

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

Government of Madras.

Public **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No.	534	Press
	(142 - 143)	Mis.
Dated	25-5-	1866

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
25th May 1866.*

No. 142. Read the following letter from C. MOOTHOSAAMY CHETTY and others, inhabitants of Madras, to the Private Secretary to the Right Honorable the Governor ; dated Madras, 9th May 1866.

We beg that you will be pleased to lay the enclosed Memorial before His Lordship the Governor, and solicit His Lordship's favorable consideration of the prayer of the Memorialists as therein contained.

To

THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD F. NAPIER, K. T. &c.,
Governor of Madras.

The humble Memorial of the undersigned inhabitants of Madras, and its Suburbs,

MY LORD,

That your Memorialists beg most respectfully to inform your Lordship that they addressed a Memorial to Government, on the 16th March 1866 (a copy of which is herewith forwarded), bringing to notice the deceitful practices, &c., of the Rice Vendors at the several rice mundies in Madras, and the great rise in the prices of rice, which has been going on, unchecked, for the last 12 years.

2. Your Memorialists also represented the great distress to which the poorer classes were, and are still, subjected, in consequence of the exorbitant rates of the selling prices of the different sorts of grain, and other commodities which form the necessities of life.

3. Your Memorialists also respectfully suggested the appointment of a Committee, composed of European and Native gentlemen, official and non-official, for the purpose of making proper inquiries, and ascertaining, the true cause of this unusual and steady increase in the selling price of rice and other commodities, whereupon the Government may be enabled to adopt such measures as may be considered advisable towards redressing the grievances of your Memorialists and relieving the poorer classes from their present distress and misery.

4. The Government, in their Order in the Legislative Department, of the 26th March 1866, No. 149, observed that :—

“ The Governor in Council cannot accede to the prayer of the petitioners.

“ The Government cannot interfere to regulate the market. The price of rice must be left to adjust itself by the ordinary laws of supply and demand. Any interference, such as the petitioners ask for, would only tend to aggravate the evil they complain of.”

5. Your Memorialists respectfully beg to submit that, in their former petition, they did not pray for any immediate interference on the part of Government to check the malpractices of rice merchants, or to pass any other order to regulate the present selling prices of rice. All that your Memorialists asked for was the appointment of a Committee to inquire and report upon the matter, on receipt of which report the Government will be in a position to see what measures could be adopted to prevent and check the growing famine and the steady rise in the selling prices of rice.

6. Your Memorialists, therefore, again most humbly entreat that your Lordship in Council will be kindly pleased to re-consider the matter, and pass such orders as your Lordship in Council may think advisable.

And your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall ever pray.

MADRAS, 9th May 1866.

(Signed) C. MOOTHOSAAMY, CHETTY,
and others.

From C. MOOTHOSAAMY CHETTY, and others, to the Secretary to Government, Legislative Department, Fort Saint George ; dated Madras, 16th March 1866.

We beg leave respectfully to solicit that you will be pleased to submit these few lines for the favorable consideration and orders of His Excellency the Governor in Council.

2. We beg leave to state that, on the 4th December 1865, we addressed a communication to the Commissioner of Police (vide original petition marked A), bringing to notice the malpractices

Black Town.
Peddoo Naick Pettah,
Washermans Pettah,

Triplicane.
Chindatrepettah.
Saint Thome.

and frauds committed by the rice vendors in the several mundies specified in the margin, and praying that a nirruck rate may be established,

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and that the frauds committed by the vendors, and the unauthorized levy by them of fees and perquisites, discontinued.

3. The Commissioner of Police favored us with the following reply :—

"I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your Memorial of yesterday's date, complaining of the high price of rice, and of certain vexatious practices on the part of the retail dealers."

"As a fellow citizen, I should be happy to discuss these matters with you, if my ideas could be of any use; but, in the capacity of Commissioner of Police, I have nothing to do with the regulation of trade, except with regard to false weights and measures. The short quantity complained of in paragraphs 1 and 4 of your Memorial appears to arise from dexterous manipulation, and not from the use of false measures."

"The practice of selling noxious rice, complained of in paragraph 2 of your Memorial, should be represented to the Municipal Commissioners, who can deal with it, under Section 166, Act IX of 1865."

4. For the last 10 or 12 years, rice and other grains have been selling at an unusually enhanced rate. The rice vendors have combined among themselves to levy, and continue to levy, quite unauthorizedly, certain fees and perquisites from their customers of all classes and creeds, for the performance of certain charities and religious festivals connected with some of the Hindu Pagodas in this town; and we beg to submit that, unless His Excellency in Council is pleased to order an inquiry to be made, and pass a law for the regulation of trade at the several rice mundies, and for fixing, from time to time, the rates at which rice and other grains should be sold, taking into consideration the state of the market at the time, the undersigned and millions of poorer classes would be reduced to the greatest hardship, poverty, and distress.

5. We, therefore, humbly beg to suggest the nomination of a Committee, composed of European and Native gentlemen, official and non-official, for the purpose of investigating and reporting, for the information and orders of Government, the causes of the high prices at which rice and other grains are at present sold, and the measures they would suggest to remedy the grievances complained of by us.

For this act of kindness we shall feel highly grateful.

No. 143. ORDER THEREON, 25th May 1866, No. 534.

The Governor in Council does not think that any advantage would result from the appointment of a Committee for the purpose of inquiring into the causes of the rise in the price of rice and other commodities.

2. The prices of grain and of all other commodities are governed by the ordinary laws of supply and demand, and any interference with them by the Executive Government would be very objectionable.

3. In regard to the alleged irregularities on the part of the rice vendors, to which the petitioners allude, His Excellency in Council observes that they should adopt the course pointed out to them by the Commissioner of Police, in his letter, of which an extract is given in their former petition.

(True Extract).

Chief Secretary.

To C. Moothoosawmy Chetty, and others, Madras.

Exd. J. H. Burns.

Madras 4 May 1866

*J. H. Garstin Esq.
Private Secretary to the
Right Honble the Governor*

*Sir,
We beg that you will be pleased to lay
the enclosed Memorial before His Lordship the
Governor, and solicit His Lordship's favorable
consideration of the prayer of the Memorial as therein
contained.*

We beg to remain,

*Sir,
Your Most Obedient Servants,
C. Moothoosawmy Chetty
C. Moothoosawmy Chetty
C. Ramaswami Aiyar
C. Muthuswami Aiyar
M. Muthuswami Aiyar
C. Rajakrishnan Aiyar
S. Parthasarathy Aiyar*

*It is requested
that the Reply
may be addressed
To
C. Moothoosawmy Chetty & others
Palliyappa Street,
near Changa Bazaar
S. P. Madras*

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following
Petition from C. Mootoo-sawmy Chetty &
others. Madras.

New Entries 9th May 1866.

Order thereon 25 May 1866 N: 534.

The Governor in
Council does not think
that any advantage would
result from the appoint-
ment of a Committee for
the purpose of enquiring
into the causes of the
rise in the price of rice
and other commodities.

2. The prices of grain
and of all other com-
modities are governed
by the ordinary laws

To be handed to Mr.
Arthur who will have
the goodness to produce
it at the next meeting
of Council.

(B) adn. 1.

J. H. Gairdner

12/5/66 P.S.

Enclosure

No 577.

Forwarding a Memorial
to H.E. the Governor respecting
the appointment of a Committee
to enquire into the price
in the price of grain at
the Presidency.

142.

16 May
1866

Public 1866 Dept
From
C. Mootoo-sawmy Chetty
Atty in Palliappan Street
Madras

2/9/66
4/11/66

of supply and demand,
and any interference with
them by the Executive
Government would be
very objectionable.

3. In regard to the
alleged irregularities on
the part of the Rice Vendors,
to which the Petitioners
allude, His Excellency
in Council observes that
they should adopt the
course pointed out to them
by the Commissioner of Police
in his letter of which an
extract is given in their
former Petition.

To ~~Petitioners~~ C. Northcote & Co.
Chetty & others - Madras.

Sept. 7.

Feb 11 1867, Department.

No. *5231*

PROCEEDINGS OF GOVERNMENT.

Dated *25th Aug 1868*

Press No. 4266, G. M.—12466—500.

142.143.