relief. Bhadráchalam must probably begin spending in anticipation; letter follows. Kindly wire reply'—message ends. Please wire Brodie direct, sanctioning funds."

Resolution—dated 12th May 1897, No. 362.

Submitted for the information of Government.

2. Whether the Koyas, like the Khonds, will refuse to come to works on famine conditions remains to be seen According to the Collector's demi-official of the 6th instant, it appears that they had already come in, though not working very satisfactorily, but the Panchamas and Madigas, who are reported to be also distressed, ought to do so. With the prices of standard grain at 12 measures—the figure reported from Bhadráchalam and Dumagudem in the letter of the 6th—there must be distress, and the fact that the Telega riparian stock-holders will not sell, which is not now reported for the first time, places the Collector in a difficult position; and, for the purposes of grain doles at least, his action in importing some grain seems to have been unavoidable. The unusual lowness of the river makes even this measure very difficult of execution. The Collector will be right in refusing to admit able-bodied Koyas who will not work to gratuitous relief, unless distinct signs should show themselves of failing physical condition, of which there are no indications at present. He will use his discretion in distributing relief to the destitute old and children.

(True Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) L. E. BUCKLEY,
Famine Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
Copy to the Collector of Gódávari.

Order—No. 398, Revenue, dated 27th May 1897.

Miscellaneous. Recorded.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture).
" the Public Works Department.
" the Local and Municipal Department.
" the Financial Department.
" the Accountant-General.

Exd. Shaik Karim.

80 Copies.

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