

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	1433	Press
		Mis.
	395-396	
Dated	27-6-	1867.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
27th June 1867.*

No. 395. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 11th May 1867, No. 2,897. *

Read the following letter from the Collector of Ganjam, to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Chetterpore, 4th April 1867, No. 968 :—

1. From Order of Government, No. 524, dated 2nd ultimo, and communicated to me with Board's Proceedings, No. 1,760, of 21st idem, I learn with extreme regret that the Government have concluded to impose a Road Cess on the ryots of the Zemindary estates of Ganjam calculated on the rent they pay to the Zemindars.

2. As, however, this decision seems to have been arrived at under an impression that the statements I had the honour to lay before the Government on this subject in my letter, No. 3,235, of the 22nd November last, were incorrect, or perhaps not convincing, I owe it both to the Government and to myself to repeat, in the most positive terms, that (with the exception of a few cases in which a still higher money-rent is levied) the settlement in the Ooriya Zemindaries is based on an equal division of gross produce between the landlord and his tenant; the Rajah Bagum and Ryot Begum representing ordinarily fifty per cent. each of the harvest, and the former being in some few cases more than fifty per cent. Hence as a rule the Zemindary ryot pays a rent of fifty per cent., and the same system obtains in the rental of Inam lands. I confidently challenge contradiction to what I have now stated, and in effect these facts are so well-known in this district, that it would excite general surprise to hear that they had been questioned by the Government. I earnestly hope, therefore, that the Government will be induced to forego the intention of imposing upon an impoverished class a higher cess than they propose to levy from their own ryots. I may add that no machinery exists at present for collecting a new cess from ryots in the Zemindaries, or for laying it out there when collected. We have no Revenue Inspectors, or Talook Officers, resident in the Zemindary estates.

1. In compliance with the Collector's wishes, the foregoing letter will be submitted to Government with reference to the papers quoted by him.

2. The Board must observe, however, that Mr. Forbes appears to them to be altogether mistaken in supposing that the decision of Government was in any way influenced by doubts of the accuracy of his assertion that ryots in Zemindaries paid higher for their land to the Zemindar than Government ryots pay to Government.

3. It seems to the Board that the decision of Government was based simply on the impracticability of so adjusting the Road Cess as to obtain exact equality of taxation, and in the absence of any necessity in the case of so light a tax, imposed for the exclusive and manifest benefit of the payers, for attempting to do so.

4. The Board as now constituted fully concur in the propriety of this decision, and they are unable, therefore, to support Mr. Forbes's request that it should be re-considered. Though the rents paid by the tenants of private landlords are doubtless frequently, if not always, in excess of the assessment paid by Government ryots, it is quite impossible to say, with any pretension to accuracy, in what

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
27th June 1867.*

ratio private rents exceed those paid to the State, and there are inequalities probably quite as great in the latter, *inter se*.

5. Supposing that Mr. Forbes's calculations are perfectly correct, and that the Road Cess was assessed at 6 pies in the rupee on Government ryots, and at 4½ pies in the rupee on Zemindary ryots, then the latter on a rental of Rupees 50 would pay Rupees 1-3-0 as Road Cess, while the former paying an equal amount of assessment, would pay Rupees 1-9-0, or only six Annas more annually. It is obvious then that, practically, the existence of such minute irregularities may safely be disregarded in the case of a tax which is levied solely for the benefit of the payers, and will confer such advantages on them.

6. The instructions in paragraph 2 of the Order of Government will prevent the inequality, such as it is, from appearing invidious, for inasmuch as the Zemindary tracts are generally separated from the Government villages, the ryots of the latter will not benefit to any appreciable extent by the contributions of the Zemindary tenants.

7. The Board would also remark that the Collector's proposal, if carried out to its logical conclusion, would involve that ryots in Zemindary estates should be charged a less rate for their salt, a lower export duty for their grain, and generally be taxed more lightly than other people.

8. With reference to his remark that there is no machinery by which the Road Cess can be collected in the Zemindaries, the Collector will be referred to the Act, from which he will observe that the cess is payable by the proprietors themselves, so that no Government establishment for collecting it will be needed.

No. 396.

ORDER THEREON, 27th June 1867, No. 1,433.

Miscellaneous.

The Government see no reason to modify their decision already expressed.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

Exd. S. R. Augustin.

7. The Board would also remark that the Collector's proposal, if carried out to its logical conclusion, would involve that ryots in Zemindary estates should be charged a less rate for their salt, a lower export duty for their grain, and generally be taxed more lightly than other people.

8. With reference to his remark that there is no machinery by which the Road Cess can be collected in the Zemindaries, the Collector will be referred to the Act, from which he will observe that the cess is payable by the proprietors themselves, so that no Government establishment for collecting it will be needed.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

Copy to the Collector of Ganjam.

Exd. J. Wright.

The Govt. in answer to the Collector's proposal to modify the decision already expressed. 27th June 1867.

1.395x096

Submitting with remarks letter from Collector of Ganjam requesting reconsideration of question of the imposition of Road Cess on ryots of Zemindary estates at the same rate as is levied on Government ryots.

No. 2,897.

Dated 11th May 1867.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE.

No. 1253.

1867.

Department.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 11th May 1867. 1

Read the following letter from G. S. FORBES, Esq., Collector of Ganjam, to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Chatterpore, 4th April 1867, No. 968:—

1. From Order of Government, No. 524, dated 2nd ultimo, and communicated to me with Board's Proceedings, No. 1,760, of 21st idem, I learn with extreme regret that the Government have concluded to impose a Road Cess on the ryots of the Zemindary estates of Ganjam calculated on the rent they pay to the Zemindars.

2. As, however, this decision seems to have been arrived at under an impression that the statements I had the honour to lay before the Government on this subject in my letter, No. 3,235, of the 22nd November last were incorrect, or perhaps not convincing, I owe it both to the Government and to myself to repeat, in the most positive terms, that (with the exception of a few cases in which a still higher money-rent is levied) the settlement in the Ooriya Zemindaries is based on an equal division of gross produce between the landlord and his tenant; the Rajah Bagum and Ryot Begum representing ordinarily 50 per cent. each of the harvest, and the former being in some few cases more than 50 per cent. Hence as a rule the Zemindary ryot pays a rent of 50 per cent., and the same system obtains in the rental of Inam lands. I confidently challenge contradiction to what I have now stated, and in effect these facts are so well-known in this district, that it would excite general surprise to hear that they had been questioned by the Government. I earnestly hope, therefore, that the Government will be induced to forego the intention of imposing upon an impoverished class a higher cess than they propose to levy from their own ryots. I may add that no machinery exists at present for collecting a new cess from ryots in the Zemindaries, or for laying it out there when collected. We have no Revenue Inspectors, or Taluk Officers, resident in the Zemindary estates.

1. In compliance with the Collector's wishes the foregoing letter will be submitted to Government with reference to the papers quoted by him.

2. The Board must observe, however, that Mr. Forbes appears to them to be altogether mistaken in supposing that the decision of Government was in any way influenced by doubts of the accuracy of his assertion that ryots in Zemindaries paid higher for their land to the Zemindar than Government ryots pay to Government.

3. It seems to the Board that the decision of Government was based simply on the impracticability of so adjusting the Road Cess as to obtain exact equality of taxation, and on the absence of any necessity in the case of so light a tax, imposed for the exclusive and manifest benefit of the payers, for attempting to do so.

4. The Board as now constituted fully concur in the propriety of this decision, and they are unable, therefore, to support Mr. Forbes's request that it should be reconsidered. Though the rents paid by the tenants of private landlords are doubtless frequently, if not always, in excess of the assessment paid by Government ryots, it is quite impossible to say, with any pretension to accuracy, in what ratio private rents exceed those paid to the State, and there are inequalities probably quite as great in the latter, *inter se*.

5. Supposing that Mr. Forbes's calculations are perfectly correct, and that the Road Cess was assessed at 6 pies in the rupee on Government ryots, and at 4½ pies in the rupee on Zemindary ryots, then the latter on a rental of Rupees 50 would pay Rupees 1-3-0 as Road Cess, while the former paying an equal amount of assessment, would pay Rupees 1-9-0, or only six annas more annually. It is obvious then that, practically, the existence of such minute irregularities may safely be disregarded in the case of a tax which is levied solely for the benefit of the payers, and will confer such advantages on them.

6. The instructions in paragraph 2 of the Order of Government will prevent the inequality, such as it is, from appearing invidious, for inasmuch as the Zemindary tracts are generally separated from the Government villages, the ryots of the latter will not benefit to any appreciable extent by the contributions of the Zemindary tenants.