

THE
WITH THE BEST COMPLIMENTS
THE GODAVARY DISTRICT ASSOCIATION,
COCÓNADA.

GODAVARI RE-SETTLEMENT

BEING 15 ARTICLES

CONTRIBUTED TO THE "HINDU"



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NOTE.

These articles which originally appeared in the columns of the Hindu have, at the instance of the Godavery District Association, been reprinted in this form.

ERRATUM.

- ARTICLE I, Page 3, Line 28, *for ancient read anicut.*
- „ IV, „ 12, „ 2, *for emoluments read emolument.*
- „ „ „ „ „ 25, *for of read for.*
- „ „ „ 15, „ 16, *for soon as read as soon as.*
- „ IX, „ 31, *for 19th December read 9th December 1895.*

APPENDIX L

SECTION VIII OF THE MADRAS SETTLEMENT MANUAL.

DURATION OF PRESENT SETTLEMENTS ARE

“As has been stated, the revised assessments are to be permanent as regards grain values after 30 years. Her Majesty's Government are to be permanent as regards grain values after 30 years. considered as regards commutation rates after 30 years. Eventually, however, it is contemplated that a community assessments have been carefully revised and shall be given to Madras which will be permanent both as regards grain values and commutation rates. This is shown in the Despatch sent to the Government of India by the Home Government, dated 9th July 1860, No 14.”

“It is there said that “Her Majesty's Government entertain no doubt of the political advantages which would attend a permanent settlement. The security, and it may, almost, be said, the absolute creation of property in the soil, which will flow from the limitation, in perpetuity, of the demands of the State on the owners of land, cannot fail to stimulate, or confirm their sentiments of attachment and loyalty to the Government by whom so great a boon has been conceded, and on whose existence it permanently will depend.”

“It is, also, most desirable that facilities should be given for the gradual growth of a middle class, connected with the land, without dispossessing the present proprietors and occupiers. It is believed that, among the latter, may be found many men of great intelligence, public spirit, and social influence, although, individually, in comparative poverty. To give the intelligent, the

thrifty, and the enterprising the means of improving their condition, by opening to them the opportunities of exercising these qualities, can be best accomplished by limiting the public demand on their lauds. When ^{thru} towards ~~the~~ acquire property and find themselves in a on the contentment ^{of} are certain to be well affected the great bulk ^{of} that under which they live. It is the Government ^{of} the agricultural classes, who form any casual ^{of} the population, that the security of ^{of} mainly depends. If they are prosperous, man the security ^{of} on the part of other classes, or ^{it} ^{intention} ^{of} is much less likely to become an element bodies of ^{of} the military force and its consequent expense ^{to} be regulated accordingly."

The Despatch then goes on to notice the main objections urged by the opponents of permanent settlement, viz., the loss of all future augmentation of income from land, wherewith to defray the increased cost of administration, consequent on advancing civilization and to meet any future depreciation of the value of the precious metals. As to the first objection, the Home Government point out that when once the assessment has been carefully revised "any increase, consequent on the natural progress of society, will, in all probability, take place but slowly and reach no great amount until after a considerable interval;" and they further bring forward the fact that "in all the revisions of settlement, which have taken place of late years, the tendency has been towards a reduction in the rates of assessment," and that such revisions, although occurring at intervals of thirty years involve the occupation of much valuable time, are harrassing, vexatious and perhaps even oppressive to the people, and as the time for them approaches induce deterioration of cultivation, with the view of evading a true estimate of the value of the land."

"The second objection, viz., the apprehension of a possible fall in the relative value of money "though deserving of consideration" was not considered by "Her Majesty's Government to be of sufficient moment to influence their judgment, to any material extent, in disposing of this important question."

"Finally, the Despatch says "after the most careful review of all these considerations, Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the advantages which may reasonably be expected to accrue not only to those immediately connected with the land, but to the community generally, are sufficiently great to justify them in incurring the risk of some prospective loss of land revenue in order to attain them, and that a settlement in perpetuity in all districts in which the conditions absolutely required as preliminary to such a measure are, or may hereafter be fulfilled, is a measure dictated by sound policy and calculated to accelerate the development of the resources of India and to ensure, in the highest degree, the welfare and contentment of all classes of Her Majesty's subjects in that country."

"As regards the ryotwary districts of Madras, the Home Government referred to the revision of assessment now in progress, and decided that "as districts are gradually brought under the revised assessment and when there is reason to believe that the land revenue has not only reached its probable limit, but that it is equitably distributed over the lands affected by it," the permanent settlement should be carried out."

APPENDIX II.

*Extract from the Standing Orders of the Board
of Revenue, Madras.*

SECTION I, PARA 4.

“Collectors of Districts in which settlement by the Settlement Department has been completed or is in progress are to notify in their *Gazettes* that the rates will be liable to revision after 30 years' duration. It is to be explained, however, to the ryots that there will be no re-classification of soils or calculation of fresh grain values, that the rates of assessment will be revised entirely with reference to prices, and that no attempt will be made to assess any additional value which may have been given to land by improvements effected by ryots even if carried out by means of money borrowed from Government.”

APPENDIX III.

*Resolution No. XX. passed by the Tenth Indian
National Congress.*

“That this Congress views with apprehension the arbitrary policy of the Government of India with regard to the imposition of water-cess introducing as it does a disturbing element in taxation, and suggests that the imposition of the said cess be regulated by certain defined principles affording security to the rights of land-owners and of persons investing money in land.”

APPENDIX IV.

Questions asked by the Hon'ble Mr. N. Subbarau Puntulu in the Legislative Council and answers given by the Government of Madras from 20th November 1894 to 4th November 1895 regarding Water-cess.

Date of the Meeting of the Legislative Council.	Questions.	Answers.
20th Nov. 1894.	<p>Whether Government is aware that when the notification was published in the Godavery and Kistna District <i>Gazettes Extraordinary</i> on or about the 15th August 1894, enhancing the water-cess by 25 per cent. from the current fasli, the sowing and transplanting season had advanced and the ryots had taken water from irrigation channels in the belief that it would be charged at the then prevailing rates.</p>	<p>Yes, and in consideration of this fact Government ordered that only water taken for land which had been irrigated for five years successively should be charged for at the new rate. It is difficult to imagine any case in which a ryot would give up the prospect of cultivating paddy because of the additional charge of one rupee an acre. The full option of refusing irrigation now allowed was not allowed under the old rules. It was granted chiefly because there were circumstances under which it was necessary that wet land should revert to dry. It is obvious that this consideration cannot affect those cases in which the landowners resolved before the issue of the Government order to persist in wet cultivation.</p>

Will Government be pleased to state the reasons which led to this notification after the commencement of the cultivating season and without allowing the ryots an opportunity to submit their representations with regard to the enhancement of the cess ?

The chief reasons are given in paragraph 9 of G. O. dated 2nd August 1894, No. 502 R ; namely :—The Settlement has already expired in a portion of the Godavery District and in any case the revision of water-rates on land in Zemindaries is unaffected by restrictions imposed by Settlement. In 1865, the rate was raised by upwards of 33 per cent. upon the sole ground that the price of grain had greatly risen during the six years in which the three rupee rate had been in force, and as the prices which would be taken into calculation for the purpose of commutation at the present time committing the abnormal prices of (1876—78) show, as compared with the commutation rate adopted at the time of last settlement, an increase of about 80 and 57 per cent. respectively for the two districts of Godavery and Kistna, it was considered that the time had come for a further enhancement of the water-rate. Moreover, the position of both districts in respect of communications has during the past five years been greatly improved by the opening of the Bellary-Kistna and the East Coast Railways,

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Date of the Meeting of the Legislative Council.	Questions.	Answers.
	<p>Is it a fact that the notification published in the <i>District Gazettes Extraordinary</i> on the 13th September 1894, extending up to the 15th September the time (which had expired by the 31st March) for presenting applications for the discontinuance of Government water, was issued with the authority of Government?</p> <p>Whether Government is aware that this notification practically gave no option to the ryots as intended?</p>	<p>Yes, on the advice of the Collector of Kistna who in recommending it said "I do not think that many, if indeed any, relinquishments will be actually made, but it is fair that an opportunity should be allowed." The Collector of Godavery made no representation on the subject. The time in the Kistna District was afterwards extended by G. O., dated 19th September 1894, Mis., No. 3661, to the 30th September. It should be observed that no order allowing relinquishments was passed when the water-rate was enhanced in 1865. At that time no option was allowed, but land which had been rated as irrigated land was so rated till the means of irrigation failed completely.</p> <p>As I have stated, the time was extended in the Kistna till the 30th September and the Government does not consider that any option was needed, for the reason given in my reply to the Hon'ble Member's 1st question.</p>

Will Government be pleased to lay on the table the reports, if any, of the District Collector and of the Board of Revenue with the order of the Government of Madras and the Government of India relating to the enhancement of the water-cess?

22nd Jan. 1895.

In the matter of enhancing the water-cess by 25 per cent. in Godavery and Kistna Districts, were any reports called from the Collectors of the said districts and from the Board of Revenue or the Member in charge of the Settlement Department? If so, will Government be pleased to place them on the table? If not, will Government be pleased to state why the Collectors of the said districts were not consulted?

With reference to the answer given by Government at the last meeting of the Council that "the full option of refusing irrigation now allowed was not allowed under the old rules" and that "the Government does not consider that any option was needed," is it not a fact that ryots, during the twelve years or more have had and have

Paragraph 9 of G. O., No. 562, dated 2nd August 1894, will be laid on the table.

No. It was not considered necessary to consult the Collectors, as the Government considered it had all the requisite information.

The full option was given in 1873 when the revised set of rules was issued and had to be exercised before the 31st March or three months before the commencement of the fasli year.

Date of the Meeting of the Legislative Council.	Questions.	Answers.
	<p>been exercising this option of refusing irrigation within the 31st March of each year ?</p> <p>Is it a fact that when the water-rate was enhanced in 1865 there was an understanding that the rate then fixed would not be increased during the currency of the settlement ?</p> <p>Will Government be pleased to state on what basis the rate of the water-cess is determined and whether there is any fixity of demand of the rate for any definite period ?</p>	<p>The Government is not aware of any such understanding.</p> <p>The rate of the water-cess is determined on the principle that a fair commercial value should be put upon all water supplied provided that the price charged is not so great as to bar its use on lands which really derive benefit from canal irrigation. There is no obligation on Government to leave a margin to the landlord to enable him to increase the rent. As a consequence, it follows that the Government cannot guarantee the fixity of the charge, at the same time it will not be arbitrarily or capriciously altered or otherwise than on fair and reasonable grounds.</p>

13th March 1895.

With reference to the answer of Government that no reports were called for from the Board of Revenue or the Member in charge of the Settlement Department in connection with the enhancement of the water-cess, is it a fact that a report was submitted by the Member of the Settlement Department and will Government be pleased to place it on the table ?

Is it a fact that your Excellency's Government was at first not in favor of the enhancement of the cess, and will Government be pleased to place on the table the correspondence of your Excellency's Government with the Government of India as requested by me at the meeting of the Council held on the 20th November last ?

With reference to the answer of Government that "the rate of the water-cess is determined on the principle that a fair commercial value should be put on all water supplied," will Government be pleased to state what it means by "a fair commercial value ?"

No report regarding the enhancement of the water-rate in the Godavery and Kistna Districts was submitted by the Member in charge of the Settlement Department before the issue of the Government order enhancing the rate. Correspondence has passed subsequently between the Government and the Board which the Government declines to place on the table.

The Government regrets it is unable to answer the first part of the question or to lay upon the table the correspondence referred to.

"A fair commercial value is what the supply of water is worth in the open market, but it does not follow that Government would always charge its full value thus gauged."

Date of the Meeting of the Legislative Council.	Questions.	Answers.
8th April 1895.	<p>With reference to the recent notification published in the Kistna and Godavery District <i>Gazettes Extraordinary</i> on or about the 20th February 1895 cancelling the enhancement of the water-rate for the current fasli only and ordering the levy of a general water-rate from the next fasli not exempting land not irrigated for five consecutive years, will Government be pleased to place on the table a copy of the order on the subject ?</p> <p>With reference to the answer of Government given at the meeting of the Council held on the 22nd January that it was not considered necessary to consult the collectors as the Government considered it had all the requisite information about the enhancement of the water-rate, will Government be pleased to lay on the table the papers containing the said information ?</p>	<p>A copy of G. O., No. 774, dated 19th February 1895, and of G. O. No. 870, dated 26th February 1895 will be placed on the table.</p> <p>The information is summarized in paragraph 9 of G. O., dated 2nd August 1894, No. 562, of which a copy has been furnished to the Hon'ble Member, and the Government does not think that any object would be gained by laying on the table any further papers.</p>

4th Nov. 1895.

With reference to G. O. No. 870, dated 26th February 1895, issuing a revised notification with regard to the levy of the water-cess at an enhanced rate from the current fasli, will Government be pleased to state why it has ordered that the enhanced rate should be levied indiscriminately on all lands before the completion of the enquiry instituted to determine whether any exception should be made and whether any specified areas or classes of lands should be exempted from the enhanced rate and what the result of the said enquiry is ?

Will Government be pleased to place the papers relating thereto on the table ?

The order of February 26th, 1895, was passed in the form in which it stands, because if it had not been so passed, all the lands which can bear the additional water-rate would have escaped the additional payment for the current fasli, 1305, under the Government order quoted by the Hon'ble Member, the question whether any and, if so, what lands should be exempted from the enhanced water-cess is under the consideration of Government in communication with the Board of Revenue. If the concession is found necessary, the Collectors of Godavery and Kistna will grant it at the time of the Zamabandi.

The question of laying the papers on the table will be considered when the correspondence is complete.

APPENDIX V.

Questions asked by the Hon'ble Mr. N. Subbarau Puntulu in the Legislative Council and answers given by the Government of Madras from 8th April 1895 to 4th November 1895 regarding Settlement.

Date of the Meeting of the Legislative Council.	Questions.	Answers.
8th April 1895.	<p>Will Government be pleased to state whether it has, according to the instructions of the Government of India, published for the information of the public, the initial Standard Schedule of prices with reference to which future revisions of settlement are to be regulated in order "that certainty of assessment might become one of the inherent attributes of agricultural property," and, if not, will Government be pleased to state when it proposes to publish "the rules regarding the revision of assessments?"</p>	<p>No instructions of the kind indicated in the question have been enjoined on this Government by the Government of India.</p> <p>In 1883 certain suggestions on the subject were made by the Government, but in 1885 the Secretary of State disapproved of the policy of laying down hard and fast rules binding future Governments as to future settlements. The Government is therefore precluded from laying down any rules that would have this effect.</p> <p>The preparation of schedule of prices is the preliminary to every settlement, and this schedule will always form an important factor in subsequent revisions. But in the course of years the staples, the prices of</p>

(a) In connection with the re-settlement of the Godavery District now in progress, has Government ordered that there should be a re-classification of soils in the Delta Taluqs ?

(b) If so, will Government be pleased to state the reasons for ordering the said re-classification, in spite of the pledges of Government embodied in the Settlement Manual and in the Standing Order of the Board of Revenue, No. 1, paragraph 4, that in the case of Districts once settled there will be no re-classification of the soils ?

which are recorded in the schedules may disappear or assume quite different relative values, and other unforeseen economic charges may arise ; and it would be therefore impolitic to stereotype these schedules as the sole basis of all future revisions.

In 1894, the Government directed the Board of Revenue to draw up schedules of prices not for immediate publication, but for official use, in order to facilitate future settlements.

(a) Yes. The Government upon considering the reports of the Deputy Commissioner and of the Revenue Board, decided that a re-classification of soils of the Delta of the Godavery was necessary.

(b) In 1883 the Madras Government on a reference from the Government of India intimated that it was prepared to assent to the principle that, in districts in which the revenue had been adequately assessed, the rates of assessment should be revised entirely with reference to prices, and that no re-classification of soils or re-calculation of grain outturn should be attempted. But

Date of the Meeting of the Legislative Council.	Questions.	Answers.
		<p>the Secretary of State, in a Despatch dated 8th January 1885, to the Government of India, refused to consent to the general scheme for the amendment of the Settlement system proposed by the Government of India, especially that part of it which contemplated that the enhancement of assessments should be determined solely on the ground of a rise in prices and declared against the policy of laying down hard-and-fast rules pledging the Government of the future to a particular line of action in dealing with revisions of Settlement. This Despatch was communicated to this Government only in November 1893, and it then became necessary to issue instructions to the Board of Revenue to revise the Standing Orders and the Settlement Manual, with a view to bring them into agreement with the policy laid down by the Secretary of State. This was done in G. O., No. 263, Revenue, 11th May 1895. Between 1883 and</p>

(c) Will Government be pleased to place on the table the reports received and the orders passed by Government on the subject?

(d) Will Government be pleased to state the reasons that led to the change made in May last in the principles of re-settlement so long accepted by Government and the people?

(e) Is it a fact that Godavery is one of the Districts held by Government in 1883 to have been adequately assessed in the settlement of 1861, and consequently exempt from re-classification?

1893, Government had no intimation that the scheme for re-settlement set forth by the Government of India had been disallowed.

The Government is not prepared to place upon the table the papers asked for by the Hon'ble Member.

Answer given in (b).

In reply to a letter from the Government of India this Government wrote in 1883 that it would assent to the proposal that increase of prices should alone be considered in future, revisions of settlement in districts in which the revenue had been adequately assessed, and added that "such districts will be those which have been surveyed and in which the assessments have been fixed by the Settlement Department." Godavery is one of the Districts mentioned amongst those in which operations had then been completed. As I have stated, this assent related to a scheme which was afterwards disallowed by the highest authority.