

Public Works (1897) Department.

G.O., No. 1903 W

DATED 15th July 1897.

[Despatch Abstract.]

Tasks on Relief Works. Pros: Revenue Dept. regarding
with remarks Board's Pros. on letter from the Collector
of Ludhiana regarding the allowance for distance
to be made in fixing — Court to S.E. the Court.

Public Works (1897) Department.
Current No: 6523
Government (1897) of Madras.
REVENUE.

Recd. S. 7. } 1897.
Regd. S. 7 }

Enclosures

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G.O., No. 472, 18th June 1897.

JUNE.

Communicated to
the Super^r III
Arch.
8/7/93

S.S. III circle 10 to 50
S.S. I circle, from 5-80
information.

Tasks on relief works.

Recording, with remarks, Board's Proceedings on letter from the Collector of Cuddapah regarding the allowance for distance to be made in fixing—.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture), dated 21st May 1897, No. 386 :—

Read—the following letter from A. C. TATE, Esq., Collector of Cuddapah, to the Famine Secretary, Board of Revenue, dated 7th May 1897, Ref. on Cur. No. 174 F. :—

With reference to clause (k) of paragraph 2 of B.P., dated 3rd April 1897, No. 278, I have the honour to point out that Government say in sub-paragraph (iv) of paragraph 3 of their order, that distance may be allowed for on a suitable time-scale where shelter has not been provided for labourers at or near the works.

2. I have the honour, therefore, to enquire whether the Government Order is to be taken to be that no distance allowance is to be made on works where shelter is provided. I would point out that it has been ordered that shelter should be provided on all works. When this direction has been complied with, are no distance allowances to be made?

3. I may inform the Board that in my management of famine works my endeavour has been to exercise the discretion allowed me by the Code and orders after consultation with the Executive Engineer and my subordinates, and I have not been troubling the Board with references on points which I felt I could dispose of myself. Prior to and since the receipt of B.P., dated 25th February, No. 159, I have been insisting that only moderate tasks approved of by me shall be exacted on our works, and I have been allowing a deduction of an hour's work for each 2 miles the coolies had to walk. Although the Superintending Engineer in a letter I have recently seen printed in a Board's Proceedings has said that harder tasks were enforced in Kurnool and Cuddapah districts than in Bellary, I think that is an expression of an opinion which he found cause to modify when he visited this district; for on three of the Cuddapah works visited by him, he issued orders increasing the task and altering my distance scale of 2 miles an hour into one of greater severity. On this coming to my notice, I took prompt steps to acquaint all concerned with the fact that in matter of tasks, my approval was essential and I did not agree to raise the tasks on the three works concerned or to alter my distance scale, but restored the former tasks and scale.

4. In support of my scale which the Board and others might at first consider too lenient, I have to say that weakly women, old people, and children of tender years formed about seven-eighths of the entire body of attendants on our works, and I consider that 2 miles an hour is as much as can be expected to be done by them, day after day, for months on famine wages. It is not a pleasant sight to see little children of 3, 4 and 5 years of age struggling along in the wake of their elders pushing on towards a famine work.

5. I do not think that the Government Order is to be construed as making $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour a standard rate at which deductions from tasks are to be calculated. I think they intended to leave the rate discretionary with Collectors, and I request to know distinctly whether I may not adhere to my own scale. The point is not, after all, a very serious one, for $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles is not much in excess of 2 miles, but it naturally arises in connection with my present difficulty, and I prefer, for the sake of women and little children, to adhere to my own rate of 2 miles an hour.

6. The Board seem to think that I have not felt sufficient sympathy with the people in the present hard times. They entirely misjudge me and I challenge the most enquiry from the Public Works Department or other officers who are really acquainted with the work I have done during the past four months. I have never

refused to open a work that was recommended. I have insisted in the face of opposition of the Superintending Engineer and Executive Engineer on very moderate tasks being fixed, and I have done what I could to make the workers and dependants comfortable with sheds and kitchens and to see that they obtained their wages without delay. Whatever little failures there may have been, have occurred in consequence of the *laches* of my subordinates and not with my good will.

7. I find the matter of securing regular payments on large works one of practical difficulty and have to-day asked the Board to help me in the matter of paymasters.

Resolution—dated 21st May 1897, No. 386.

The Collector will be informed that the allowance for distance may be granted even in cases where the hutting accommodation provided on the works is not used by the labourers. It is not the intention of the Famine Code that people should be drawn away from their villages to any greater distance than is absolutely necessary (*vide* section 36 of the Code). When the distance is excessive, works should be started nearer to the villages. The allowance should be regulated strictly in accordance with the scale prescribed by Government, *i.e.*, at one hour for $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, or 24 minutes for a mile.

2. Orders have already been issued directing the Collector of Nellore to depute a few men to Cuddapah for famine duty. The Board is considering how more men can be drafted to Cuddapah.

3. The action of the Superintending Engineer in altering the tasks without the Collector's approval was unauthorized. Now that Government has passed a distinct ruling on the subject (G.O., No. 1708, dated 30th March 1897), no further interference of the kind is likely to occur.

4. With reference to paragraph 6 of the Collector's letter, the Board would observe that the Collector should himself take the initiative in proposing works. He should not wait to act until he is asked. The great principle which should guide all famine operations is that of meeting the people, and relief of each kind had better be commenced too soon than too late. Much of the Collector's present difficulties are due to the fact that each step in the expansion of relief has been taken from a month to six weeks too late. It is easy to expand operations once opened, but to start them all *en bloc* is a very troublesome matter. The Collector allowed the Indian Famine Relief Committee to do his work in the granting of gratuitous relief. Had he been preparing for this beforehand, he would have been able to set it going sooner than any private parties could have done it. Similarly, in the matter of dry remissions, the Collector, instead of taking the matter up with interest as a boon which he could procure for his people, has moved most reluctantly, and his proposals, when he did move, were impracticable, inconsistent with each other, with his own views, and with the standing orders on the subject. The shortcomings of his subordinates, to which the Collector refers, are, the Board fears, partly due to the want of a little more confidence reposed in them. The Board does not hold, as the Collector seems to think, that the Collector has no sympathy for his people; but the Collector's sympathies are too much in the *paulo-post-future* tense. Famine is not an enemy to be combated by costive sympathies or by Fabian tactics.

(True Copy and Extract.)

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

To the Collector of Cuddapah.

Copy to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

ORDER—No. 472, Revenue, dated 18th June 1897.

Miscellaneous.

Recorded with the remark that the allowance for distance authorized by paragraph 3 (iv) of G.O., No. 216, dated 30th March 1897, was intended to meet cases in which there was no hutting accommodation, and that the concession should not be granted when such accommodation is provided at or near the works. The Government is also of opinion that some deduction should be made from the distance travelled by the workers, as it is only natural and reasonable that they should go some little distance to the works. The Government observes from the correspondence submitted to it in another connection that in certain instructions issued prior to the receipt of the above Government Order, the Superintending Engineer, III Circle, had directed that one mile should be deducted for the above reason from the distance travelled by the workers each way; this is no more than what labourers and ryots have every day to go to their fields and seems to be a suitable deduction.

10460
14-6-97

(True Extract.)

C. M. M. M.
for Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement,
Land Records and Agriculture).
„ the Public Works Department. ✓

Exd. Shaik Karim.

60 Copies.

3570

Government {1897} of Madras.
REVENUE.

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G.O., No. 472, 18th June 1897.

*For 1903 W & 15
communicated
Supts. Engrs. III circle*

JUNE.

*H. D. M. C.
W*

To

*The S. & T. circle
" S. & T. circle for info*

Tasks on relief works.

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

To the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement,
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„ the Public Works Department.

Exd. Shaik Karim.

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