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Government (17) of Madras.
POLITICAL.

Recd.

Reg.

1897.

Enclosures

Spare copies

G.O., No. 336, 22nd May 1897.

MAY.

Devasthanam Revenue in Pudukkottai.

Ag. Sta. ing that the Government has no objection to the proposal submitted by regarding the incorporation of the devasthanam and charity revenues with and the assignment of a permanent allotment to the institutions concerned.

செப்பனிருபவர் பெயர்

செப்பனிருவதற்காக எடுத்தக் கொள்ளப்பட்ட நாள் 3/20/97

செப்பனிரு முடித்த நாள் 3/20/97

சம்பார்க்கும்

மு. பா. எ.

கையொப்பம்

ஆ. ரா. மீ. சி.

உதவியாளர்

கையொப்பம்

GOVERNMENT OF MARAS.

POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following papers:—

From B. MACLEOD, Esq., Political Agent for Pudukkottai, to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Trichinopoly, 16th February 1897, R.C. No. 43-O—Pol.

I have the honour to forward a copy of letter, No. 25-O., dated 25th January 1897, from the Diwan of Pudukkottai which deals with a proposal to incorporate the devasthanam and charity revenues with those of the State and to assign a permanent allotment to the devasthanam and charitable institutions. The allotment proposed is based on the average of ten years and will be duly budgeted.

2. It is observed from the past records that the late Diwan M.R. Ry. A. Seshayya Sastri Avargal, C.I.E., granted in 1893 remissions of land revenue (*vide* R.O. No. 500, Political, dated 15th May 1893), which had the effect of reducing the receipts by Rs. 50,000 without a corresponding reduction in the expenditure which the late Diwan appears to have failed to effect simultaneously with the grant of the remissions in question. As a matter of course the surplus of the devasthanam and charity funds was gradually absorbed by the deficit in the receipts, rendering the carrying out of the present proposal very necessary.

3. The proposal evidently has in view the resumption of the devasthanam and charity lands and the substitution of money allowance in its stead, securing at the same time the abolition of the establishment at present employed in the collection of devasthanam and charity revenues, as the State will in future collect the revenues by its regular revenue establishment. I believe such arrangement is actually in force in the Travancore State and, if introduced as proposed by the Diwan, will tally with it. The benefits referred to by the Diwan in paragraph 4 (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e) of his letter.

4. His Highness the Raja appears to second the proposal, and I accordingly recommend it for the early approval of Government.

ENCLOSURE.

From M.R. Ry. R. VEDANTA CHARLU, Diwan of Pudukkottai, to the Political Agent for Pudukkottai, Trichinopoly, dated 25th January 1897, R.C. No. 43-O—Pol.

By the permanent reduction effected by the late Diwan-Regent of Rs. 22,000 under receipts. No corresponding reduction under expenditure was effected. The late Diwan-Regent himself felt the difficulty and had intended to effect some reduction in the expenditure of the taluk devasthanam sabbundies, their work of collection and accounts being naturally rendered the financing of the devasthanam and charity accounts difficult and embarrassing.

The late Diwan-Regent himself felt the difficulty and had intended to effect some reduction in the expenditure of the taluk devasthanam sabbundies, their work of collection and accounts being naturally rendered the financing of the devasthanam and charity accounts difficult and embarrassing. The then surplus cash being, however, he did not feel the immediate necessity of his contemplated change. As years advanced having permanently fallen, but the expenditure conducted on the same scale, the cash gradually absorbed, leaving the one lakh and odd in Government securities to be drawn immediately. This state of things could not be allowed to go on, nor was it trench on the securities for current expenditure. Thus a drastic measure became urgent and the first step taken was to amalgamate the control of collection of revenue and the abolition of separate taluk establishment. This is being gradually effected. Even after these measures it will be found difficult to finance the devasthanam accounts; for, the village establishments and some of the controlling establishments and central offices will always be necessary to be maintained as long as the revenue is separately collected and separate accounts maintained for it. The expenditure on the services and the upkeep of pagodas and charities cannot be in any way reduced and without contravening the conditions of the trust, although it has been no more than the expenditure during years of scarcity entailing loss of devasthanam revenue. Again during more favourable seasons. This was equally embarrassing and

uncertainty and constant change in the scale of expenditure of maintenance on such religious and charitable institutions are likely to bring greater odium. Hence the only course left to me is to state these state of things of such conflicting nature seems to me to incorporate the devasthanam and charity revenues with the "Ain" or State and to assign permanently to the pagodas and charities suitable sums as per scale obtaining hitherto.

His Highness the Raja, to whom I submitted the above difficulties, wrote to me under the 1st November 1896 as follows:—

"I have been over your devasthanam accounts and establishments and as supervision has been amalgamated lately, I think it quite unnecessary to continue keeping up two different establishments and I don't see how you can maintain it with the present state of finances. I also note the chief reason to do so. The late Diwan-Regent curtailing devasthanam revenue by nearly Rs. 22,000 a year without reducing establishment and expenditure corresponding to the decrease in revenue."

3. The present proposition is therefore to incorporate the devasthanam villages with the "Ain," the revenue being included under "Land revenue" on the receipt side of the accounts and to allot a fixed assignment for the daily services and maintenance of the several pagodas and charities on the present scale, with provision from year to year for usual extras in connection with non-recurring charges of pagodas, which will be exhibited in the accounts under a separate major heading to be opened under direct demands of revenue styled "Assignments for religious and charitable institutions" corresponding to assignments to "Palace" and assignments to "Western Palace," and so on. The small item "Compensation to pagodas" recently opened will be added to the same heading. On the receipt side the present headings "Contributions from devasthanam" for 'Education' and 'Medical' will disappear as such revenues will have been incorporated under "Land revenue."

4. This arrangement the following advantages are secured:—

The expenditure on account of devasthanam collection and connected charges will be adequately reduced without trenching on the pagoda services.

(b) The pagoda services will be permanently ensured without the chance of fluctuation on account of vicissitudes of seasons and consequent oscillations and uncertainties in annual allotments, and in fact the pagodas will be free to be supported permanently relieved of the inconvenience and difficulties of collection of revenue assigned for the purpose.

(c) The irrigation works connected with the tanks of the assigned villages will be done along with State tanks, the allotment necessary being provided in future under the head "Irrigation."

(d) The present anomaly of a portion of the revenue collected by State agencies not being brought within the scope of the general budget and review will also be removed.

(e) Such servants who may be retained and who may be absorbed as vacancies occur in other departments of the State will continue public servants and enjoy the privileges and advantages of local service, &c.

5. The measure now advocated is only in accordance with precedents obtaining in other Native States, e.g., Travancore, where, presumably for similar reasons, similar assignments were incorporated substituted by money provision out of State funds for such religious and charitable services.

6. I have therefore to request the favour of your laying this before Government for their early opinion in view to the revised estimate of the current year and budget estimate for the ensuing year being drawn up in accordance with it.

7. I append herewith a statement to show the present average allotment and the proposed fixed allotment for the several religious and charitable institutions maintained by the State within and outside the State.

From B. MACLEOD, Esq., Political Agent for Pudukkottai, to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Trichinopoly, 26th April 1897, Ref. on R.C. No. 43-O—Pol.

With reference to your memorandum No. 567, Political, dated 8th March 1897, I have the honour to submit, for the information of Government, a copy of letter from the Diwan of Pudukkottai, No. 100-O., dated 14th April 1897, informing the original assignment of devasthanam, &c., lands.

ENCLOSURE.

From M.R. Ry. R. VEDANTA CHARLU, Diwan of Pudukkottai, to the Political Agent for Pudukkottai, Trichinopoly, dated 14th April 1897, No. 100-O.

Referring to your letter of 11th March 1897, I have the honour to inform you that I caused inquiries to be instituted on the subject matter thereof with a view to ascertain if there is no information available in the records anywhere here except in the

minor temples endowed in recent years, viz., in the present century, and that in the case of some other bigger temples, it appears from the inscriptions on stones in those temples that the lands pertaining to those temples have been endowed by many ancient Rajas mostly in the days and by, Chola and Pandya kings.

From F. A. NICHOLSON, Esq., Acting Resident in Travancore and Cochin to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Camp, Peermad, 4th May 1897, Ref. on C. No. 1232.

With reference to memorandum No. 585, Political, dated 9th March last, I have the honour to submit herewith copy of a report No. 673-A of the 28th ultimo, from the Diwan of Travancore, from which it will be seen that in this State devasom and charity revenues are collected by the ordinary revenue agency and incorporated in the State accounts, a fixed annual allotment from State funds being assigned to the devasom and charitable institutions to meet the expenses connected with such institutions. The proposal of the Diwan of Pudukkottai, with reference to which the above report was called for by Government, appears therefore to be in accordance with the practice in Travancore.

2. The referred papers are herewith returned.

ENCLOSURE.

From M.R. By. S. SHUNGRASOBYER, Diwan of Travancore, to the British Resident in Travancore and Cochin, dated Trivandrum, 28th April 1897, No. 673-A.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Ref. on C. No. 715, dated 13th ultimo, with enclosures, asking, with reference to a proposal of the Diwan of Pudukkottai to incorporate the devasom and the charity revenues with those of the State and assign a permanent allotment to those institutions, for a report on the practice in this State which has been quoted by Mr. Vedanta Charlu as a precedent.

2. In M.E. 987 (A.D. 1811), the State assumed the direct management of 348 pagodas, taking over and incorporating in the State accounts the revenues of the lands belonging to these pagodas and assigning a fixed annual allotment to meet the expenses of the institutions. Prior to this the pagodas under direct State management were but a few. The lands are still recognized in the accounts as "Devasom," but in respect of assessment, collection, revenue, &c., no distinction is maintained between them and the ordinary Sirkar lands. The receipts from these pagoda lands are included in the major head "Land revenue" and are, of course, collected by the ordinary revenue agency.

3. There are many other devasoms not assumed by Government. They continue as before under the management of Ooralmakars, some of them receiving State aid, some are in recognition of previous usage, some having grants of land as endowments, while the purely unaided being left to be managed by the communities and trustees concerned. The lands of these pagodas remain the private property of the institutions and the collection is made by the managers or trustees themselves without Government aid or intervention.

R—No. 336, Political, dated 22nd May 1897.

The Government has no objection to the proposal in the letter from the Political Agent, Pudukkottai, No. 43-O., Political, dated 16th February 1897.

(True Extract.)

J. F. PRICE,
Chief Secretary

Political Agent, Pudukkottai.