Public Works (1897) Department.

G.O., No. 20384

DATED 28 July 1897

Chingleput Dt

[Despatch Abstract.]

Famine Relief Estimates & Proc: Reserve Copy for
Recording with remark the report from the
Secretary to Govt PWD and the third member
of the Board of Revenue on — Famine Tools
Drain the Chingleput Dt Contd 6 the S. E.
Mail.

[P.W. 25.
5,000—30-11-96.]

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: 6983

Government {1897} of Madras.

REVENUE.

Recd. 12.7. *Regd.* 12.7. } 1897.

Encl sures 1

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G.O., No. 529, 3rd July 1897.

No. 2038 W & 28.7.97

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Communicated to the Superintending V circle.

Ch

22/7/97

JULY.

S.S. V circle with 516

Ch. S. for 1846

reports to 6th

29/7/97

T.A.
B.P.W.

Famine Relief Estimates, Famine Tools, &c.

Recording, with remark, the report from the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, and the Third Member of the Board of Revenue on — in the Chingleput district.

0 L S 302 2 4 6

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Read—the following letter from the Hon'ble Colonel D. McNEIL CAMPBELL, R.E., Chief Engineer and Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, and H. M. WINTERBOTHAM, Esq., Third Member, Board of Revenue, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, dated Cuddalore, 19th June 1897, letter G :—

In continuation of our letter F., dated 15th June, we have the honour to submit the following report regarding the district of Chingleput.

1. Mr. Murdoch, the Acting Collector, has been in charge since the middle of September last, and has over two years' acquaintance with the district. We met him and the Executive Engineer at Saidapet on June 18th; the Superintending Engineer was unable to attend owing to illness.

2. *General condition of the district.*—On an average of 25 years the district receives 19 inches of rain in the south-west monsoon and 25·52 inches in the north-east monsoon, total 44·52 inches. In 1896, the district average shows 13·77 inches up to September 30th and 42·24 inches after that date, total 56 inches, or 11½ inches more than the average. The rainfall was short till the middle of November and was subsequently excessive. We gather that on the whole the general outturn of wet and dry crops was probably not much below the average, though, owing to the failure of rain in October, the yield of the early dry crops was poor.

3. *Rainfall in* 1897.—The district is not at all dependent on rain falling in April, May and June. In April last the district average was 0·16 of an inch, and in May 0·84 of an inch. This latter average has only been reached in two years out of the last ten.

There have been good showers in most parts of the district in the current month, and, so far, prospects are normal and encouraging. There is a good supply of water in most of the big tanks.

The wet area already cultivated (15,400 acres) is nearly twice as great as usual (8,000 acres). The dry area sown (2,400 acres) is much less than the average (13,000 acres), but is in excess of 1895–96, when the rainfall was normal. The great sowing months are July, August, September and October.

4. *Prices.*—The following statement shows the prices of the chief food-grains for the week ending June 12th as compared with the normal, warning and scarcity rates :—

Stations.	Prices in imperial seers of 80 tolas of							
	Rice.				Ragi.			
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Poonamallee ..	9·8				14·4			
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Uttaramerur ..	13·1				16·3			
Madurántakam ..	11·2				15·4			
Sríperumbudúr ..	11·9				16·6			
Conjeeveram ..	11·2				16·3			
District average ..	10·9	..	..	..	16·2	..	..	..

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It is now only a trifle dearer than the warning rate.

The demand in the affected districts has naturally kept up the price of ragi, but its price is nowhere near the scarcity rate.

5. *Exports and imports of grain.*—Since the middle of February 1897 up to June 5th, 15,734 maunds of grain have been imported by rail, and 125,537 maunds have been exported. For a month past the exports have been about 8,000 maunds a week.

There is no record of the exports by road into the city of Madras, which the Chingleput district surrounds on three sides; nor of the road traffic with the surrounding districts, and no useful information regarding the flow of grain into and out of the district can therefore be given. The district is so situated that any quantity of grain can be thrown into it or carried from it by rail, road and canal in a very short time.

6. We see no evidences of distress in the heart or the suburbs of Madras City, and are informed that there is no part of the district where any portion of the agricultural or artizan classes stands in need of relief, or would engage on relief works at a famine wage.

7. *Famine programme.*—The famine programme includes works the assumed cost of which is Rs. 20,85,857, or sufficient to give employment to 22·94 per cent. of the population for three months.

The sanctioned estimates which were laid before us amount to Rs. 8,21,587, but the following deduction must be made from this—Rs. 10,418 on account of Madras water-works distribution; this work has been ordered to be held in abeyance pending the settlement of the quantity of water required by the municipality. Out of Rupees 11,725 entered for eleven major works in the Tiruvallúr taluk only Rs. 5,359 is available for famine, the balance of the estimate being for masonry works and compensation; and out of Rs. 28,785 entered for tank restoration scheme minor irrigation works, only Rs. 10,180 is available for famine for the same reason. In the Madurántakam taluk, out of Rs. 7,080 entered for the Kinar tank, only Rs. 2,805 is available for famine, and out of Rs. 16,200 entered against major irrigation works only Rs. 13,000 are available owing to the omission of masonry works and compensation.

Therefore out of Rs. 8,21,587, only the sum of Rs. 7,78,723 is available for immediate execution by famine labour; this would give employment to 8·6 per cent. of the population for three months.

8. The sanctioned works in the programme may be divided as follows :—

	Rs.
Irrigation works, Public Works Department	1,09,214
New roads	...
Road repairs	5,72,139
Miscellaneous	97,370
Total ...	7,78,723

The item under miscellaneous is the Conjeeveram water-supply, and it is doubtful if this is a suitable relief work; but all the others will do well for the employment of famine labour.

There are besides estimates to the amount of Rs. 4,91,686 for roads and irrigation works stated to be ready; we saw a considerable number of these and they only require to be sanctioned.

There would then be estimates to the amount of Rs. 7,78,723 + Rs. 4,91,686 or Rs. 12,70,409 ready and these would give employment to 12·2 per cent. of the population for three months, and this, we are of opinion, is ample unless there is a failure of the north-east monsoon in addition to that of the south-west.

Estimates amounting to Rs. 1,42,698 for simple works are also stated to be ready, but we were unable to see them.

There is absolutely no work of magnitude on which large bodies of coolies could be massed; but there is one work costing Rs. 40,000 which is not included in the programme and this would be eminently suitable for famine relief, that is, widening Bangaru channel.

We are given to understand that the South Indian Railway Company is contemplating doubling the line from Madras to Chingleput; the earthwork and collecting ballast for this work would form a most excellent relief work, and would give employment to a very large number of coolies for a considerable time.

9. *Tools.*—The famine tools are stored at St. Thomas' Mount, and as they have been lately personally counted and examined by the Executive Engineer, we thought it unnecessary to see them ourselves, more especially as the numbers are very small, consisting of—

Mamooties	6,400
Crow-bars	980
Pickaxes	745

These agree almost exactly with the numbers given in the statement printed with reference to G.O., No. 3116-W, dated 2nd December 1893, with the exception of the number of mamooties in which there is an error of a cypher in the printed statement, as it should be 6,400 instead of 64,000.

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2. The Board of Revenue is requested to expedite the report called for in G.O., No. 2655, dated 25th May 1897, regarding famine tools.

(True Extract.)

for Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Famine Commissioner.
„ the Public Works Department.

Exd. S. J. Pereira.

60 Copies.

Government {1897} of Madras.

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№ 2038 W dy 28.7.97
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Superintending Engineer
V circle

JULY.

(Sgd) D Ar. C
W.

To.
The Sup Engineer V circle
" Chief Engineer for Irrign

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