

Public Works (1898) Department.

G.O., No. 2486 W

DATED 28th Sep '98

[Despatch Abstract.]

Lamine Ashef Works

Saw: L. Ashef reducing from
Rs 50,000 to Rs 31,000 the contribution payable to
Govt. funds by the S. & T. Co. for 1897-98, on account
of —, communicated to the S. & T. Co., for
information.

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

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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

LOCAL AND MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following papers:—

From H. D. TAYLOR, Esq., I.C.S., President, District Board, Ganjám, to the Secretary to Government, Local and Municipal Department, dated Chatrapur, 8th March 1898, R. C. No. 45-D.B.

With reference to G.O., Mis. No. 226 L., dated 8th February 1898, directing that a contribution of Rs. 50,000 should be paid by the District Board, Ganjám, towards famine expenditure incurred by Government in the Financial Department, I have the honour to forward, herewith, copy of a resolution passed by the district board on the 28th ultimo, and to respectfully request a reconsideration of the order.

2. The District Board of Ganjám—at no time rich—is at present financially in very low water indeed. The exigencies of famine and the peculiarities of the district which are such as to practically restrict in many places the work of famine relief to the collection of road materials have caused a very large expenditure to be incurred on these objects. The materials so collected cannot possibly be utilized for a period extending over ten years in some instances and meanwhile heavy wastage of these materials cannot but ensue.

The district board has been charged with more than the full present value of all work executed as famine-relief works or local fund works, and I would here draw attention to G.O., No. 731, Financial, dated 8th September 1897, in which it was directed that district boards should be called upon to contribute only the cost of such materials or works as would in the ordinary course and in the absence of famine have been required to be collected or executed within the official year.

3. I would also refer to letter, R. C. No. 2684-F., dated 26th January 1898, from the Collector and President, District Board, Ganjám, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Financial Department, in which full details of value of work turned out on behalf of the district board were given, with proposals for an equitable contribution to be paid by the district board.

This letter, I believe, had not reached Government in the Local and Municipal Department, and had not been considered at the time when the present order was passed. A copy of the same is now enclosed for reference.

4. I may note that, owing to the necessity for concentrating work at certain badly-affected spots where no other work was available, it was found necessary in the past year to restrict the allotments which would otherwise have been made for special repairs in other portions of the district.

The expenditure shown as incurred on famine works for the district board by no means represents the entire amount of expenditure due to famine incurred by the district board. Large sums were spent partly with a view to improving water-supply and partly with a view to providing labour on tanks, while considerable quantities of materials were collected on special estimates, funds being allotted by the district board and works undertaken on the intermediate or gang piece-work system which had not at that time received the sanction of Government for introduction and finally constituted relief works.

5. I would note that, after the famine of 1889, a very large portion of the amount debited by Government to local funds was subsequently remitted.

6. The budget estimate for 1898-99 shows only a balance of Rs. 18,250, which has been allowed for to meet the contribution to Government on account of the value of work turned out on test and relief works. A contribution of Rs. 50,000 will not only swallow up the balance, but will leave the district board impoverished for several years to come and quite unable to carry on any of that work of improvement on the roads for which a detailed and systematic scheme has been for some time under consideration. Under these circumstances, I request that Government may be pleased to reconsider the case of the contribution ordered to be paid by this district and to allow the payment of such sum, as may be fixed upon, to be made in annual instalments not exceeding Rs. 5,000 per annum and free of interest after the current year.

ENCLOSURE.

EXTRACT from the Proceedings of the District Board, Ganjám, at a meeting held on Monday, the 28th February 1898, at 12 noon, in the Senior Assistant Collector's office, Berhampur.

Read G.O., Mis. No. 226 L., dated 8th February 1898, directing a contribution of Rs. 50,000 to be paid by the district board on account of famine relief in the district.

Resolution No. 14.—Resolved that Government be re-addressed on the subject with a view to a reduction of the contribution and the repayment of the contribution fixed in convenient instalments.

Memo. No. 680, Financial.

Read—Proceedings of the Local and Municipal Department, Mis. No. 350 L., dated 1st March 1898.

The amount allotted from Ganjám in G.O., Mis. No. 226 L., dated 8th February 1898, was apparently based on the report of the President of the District Board that a sum of Rs. 1,524 was expended on new works up to the close of November last and that a considerable amount of expenditure was incurred in December while the dispensary building at Russellkonda was in progress and could not be postponed. It now appears that the expenditure incurred on new works up to the end of December was only Rs. 10 more than the sum reported to have been incurred up to the end of November and that the construction of the Russellkonda dispensary has not yet been taken in hand. The Local and Municipal Department is requested to state whether, with reference to the statement now furnished, any further amount can be made available for famine expenditure in the current year.

FORT ST. GEORGE,
14th March 1898.

(Signed) S. G. ROBERTS,
for Chief Secretary.

To the Local and Municipal Department.

Telegram from the President, District Board, Ganjám, to the Secretary to Government, Local and Municipal Department, dated Chatrapur, 19th April 1898.

Available balance under local funds service heads on 31st March approximately rupees forty-six thousand without paying fifty thousand to Provincial. Increase over revised estimates due to increased collection—ten thousand land-cess and five thousand lapsed balance—Russellkonda dispensary. Latter item requires renewal for current year but not budgeted for.

ORDER—No. 1405 L., dated 8th August 1898.

It was not possible to remodel, as required in G.O., No. 133, Financial, dated 8th February 1897, the budgets of the Ganjam District Board for 1896-97 and 1897-98 and to make provision for a contribution to Provincial funds towards famine relief expenditure. In the budget for 1897-98, however, the District Board had, owing to neglect of sound budget principles, shown a large closing balance of Rs. 65,820 or 24 per cent. of the receipts, and stated that, as scarcity was imminent in the district, it was probable that considerable allotments would be made from the closing balance for expenditure on communications and supply of drinking water. In G.O., No. 741, Financial, dated 10th July 1897, the Financial Department requested, with reference to a letter received from the Government of India, information as to what reductions could be made in the District Board's budgets for 1897-98 with the object of making funds available to meet famine expenditure to the extent of 5 lakhs, which the Government of India considered should be charged to Local Funds. In reply to this the Financial Department was informed that the major portion of the balance of Rs. 65,820 mentioned above, with the unutilized portion, if any, of the sum of Rs. 16,210 provided for new public works in the District Board's budget for 1897-98, or Rs. 50,000 in all, might be made available for famine expenditure in the affected tracts of the district, and the Accountant-General was accordingly requested, in G.O., No. 226 L., dated 8th February 1898, to place this sum at the disposal of the Financial Department. The necessary provision on this account was also made in the District Board's revised estimate for 1897-98.

2. With the first of the papers read above, the President of the District Board forwards a copy of the Board's resolution requesting that the contribution of Rupees 50,000, which it was directed in the order last quoted to pay to Provincial funds, may be reduced and the reduced amount made payable in convenient instalments on the following grounds:—

(1) The exigencies of famine and the peculiarities of the district have, in many places, restricted the work of famine relief to the collection of road materials, and the quantity thus collected cannot possibly be utilized for a period extending over ten years in some instances, and meanwhile heavy wastage of these materials cannot but ensue.

(2) The sum proposed to be charged to Local Funds on account of famine relief is more than the full present value of all the work (i.e., road materials); and the whole of the sum is not therefore properly debitable to Local Funds—vide paragraph 3 of G.O., No. 731, Financial, dated 8th September 1897. The value of the materials collected is estimated by the President at Rs. 33,716, of which Rs. 16,858 or only 50 per cent. may, in his opinion, be charged to Local Funds in view of the facts that the material can only be gradually utilized from year to year along such portions of the roads as are adjacent to the quarries and that half of it must be wasted before use.

(3) Owing to the necessity for concentrating work at certain badly-affected spots, where no other work was available, it was found necessary in the past year to restrict the allotments which would otherwise have been made for special repairs in other parts of the district.

(4) The expenditure of Rs. 2,663 and Rs. 18,010 shown in the accounts as having been incurred by the District Board on famine-relief works in 1896-97 and 1897-98, respectively, by no means represents the entire outlay incurred by the District Board, as large sums were spent partly with a view to improve the water-supply and partly to provide labour on tanks.

(5) The District Board is a poor one, as evidenced by the fact that a sum of Rs. 32,555 payable by it to Government as a result of the famine of 1889 was remitted by Government.

(6) A contribution of Rs. 50,000 now will not only swallow up the balance, but will leave the District Board impoverished for several years to come and render it quite unable to carry on the improvement of roads, for which a detailed and systematic scheme has been for some time under consideration.

From the statement submitted by the President, it appears that the actual outlay on road works or materials during the late famine, excluding tank works, was Rupees 1,37,568, the whole of which might by law have been debited to Local Funds, and as the amount proposed to be recovered in 1897-98 was only Rs. 50,000, the Government does not think that the District Board has much to complain of. As the Board's accounts, however, closed with a balance of only Rs. 46,000 on the 31st March 1898, the Accountant-General is requested to take credit for a sum of Rs. 31,000 in 1897-98, after providing for a working balance of Rs. 15,000 for the current year.

3. As regards 1898-99, the Local Fund budget has now been revised so as to provide for a contribution of Rs. 25,010 to Provincial funds on account of famine-relief works.

(True Extract.)

Thurman
for Secretary to Government.

To the President, District Board, Ganjam.
" Accountant-General.
" Financial Department.
" P.W. Department.