

(1) Number of pages 4
(2) Date of repair 12.7.80
(3) Initials of the Referencer _____

TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	1907	Press.
B.P. No.		Mis.
Dated	A. 4. 1877	197

Not to be folded or roughly handled.

1907
7

No. 537. Read the following endorsement of the Chief Secretary :—

From J. O'SHAUGHNESSY, Esq., District Engineer of Nellore, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Nellore, 17th January 1877, No. 174.

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your memorandum, No. 72, dated the 12th instant, calling for a revised estimate of grain requirements and for explanation of the method of paying coolies on the East Coast Canal.

2. I have only just returned from travelling over the whole line of the canal, and your memorandum reached me only yesterday. I am therefore unable to forward an estimate of grain requirements *immediately*, but I shall do so in a few days or as soon as I get some necessary information from the Collector and Executive Officers regarding the stocks in hand.

3. In regard to the method of paying coolies, I beg to explain that there are three classes now employed who are working on different systems.

1st.—Contractors who employ large numbers of people and who take up a mile, half a mile, or other comparatively large sections of the canal.

2nd.—Petty contractors who form themselves into gangs of about 10, 20, 50, &c., people, and who take up pits of a few yards in length of the canal at a time.

3rd.—People who will not form themselves into gangs, but who are formed into gangs by the canal officers. Pits in proportion to the strength of these gangs are marked out for them, and they have to be guided entirely and kept to work by the supervising establishment.

4. Large contractors are as a rule paid by cheque on the nearest treasury when they have completed a section of the canal. If they want money they are sometimes paid in part in the same way before the section is completely finished and in proportion to the quantity of work actually done, these contractors pay their workpeople partly in grain, and they have except in a few instances procured grain by private agency. In the case of the exceptional instances the contractors' arrangements for importing grain failed, and rice was then issued to them at cost price from the Government stores for distribution to their coolies. The contractors found some difficulty a short time ago in importing grain, and there was none procurable in the local markets. There is no difficulty now in either respect, but the large contractors are still breaking up, and it is probable that none of them will be at work shortly. The coolies find that they can get more money by petty contract or task-work, they are therefore leaving the contractors and taking up small pits on their own account and in direct communication with the canal officers. This is throwing more labor on the establishment, and is therefore causing some trifling additional cost to the work, but the people get what the contractor no doubt retained for his trouble and profit, and under existing circumstances it is, I think, as well they should.

5. The second-class, or petty contractors, form themselves voluntarily into gangs consisting of one family, two or three families, or perhaps the people of one village form themselves into a gang, pits are marked out to them consecutively according to the strength of the gangs. The work is frequently measured and the people are paid by cheque or cash, or partly in grain as they desire.

6. In the Iskapully division the grain is issued at the rate of 10 Rupees a bag or $7\frac{1}{2}$ measures for a rupee, which is a few annas per bag more than it has cost

including landing and carrying charges. In the Kanuparthi section, at the north end of the canal, each gang takes a pit of 100 yards in length of the canal, they are paid as frequently as they can desire by cheque on the Kanuparthi treasury, by cash, or by cheque and cash combined. The Guntur Comaties bring grain for sale to the work on this section, and sell it at nearly the same price as we could issue it from the Government stores. I propose to encourage this system along the whole line of canal by withholding Government rice when rice is *certainly* procurable in the local market. It would, I think, be advisable to increase, if necessary, the price of the work in proportion to the market price of grain in order to give the fullest encouragement to this system; but of course some caution would be necessary, the stock available in the market should be closely watched, and the Government reserve stock regulated accordingly. I beg to recommend this proposal for the approval of Government.

7. The third-class employed consists of the feeble and the lazy, who cannot or will not do more than they can possibly help, and who are satisfied with a mere subsistence. The emigrants forwarded by the Revenue Officers of Cuddapah, Bellary and Kurnool are entirely in this class; but a few of them will, I hope, when they see men of the second-class earning from 3 to 5 Annas a-day, endeavour to do more than they are doing at present. I must say in justice to the officers of Kurnool, that though the people they sent are painfully feeble, they are certainly a better lot than the emigrants from Bellary and Cuddapah.

8. The people of this class are divided into gangs similar to the second-class, the only difference being that daily rations are issued to them as follows:—

Men, 1 Nellore measure, or 2 lbs. rice, and 6 Pies in money.

Women, $\frac{3}{4}$ do. do.

4 Pies in money.

Boys and girls able to work, $\frac{1}{2}$ do. do. and 3 Pies in money.

at the present price of grain these rations are equivalent to daily wages of

$2\frac{1}{2}$ Annas for men,

$1\frac{1}{2}$ do. for women and

$1\frac{1}{4}$ do. for boys and girls able to work;

they are now issued irrespective of work turned out, but the work is or will be measured; and if it amounts at the contract rates to more than the cost of the rations the excess will be paid to the coolies. If it amounts to less the difference will be at a loss, so to speak, to Government. The gangs are however well supervised; they are employed systematically; no labor is wasted, and I am in hopes that the outturn of work will cover the cost of the rations at least.

9. The strength of each gang is so arranged that a bag of rice contains as nearly as possible a daily ration for each person. There is a head cooly or ganger and a Sapper in charge of each gang. The head cooly belongs to the party, and is sometimes selected by the people themselves. There is an Overseer in charge of from about 10 to 20 gangs, who reports to his Sub-Division Officer the number of people daily employed, upon which he receives the number of bags of rice and the amount of the money-rations required. The gangs are mustered after work, the bag of rice and the money for each gang is handed over for distribution to the ganger and Sapper of each party, and the Overseer moves about among the gangs to attend to complaints and to see that the rations are properly distributed.

10. The Sub-Division Officers also move about as much as possible on the occasions, and when the pit on which each gang is employed is completed it will be

measured and the account of each party settled before they move on to another pit. Bazaars have been established and are being established at each camp, where every person can get salt and the other small necessities for the money ration issued daily. Camps in the form shown in the enclosed sketch have been and are being erected at about 4 miles apart throughout the Iskapully division and in the northern section of the Kottapatam division. These camps will be enlarged and intermediate camps erected hereafter as required.

11. This is an outline of the arrangements I have made in personal communication with the Division and Sub-Division Officers, they are not in some cases perhaps strictly attended to yet, but they will be in full force along the whole line in a few days if not so already.

Communicated to the Department Public Works. Copy to the Collector of Nellore.

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Chief Secretary.

No. 538.

ORDER THEREON, 20th March 1877, No. 970.

CIVIL WORKS, No. 44.

On perusal of this report His Grace the Governor in Council does not consider it necessary to interfere with the petty

contract system on the East Coast Canal work, although not strictly in accordance with the general method of task-work for relief purposes.

2. It is less demoralizing to the labor, gives a fair return for money spent, and, what is of still more importance, it gives people heart and prevents crime. More strictness should however be exercised towards the class of laborers falling under category three of Mr. O'Shaughnessy's letter, the wage paid to whom is in excess of that sanctioned by Government—*vide* G.O., No. 225, dated 24th January 1877. Arrangements should be made for gradually reducing their labor to task-work, so as to bring it within the Government rates of payment.

(True Extract.)

Colonel,
Acting Joint Secy. to Govt., P.W.D.,
Buildings and Roads Branch.

To the District Engineer, Nellore.
" Revenue Department.
" Financial "

Exd. S. T. Austin.

Spare Copies

Rev. 1877 Sept
1907 7th 2041

Govt. of 1877
PUBLIC WORKS.

✓
Dist. ENGINEER
NELLORE
Sd. do.

1967
1

Dated March 20th.

Level

Dist. --- 31

G. O., 20th March 1877, No. 979.

MARCH

Nos. 537-538.

bank
3-11-77

For Govt. Canal Works, Nellore District
Passing orders on letter from the District
Engineer, Nellore, relative to the above
payments.

1907
Commanded at the Board of Revenue
4th April 1877

To The Board of Revenue