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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue. DEPARTMENT

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
24th July 1874.*

No. 203. From D. BARBOUR, Esq., Under-Secretary to the Government of India, Financial Department, to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras, dated Fort William, 4th July 1874, No. 4,199.

With reference to your letter, No. 476, dated 21st April 1874, I am directed to inquire whether the Government of Madras considers the Laccadive Islands are in British India as the term is used in Section 3, Act VI. of 1863, and whether the status of the Maldivé Islands is the same as that of the Maldivé group.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) C. G. MASTER,
Acting Secretary to Government.

Edw. F. R. Bantlesian

Maldiva Islands.—A vast group of islands in the Indian Ocean, estimated at twelve hundred; extending southward from lat. 7° 6½ N. to 0° 42' S. The islands are formed into large groups which the natives call Atoll or Atollon. Of these there are nineteen, and they appear to be the summits of coral mountains. The inhabitants are Mahomedans, governed by a Sultan or King, and engage in trade and navigation. The Maldiva and Lakkadive islands have the Arabic Alphabet, but their language is Singhalese. The group extend 166 geographical miles in length and 46 or 48 miles in breadth. Between the islands the water is of great depth, but on the surrounding reefs the waves beat with great violence. The reefs have openings which admit ships to enter, and though the water inside the Atoll is generally shallow and calm the depth is sufficient to allow vessels to pass from one side to another. The number of the islands is supposed by the natives to be 1,200; but it is generally believed that there are much more numerous. Mab, the largest island in L. 4° 10' N. and L. 73° 40' E., is seven miles in circumference, and contains about 2,000 people. There are four safe channels through the islands. The soil is sandy; all the islands are densely clothed with palms, fig trees, bread-fruit trees, and a thick jungle covers them all. Indian corn, sugarcane, and millet are grown in a few. There are no sheep or goats, but there are a few cattle, and the inhabitants live chiefly on fish and coconuts. They trade with India, carrying in boats coconuts, copra, salt-fish, coconut-oil, cori, jaggery, coral, ornamental mats, tortoise shell, and cowries, and import grain, cotton, silk, and tobacco. The population of the latter group is estimated at 150,000 to 200,000. They are all Mahomedans who do not conceal their women. They are governed by a ruler who is styled Sultan of the thirteen Atolls and twelve thousand Isles, but who is tributary to the British Government of Ceylon. The people are quiet and inoffensive and little accustomed to war. The larger islands produce edible roots, fruits, and poultry, and they traffic with Sumatra. The bread-fruit, coconut, and fish are the chief food of the people.—Memoir by Lieut. J. A. Young and W. Christopher, I.N., in *Bombay Geog. Trans.* 1835—1838; and in *Bombay reprint Vol. 2, pt. 4, En cyc. Brit.*

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923
REVENUE DEPARTMENT,
OOTACAMUND,
24th July 1874.

No. 923.

No. 204.

To

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,

FINANCIAL DEPARTMENT.

Miscellaneous.

SIR:—In reply to Mr. Under-Secretary Balfour's letter, dated 22 July 1874,

No. 4,199, I am directed to state, for the

information of the Government of India, that there is no doubt of the Laccadive Islands coming under the definition of Territories vested in Her Majesty within the meaning of the Statute 21 and 22, Victoria Cap. CVI.

2. The status of these islands is entirely different from that of the Maldiva group. An extract from Dr. Balfour's Cyclopaedia respecting the Maldiva Islands is appended.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed) C. G. MASTER,

Acting Secretary to Government.

Kind F. B. Gentlemen.

24-9-1874

24th July 1874

Received of the
Hon. Secy to the Govt of India

Government of India

24th July 1874

2/5/1874

Revenue Department
24th July 1874

The Secretary to the Government of India
Financial Department

Sir,

I in reply to Mr.
Under Secretary Portland
letter dated 14th July 1874
No. 4099, I am directed to
state for the information
of the Govt of India that
there is no doubt of the
Laccadive Islands coming
under the definition of
Territories vested in Her
Majesty within the
meaning of the Statute
21 & 22 Victoria Cap. 64.
2. The status of these
islands is entirely dif-
ferent from that of the
Maldiva group. The
extract

extract from Dr. Belfour
Encyclopedia respecting
the Maldive Islands
is appended

E. H. C.

W. C. M. O. L.

Maldiver Islands. A vast group of islands in the Indian Ocean, estimated at twelve hundred; extending southward from lat. $7^{\circ} 62' N$, to $8^{\circ} 42' S$. The islands are formed into large groups which the natives call Atoll or Atollon. Of these there are nineteen, and they appear to be the summits of coral mountains. The inhabitants are Mahomedans, governed by a Sultan or King, and engage in trade and navigation. The Maldiver and Lakkadive islands have the Arabic alphabet, but their language is Singhalese. The group extend 400 geographical miles in length and 40 or 48 miles in breadth. Between the islands the water is of great depth but on the surrounding reefs the waves beat with great violence. The reefs have openings which admit ships to enter, and though the water inside the atolls is generally shallow and calm, the depth is sufficient to allow vessels to pass from one side to another. The number of the islands is supposed by the natives to be 1200, but it is generally believed that there are much more numerous. Make the

larger

largest island in cl. 4° 10' N and cl. 73° 40' E
is 7 miles in circumference and contains about
2000 people. There are four safe channels
through the islands. The soil is sandy, all
the islands are densely clothed with palms,
fig trees, bread fruit trees and a thick
jungle covers them all. Indian corn, sugar-
cane and millet are grown in a few. There
are no sheep or goats, but there are a few
cattle and the inhabitants live chiefly on
fish and coconuts. They trade with India,
carrying in boats coconuts, coir, salt,
fish, coconut oil, coir, jaggery, coral,
ornamental nuts, tortoise shell and cowries,
and import grain, cotton silk and tobacco.
The population of the latter group is esti-
mated at 100,000 to 200,000. They are
all Malaysians, who do not conceal their
women. They are governed by a ruler
who is styled Sultan of the Thirteen Atolls
and whose domain is the whole of the
Lakshadweep Islands. He is
tributary to the British Government of
Ceylon. The people are quiet and unoffensive
and well accustomed to war. The larger
islands produce little, coals, fruit and
poultry.

poultry and they traffic with Sumatra.
The bread fruit, coconut and fish are
the chief food of the people — allusion
by Lieut. J. A. Young and W. Christopher, I. N., in
Bombay Geog. Trans. 1826-1838, and in Bombay
reprint vol. 7. 54. Encyc. Brit. —

Revenue Department.

The Secretary to the Govt. of India.
Financial Department.

Sir, In reply to your letter No. 404
dated 11th instant A.D. 1909, I
am directed to state for the informa-
tion of the Government of India -
that there is no doubt

that the islands of the
Laccadive Islands coming
under the definition of Territories
mentioned in the Statute 21 & 22
Victoria Cap. CXL.

21/

of the Laccadive Islands coming
under the definition of Territories
mentioned in the Statute 21 & 22
Victoria Cap. CXL.

These islands do not form
part of the Maldivian group, the
status of which is described in
the Statute 21 & 22 Victoria Cap. CXL.
The Laccadive Islands of India
are entirely different from
those of the Laccadives.

The Laccadive Islands are not
Laccadives and the
Laccadives must be under
the Laccadive Islands.

Q. U.

Many more are
 uninhabited islands
 & some uninhabited
 small islands
 called the
 Shetland group

Laccadive, or Laccadives, an archi-
 pelago of low islands, off the coast of Malabar,
 extending from lat. $8^{\circ}30' N$ to the parallel of
 $13^{\circ}52' N$, and from 71° to $75^{\circ}50' E$. Most of
 the islands are low, and surrounded by steep
 coral reefs. The Laccadives form a group of
 32 small islands, west of the Malabar coast,
 surrounded by coral shoals. The inhabitants
 subsist mostly on coconuts and fish, and
 their chief trade is in coconuts, oil, coir,
 jaggery and coral. The inhabitants
 call them the Lakkera-deech. Ptolemy
 mentions them as the Limuria Insula, but
 Ammianus Marcellus, in the fourth century
 styles them merely Divi, and the Arabs
 and Persians call them Dehajal. They
 were rediscovered in 1498 by Vasco da Gama
 and afterwards plundered by the Portuguese.
 They were then subject to the Malabar
 chiefs of Cannanore, some of them at times
 were under the Bedar queens of Bednore,
 and latterly under the Beys of Cannanore
 and the British, and between the last
 two they are now apportioned. They were
 visited in 1844-45 by Mr. W. Robinson.

and in 1867 by Mr. Seale; 8 or 10 islands are more or less inhabited, and each with 2 or 3 miles of superficial area. They are all about 15 or 20 miles apart, separated by great channels, but none of the islands are more than 10 to 15 feet above the sea level. The people are estimated to be 7000 in numbers. They are of Malay origin, but are now Mohammedans and adhere to the Alpyan religion, or deaconism as it is called, though some of the islands are adopting the Hindu law. They are peaceable and inoffensive, make good pilots and use a dialect of Malayalam. They produce the coconut palm and corn, jagged and a few pulses: a few cattle, sweet potatoes and betel nut. The cedar oil and a number of plants are grown, tortoise shell, holothurians or sea eels, mats, shells, shark and fish. Their boats vary from one to fifteen tons burden, and they visit all the western coast of India from Cochin to Calcutta. They are taught Arabic and Persian (a dialect of the Malayalam) in the mosques, by the priests. There are 19 coral islands, but

but the approach to most of them is very dangerous, as they are surrounded by reefs and steep rocks with a great depth of water close to them. The largest island is about 7 miles long and $2\frac{1}{2}$ broad, and there are many navigable channels between the islands, the largest of which is the Narmada or the Nira-degus channel. They pay £1,000 of tribute to the British Government. The islands are very difficult to find in thick, squally weather, as scarcely any of them rise more than six feet from the surface of the water: they have a novel appearance when first coming in sight, as the coconut trees with which they are thickly covered, have the appearance of growing out of the sea. They are all of coral formation, and very few have any anchorage near them. As a rule, no bottom is found at a hundred fathoms close up to the beach. The four northern islands are Chittai, Kithan, Armini and Cardamum. — Johnson, Gazetteer; Mr. William Robertson's Report, Mr. Seale's Report.

Not used by previous writers