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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue DEPARTMENT

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Dated	2.1.1877	197

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
27th December 1876. No. 3,554.*

No. 603. Read the following endorsement of the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, dated Fort St. George, 23rd December 1876, No. 315 W :—

From Major J. O. HASTED, R.E., Superintending Engineer, Kistna, to Lieutenant-Colonel J. MULLINS, R.E., Chief Engineer for Irrigation, dated Masulipatam, 12th December 1876, No. 116.

In accordance with instructions received by telegram* from Government, I have

* 4th instant.

this day despatched my first telegram stating number of coolies employed on Famine Relief Works. My subsequent telegrams will be despatched on Tuesday of every week, that being the day on which, I understand, the Collector has been directed to telegraph.

2. The arrangements made in this district, in making which I have followed the instructions conveyed in your demi-official letters, are—one relief work has been started to the east of the river, the river embankment from Yanamalacudooroo towards the sea, to provide employment for the ordinary labor of this part of the district, as also for those in want, as distress spreads; and the extension of the Commamoor Canal from near Santaravoor to Peda Ganjam, for the employment of all famine coolies not only from the Kistna west of the river, but also from parts of Nellore and Kurnool Districts is being marked out.

3. As stated in my letter No. 103, dated 24th ultimo, I considered it necessary to start some work in the Eastern Delta, as the population of Divi was absolutely without food, and the ordinary labor of the district was beginning to emigrate in search of employment. The river embankment and East Bank Canal was the only work that could be taken up in the delta, as the wet crops have not yet been cut, and this was promptly laid out at Yanamalacudooroo and Royyoor; here there are upwards of 1,500 men at work, and they are at present doing task-work within estimated rates. Having lately been informed, however, that a large number of coolies about Nandigama are in distress, I have directed that they should be sent down to Yanamalacudooroo, and I have drawn all the labor at present on the work down to Royyoor that I may be able to separate those who are able and willing to work at usual rates, and famine coolies who can barely earn subsistence. Mr. Norris, Executive Engineer, is in charge of the whole work, and I propose to place Mr. Supervisor Taylor under him on arrival, also two Overseers. Mr. Assistant Engineer has been ordered to Masulipatam to carry on the ordinary work of the division for Mr. Norris.

4. The Commamoor Canal is being marked out as proposed in my letter No. 103, dated 24th ultimo, and I am expecting daily that some 2,500 coolies who were at work on daily pay on the road from Chila to Perala, for which funds were provided by the Local Fund Boards, are on their way to the work. Lieutenant Boddie, R.E., is in charge of the work, and Supervisor Muhammad Khassim has been sent down to assist him. Materials for hutting and to be despatched, also a supply of grain in case the local markets fail on arrival of the work-people, the Collector has placed a Hospital Assistant at my disposal for the work, and I have applied for a small police guard.

5. At present the arrangements for supplying food are not satisfactory; the local Comaties are quite unable to supply a large number of men, and at one time we were

in great difficulty on the river embankment, as even the Bezwada bazaarmen refused to sell rice. Mr. Norris was able to obtain food for the coolies one day, only by going himself into the bazaar and purchasing himself what was necessary. I have offers from the merchants of Masulpatam to supply any quantity of rice, and the Collector informs me that he has received similar offers, but the merchants say they will only deliver here, and we must arrange for transport; at Bezwada they simply refuse to sell. Under these circumstances I thought it advisable to telegraph, suggesting that the Collector should enter into contracts for the supply of grain, and I have urged him to endeavour to draw our supply from the Godavery. The combination among the merchants here is insuperable, and I am sure prices are being kept up with the idea that we shall be obliged to supply all our famine coolies with rice purchased in the Masulipatam bazaar; at present the Collector has arranged with a merchant here to send up the quantity of grain required every two days to near Mr. Norris' camp.

6. The supply on the Commamoor Canal, I think, may be arranged better. Lieutenant Boddy writes that the merchants there are willing to supply, and a large quantity of grain is certainly being sent down from Ellore. I lately passed forty laden boats in 24 hours on that canal. I am in doubts however if sufficient supplies for a very large body of men will be available, but further inquiries will be made; meantime I have requested the Superintending Engineer, Godavery, who informed me he could keep the Ellore Canal open as long as necessary, to keep it navigable till middle of March, and I am removing the obstacles to navigation which exist in the Commamoor Canal.

7. I have been informed by Lieutenant Rawson that relief coolies under him are to be paid by task-work at certain fixed rates; those coolies we have employed hitherto have paid daily wages according to their strength and work, the highest rate being 2½ Annas a-day. I think it will be well to adhere to this arrangement, if on trial it does not clash with Lieutenant Rawson's arrangement, the two parties being but 10 miles apart.

8. I am unable at present to give any idea of the numbers of people that will come for employment. There is undoubtedly the pressure of want on the poorer classes in most of the dry taluqs of this district, but it does not seem to have amounted to famine, as the people will not yet leave their villages. I have reports of their coming out and crying for work, but refusing to go more than a short distance from their own doors to get it. In communication with the Collector I have arranged that all able-bodied coolies shall be directed at once to proceed to the works above mentioned, and they are to be told that employment cannot possibly be found for them in their villages. When these people have moved out, the balance on Local Fund Works and such allotments as can be granted for clearing prickly-pear, repairing drinking tanks, &c., we believe will suffice to keep the people who must of necessity remain in their villages employed.

9. I may here refer to your telegram of the 20th ultimo, and report that I propose continuing the manufacture of tools until I have 3,000 mamoties, 1,000 crowbars, and 10,000 baskets ready for this district. I am, in addition, despatching tools to Lieutenant Rawson at Peda Ganjam. One thousand mamoties have already gone to him, and their payment will be adjusted by transfer. One thousand three hundred and

fifty are now available for this district, also a number of crowbars, and the manufacture of tools and baskets is in rapid progress. Ten thousand bamboos have been ordered at Bezwada and upwards of 10,000 purchased by Lieutenant Boddy, R.E.

10. To the arrangements above described I have to request the approval of Government. It may be thought that I have raised an alarm unnecessarily soon, but I submit that the approach of famine is sufficiently near to compel us to have our plans matured, our work ready for all comers and food prepared on the spot. I shall not be disappointed, but thankful, if the thousands that I expect shortly to flock to our works do not appear.

11. In connection with the completion of the East Coast Canal, I am making arrangements for building a lock at Santaravur on the Commamoor Canal, and I hope shortly to be sending down materials in large quantities.

SUBMITTED to Government.

(Signed) DE C. SCOTT, Major, R.E.,
Dy. Chief Engineer for Irrigation,
for Chief Engineer for Irrigation.

No. 604.

ORDER THEREON, 27th Decemr 1876, No. 3,553.

IRRIGATION, No. 45.

THE proceedings of the Superintending Engineer, Kistna, are entirely approved.

(True Extract.)

Lawrence Major-General, R.E.,
Secretary to Government.

To the Chief Engineer for Irrigation.
" Superintending Engineer, Kistna.
" Revenue Department.

Exd. S. T. Austin.

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To
The CHIEF ENGINEER IRRIGATION
D.C. &c.

Dated December 27th.

Issued

Recd. 2^d Jan'y 1877.

Encl.

G. O., 27th December 1876, No. 335

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DECEMBER

No. 603-604

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*No 19 ✓
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to [illegible]*

*JH
5 Jan'y 77*

For the Relief Works. The proceeds of
the Superintending Engineer, relative
to the execution, &c., of
protec