Public Works (189) Department.

G.O., No. 335470

DATED / December 1897

[Despatch Abstract.]

Famine Code: Pros: Revenue Dept: Courts.

& the Famine Commissioner with remarks
Cost of India letter regarding the revision
of the Provincial — , Cuttack & the Mins
Concerned.

[P.W. 25. 5,000—30-11-96.]

Indexed.

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

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Public Works (1897) Department
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Government {1897} of Madras.

REVENUE.

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G.O., No. 919, 8th November 1897.

Rp 3354 W 1-12-97

NOVEMBER.

Communicated to the officers concerned the continuation of G.O. 3284 W of 24th November 1897.

C. E. for 1 Ctc, 1 Hdy
S. Engrs. 1 Ctc, 1 Hdy
Dy 6/12/97

Provincial Famine Code.

Communicating to the Famine Commissioner, with remarks, letter from the Government of India regarding the revision of the —.

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14. With reference to paragraph 6 of the order, which of the following should be deemed strictly professional and be assigned to the Public Works Department:—

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Exd. Shaik Karim.

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Government {1897} of Madras.

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(Sd) W B de W W

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Chief Engineer for Irrigation
Supt. Engineers.

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2. The most important chapters of the codes are concerned with the organization of relief works, and Mr. Higham's final note, on the suggestions contained in which the opinions of local Governments have already been invited, covers in effect the whole of this subject.

3. With regard to the subject of *gratuitous relief*, it may be observed that the Madras Famine Code provides that at the early stage of distress, unless otherwise directed by the Government, gratuitous relief to those who cannot earn wages on relief works and are otherwise unable to support themselves, shall be given only in the form of cooked food at central kitchens. Village relief in the form of doles to persons in their homes is under this system kept in reserve. In most of the other Provincial Codes, kitchens are regarded as adjuncts to relief works for the relief of the children and non-working dependants of relief labourers. But in the present famine the expedient of kitchens apart from relief works has been largely adopted in Bengal, in the Central Provinces and elsewhere, either with the object of providing for indigent children in the most suitable manner, or as a precaution against adult persons starving on the reduction or cessation of gratuitous relief in the homes of the people, or as a substitute for village relief in the form of doles where distress is not acute or where village relief from special reasons is difficult to administer. The Government of India would like the regulations bearing on kitchens in each Provincial Code to be carefully examined and revised, where necessary, so as to bring them into accordance with the recent practice in each province as regards this form of relief.

4. In the matter of gratuitous relief to respectable families in large towns the codes might, it is thought, embody some of the practical expedients which have been adopted by local Governments in this respect during the late famine. It is believed that in some cases the organization of such relief was placed with local committees, which worked partly with private subscriptions or local funds, and partly with a grant-in-aid from the local Government.

5. In some provinces gratuitous relief to the incapable poor in their homes has been given in the late famine in the form of uncooked grain, and in other provinces, of money. The Government of India would like to have the opinion of local Governments as to which form of relief is, on the whole, best, or in what circumstances the gift of money is preferable to that of grain.

6. With regard to *poor-houses* it is suggested that the regulations respecting them should provide for the systematic weeding of the inmates, with the object of placing those who are fit to work on relief works, and returning to their villages, to be there gratuitously relieved, those who are incapable of work and have settled homes. The question of the transfer of poor-house inmates from the particular poor-house in which they have sought refuge to the poor-house of their own district or sub-division, with a view to their being there dealt with in the manner above described, is one which frequently arises, and which is possibly of sufficient importance to be treated of in the revised regulations.

7. The reference to *orphans* contained in the present codes is brief, and the Government of India would be glad to know what additions, if any, to existing provisions of the codes with respect to the care and disposal of orphans, commend themselves to the local Governments.

8. *Relief to weavers and artizans* has not, so far as the Government of India are aware, been given to any great extent, except in the Madras Presidency during the late famine. The Government of India would like to learn whether the codes require any alteration or expansion on this point.

Order—No. 919, Revenue, 8th November 1897.

Miscellaneous.

Communicated to the Famine Commissioner with reference to G.O., No. 899, dated 29th October 1897. The questions raised in paragraphs 3 to 8 of the letter read above should be discussed at the conference as well as those raised in papers already communicated to the Famine Commissioner and of which a memorandum is appended to this order.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Secretary to Government.

To the Famine Commissioner (with memorandum).
,, the Public Works Department.
,, the Public Department.
,, the Local and Municipal Department.
,, the Financial Department.
,, the Accountant-General.

APPENDIX.

Memorandum of questions to be discussed at the conference.

1. Whether the intermediate gang piece-work system can be introduced on works with success.

2. Whether gratuitous relief should be given to the dependants of workers on test works.

3. The Government of India objects to the Madras system of classifying relief workers under which the gang is the unit of classification, and suggests the system in force elsewhere under which the individual workers composing a gang are first classified with reference to their capacity and the task of the gang is then fixed with reference to the number of A, B, C and D units it contains. May the latter system be adopted?

4. It also takes exception to children of 12 to 16 years belonging to the labouring classes being classed as B adults. Are these children capable of turning out adult tasks? If not, may they be classed as C adults as in Bombay? (Section 73, Bombay Code).

5. Are the present equivalents 1 man = 2 women = 4 children adopted in the code task-tables correct? The North-West Provinces equivalents are 1 man = 2 women = 3 children.

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(vii) Water-supply.	(xiv) Provision of funds and establishments for works.

15. *Payment of wages.*—Mr. Higham objects to the principle enunciated in paragraph 23 of Appendix VI that paymasters should be independent of the Public Works Department. May these be made subordinate to the Public Works Department?

16. The Government of India suggests that greater powers should be given to the Public Works Department than allowed by the above order. In what directions may this be done?

Exd. Shaik Karim.

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