Revenue (1897) Department.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS
25 MAY 97

PRESS SERIES.

G.O., No. 135-136

DATED 4th March 1897

[Despatch Abstract.]

Directing the grant of famine allowances to Govt. servants in Sanjam in accordance with the provisions of Rule 72 of the Civ. Acct. Code, Vol. I, Part I, and addressing the Govt. of India with a view to the present rule which gives rise to anomalous results being altered

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
Circ	3495/97		20				
Circ	4432/97		439				

8

Revenue

Financial (1897) Department.

S.O.

CURRENT No. 102

From H. A. Sim, Esqr.,
Cuttack Commd.

Order ***No.***

Dated 24th May 1897

Received 25.5.97

Registered 26-5-97

Enclosures G.O. 135-136
H. 3.97

Spare copies

SUBJECT.

Returning certain papers re: the grant of famine batta to Govt. servants in Ganjam

26/5/97

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNOR · MADRAS ·

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
Ootacamund
24th May 1897.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS
25 MAY 97
JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT

My dear Stokes,

I return you the enclosed with many thanks. We shall see, when the Govt. of India orders come down, what they say, and raise the question again if needed.

Yours sincerely,

W. Ellis

Revenue (1897) Department.

D. O.

CURRENT No. 92

Public also a spare copy
of the for transmission
to Surgeon
RS

Order

From H. A. Linn, Esquire.
Private Secy. to H.E.
the Govr.

No.

Dated 17th May 1897

Received 18.5.97

Registered "

Enclosures

Spare copies

Revised by Public Dept.
for Pub. 19.5.97

SUBJECT.

Requesting to be furnish
with the paper re: the grant
of Compensation to medical
Servants for dearness of fo

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date

above the normal, and not by the Cast-iron rates of Article 72 of the Civil Asst Code. They would not accept the Madras idea of regulating it on a percentage rise. Then I suggested that at least the Compensation allowance could be given in districts where the opening of relief works on a Considerable Scale evidenced acute distress, but Finlay and Westland have objected to this also."——

Would you kindly let me See the paper to which this refers?

Yours Sincerely,

J. W. Hm

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNOR · MADRAS ·

GOVERNMENT HOUSE

CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

17 MAY 1897

18 MAY 97

17 May 1897.

My dear Price,

I have had a private letter to me Rodwell makes the following remark:—

"I have been fighting hard for you, but without success, over that proposal the Madras Govt. sent up, that grant of Compensation for dearness of food to menial servants &c, should be regulated by the rise in food price in the district

1340
4-3-97

Revenue (1897) Department.

CURRENT No. 1340

The Hon: ble Mr Robb. C.S.I
The Hon. ble Mr Bliss C.S.I
&c &c &c H. E. the Governor

From

The Board of Revenue

(Rev. Sett., L. R. & Agri.),

Madras

To Orders.

fo 597/1759. (1897 4 ##

No. 101.

Dated 5th February 1897.

Received 6-3-97

Registered 6-3-97.

Enclosures

Spare copies

SUBJECT.

Famine batta.

Rice has been adopted as the staple food grain of Ganjam and the price of this grain is now, and has been for some months, dearer than 12 seers per rupee. The Board and the Collector recommend the grant of batta to Govt servants under article 72 of Civil Account Code.

2. As yet only 8 cent. wants have been opened in Ganjam, and the present condition of the district is certainly not so bad as that of the Deccan districts where famine batta is not permissible as the prices of the staple grains are not

Submitting, for orders of Government, letter from the Collector of Ganjam, recommending the grant of — to Government servants in his District.

C. 16/2/97.
R 23/2/97.

dearer than 12 seers per rupee. It will be seen from Govt No 3722 12-9-95 that even when prices rise above this limit, the Govt have a discretionary power to grant or withhold the allowance, and it is submitted that the batta should now be refused.

3. In paras 4 & 5 the Board refers to certain anomalous results arising from adopting fixed prices for all grains alike and suggests the adoption of definite percentage increases over the normal prices. It is exceedingly doubtful whether the Govt would modify a rule which applies to the whole of India, without consulting other local Govts, and seeing that the anomaly pointed out can be rectified by the discretion vested in the Local Govt it is submitted that no representation need be made on the subject to India at the present time.

The Standard with which the Govt of India have laid down in this matter is the "cheapest staple food grain of the district" (Vide G.O. flagged A) in reference to the Govt of India letter to Govt of Madras

RS 15-2-97

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
flagged B.			

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

It has been decided by Govt that Rice is to grain rates rupee & the price of Rice & Jowari is to be given to Govt pensioners in Bangalore. It follows that when it is found that there is real & long continued scarcity the additional Jowari should be granted rate rupee to the price of rice. Now there can be no doubt that there is real & long continued scarcity in Bangalore (including Jowari) The prices of all grains there are above scarcity rates & have been above for some time. I think therefore batta should be given in Bangalore. As regards taking a percentage on the price of grain rate rupee account instead of a rise in the absolute value of a rupee, I agree with the Board. The Govt of India can be addressed.

BS
17/2/97

The G.O. of July 16, 1889, seems to me to be in fact defiance of the orders of the G. of I. - I don't think, therefore, that it should be followed. If the price of the cheapest staple food grain is higher than the fixed rate, compensation should be given - otherwise, I think not.

BD
18/2/97

in 1889 laid down that since last year the staple cultivation of this district and the staple food of the people and hence at famine batta with reference to the price of rice. Is this incident to be followed? The functions entrusted to this staple food grain but not what is a staple food grain of this district.

I am afraid the G. of I. cannot in any instance have cut from the Govt of India rule but from the interpretation of it adopted by the Madras Govt in 1889. than the Madras Govt understand it apart from it special application is plain from G.O. 25th April 1889. No 324. (flagged C.)

The G. of I suggestion to substitute the Govt by a reference to a percentage of price would afford a much fairer and more rational way of settling the question. Perhaps India if addressed might accept it. It is much easier to say I think what is the staple than what is a staple food grain in a particular district.

W 18/2/97

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE
(Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture).

Read—the following letter from C. J. WEIR, Esq., Collector of Ganjám, to the Secretary to the Commissioner of Revenue Settlement and Director of the Department of Land Records and Agriculture, dated Chatrapur, 20th December 1896, Dis. No. 1764-Acc. :—

In G.O., No. 638, Revenue, dated 25th July 1889, famine batta was allowed to certain Government servants in this district, the reason for the concession being that the price of rice was then higher than 12 seers to the rupee, the scarcity rate then being 11·2. The average price of rice for November 1896 throughout the district was 10·4 seers to the rupee and the prices for the weeks ending 5th, 12th and 19th instant have been 10·4, 10·4 and 10·5, respectively, and our present scarcity rate is 10·2 seers to the rupee.

2. There does not seem to be any prospect of a material fall of the price. I would therefore recommend that the concession allowed in the Government Order above quoted be again allowed on the same scale and subject to the same conditions. I may mention that in the places where most of the Government servants in question draw and spend their pay, the price of rice has been considerably above the district average.

Resolution—dated 5th February 1897, No. 101.

Submitted to Government for orders with reference to article 72 of the Civil Account Code, Fifth Edition, Volume I, Part I. In G.O., No. 597, Revenue, dated 16th July 1889, rice was declared to be the "common staple food" of the people of the Ganjám district, with reference to the price of which compensation for dearness of provisions was to be granted to the Government servants employed in the district. The price of rice ruling in the district since October last has been as noted on the margin and there is no likelihood of the prices falling for some months to come.

	Seers per rupee.
October 1896	12·4
November „	10·4
December „	10·3
January 1897	10·2 *

* Approximate.

2. In this connection, the Board would invite attention to the remarks made in its Proceedings, No. 576, dated 15th August 1892, which to some extent apply this year also, although the general scarcity and pressure in Ganjám is now probably, so far as prices are concerned, as great as they were in 1889.

3. In these circumstances, Government servants of the classes referred to in article 72 of the Civil Account Code are entitled to the concession granted therein, and it should be granted to them, as it has, it is believed, already been granted in Bengal.

4. The Board would, however, take this opportunity of inviting the attention of Government to the anomalous results which follow the application of the rule in question. In Ganjám, a rise of 42 per cent. over the normal price of the common staple food-grain—rice—adopted for that district entitles Government servants to famine batta whilst in the adjoining district of Vizagapatam, it would require a rise of 133 per cent. in the price of ragi—the staple adopted for that district—before the

concession may be granted, while in the Deccan districts, no claim to such concession will be established until the prices of the staple for these districts—cholam—is 150 per cent. dearer than usual, and by the application of the Government of India rule, famine batta will be granted in Ganjám some months at least before any relief works are opened there, whereas in Bellary, where there are already over 20,000 persons in receipt of State relief, the time may never come this year for the application of the concession. This does not appear to the Board to be in accordance with the principles laid down by the Government of India in 1889—*vide* G.O., No. 597, Revenue, dated 16th July 1889.

5. In view of these considerations, the Board considers that it would be a far better gauge of general scarcity and pressure to adopt definite percentage increases over normal prices rather than the present arbitrary fixed price for all grains.

(True Copy and Extract.)

K. V. Srinivasa
Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
" Collector of Ganjám.

Rgd. A. F. Ecclestone.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

1897.

Board of Revenue

(Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture),

MADRAS.

Printed February 12th.

Proceedings, 5th Feb. 1897, No. 101.

Famine batta.—Submitting, for orders of Government, letter from the Collector of Ganjám recommending the grant of — to Government servants in his district.

Issue as usual
also address to Govt
Omit 2/3

Please see Secretariat Std. Article 72 page 33 [illegible]

To the Hon'ble the Chief Secretary,

for favour of counter-initials.

100/9.

P.C. Rs. 20-3-97
Rs. 13-3-97

Current No. 1540.

G.O. (Press). No. 135 d/4th March 1897.

The Government accepts the recommendation in para 3 of the Proceedings read above, and directs that as a temporary measure and until further orders all servants of Government on Civil establishments in the district of Ganjam whose pay does not exceed Rs.16 per mensem or in the case of officials required to keep a horse, Rs.25 per mensem shall receive an extra allowance of Re.1 per mensem, provided that the aggregate monthly pay shall in no case be less than Rs.6.

2. As pointed out in para 4, the present rule which takes a fixed price of grain as indicative of distress gives rise to anomalous results, and the Govt. agrees with the Board in thinking that definite percentage increases over normal prices would be a far better gauge of general scarcity and pressure.

3. Ordered that the Government of India be addressed.

dp 3/3/97. 4/3/97.

To

The Board of Rev. Rev. Sett. &c.

The other Heads of Departments under the Revenue Secretariat.

The Financial Department, with copy of letter. Rs. 8-3-97

The other Departments of the Secretariat.

The Accountant General.

Sec. 8-3-97

Letter No. 136 d/4th March 1897.

To

The Secretary to the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department.

Sir,

I am directed to forward a copy of the marginally noted Proceedings of this Government in which His Excellency the Governor in Council has sanctioned the grant of famine batta to Government servants in Ganjam in accordance with the provisions of Article 72 of the Civil Account Code Part I. Vol.I., and to invite your attention to paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Board's Proceedings printed therein, pointing out that the adoption of a fixed price for all grains and all districts alike as indicative of general scarcity and distress, gives rise to anomalous results, and suggesting a modification of the present rules regulating the grant of compensation for dearness of provisions.

2. The Government of India has directed that the grain to be adopted for regulating the grant of compensation should be the cheapest staple grain of any kind commonly used by the people, (Vide para 9 of the Government of India Resolution No. 1648 dated 28th. March 1888 Finance and Commerce) and it has been explained in Mr. Sinkinson's letter No.5040 d/18th. June 1889 that the basis of this rule is that

To be sent from 1st Sept. as all savings to be adopted in case of famine.

No. 135-8/4-3-97.

that is the common staple food of the people of the district.

if in any district the common food of the people has risen in price beyond a certain point the fact indicates a general scarcity and pressure in the district causing such distress to Government servants there employed as to warrant an increase to their pay sufficient to mitigate the hardship caused by high prices. The staple-grains adopted by this Government for the different districts in accordance with the above resolution of 1888, are given in the annexed statement from which it will be seen that the normal prices of these grains as determined from the averages of ordinary years vary evidently, from 15.4 seers per rupee in Malabar to 33 seers in North Arcot. It will be obvious from an examination of these normal prices (column 5 of the statement) that the fact that the price of the staple adopted has risen to 12 seers per rupee in any district does not necessarily show that there is scarcity or pressure in the district, and that where it does indicate distress the limiting price is reached at different stages of distress in different districts. Thus in Malabar and South Canara a small rise in prices over the normal entitles Government employes therein to famine batta, and in the districts of Ganjam, Nilgiris, and Vizagapatam, the grant of such batta is permissible long before scarcity rates are reached. On the other hand in North Arcot Salem and the Deccan districts no compensation will be payable till prices exceed scarcity rates considerably and till practically very severe distress has set in. The Govern-

government has till now avoided in -- equalities in the working of the rules by the exercise of the discretion vested in it by article 72 of the Account Code, but this discretion only enables it to withhold compensation where it is permissible under the rules and not to grant it in cases where there is undoubted distress though the staple-grain has not risen in price above 12 seers per rupee.

3. Second point rice is the staple-grain adopted for Ganjam, and as the price of this grain has been for months past higher than 12 seers per rupee, and has now risen beyond the scarcity rate of 10.2 seers, ~~per rupee~~ orders have been issued directing the grant of famine betta to Govt. employes in the district. As yet, however, only test works have been opened in the district on which about 1629 persons are employed, and the distress, though undoubted, is not so severe as in the Deccan Districts where regular relief works have been opened in various parts and where over 50,000 persons are in receipt of -- state relief. Government servants in these districts in receipt of small salaries are certainly in greater need of help from Government than those in Ganjam, but as the staple-grain of these districts, Viz. Cholum, is still cheaper than 12seers per rupee they are not entitled to any concession under the rules. This is an undoubted inequality in the working of the rules which the local Government cannot rectify.

→ 80 Passed G.

Monthly	Seers per Re.
November	10·4
December	10·3
January	10·2
Feby. (average of 1st 3 weeks)	10·0

Week ending 20 Feby. '97

Districts	Seers per Re.
Kurnool	14·2
Bellary	13·1
Anantapur	13·7
Cuddapah	14·5

4. The object of the Government of India in framing the rules being to mitigate the hardship caused to its employes by -- high prices in times of general scarcity and pressure, it appears to His Excellency the Governor in Council for the reason set forth above, that definite percentage increases over normal prices are a fairer and surer gauge of such scarcity and pressure than a fixed price for all grains and places alike. The warning and scarcity rates adopted for the various districts are based on the principle of percentage increase, and I am to suggest that the same principle may also be adopted in --- article 72 of the Civil Account Code.

RS
26-2-97

25
~~50~~
2.

District	Grain	Normal Price	Scarcity rates	Percentage of rise above normal price which causes distress	Percentage of rise above normal price which causes famine
Ganjam	Rice, 2nd sort	17·0	10·2	41·7	—
S. Canara		14·0	8·4	16·7	—
Malabar		13·4	8·0	~~11·7~~ 10·6	—
Vizagapatam	Rice	28·0	14·0	138·3	16·7
E. Godavari		28·0	14·0	~~133·3~~ 11·3	16·7
Madras		24·0	12·0	100·0	0·0
Chingleput		24·0	12·0	100·0	0·0
N. Arcot	Ragi	32·0	16·0	166·7	33·3
Tanjore		28·0	14·0	133·3	16·7
Nilgiris		21·0	10·5	75·0	—
Salem		31·0	15·5	158·3	29·2
Kistna	Cholam	26·0	13·0	116·7	8·3
Nellore		26·0	13·0	116·7	8·3
Cuddapah		30·0	15·0	150·0	25·0
Anantapur		30·0	15·0	150·0	25·0
Bellary		30·0	15·0	150·0	25·0
Kurnool		30·0	15·0	150·0	25·0
Trichinopoly	Cumbu	24·0	12·0	100·0	0·0
Madura		24·0	12·0	100·0	0·0
Tinnevelly		23·0	11·5	91·7	—
South Arcot		26·0	13·0	116·7	8·3
Coimbatore		26·0	13·0	116·7	8·3

Government (1897) of Madras.

REVENUE.

Recd. } 1897. *Enclosures*

Regd. } *Spare copies*

G.O., No. 135, 4th March 1897.

MARCH.

Famine Batta.

Directing the grant of — to Government servants in Ganjám in accordance with the provisions of article 72 of the Civil Account Code, Vol. I, Part I, and addressing the Government of India with a view to the present rule which gives rise to anomalous results being altered.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Read—the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture), dated 5th February 1897, No. 101:—

Read—the following letter from C. J. WEIR, Esq., Collector of Ganjám, to the Secretary to the Commissioner of Revenue Settlement and Director of the Department of Land Records and Agriculture, dated Chatrapur, 20th December 1896, Dis. No. 1764-Acc.:—

In G.O., No. 638, Revenue, dated 25th July 1889, famine batta was allowed to certain Government servants in this district, the reason for the concession being that the price of rice was then higher than 12 seers to the rupee, the scarcity rate then being 11·2. The average price of rice for November 1896 throughout the district was 10·4 seers to the rupee and the prices for the weeks ending 5th, 12th and 19th instant have been 10·4, 10·4 and 10·5, respectively, and our present scarcity rate is 10·2 seers to the rupee.

2. There does not seem to be any prospect of a material fall of the price. I would therefore recommend that the concession allowed in the Government Order above quoted be again allowed on the same scale and subject to the same conditions. I may mention that in the places where most of the Government servants in question draw and spend their pay, the price of rice has been considerably above the district average.

Resolution—dated 5th February 1897, No. 101.

Submitted to Government for orders with reference to article 72 of the Civil Account Code, Fifth Edition, Volume I, Part I. In G.O., No. 597, Revenue, dated 16th July 1889, rice was declared to be the "common staple food" of the people of the Ganjám district, with reference to the price of which compensation for dearness of provisions was to be granted to the Government servants employed in the district. The price of rice ruling in the district since October last has been as noted on the margin and there is no likelihood of the prices falling for some months to come.

	Seers per rupee.
October 1896	12·4
November „	10·4
December „	10·3
January 1897	10·2 *

* Approximate.

2. In this connection, the Board would invite attention to the remarks made in its Proceedings, No. 576, dated 15th August 1892, which to some extent apply this year also, although the general scarcity and pressure in Ganjám is now probably, so far as prices are concerned, as great as they were in 1889.

3. In these circumstances, Government servants of the classes referred to in article 72 of the Civil Account Code are entitled to the concession granted therein, and it should be granted to them, as it has, it is believed, already been granted in Bengal.

4. The Board would, however, take this opportunity of inviting the attention of Government to the anomalous results which follow the application of the rule in question. In Ganjám, a rise of 42 per cent. over the normal price of the common staple food-grain—rice—adopted for that district entitles Government servants to famine batta whilst in the adjoining district of Vizagapatam, it would require a rise of 133 per cent. in the price of ragi—the staple adopted for that district—before the

concession may be granted, while in the Deccan districts, no claim to such concession will be established until the prices of the staple for these districts—cholam—is 150 per cent. dearer than usual, and by the application of the Government of India rule, famine batta will be granted in Ganjám some months at least before any relief works are opened there, whereas in Bellary, where there are already over 20,000 persons in receipt of State relief, the time may never come this year for the application of the concession. This does not appear to the Board to be in accordance with the principles laid down by the Government of India in 1889—*vide* G.O., No. 597, Revenue, dated 16th July 1889.

5. In view of these considerations, the Board considers that it would be a far better gauge of general scarcity and pressure to adopt definite percentage increases over normal prices rather than the present arbitrary fixed price for all grains.

(True Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) R. V. SRINIVASIAR,
Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
„ the Collector of Ganjám.

Order—No. 135, Revenue, dated 4th March 1897.

Miscellaneous.

The Government accepts the recommendation in paragraph 3 of the Proceedings read above, and directs that, as a temporary measure and until further orders, all servants of Government on civil establishments in the district of Ganjám whose pay does not exceed Rs. 16 *per mensem*, or, in the case of officials required to keep a horse, Rs. 25 *per mensem*, shall receive an extra allowance of Re. 1 *per mensem*, provided that the aggregate monthly pay and allowances shall in no case be less than Rs. 6.

2. As pointed out in paragraph 4, the present rule which takes a fixed price of grain as indicative of distress gives rise to anomalous results, and the Government agrees with the Board in thinking that definite percentage increases over normal prices would be a far better gauge of general scarcity and pressure.

3. Ordered that the Government of India be addressed.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue (Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture).
„ the other Heads of Departments under the Revenue Secretariat.
„ the Financial Department, with copy of letter.
„ the other Departments of the Secretariat.
„ the Accountant-General.

Ex I. C. M. Thumbuswamy.

100 Copies.

1897.

DEPARTMENT OF ~~FINANCE~~ AND ~~COMMERCE~~.

From

The Government of Fort St. George.

Recd. } 1897. *Enclosures*

Regd. } 1897. *Spare copies*

Letter, No. 136, 4th March 1897.

MARCH.

Pointing out the anomalous results that arise from the present rule regarding the grant of famine batta, and suggesting that definite percentage increases over normal prices may be taken as a fairer and a surer gauge of the scarcity and pressure which will warrant the grant of the batta.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

From

G. STOKES, Esq., I.C.S.,
Acting Secretary to the Government of Madras,

To

The SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT of INDIA,
Department of Finance and Commerce,

Dated Fort St. George, 4th March 1897.

Sir,

I am directed to forward copy of the marginally-noted Proceedings of this Government in which His Excellency the Governor in Council has sanctioned the grant of famine batta to Government servants in Ganjám in accordance with the provisions of article 72 of the Civil Account Code, Part I., Volume I., and to invite your attention to paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Board's Proceedings printed therein, pointing out that the adoption of a fixed price for all grains and all districts alike as indicative of general scarcity and distress, gives rise to anomalous results, and suggesting a modification of the present rules regulating the grant of compensation for dearness of provisions.

Miscellaneous.
No. 135, dated 4th March 1897.

2. The Government of India has directed that the grain to be adopted for regulating the grant of compensation should be the cheapest grain of any kind commonly used by the people, that is, the common staple food of the people of the district (*vide* paragraph 9 of the Government of India Resolution, No. 1648, dated 28th March 1888, Finance and Commerce), and it has been explained in Mr. Sinkinson's letter No. 3040, dated 18th June 1889, that the basis of this rule is that "if in any district the common food of the people has risen in price beyond a certain point the fact indicates a general scarcity and pressure in the district causing such distress to Government servants there employed as to warrant an increase to their pay sufficient to mitigate the hardship caused by high prices." The staple-grains adopted by this Government for the different districts in accordance with the above resolution of 1888, are given in the annexed statement from which it will be seen that the normal prices of these grains as determined from the averages of ordinary years vary widely, from 13·4 seers per rupee in Malabar to 32 seers in North Arcot. It will be obvious from an examination of these normal prices (column 3 of the statement) that the fact that the price of the staple adopted has risen to 12 seers per rupee in any district does not necessarily show that there is scarcity or pressure in the district, and that where it *does* indicate distress, the limiting price is reached at different stages of distress in different districts. Thus in Malabar and South Canara a small rise in prices over the normal entitles Government employés therein to famine batta, and in the districts of Ganjám, Nilgiris and Tinnevelly, the grant of such batta is permissible long before scarcity rates are reached. On the other hand in North Arcot, Salem and the Deccan districts no compensation will be payable till prices exceed scarcity rates considerably and till

probably very severe distress has set in. The Government has till now avoided inequalities in the working of the rules by the exercise of the discretion vested in it by article 72 of the Civil Account Code, but this discretion only enables it to withhold compensation where it is permissible under the rules, and not to grant it in cases where there is undoubted distress though the staple-grain has not risen in price above 12 seers per rupee.

3. Second sort rice is the staple-grain adopted for Ganjám, and as the price of this grain has been for months past higher than 12 seers per rupee, and has now risen beyond the scarcity rate of 10·2 seers, orders have been issued directing the grant of famine batta to Government employés in the district. As yet, however, only test-works have been opened in the district on which about 1,629 persons are employed, and the distress, though undoubted, is not so severe as in the Deccan districts where regular relief-works have been opened in various parts and where over 50,000 persons are in receipt of State relief. Government servants in these districts in receipt of small salaries are certainly in greater need of help from Government than those in Ganjám, but as the staple-grain of these districts, viz., cholam, is still cheaper than 12 seers per rupee they are not entitled to any concession under the rules. This is an undoubted inequality in the working of the rules which the local Government cannot rectify.

Months.	Seers per Re.
November	10·4
December	10·3
January	10·2
February (average of the first 3 weeks)	10·0

Week ending 20th February 1897.

Districts.	Seers per Re.
Kurnool	14·2
Bellary	13·1
Anantapur	13·7
Cuddapah	14·5

4. The object of the Government of India in framing the rules being to mitigate the hardship caused to its employés by high prices in times of general scarcity and pressure, it appears to His Excellency the Governor in Council for the reasons set forth above, that definite percentage increases over normal prices are a fairer and surer gauge of such scarcity and pressure than a fixed price for all grains and places alike. The warning and scarcity rates adopted for the various districts are based on the principle of percentage increases, and I am to suggest that the same principle may also be adopted in article 72 of the Civil Account Code.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

(Signed) G. STOKES,
Ag. Secretary to Government

Ex1. A. F. Eccleston.

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APPENDIX.

Districts.	Grain.	Normal price.	Scarcity rates.	Percentage rise above normal prices when compensation will be allowable.	Percentage rise above scarcity rates before compensation may be allowed.
Ganjám	Rice, 2nd sort.	17·0	10·2	41·7	..
South Canara		14·0	8·4	16·7	..
Malabar		13·4	8·0	11·7	..
Vizagapatam	Ragi.	28·0	14·0	133·3	16·7
Gódávari		28·0	14·0	133·3	16·7
Madras		24·0	12·0	100·0	0·0
Chingleput		24·0	12·0	100·0	0·0
North Arcot		32·0	16·0	166·7	33·3
Tanjore		28·0	14·0	133·3	16·7
Nilgiris		21·0	10·5	75·0	..
Salem		31·0	15·5	158·3	29·2
Kistna	Cholam.	26·0	13·0	116·7	8·3
Nellore		26·0	13·0	116·7	8·3
Cuddapah		30·0	15·0	150·0	25·0
Anantapur		30·0	15·0	150·0	25·0
Bellary		30·0	15·0	150·0	25·0
Kurnool		30·0	15·0	150·0	25·0
Trichinopoly		24·0	12·0	100·0	0·0
Madura		24·0	12·0	100·0	0·0
Tinnevelly		23·0	11·5	91·7	..
South Arcot	Cumbu.	26·0	13·0	116·7	8·3
Coimbatore		26·0	13·0	116·7	8·3

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Letter

Pointing out the anomalous results that arise from the present rule regarding the grant of famine bhatta and suggesting that definite percentage increases over normal price may be taken as a fair and assured gauge of the scarcity and pressure which will warrant the grant of the bhatta.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

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