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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU REVENUE DEPARTMENT

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Financial Department,
29th December 1876. No. 2476.*

Export of Grain.

No. 360. *Read the following letter from Major T. G. CLARKE, Officiating Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Mysore, to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated Bangalore, 13th December 1876, No. 9354 General 34:—*

In continuation of my letter, No. 8014—Genl. 27, dated 10th November 1876, I am desired to forward, for submission to His Grace the Governor in Council, the enclosed copy of the Proceedings of the Chief Commissioner, No. 9352—183, dated 13th December 1876, embodying the results of the investigation held by Mr. Assistant Commissioner Krishna Murti as to the grounds of the alleged interference by Mysore officials in the export of grain to the Gudalur and Devala markets.

From the Commissioner of the Ashtagram Division, to the Officiating Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Mysore, General Department, No. 530—193, dated Camp Arsikei., 18th November 1876.

I have the honor to forward, herewith, for the information of the Chief Commissioner, copy of letter No. 784, dated 11th instant, from the Deputy Commissioner, Mysore, as well as copy of letter from the Deputy Collector, Wynaad, and my reply, and to state that I trust the Chief Commissioner will be satisfied that after a full and impartial inquiry, the representations made regarding the stoppage of grain by the Mysore authorities have been ascertained to be groundless.

From the Deputy Commissioner, Mysore District, to the Commissioner, Ashtagram Division, dated Mysore, 11th November 1876, No. 784.

I have the honor, in reply to your No. 994, of 3rd instant, to report the result of the inquiry instituted of the alleged interference with the export of grain from Mysore to Her Majesty's territories.

2. The action I took on receipt of the above was to at once direct Mr. Krishna Murti, Sub-division Assistant Commissioner, to proceed immediately so as to be present at the next weekly fairs at Gudalur and Devala.

3. A copy of my letter of instructions to him and his report this day received are enclosures to this communication.

4. I would here remark that I subsequently received a telegram from the Collector of Malabar, which I replied to by wire. Copies of these are enclosed for information, but I would remark that up to date I have received no information by post of the reliable information alluded to, and have consequently applied this day by letter for it.

5. I also, on the 8th instant, received a letter signed by Mr. Minchin and other planters, dated 3rd instant, (copy of which I regret I cannot enclose, as I forwarded the original at once to Mr. Assistant Commissioner Krishna Murti for inquiry, in connection with that he was then instituting, and which has not yet been returned), reiterating the complaint of interference with exports which was greatly imperilling the security of the district.

6. The report of my Assistant, herewith enclosed, I think, plainly points to the real cause of the outcry against the Mysore authorities, which, in my opinion, are clearly without any foundation.

7. Undoubtedly the supply in the Gudalur and Devala markets was scanty, partly owing not to interference with export but to the short supply procurable in the Mysore District which generally in a great measure supplies those markets; 2ndly, to the higher rates procurable in Mysore territory itself; 3rdly, to the fear of Mysore traders and ryots running short themselves if they sent more away; 4thly, to the injudicious interference of the Deputy Tahsildar and the planters with the market, which necessarily slackened sales on the spot, and, as I am informed,

(though Mr. Krishna Murti apparently did not in his inquiry elicit the fact), the withholding from the market supplies already there; for, when prices were regulated, grain taken there was again brought back unsold.

8. There can therefore be no doubt that the primary cause is the present prevailing scarcity having reduced supplies below the demand enhanced by the action taken by both the official and non-official element in Her Majesty's territories.

9. The course of trade in this district has, as far as I can effect it, been entirely unshackled from any description of interference. Exports to Her Majesty's territories have, I am satisfied, been perfectly unmolested.

From the Deputy Commissioner, Mysore District, to the Assistant Commissioner, Nanjangud Sub-Division, dated Mysore, 3rd November 1876, No. 1337.

The Chief Commissioner on 1st instant sent telegram to Commissioner, Ashtagram Division, regarding reported stoppage of exportation from Mysore to Wynaad by the Mysore authorities for inquiry and report. Copy of Commissioner's order (which was verbally communicated to several Amildars present that date who denied any interference with the export trade), is herewith sent, also copies of telegram just received from the Collector of Malabar and of my reply thereto.

2. I have the honor to request with reference to the above that you will at once proceed so as to be present at the Wynaad Fairs* on Sunday next, make as full inquiry en route as possible regarding any interference with the export trade, and at the fairs assure the Collectorate officials who may be present that export with the sanction of Government is not being checked, obtain from them any information you can, to lead to the whole matter being cleared up, and as soon as possible report in full detail the result of your investigation.

* Gudalur and Devala.

From the Assistant Commissioner, Nanjangud Sub-Division, to the Deputy Commissioner, Mysore District, dated Gundlupet, 7th November 1876, No. 225.

With reference to your letter, No. 1337, of the 3rd instant, which I received by express anche on Friday at 11 p.m., I have the honor to report, for your information, that I lost no time in starting, as within an hour and a quarter from the receipt of the letter I was on my way to Gundlupet, which I reached at 7-45 next morning.

2. The Amildar was absent from the head-quarters. I sent for him and in the meantime collected all the leading merchants and others who were in a position to have known about the rumoured prohibition of the export trade, and proceeded with my inquiry in a most careful manner. A copy of the statement I have taken is herewith forwarded for your information. Every one, mercantile and non-mercantile, official and non-official, was unanimous in declaring the official non-interference with the export trade. Nanja Shetti and Venkatappa had both sold ragi and rice only a few days ago to the people of Wynaad, and Narayansami, an agent of Osterloney valley estate, was still at Gundlupet buying grain for the purpose of being taken to his plantation. From such evidence which was openly given before me, and from the most scrutinizing inquiry which I secretly made, I was perfectly convinced that there was not the slightest interference on the part of our officials, and consequently the reported rumour was quite unfounded.

3. Nanja Shetti's allusion to the regulation of the prices fixed by the Deputy Tahsildar of Gudalur, which is confirmed by Ranga Shetti, who was an eye-witness, affords some clue to the finding out of the cause of the scanty supply in the Wynaad markets, but as it will be more convenient to deal with this subject in a subsequent part of this letter, I shall dismiss it with this brief notice here.

4. After being satisfied that there was no interference on our part, I went to Gudalur, which I reached at 6 a.m., on Sunday, being the market day, with a view to ascertain the cause of the rumour from the authors of it.

5. There was a better supply of grain than in the previous market, but was hardly sufficient to meet the demand. There were also some carts from Mysore, and from the inquiry which I afterwards made it was apparent that Kasimra Ravatan, Tirpu Shetti, and Khadar Sabi had got between them about thirty-nine pallas of ragi and cholam shortly before, which, considering the state of the supply in our country, may be regarded as more than a fair export. Copies of statements from these are also enclosed, and there was not a single man who could say that he was obstructed. All were second-hand and hearsay, and in that too they have been broken down by their own admissions of having imported grain shortly before the date of the inquiry.

6. The Deputy Tahsildar did not disown his order regulating the prices. As a means of quelling the riot or loot, the possibility of which was more than apparent, he had no other alternative but of regulating the prices to a small extent and of distributing the available supply among all with a view to satisfy the excited mob. This had its pernicious effect imperceptibly, inasmuch as it checked the freedom of the mercantile competition and violated the law of supply and demand, but to this I shall advert hereafter.

7. The Deputy Tahsildar also owned before me that it was he who had sent up the report to the Collector on the stoppage of export, and from subsequent informations I have reason to believe that Mr. Minchin confirmed this report in a communication to the Collector.

8. It was 2 o'clock before all this was finished in Gudalur, and I started at once to go to Devala, about twelve miles distant, which I did not reach before it was quarter past seven. The Deputy Tahsildar also accompanied me. The market had been over by that time, but as the shops had not been closed I got as many merchants as possible and proceeded with my inquiry at once. Husen Ravatan was the leading merchant, and every one from him downwards declared that they were not personally aware of any prohibition. It would appear that the Deputy Tahsildar took a deposition from these men on the previous Sunday in which they made a similar statement; but as that officer showed a disinclination to part with that document, I did not press for it.

9. As Mr. Minchin was the leading planter there, and I was given to understand that he took a most interested part in the affairs of the market, I thought it desirable to see him and accordingly called upon that gentleman on Monday morning. A few of the other neighbouring planters* also came and we were making inquiries from the merchants and others till

* Mr. Russell.
" Griffin.
" Wright.

about 10 o'clock with no apparent result. Each one would contradict the other and no one would make any definite statement. Mr. Minchin was himself forced to say that he "jumped to the belief," but was inclined to think that the rumour had some foundation, and that it might have been an excuse spread abroad by the merchants and ryots with the permission of the village servants. In this surmise, however, I entirely differ from Mr. Minchin, as there is nothing before me to support it.

10. The only man that made any intelligent statement was Anka Mestri in the establishment of Mr. Minchin, and he gave out that he had heard from one Mari Mada, residing in Devanur of Chamrajnagar Taluk, that there was a regular "tom-tom" published in that village to the effect that no grain was to be exported to Wynaad. I have not been able to make an inquiry into the truth of this statement as yet, but on this subject I shall make another reference at as an early a date as possible.

11. Another, Kari Gauda, stated that when his brother Javara, son of Chinne Gauda, residing in Chittanhalli of Nagamangala Taluk, was passing with six carts of cholam and three of horse-gram through the town of Mysore, on his way to Wynaad, he was obstructed by the customs officials (Ukkada people) who got all the grain to be given to a merchant in that town. This man could neither identify the merchant nor point out the shop, but for all detailed informations referred to his brother.

12. Having regard to the state of the market in the Mysore town at that time, and also bearing in mind that Nagamangala people were taking large quantities of grain to their own

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places, I am inclined to receive this statement with suspicion, but as an inquiry into the truth of it is possible, I would respectfully suggest the desirability of sending an order to Nagamangala Amildar to find out this man and investigate into the matter of this complaint.

13. One Venkataramana, serving in the estate of Mr. Wright on Shoolé Malé, had been sent for, but as he did not come till very late, the planters kindly promised to bring him over to the place where I had put up, and I took leave of them. In about an hour they saw me in my place. Venkataramana at first said that there was no obstruction of any kind, but on being told by Mr. Wright that he had said so to that gentleman, he repeated that he had heard at Tirkanambi market from the people who had come there from Kamgero that they were not allowed to bring grain. This village is in Collegal of the Coimbatore District.

14. One Sundyava, who looked more as domestic servant than a trader or a cart-man, also said that he was at Gundlupet three weeks before that day, when he heard a rumour prohibiting the export trade. I need only say that at that period of the year no serious fears were entertained and there was not a fall in the Wynaad supply. The statement is most improbable, and the inquiries which I subsequently made at Gundlupet, on my return to that place, enable me to declare that this is an utter falsehood.

15. The above is all that I could collect in the way of information, and, as directed in your letter under reply, I assured all of them in Gudalur and Devala that there was not the least prohibition of any kind, and Mr. Minchin and other gentlemen, while expressing their sense of the trouble the Mysore authorities took with a view to alleviate their distress, said they would send their carts and try to procure grain for themselves.

16. On my return to Gundlupet I made inquiries from Narayansami, agent of the Ootterloney valley estate, and he declared there was not the slightest prohibition of any kind. The ryots themselves were not inclined to sell the little grain they had, and his master had given a limit of the price. He shewed me a letter in which this restriction as regards price had been removed and hoped to buy grain more successfully. He had already secured five or six cart loads.

17. You will perceive from this detailed report of facts that there is not the slightest foundation for this rumour. The "reliable intelligence" acted upon by the Collector of Malabar is evidently the report of the Deputy Tahsildar of Gudalur, confirmed as it was by the communication of Mr. Minchin. Both these were convinced that they acted only upon vague rumours, and if I understood them correctly they seemed to ascribe the scanty supply to the action of the local merchants.

18. The practice with regard to these fairs is peculiar. None of the Mysore merchants take their grain into Wynaad. It is the local merchants of Gudalur and Devala who go to Tirkanambi market of the Gundlupet Taluq and from there take grain in their own and hired carts. Very exceptionally the ryots who grow the grain take it in expectation of realising high prices, but during this year when the crops failed there were not many of this kind. It is clear therefore that all the grain supply into these fairs depends upon the voluntary enterprise of the local merchants, and as far as I can understand, their free competition was to some extent interfered with by the action of the Gudalur Tahsildar and Mr. Minchin who endeavoured to regulate the prices. Indeed, both Messrs. Minchin and Wright told me that they made a calculation and found that the merchants were allowed a fair profit of 10 per cent. I cannot dispel from my mind the theory that this interference of the Tahsildar and Mr. Minchin to regulate the prices had its own effect in reducing the supply of grain.

Statements.

Kasim Ravatan two or three days ago, that is, on Thursday last, had sent his cart-men to Tirkanambi fair. Cart-men returned without anything, and they said that the Police peon did not allow the whole quantity of ragi to be taken. There were ten pallas. Five pallas were bought and five pallas retained there only. These cart-men came yesterday morning. Rice could

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not be had in the fair at all. The remaining five pallas of ragi were sold then and there. Ragi sold 12 Rupees a pallah.

Ismal Ravatan.
Khadar Sab.

Corroborate the above. None of them had gone there.

Tirpu Shetti is not aware of any obstruction. Khadar Sab and Tirpu Shetti got each seventeen pallas of ragi and cholam yesterday from Gundlupet in eight carts. Tirpu Shetti says that ryots from Gundlupet were bringing corn, but when the prices rose they have discontinued coming during the last three fairs.

Locally, i.e., in Mysore territory.

Nanja Shetti, leading Shetti of Gundlupet but no merchant, says there is no prohibition of any kind for exports. Narayansami has been here for the last one month buying ragi. Cannot say how much has been sent. Nanja Shetti got eight carts of ragi given to his Mestri on Friday, nine days ago. It would appear that the Sub-Magistrate (Tahsildar) interfered and wanted to sell ragi at eight seers and rice at five seers. This was a loss to the merchants, who fear such compulsory measures being adopted, and

Venkatappa sold four carts of rice nine days ago to four or five Labbes from Gudalur. No prohibition of any kind from officials. There is scanty supply, and all the demand cannot therefore be met. There is a talk that exports are not permitted from Mysore. For the last fair only eight or ten carts of rice, cholam and ragi went. Yesterday three or four merchants came, but nothing was found in the shops. They took empty carts. There is not much grain in the shops. He had not gone to Gudalur.

Ranga Shetti had gone to Gudalur last Sunday. There was very little grain and many people and the prices rose high. Tahsildar interfered and wanted to sell rice at six seers and ragi at eight seers but prevailed upon the merchants to sell cholam at seven seers, ragi at six and rice at five. The Tahsildar himself got everything sold. No grain is to be had anywhere. The supply at Tirkanambi has ceased; ryots say they have nothing to sell. There was no talk that exports had been prohibited there. The market is supplied from Neilgherri and Bundoo near Calicut for a month, but the permanent supply is from Mysore. Has gone round all the villages, but no grain can be had. Northern people from Nagamangal and such parts have come and raised the prices, so that the ryots will not sell. There is such a demand here only, that no-one takes the trouble of going to the fair.

Venkatappa had gone to Tirkanambi the day before yesterday, but there was no supply of rice or ragi. There were only two pallas of rice and no ragi.

No. 9352—GENL. 183, DATED BANGALORE, 13TH DECEMBER 1876.

ORDER.—The Chief Commissioner is fully satisfied from the inquiry instituted by the Assistant Commissioner that the allegations made in Wynaad, of obstructions having been placed by Mysore officials in the export or transit of grain from this Province, were not founded on fact, and that the deficient supply at the Gudalur and Devala markets, on the occasions referred to must be regarded as arising mainly from the action taken by the Deputy Tahsildar in regulating prices at those places.

Ordered, that the following letter be addressed to the Chief Secretary to the Madras Government for submission to His Grace the Governor in Council, in continuation of this office letter No. 8014—G. 27, dated 10th November 1876.

(Signed.) T. CLARKE,

Offg. Secretary.

To the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George.

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No. 361. ORDER THEREON, 29th December 1876, No. 2476.

Ordered to be communicated to the Collector of Malabar and the Commissioner, Nilgiris.

2. The Government are much indebted to the Mysore authorities for the trouble they have taken to investigate the complaint.

(True Extract.)

Chief Secretary.

The Chief Commissioner of Mysore.
" Collector of Malabar.
" Commissioner of the Nilgiris.
" Revenue Department.
" Board of Revenue.

57 Exd. T. O'Connor.

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Obdt. of 11876 **RECEIVED**

FINANCIAL.

THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER OF MYSORE.

At the

Dated December, 20th.

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1000, 2000, December, 1877, No. 217.

DECEMBER.

Nos. 360-361.

Report of Grain.—Communicating letter from the Mysore Government, forwarding copy of their Proceedings embodying the results of an investigation held as to the alleged interference by Mysore officials in the export of grain to Guddur and Dargah markets in Wynd.

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19 Jan 78