

Revenue (1897) Department.

PRESS SERIES.

G.O., No. 721

DATED 26th August 1897.

[Despatch Abstract.]

Condition of the People in parts of Godavari

Recording Board's Progress, seeking to get, with remarks, report of the collector on the —, and passing orders as to the methods of relieving them.

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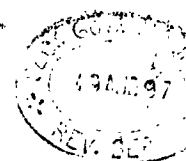
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Revenue (1897) Department.

CURRENT No. 6708



From

The Board of Revenue
(Revenue Settlement, Land
Records and Agriculture) Madras

No. 547 Drioo.

Order

Dated 4th August 1897

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SUBJECT.

Condition of the people
in parts of Godavari

Submitting to Government
with remarks report of the
Collector upon — and the
methods of relieving them.

Collector Head Quarters Division
telegraphs to me from Juni though
I have not as yet received his
report that there is not such
distress in his Division as to
render relief works necessary
for there has lately been ample
rain and agricultural operations
are now in full swing. The District
Engineer is endeavouring however
to start two roads as test relief
works in this Division viz one
near Kattipudi and the other
near Sondaugi. I have not
yet heard that any one has
resorted to them and am not
sanguine of their attracting
labour for the people who have
been swarming into the District
from

Vizagapatam won't go to them as
they won't go to relief works in
their own District and now that
rain has fallen the local labouring
population has probably sufficient
employment.

2. At Chintalapudi on the 1st
Instant there were 47 cents of rain,
on the night of the 6th, 1.60 inches
and on the night of the 9th Instant
20 cents and there has no doubt
been some more ^{since}. This of course is
more than enough to start
Agricultural operations. It is
not therefore perhaps surprising
that no one came near the
Settivari gudem and Mollhamgudem
tanks when the Deputy Collector
endeavoured to have their repairs
carried out as test relief work.

I have now ordered him to keep open the first section of the Chintalapudi-gilugumilli road as a test work (ie) the Deputy Tahsildar is to give notice generally that he will provide all wanting work with work at famine wages on application and if he receives applications he will at once call on the Overseer to start it. I do not see that more can be done or need be done at present.

3. On the 6th Instant the Deputy Collector reported that the condition of the panchamas generally was not satisfactory as owing to the high price and failure of the rains the ryots could not furnish employment and

and were even dispensing with the services of their fathers or regular farm-servants but all the same he said the panchamas were unwilling to come to relief works on the ground that they were earning just as much as they could get in that way by collecting and selling Tangedu bark. All he says, want gratuitous relief even though strong enough to work and earn their living. The Tahsildar of Gannagudem tells me the same thing. Every where the panchamas complain but refuse to work for famine wages saying that they must get 4 annas a day for work or else gratuitous.

no doubt.

Then they are not really in want.

relief and no work. In this
taluk some Rs 3000 have been
sanctioned for minor irrigation
works and I have ordered
the Tahsildar to endeavour
in the first place to have
these works carried out as
test relief works though he does
say this is only wasting time.
If they fail as test relief works
they are to be given out on
contract to villagers and not
professional contractors as
the former will give the work
to the panchamas of the neighbourhood
and the latter generally employ
their own gangs of especially
skilled labourers

4. In physique he reports that the
panchamas generally show no signs
of deterioration and although they appear
to have no stores of food yet they
appear to be able to get along as all
the men and women not in regular
employment are away from home all
day collecting tangedu bark and
edible leaves and roots whilst the
old folks and children go begging. -
According to the Sowars the Deputy
Collector reports that a man can
earn $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 annas a day by collecting
tangedu bark but he thinks and I
have no doubt he is right that
this is an exaggeration and the gain
cannot exceed one anna per head
as a rule. The work however is
very light. Others again - Chiefly women

he reports to be getting from half to three-quarters of an anna a day by collecting and selling grass and leaves and firewood.

5. On the 6th instant however the Deputy Collector was despondent and he was of opinion that if the rains continued to hold off these people would soon come to the end of their resources and have no resources to come to relief works and not only they but many of the ryots as these in that part of the district are all in debt to the sowcars who were stopping making advances on account of the unfavourable character of the season and also putting up prices which was an additional hardship to those without stores of grain like the panchamas. On the 10th however he writes much more hopefully and without question the state of affairs everywhere has considerably improved since the 3rd instant. On the 6th there was a fall of 1.60 inches at Chintalapudi and on the 9th 20 cents fell at Chintalapudi and

and over half an inch to the south as far as Oshimajigudem. In consequence he says the big tank at Chintalapudi has received a month's supply and many others even a better supply. To quote his own words "The ryots are busy sowing their dry lands, raising seed-beds and ploughing uplands for cholam. Maize ganti and ragi are lands sown now.

Should there be one or two more showers before the end of this month there will be plenty of pasture available everywhere in this Division. All panchamas who are fathers of the ryots have already been again taken into service by their former masters and are now engaged in tilling and cultivating their lands. In fact this rain has revived the spirits of all and should there be more rain merchants and sowcars will commence to advance

Let it be showers before the end of this month
15th July

month

money and grain as usual. He further reports that no deaths from starvation have been anywhere reported and there is no crime at all. |

6. He reports that an association at Chintalapudi called the "Temperance Association" are now feeding 70 persons of whom most are children between 5 and 12 and that there are some old and infirm persons generally living by begging who are having a hard time as charity is not in these days of high prices so freely exercised and there has been a great increase in the number of beggars. He has ordered the Deputy Tahsildar with the assistance of the Revenue Inspector to prepare a list of the helpless and infirm poor with a view to

to their being ^{sent} given gratuitous relief. There is also a community of staicks (hill-men) numbering about 300 in one or two of the jungle villages on the Nizam's frontier who are he says in difficulties and though he does not allude to them in a former report the Deputy Tahsildar refers to Koyas from the Nizam's dominions coming to villages in the Division to beg. In conclusion he requests that he may be given Rs 200 to enable him to relieve cases of distress so that he may be in a position to relieve hard cases when met with.

7. As relief works have failed and do not now appear to have any chance of success I have pointed

pointed out that Chintalapudi
cannot be declared an "affected tract"
but at the same time as there
appear to be isolated cases of
severe distress and the Naicks
and Koyas that have been
alluded to seem to require
assistance I have authorized
him to spend up to Rs 200 on
the relief of distress pending a formal
allotment on receipt of the additional
Rs 20,000 I have asked for. The
Koyas must be in want of help
or they would not have left
their villages and the Naicks won't
work in the same way. In their
case I have told him that a note
should be kept of the help given
and pending your orders advances
to them treated as recoverable
advances

Since
sanctioned
by the P.D.
31.7.97.

advances. The question of relief
to jungle communities generally I think
needs special consideration and
in regard to them the famine
code appears to require revision. Such
work as the code contemplates they
won't do and they won't leave their
homes under any consideration almost.
They are all too cultivators and if you
give gratuitous relief to some and not
to all one has the unpleasant con-
sciousness that all are sharing in it.
The sowcars in dealing with them
deal always with the headman and
advances to him are repayable by
the whole community. Why should
not the Government adopt the same
system and as they won't work make
these advances repayable wholly
or in part. Of course in the case of
the land-less labouring population
relief should take the form of
recompense for labour and be
gratuitous

gratuitous, ~~only in~~ the case of such
as cannot work; but in the case
of communities who won't do any
work beyond the cultivation of the
lands or such work as the state
has no need for I do not see
the necessity for gratuitous relief.
It would save an immense
deal of trouble and be much
more agreeable to the people
themselves if the state would
step in when the sowcar fails
and make advances to the
headmen on behalf of the whole
of their villages and to escape
leaving their villages and neglecting
their cattle and cultivation. Such
communities would vastly prefer
this system. It might not of
course be possible to recover
the whole advance but if it
took

took the form of grain there
would not generally be any
difficulty in getting back the
same quantity, though one might
not be able to get back what
it cost.

8. Here in Solavaram the Moyas
have in many cases helped them-
selves to enough grain to last them
a year but where they have not
we may have to come to their
assistance for the Komaties have
received such a fright that they
will not be in any great hurry
to reopen business with them and
many of them are much crippled
in their resources by the inroad
the rioters have made on their
cash and grain stocks though few
appear to have been cleaned out.
One thing however is clear and
that is that prices were put up
here

here and advances stopped
suddenly ~~by the~~ now cars not
because ~~the~~ supply of food
was short but because prices
have risen in the chief markets
like Rajahmundry where the
rise is just as much or more
due to speculation than to
be the law of demand and supply.
In villages like Lakkavaram and
Jangareddigudem which have not
been looted there are hundreds of
puttis of grain but of course every
rise in the Rajahmundry market
is followed by a rise here and
indeed prices are generally higher
here than there whilst there
is no redress as the entire
trade is in the hand of the
Komatics who can fix prices
as

as they please until the worm
turns suddenly and the people
they are oppressing take the law
into their own hands and help
themselves. Any forecast as to the
requirements of the Royas is at
present impossible and in any
case I have no intention of
doing anything for them until they
comply with my terms as regards
the rendition of loot &c. After things
have settled down I will have
enquiries on the subject made
and if necessary address you again.
All the prisoners we have made
show no signs of starving ation
except some skeletons who however
all admit they have been suffering
from illness for a longer or shorter
time

time and it is no doubt to such sickness that their emaciation is due.

Resolution

Submitted for the information of Government.

2. The situation of the district has been summarised in Board's Proceedings 511 of 1894. Since

that date, rain has been reported ^α But please see rainfall statement (T.G.) as follows:-

	18 th	19 th	20 th	Total
Polavaram	"	0.84	"	0.84
Wallapudi	1.05	"	1.09	2.14

no doubt the position in Chintal-pudi have been considerably ameliorated.

3. It has already been suggested to the Collector in Board's

Board's Proceedings 511 of 1894 that he should give a trial to the intermediate system of works, in place of the hard and fast rules of the ~~Hannin~~ ^{Hannin} Code. The earnings provided, as estimated by Mr. Brodie, are just insufficient to maintain life and health, and the gathering of leaves and roots for food, as also the increase of begging are signs that distress is considerable. ^{Godavari} ~~Godavari~~ in Vizagapatnam ^{as in Kurnool} ~~as in Kurnool~~, the people are not used to coming on Government relief and there is the danger that they may hold off too long.

4. The only question requiring

requiring orders is the method
of treatment to be adopted
in regard to the relief of
jungle tribes. The matter is one of
extreme difficulty and really
the most satisfactory and least
~~costly~~ solution seems to be
that suggested by the collector,
viz, that in the case of jungle tribes
who either will not or cannot
do, the work usually offered
to those in need of relief,
grain should be advanced
to the village headmen for
the use of the whole community
to be returned after the reaping
of the next harvest, without
interest and without reference

Simple loan
can be
which means
simple things

of price. The Famine Commissioner
puts forward this view, which
is so much at variance with
the provision of the Famine Code,
with considerable diffidence;
but there is no doubt that the
strict rules ^{which} are suitable for
the people of more civilised
areas cannot be ~~so~~ success-
fully applied to the inhabitants
of the Agency tracts of the
Northern Circars. The operation
of the method of relief should
be limited to the jungle tribes
of Ganjam, Vizagapatam,
Godavari and perhaps Kurnool.
At the same time the Famine
Commissioner must observe that
this course is really harder on
these