Public Works (1898) Department.

RAILWAY BRANCH.

G.O., No. 460

DATED 27th Aug. 1898

[Despatch Abstract.]

Bahamas Rly

Recs. Ltr. dft. ordering with remarks, that certain precautionary measures be taken in connection with the ensuing Asylum Festival in the Bethany Dist. in view to the prevention of a possible occurrence of ——— Caused to the Lay Asst. Concerned

———

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.

Government {1898} of Madras.

LOCAL AND MUNICIPAL.

P.W. Ry C no 123

Recd 25-1-98

Recd. }
} 1898.
Regd. }

Enclosures

Spare copies

RECEIVED JOINT STOCK COMPANIES REGISTRY MADRAS 1898

G.O., No. 158 M., 19th January 1898.

JANUARY.

Mylar Festival.

Ordering, with remarks, that certain precautionary measures be taken in connection with the ensuing — in the Bellary district in view to the prevention of a possible occurrence of bubonic plague.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

LOCAL AND MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following paper:—

From E. A. ELWIN, Esq., Acting Collector of Bellary, to the Secretary to Government, Local and Municipal Department, dated 12th January 1898, No. 18.

Having regard to the prevalence of plague at Belgaum and other parts of the Bombay Presidency traversed by the Southern Mahratta Railway, I have the honour to request that Government will be pleased to consider the advisability of prohibiting the holding this year of the annual "Karnikam" festival at Mylar in the Hadagalli taluk of this district. Accounts of the previous two celebrations of the festival are to be found in G.Os., No. 763 L., and No. 1262 L., dated 27th April 1896, and 3rd July 1897, respectively.

2. The festival has been fixed for 5th proximo and following days, and is likely to attract some 15,000 or 20,000 pilgrims, half of whom would come from the Belgaum and Dharwar districts, and the rest partly from Mysore and partly from this district.

3. Mylar is situated close to the Tungabhadra river at the western extremity of this district, and the nearest railway stations are Devaragudda, 10 miles distant, and Ranibennur, 15 miles distant, on the Harihar branch of the Southern Mahratta Railway. I beg to enclose for easy reference a rough map taken from the Railway Guide, in which I have marked the position of the village.

4. The Sanitary Commissioner, the District Medical and Sanitary Officer and the Head Assistant are all of opinion that the celebration of the festival should, if possible, be stopped, apprehending as they do the introduction of plague into this district by the visitors from the Bombay Presidency, and as a precedent for prohibiting festivals I would invite attention to the enclosed circular received from the Collector of Belgaum notifying that, under the orders of the Bombay Government, the fair at Yellamma Hill in his district, originally fixed for 9th ultimo, would not be allowed to take place. On the other hand, there is no doubt of the importance of the Mylar festival, as will appear from the following extract from the District Manual (page 294):—

"After Hampi, the festival held at Mylar is the best attended. It is held after the harvest, and the people encamp in the fields being spread over a space about a mile square. The Tungabhadra is close by, so that there is an abundant supply of pure fresh water, and as there is no necessity for the pilgrims to crowd together as at Hampi, disease does not often break out. There is one custom which is peculiar to this festival. On the great day in the evening when the worship is completed and the offerings made, the deity deigns in the person of a child to lift the veil of the future, and in the presence of the assembled thousands to utter one sentence prophetic of future events. A little child is held up on the shoulders of the priests and closing in his arms the iron bow of the god upheld by the priests, he utters the words put into his mouth by the god.

* * * * *

Great faith appears to be placed by the people in these words heard at these times, and as there seems to be the same vagueness about them as characterised the utterances of the Delphic oracle, it is probable that their faith is never put to any severe test."

5. Should Government think it inadvisable or unnecessary to stop the festival, I would suggest that the issue of tickets by the Southern Mahratta Railway Company to the two stations mentioned in paragraph 3 *supra* during the first week of next month be forbidden, and that either the Sanitary Commissioner or the Deputy Sanitary Commissioner be instructed to be present at the festival for the purpose of assisting the local officers with his advice.

6. The favour of very early orders on this reference is solicited.

ORDER—No. 158 M., dated 19th January 1898.

The Government considers that it will be sufficient to prohibit the sale of railway tickets to the two stations referred to by the Collector and to one more station on each side, to persons from the Bombay Presidency intending to be present at the festival, as well as the attendance of such persons at the festival.

2. The following telegram will accordingly be despatched to the Government of Bombay:—

"An important festival called Karnikam festival largely attended by pilgrims from Belgaum and Dharwar districts, begins at Mylar in Bellary district, fifth proximo. Madras Government requests Bombay Government to prohibit by notification, under Epidemic Diseases Act, issue of railway tickets to Byadgi, Devargudda, Ranibennur and Chalgeri stations in first week of February to any pilgrim or person intending to attend festival from Bombay Presidency and also prohibit attendance at festival of persons from Bombay side."

3. The following notification will also be published in the Fort St. George and the Bellary District Gazettes:—

NOTIFICATION.

WHEREAS the Governor in Council is satisfied that there is a danger of an outbreak of dangerous epidemic disease at Mylar in the Bellary district, if pilgrims from the Bombay Presidency are permitted to visit Mylar on the occasion of the Karnikam festival which is to be held there on the 5th February next and the following days;

In exercise of the powers delegated to him under section 2, sub-section (3) of the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897, by the Governor-General in Council, His Excellency the Governor of Fort St. George in Council is pleased to direct that no person in the Bombay Presidency shall be permitted to visit Mylar from the 1st to the 7th day of February next, both days inclusive.

4. The above notification should be enforced by providing a patrol along the bank of the Tungabhadra river and the Collector is requested to arrange for it at once in communication with the Inspector-General of Police and the Commissioner of Salt and Abkári Revenue. It is understood that there is at present no such press of work as to prevent the Salt and Abkári establishment in Bellary and Anantapur from giving the necessary help in this matter. The services of the Bellary and Anantapur Circle Inspectors, half a dozen Sub-Inspectors and about fifty peons might therefore be utilised for the purpose.

5. With reference to paragraph 5 of the Collector's letter, it is observed that it would be sufficient if the Divisional Officer and the District Medical and Sanitary Officer are present at the festival.

(True Extract.)

V Rajhara Chari
for Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Collector of Bellary.
" Commissioner of Salt and Abkári Revenue (through the Revenue Department).
" Inspector-General of Police (through the Judicial Department).
" Surgeon-General.
" Sanitary Commissioner.
" Public Works Department (Railway Branch).
Gazette.

Exd. A. F Eccleston.

P. W. DEPARTMENT
Ry: Branch

No. 146.R dated 27/1/98.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

READ the following.

Progs: of the Madras Govt. L & M Depts. } No. E. Rv 158 M of 19 January 98

Communicated to the Railway Administrations for information :-

CMM. 25/1
R

27/1/98

To
The Agent & Manr. S.I.Ry.
— 4 — Agent S. I. Ry.
— 4 — Agent & Chf. Engr. M & S Ry.
— 4 — Agent & Manr. H. H. Nizam's Ry.
— 4 — Manager Port Conolly Ry.
— 4 — Consg. Engr. for Rys.

Despatched on 27.1.98

[P. W. 40 / 1000 — 26-11-97.]