

Public (1897) Department.

ORDINARY MS.

G.O., No. 544

DATED 12-5-97.

INDEXED.

[Despatch Abstract.]

Receiving a letter from India to the Straits
Settlements expressing concurrence with
the suggestion that the Govt of Perak should
adopt the Straits draft ordinance for the
protection of natives of India employed in
that state

J 14/5/97

BACK PAPERS.

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

FURTHER PAPERS.

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

[Pub.
29.
3,000-5-3-97.]

Public (1897) Department.

CURRENT No. 1457

H. M. and Co.
Order W. 5448 12th May 97
mis

From Govt. Dept of R & B
Bengal

Recorded

No. 453
11-6

Dated 27-3-97

Received 12
Dated 13
Registered 13 } - 4-97

Cert.
27-4-97
M. 29-4-97

Note - In letter N° 1157 of 27.10.96 (K) Enclosures 1.

This Govt approved (with certain remarks) Spare copies

of the provisions of the draft Bill

(received from the Govt of India) to repeal

the Straits Immigration Ordinance

of 1884, & to supersede Ordinance

No. 1 of 1892.

In March 1896 (J) India forwarded a copy of the

that Govt Concurred in

the suggestion that

the Straits draft Ord

1895 for information & remarks.

This Govt's opinion thereon was

Expressed in its letter N° 931

Public d/28. 8. 96 (H)

SUBJECT.

Forwarding for information

Copy of letter to the

the Colonial Secy Straits

Settlements. Shatin

that Govt Concurred in

the suggestion that

Govt of Perak should

the Straits draft Ord

1895 for information & remarks.

This Govt's opinion thereon was

Expressed in its letter N° 931

Public d/28. 8. 96 (H)

The Straits foot has suggested that the foot of Perak should adopt the Straits draft Ordinance, and India sends for information copy of letter to the Straits foot concurring in its suggestion and expressing the hope that the foot of Perak will agree thereto mutatis mutandis.

The papers may be recorded pending a further communication on the subject

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
for	930-1	Pub	28-8-96
	1156-57		27-10-96

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FILE No. 11 of 1896.
SERIAL No. 5.

No. 7843-96, dated Singapore, the 23rd November 1896.

From—The Hon'ble the Colonial Secretary, Straits Settlements,
To—The Secretary to the Government of India.

In reply to your letter No. 1644—11-4 of the 24th September last, in which you invite the views of this Government on certain points raised by the Madras Government on Perak Order in Council No. 9 of 1895, for the protection of Natives of India employed in that State, I am directed to state that it is understood that the Government of Perak will be glad to adopt the Straits draft Ordinance (*mutatis mutandis*) sent to you for approval by my letter No. 6412* of the 23rd August last, with whatever modifications may be agreed upon between the Government of India and that of the Colony, so that a discussion of the terms of the Perak Order of 1895 may ultimately prove to be superfluous.

2. As regards the points raised in Madras, the Government of the Colony concurs in the view of the Government of Madras (paragraph 2) that the Emigration Agent appointed by this Colony should be the Agent at Negapatam for the whole Malay Peninsula, but any local officers whose duties will lie entirely in Perak, appointed for supervising the comfort and health, the landing, lodging, and forwarding of Indian labourers in the State itself, should be appointed in terms of section 4.

3. As regards indentured labourers, the maximum duration of indenture should be reduced to 600 working days—the penalty attendant on withdrawing from a contract should be reduced almost to that proposed for the Colony, *viz.*, 20 dollars (Colonial draft Ordinance, section 18). I write *almost* because it costs more to take a labourer to Perak than to Penang and if \$20 be adopted for the Colony, \$25 should suffice for Perak.

4. Wages—the *minimum* rate of wages should be—
Males 17 cents for first 300 days and 19 cents thereafter;
Females and boys 13 and 15 cents for each period respectively.
The old present of a day's pay for an idle Sunday being abrogated. A boy should cease to be counted a boy after the age of 16.

These are the wages proposed in the Straits draft Ordinance, section 23.
As between the Colony and Perak, it seems inadvisable to make any distinction in the *minimum* rate because the districts of Krian in Perak and Province Wellesley in the Colony are the only districts in which indentured labour is employed (chiefly in sugar planting) and these districts adjoin each other.

5. On the matter of wages generally the Government of the Colony observes that the legal minimum rate of wages affects only a small proportion of the Indian labourers imported, *viz.*, those who work under indentures.

Arrivals in Penang.

YEARS.	Free.	Under indenture.	Contracts of old immigrants renewed.
1893	15,877	2,106	270
1894	13,155	1,688	191
1895	14,413	1,549	168

and even this small proportion is not affected by the minimum for the whole period of indenture, because as soon as a labourer acquires sufficient experience to be able to do good work it becomes his interest to accept piece work from his employer on which he can earn the same wages as the free labourers.

As a consequence the only class practically affected by minimum rate of wages is that of newly employed, or physically weak indentured labourers which forms less than 10 per cent. of the immigrants.

6. The great majority of immigrant labourers is quite unaffected by the minimum rate fixed by law—they sell their labour at the market rate which is considerably higher than the legal minimum. Indeed free labourers in Perak have been known to obtain, when physically fit, in some cases, as much as half a dollar a day, but only in districts at a considerable distance from Krian.

7. As regards cost of living, it must be remembered that the scarcity value attained by the rupee is making the Malay Peninsula dependent for rice, not as formerly, on India and Burma, but rather on Siam and Saigon where there is a bullion silver currency which admits of a cheaper production than may be the case in India.

8. For all these considerations the Straits Government is inclined to consider the legal minimum rate of wages has been fixed sufficiently high in the draft Colonial Ordinance enclosed in my letter of the 28th August last, and that the minimum rate in Perak should be made equal thereto.

G. I. C. P. O.—No. 1107 R. A.—16-1-97.—40.—W. D'B

AK.
29/4/97.

12/5/97.

No. 422
11-6

FROM

DENZIL IBBETSON, Esq., C.S.I.,
Secretary to the Government of India,

TO

The Honourable the Colonial Secretary,
Straits Settlements.

CHIEF SECRETARY
12 APR. 1897
GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Calcutta, the 27th March 1897.

Department of Revenue
and Agriculture.

Emigration.

SIR,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 7843/96, dated 23rd November 1896, and to say that the Government of India concur with the suggestion that the Government of Perak should adopt the Straits draft Ordinance. In my letter No. 421 of to day's date, the Government of India have conveyed their satisfaction with the terms of the Ordinance in question, and they will be glad to hear that the Government of Perak has decided to substitute that Ordinance for Perak Order 9 of 1895, with such minor alterations as may be necessary.

I have etc.,

Sd. T.W. Holderness.

for Secretary.

1457 Pub

No. 423
11-6

Copy, with copy of the letter noted in the

From the Government of the Straits Settlements } margin, forwarded to
No. 7843 dated the 23rd November 1896.

the Government of

Madras, for information, with reference to their letter
No. 931 dated the 28th August 1896.

By order etc.,

455

Under Secretary.

When given for copying _____
When filed _____
When examined _____
When signed _____

189

READ AGAIN G.O., No. _____
189 ,

DATED

CURRENT No.

ENCLOSURES TO C. No.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT

A A A A A A A

LETTER OF GOVERNMENT.

STATEMENT WITH DITTO.

PAGES NOT FILLED UP, BEING WANT FOR DISPATCH
IN ORIGINAL.

N.B.—

A = Copy in full.
B = Not to be copied.
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