

Central



Government of Bombay

A Note on the Co-ordination of Administration of Greater Bombay

October

1930

BOMBAY

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I. GENERAL

As announced by His Excellency the Governor in his speech to the Legislative Council on the 17th February 1930, it is the intention of Government to examine the whole administrative machinery in order to ensure that it is being conducted as economically and efficiently as possible and that it is designed to meet present-day requirements. In order to achieve this and to get a clear view of the needs of the future each branch of the administration both in Bombay City and the Bombay Suburban District has been examined and discussed in this Note.

The question of modifying existing arrangements for the administration of the Bombay Suburban District has been raised mainly for two reasons,

- (1) because the present police arrangements are not found to be effective ;
- (2) because no organisation has been devised which can deal satisfactorily with the different branches of local administration.

Conditions in this area are exceptional. It is linked up with Bombay, and is largely dependent on Bombay. On the other hand it is not densely populated and has not the characteristics of a town area which would allow of the same form and methods of administration being applied as in the case of Bombay City.

In all branches of administration, proposals have hitherto been made to assimilate arrangements in this area either to those existing in Bombay City, or to those in force in the rural areas of the Presidency, i.e. the ordinary district system of administration. In practice it has been found that neither of these types of administration is quite suited to the exceptional circumstances of the Bombay Suburban District and various proposals to divide it between Bombay City and Thana District locally, and to divide the various functions to be performed between the existing district organisation of the Thana and Bombay Suburban Districts and of the Municipal, Judicial, Revenue and Police organisation of Bombay City have not been approved.

The general facts as to area, population and distribution and likelihood of growth of population are of primary importance as a basis for decision as to the most suitable type of administration. It may be found that the urban type of administration may be suitable for certain parts and something akin to the district type may be suitable for others; there may also be cases in which the area over which authorities of the urban type are at present exercising jurisdiction can with advantage be extended.

The area and population of Bombay City and Island are 23 square miles and 1,175,914 (1921 Census) respectively and the total length of the Island is 11 miles.

The area and population of the Suburban District, excluding Ambernath, are 142 square miles and 152,840 respectively and it extends north and south 15 miles, and east and west 14 miles.

The population according to the Census of 1921 is distributed as follows :—

Suburban towns—

Bandra	27,944
Kurla	26,059
Ghatkopar	8,064
Juhu	1,418
Santa Cruz	6,092
Vile Parle	7,479
Andheri	6,211
Malad	8,520
Kandivli	3,444
Borivli	5,957
Chembur	3,191
Mulund	2,653
Rural areas	45,808

Total .. 152,840

There are 36 Government villages, and 47 villages held on special tenures.

The general nature of the area can be understood from the map at page 3.

The population of the Suburban District as given above is according to the census of 1921 and represents an increase of 51,000 over that of 1911. This shows the rapidity with which this area has been developing although the period includes

the War. It may therefore be estimated that since 1921 the increase in population has been even greater which is supported by the fact that the Collector sanctioned plans for 359 houses during 1929. Most of the suburbs are mainly residential, and the residents in the southern suburbs are for the most part employed in Bombay.

The whole Suburban area is about one-third to half the area of one taluka of a mofussil district, and the population about the same as that of a large taluka. The principal work of the Revenue authority is of a special kind, mainly that connected with the development and administration of the various suburbs.

In this note the different branches of administration are considered in the first instance separately, and secondly as to the possibility of co-ordinating some or all of the branches in one system.

The main difficulty is that in Bombay City and in any district outside of Bombay, the existence of the present standard form of city and district organisation is assumed in all enactments. If these forms of organisation are departed from, and a special form is set up, certain laws and standing orders may have to be modified to suit it.

At present the form of administration in the Bombay Suburban District is throughout that of an ordinary district. There are a Collector and District Magistrate, a District Superintendent of Police and a Deputy Collector.

As in the case of several other districts in the Presidency, it shares a District and Sessions Judge, and an Executive Engineer with an adjoining District,—in this instance, Thana.

There is a District Local Board to deal with the local administration of the villages in the rural area, and a Municipality or municipal notified area committee for each large town or village.

With regard to district administration, the Commissioner, Central Division, has certain functions and powers. It has been represented that it is undesirable that the affairs of the suburban area adjoining Bombay should be controlled from Ahmedabad (N. D.) or Poona (C. D.), and two alternative arrangements have been suggested :—

(1) The formation of a new Konkan Division, including Bombay and the Bombay Suburban District.

(2) The substitution for the Collector of Bombay of a Commissioner for Bombay and Bombay Suburban District, who would administer the affairs of the City and Suburban District with the help of Deputy Commissioners.

The problem is to constitute charges which will provide adequate work for those appointed to hold them, of such local extent that they can be conveniently worked and developed and of such nature that suitable incumbents can always be found to fill the different posts.

There are three lines of approach :—

(1) To take the existing system as a basis and modify it so as to remove obvious defects or shortcomings.

(2) To substitute a different system, still based entirely on the forms of organisation of the City and Island of Bombay and the District.

(3) To examine the work of different kinds to be done, decide on the most suitable special agency and personnel, and empower the special officer appointed to perform functions assigned to different District or Presidency officers under the Land Revenue Code and other enactments.

The last would mean setting up a new form of administration for this area, in addition to the two forms provided for in all existing legislation—that of the City and Island of Bombay and that of the District.

The formal and legal difficulty of applying existing laws to a form of administration which was not contemplated when they were enacted need not be given undue weight if the advantages to be obtained from a novel form of administration are substantial.

Whatever form of administration is introduced in the Suburban District the increase in population and consequent extension of activities of local authorities must not be overlooked. As already stated the Suburban District has developed considerably during the last few years and further development may be anticipated.

III. REVENUE AND GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Present position

The Revenue and General administration in *Bombay City* is in charge of :—

1. The Collector.
2. A Deputy Collector.
3. A Land Acquisition Officer, who has recently been appointed Land Manager in charge of chawls in addition to his other duties.
4. A Superintendent, City Survey and Land Records Office.

In the *Bombay Suburban District* there are :—

1. The Collector.
2. A Deputy Collector, whose work is mainly connected with lands and non-agricultural assessments.
3. A Land Manager for Government Development Estates.

The *Bombay Suburban District* has recently been placed under the Commissioner, Central Division, to meet all statutory requirements, but for administrative purposes the Collector corresponds directly with Government.

Object

The object to be aimed at is the co-ordination of policy in *Bombay Island* and in the *Suburban District*. Various methods have been suggested :—

(1) The appointment of the Collector of *Bombay* as Commissioner for the *Bombay Suburban Division*.

(2) The substitution for the Collector of *Bombay* of a Revenue Commissioner for *Bombay City* and *Island* with a Deputy Commissioner for the *Bombay Suburban Division*.

(3) The formation of a *Konkan Division* including *Bombay*, and *Bombay Suburban District*,

but none of these proposals has in the past been approved.

The union of the offices of Collector of *Bombay* and Collector and District Magistrate, *Bombay Suburban District*, is not practicable as the charge would be too heavy for one officer. In the event of the Police administration of *Bombay City* and the *Bombay Suburban District* being unified some of the functions of the District Magistrate, *Bombay Suburban District*, would be performed by the Commissioner of Police, *Bombay*, and some by the Chief Presidency Magistrate and the Collector would then cease to be District Magistrate. In this case the question would arise as to whether the *City* and the *Bombay Suburban District* could with advantage be combined for the purposes of Revenue and General administration.

The systems of Land Revenue administration in *Bombay City* and in the *Bombay Suburban District* are admittedly different, as the land tenures in *Bombay City* have difficulties peculiar to it, and the assessment and collection of Land Revenue are governed by the *Bombay City Land Revenue Act of 1876*. In the *Bombay Suburban District*, the ordinary survey tenure prevails in 36 Government villages and the revenue administration is governed by the *Land Revenue Code of 1879*. In addition to the Government villages there are 47 villages held under special leases or agreements, and the system of levying non-agricultural assessments differs not only from the practice in *Bombay City*, but in some respects from that followed in Districts in the Presidency.

In *Bombay City* the usual tenure of building lands is leasehold; for example, the lands in the *Back Bay Reclamation* scheme will be given on a 999 years' lease. This would, therefore, point to the necessity of a specialist staff for the Revenue and General administration, both in *Bombay City* and in the *Suburban Area*, though they might beneficially be controlled by a single revenue authority. In the event of a part of the *Bombay Suburban District* being incorporated with *Bombay City* it would probably be possible to reorganize the present staff as the revenue administration in the northern part of the *Suburban District* is similar to that of an ordinary District.

Proposals

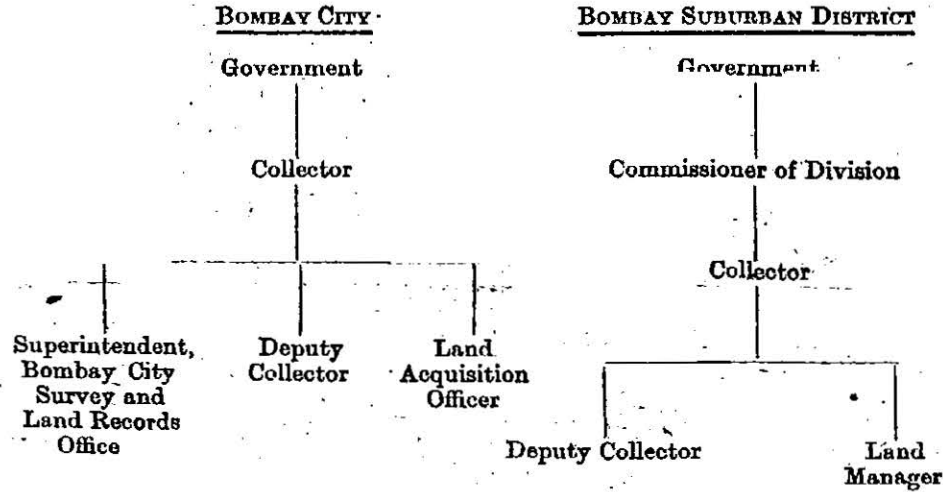
It would, however, be advantageous if Bombay City and that part of the Suburban District south of a line drawn East from Versova to Andheri and Ghatkopar and excluding Trombay Island were in charge of one Collector—the remainder north of this line being restored to the Thana District—who would have as his subordinates qualified specialists for the various problems which are continually to be solved in both areas. It is, of course, presumed that the Collector would be relieved of the duties of District Magistrate and would, therefore, be free to attend to the Land Revenue questions, which have their own difficulties. The subordinate staff might suitably consist of :—

- (1) An Assistant or Deputy Collector.
- (2) A Superintendent, City Survey and Land Records.
- (3) A Land Acquisition Officer.
- (4) A Land Manager.

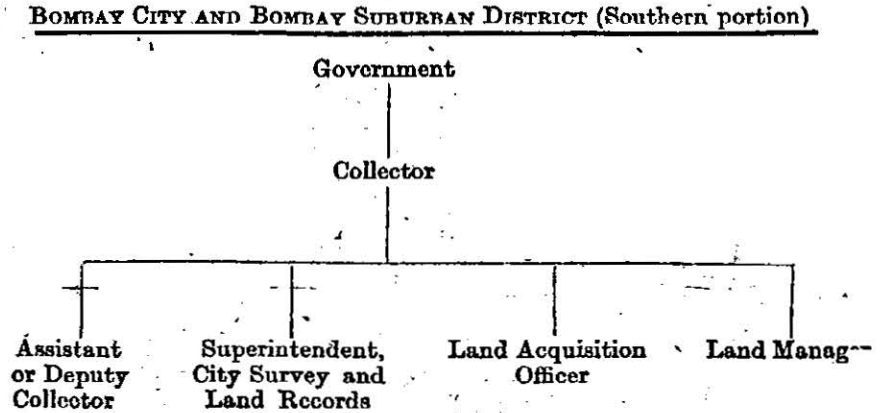
The establishment proposed above does not however provide for a Commissioner and for purposes of the Land Revenue Code it is suggested that under section 19 the Collector of Bombay City and the southern part of the Bombay Suburban District already defined should exercise the powers of a Commissioner and the Assistant or Deputy Collector should exercise the powers of a Collector.

REVENUE AND GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Present



Proposed



BOMBAY SUBURBAN DISTRICT TO THE THANA DISTRICT.
(North of Versova, Andheri, Ghatkopar).

IV. POLICE

Present Position

Law and Order is maintained in Bombay City by the Bombay City Police Force which consists of the Commissioner of Police, 4 Deputy Commissioners and 5,000 other ranks.

In the Bombay Suburban District there are the District Magistrate, the District Superintendent of Police and 440 other ranks. The latter are divided among six Police Stations, viz. :—

Bandra.	Borivli.
Vile Parle.	Ghatkopar.
Andheri.	Kurla.

Crime

For its size and population, the Bombay Suburban District has for some years been the most criminal district in the Presidency, and the figures below show it in comparison, as regards cognizable crime in 1929, with eight mofussil districts :—

District	Population	Area in square miles	Cognizable crime in 1929
1. Kanara	4,01,727	3,948	327
2. Kolaba	5,82,942	2,169	441
3. Ratnagiri	<u>11,54,244</u>	3,989	<u>621</u>
4. Broach	3,07,745	1,468	511
5. W. Khandesh	6,41,847	5,438	506
6. Satara	<u>10,26,259</u>	4,910	<u>983</u>
7. Panch Mahals	3,74,880	2,402	958
8. Bijapur	7,96,876	5,707	976
9. Bombay Suburban District	1,54,922	142	<u>1,177</u>

In non-cognizable crime the differences are still greater.

Previous Proposals

Several proposals have been made for the prevention of crime and reorganisation of the Police in the Bombay Suburban District, the most important of which are :—

(1) That the strength of the Police in the Bombay Suburban District should be considerably increased.

(2) That the policing of the Bombay Suburban District should be handed over to the Commissioner of Police, Bombay.

(3) That Bandra and Kurla should become part of Bombay City and be in charge of the Commissioner of Police for Police purposes and that the remainder of the Bombay Suburban Division should be an independent charge or a sub-divisional charge under the District Superintendent of Police, Thana.

The question of increasing the Police force in the Bombay Suburban District has been discussed in the Legislative Council on several occasions, as it has been maintained that there is not sufficient police protection for the increased and increasing population in these suburbs. It is a fact that the southern part of the Suburban District is in reality an urban area and is so closely bound to Bombay City where many of its criminals are reported to have their headquarters, and there would appear to be some justification for an increase in the force to bring it into line with the Bombay City Police with the possible exception of the traffic police. This would make for efficiency and a consequent diminution in crime.

The question of handing over the Bombay Suburban District to the Commissioner of Police was considered in 1928, and while both the Commissioner and the Inspector General considered the amalgamation would be beneficial from the point of view of efficiency, it was thought that it would be an unduly heavy charge for the Commissioner. One argument given as to why this should not be done is that the northern part of the Suburban District is not thickly populated and is more similar to a mofussil district.

If the Bombay Suburban District were amalgamated with Bombay City, it was held that the force required would be twice the then present strength: and that it would be essential to bring the whole force on to the same scales of pay as are given in Bombay City. But as has already been mentioned, the conditions north of Andheri are not entirely similar to those of Bombay City, and it is doubtful whether an increase in the pay of the police of this area would be necessary.

As regards superior establishment, no considerable increase in expenditure would appear to be necessary, as the District Superintendent of Police would become a Deputy Commissioner. There would be no District Magistrate, as the Commissioner of Police and the Chief Presidency Magistrate would exercise the powers corresponding to those exercised by the District Magistrate, which they now exercise in Bombay City.

Present Proposal

If it is not considered feasible to amalgamate the whole of the Bombay Suburban District with Bombay City it might be possible to extend the jurisdiction of the Commissioner of Police to that part of the Suburban District bounded on the north by and including Versova, Andheri and Ghatkopar, as conditions in this area are similar to those in the City, especially as a large proportion of the residents in these suburbs are Bombay business men. This area reports more crime than other parts of the Suburban District and contains five of the six Police Stations. These Police Stations reported 92 per cent. of the cognizable cases of the whole district during 1929.

In this connection it has been proposed that the new Police Station at Malad, which is now used as an outpost, should be opened and given all the villages north of Andheri and that the few villages north of Ghatkopar should be transferred from the Ghatkopar Police Station to the Mulund outpost and come under the charge of the District Superintendent of Police, Thana.

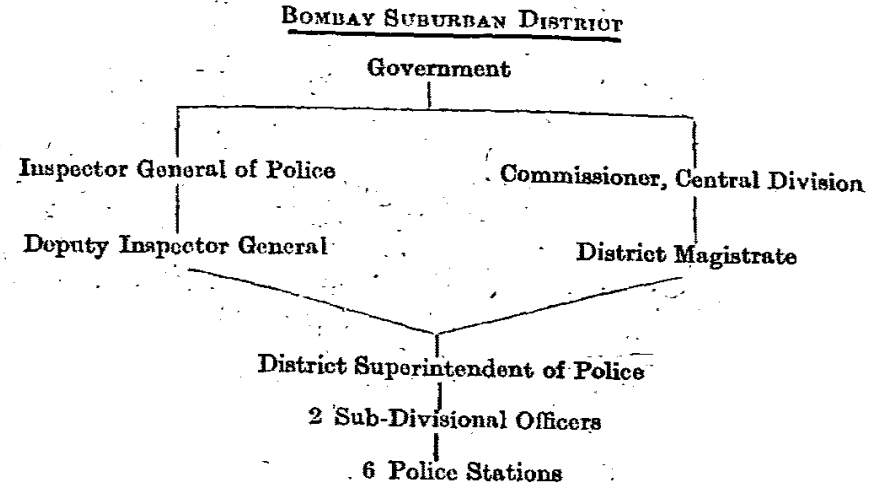
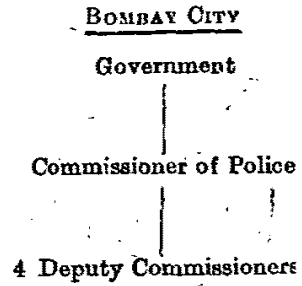
The additional expenditure required to bring this compact area up to the Bombay City standard, as regards strength and pay of police, and cost of new buildings, would be proportionately much less than for the larger area, in particular because it is doubtful if the Bombay City rates of pay would here be justified. The rest of the Bombay Suburban District could be transferred to Thana. There is no clear geographical boundary between the North of the Bombay Suburban District and Thana as there is at present in the form of the Mahim Creek on the south between the Bombay Suburban District and Bombay.

The northern part of the Bombay Suburban District is connected to Thana by good roads running N-S and E-W, while there is also an excellent electric train service between Thana and Ghatkopar. Hence there would be no great difficulty in administering this area from Thana as Headquarters.

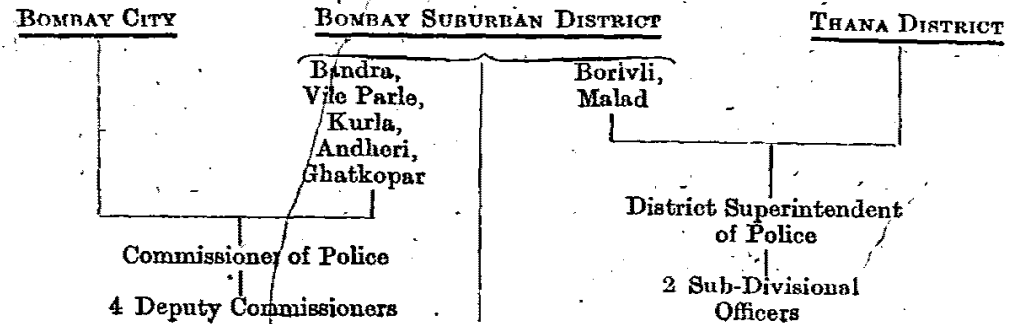
The question of whether Thana with the northern part of the Bombay Suburban District would form too heavy a charge for the District Superintendent of Police is therefore for consideration. The Thana District has an area of 3,434 square miles, a population of 759,936 and during 1928 the figures for non-cognizable crime were 1,467. It is not, however, more extensive than other Districts and even with the addition of the northern part of the Suburban District might not be considered an unduly heavy charge for one District Superintendent of Police, especially as it is the least criminal part of the Suburban District and would only mean the addition of two Police Stations to the charge of the District Superintendent of Police, Thana.

POLICE

Present



Proposed



V. JUDICIAL

Present Position

In Bombay City the Commissioner of Police exercises some of the magisterial powers exercised by District Magistrates in the mofussil and the Presidency Magistrates exercise the powers of first class Magistrates.

Appeals from the Presidency Magistrates lie to the High Court and all cases triable by a Court of Session are tried by a Judge of the High Court. As regards Civil litigation the Court of Small Causes exercises a jurisdiction limited both in respect of pecuniary value and of subject matter and corresponds to a certain extent to the Subordinate Judges' Courts in the mofussil while the High Court exercises all the powers of a District Judge in regard to cases arising in Bombay City.

The position in the Bombay Suburban District is different as there are a District Magistrate and two First Class Magistrates. There is however no separate Sessions Court and the chief Civil and Criminal Court for this area is at Thana. This in many cases causes litigants and witnesses a great deal of inconvenience as it necessitates practically a day's absence from their business or profession if their offices are in Bombay.

Previous Proposals

On the assumption that the jurisdiction of the High Court will not be changed, it has been proposed that it might be desirable to have a new District and Sessions Court at Bandra which may not involve much expense beyond finding a suitable building and appointing a Sessions Judge at Bandra at the expense of one Assistant Judge, Thana.

The suitability of this arrangement could only be based on statistics as to the cases of all kinds, Civil and Criminal, with which the Sessions Court has to deal, and an estimate as to the probable increase of this work in future.

Present Proposals

The unification of Bombay City and the Bombay Suburban District would mean the abolition of the District Magistrate, Bombay Suburban District, as the ~~Commissioner of Police and the Chief Presidency Magistrate~~ together would exercise the powers of the District Magistrate in the increased area as they already do in Bombay City. It has however been pointed out that this proposal would involve technical difficulties from a magisterial point of view.

The two First Class Magistrates in the Bombay Suburban District could not be styled Additional Presidency Magistrates unless the local limits of the ordinary original jurisdiction of the High Court are extended as Presidency Magistrates can only function in a Presidency town. (*Vide* Sec. 20, Criminal Procedure Code.) The present limits of the High Court's jurisdiction which were fixed many years ago are co-extensive with the limits of Bombay City. They can however be extended by an order of the Governor General in Council under Sec. 109, Government of India Act, which would obviate the necessity of amending the Bombay City Police Act, because under Sec. 3 (10) of the General Clauses Act, 1904, the City of Bombay is defined as the area within the local limits for the time being of the ordinary original jurisdiction of the High Court.

If this course is found desirable it may be necessary to appoint one or probably two more Presidency Magistrates under Sec. 18, Criminal Procedure Code, in place of the two First Class Magistrates at present working in the suburban area the direct result of which will be that appeals from these Presidency Magistrates will lie to the High Court instead of to the District Judge, Thana. It may be argued that the time of a High Court Judge costs more to Government than that of a District Judge but it is not possible to extend the area of Bombay City for police purposes unless the jurisdiction of the High Court is similarly extended.

The solution of the difficulty would appear to be the establishment of a City Civil Court in Bombay the demand for which, it is understood, is growing stronger. The establishment of such a Court would relieve the High Court of a number of cases of a petty nature and allow time for the hearing of appeals from the extra Presidency Magistrates proposed above.

As already proposed in the case of the Police the jurisdiction of the High Court might be extended to include the part of the Suburban District bounded on the North by and including Versova, Andheri and Ghatkopar, the remainder being within the jurisdiction of the Thana District Court.

If the suggestion to include the area defined above in Bombay City were adopted, as being advantageous for police and local administration, the remainder of the Bombay Suburban District would not be a sufficient charge for a district staff and the possibility of its re-inclusion in Thana District for all purposes may be considered.

VI. PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Present Position

The Public Works Departments of both Bombay City and the Bombay Suburban District are under the administration of the Superintending Engineer, Northern Circle.

In the Island and City of Bombay there are at present two Executive Engineers :—

(a) Executive Engineer, Presidency Division—in charge of Government buildings, open spaces and the maintenance of chawls.

(b) Executive Engineer, Back Bay—in charge of the Reclamation Scheme.

In the Bombay Suburban District the Executive Engineer, Thana, is in charge of the various housing schemes, the Badlapur and Salsette Water Supply and all Government roads and buildings.

Proposals

A modification of existing arrangements which has been suggested is :—

If the Bombay Suburban District, or part of it, is combined for administrative purposes with Bombay, that the charge of Roads and Buildings in the portion transferred should be given to the Executive Engineer, Presidency Division. This would be a convenient arrangement, and the enlarged charge would not be heavy as he spends only approximately Rs. 17 lakhs per annum, which amount is nearly 50 per cent. less than two years ago.

As regards this suggestion it may be argued that the extra area would make the Executive Engineer, Presidency's charge too extensive and involve his frequent absence from the city where he has to attend Corporation and other meetings, but as the total area of both the Bombay Suburban District and Bombay City is little more than that of a taluka in the mofussil and as there is no near prospect of any considerable building schemes in Bombay City, the inspection of any work in the north of the present Bombay Suburban District, which is served by a good road, would not mean an absence from the city of more than a few hours.

It is however probable that the Back Bay Reclamation Division will not justify the appointment of a full time Executive Engineer for much longer and it is therefore proposed that this charge should be added to the charge of the Executive Engineer, Presidency Division, which will keep his Division limited to the Island of Bombay.

Previous to October 1st, 1930, there was an Executive Engineer, Housing and Suburban Division, who was in charge of the chawls in Bombay City, the Housing schemes in the Bombay Suburban District and the Badlapur and Salsette Water Supply. This post has now been abolished owing to the fact that there is little development at present and not sufficient work to justify the retention of a separate Executive Engineer.

The maintenance of the two Water Supply schemes continues to be in charge of an experienced Sub-Divisional Officer but is now under the supervision of the Executive Engineer, Thana Division, while the maintenance of chawls in Bombay City has been transferred to the Executive Engineer, Presidency Division.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Present

BOMBAY CITY

Government

S. E. N. C.

Executive Engineer,
Presidency Division.

Chawls,
Government buildings
and open spaces

Executive Engineer,
Back Bay

Reclamation

Housing
Schemes

BOMBAY SUBURBAN DISTRICT

Government

S. E. N. C.

Executive Engineer,
Thana Division.

Badlapur
and Salsette
Water Supply

Government
Roads and
Buildings

BOMBAY CITY

Government

S. E. N. C.

Executive Engineer,
Presidency Division

Chawls,
Government buildings
and open spaces

Back Bay
Reclamation

Housing
Schemes

BOMBAY SUBURBAN DISTRICT

Government

S. E. N. C.

Executive Engineer,
Thana Division.

Badlapur
and Salsette
Water Supply

Government
Roads and
Buildings

VII. LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

In 1924 there were in the 142 square miles of the Bombay Suburban District and for a population of 154,922, 19 local (self-Govt.) authorities, viz. :—

- 4 Municipalities,
- 10 Notified Area Committees,
- 1 District Local Board,
- 1 Taluka Local Board,
- 1 Cantonment Authority,
- 1 Sanitary Committee, and
- 1 Village Panchayat.

This multiplicity of separate authorities for such a small area and population suggests that institutions which are suitable for the ordinary district, may not be a suitable form of local organisation for the special conditions which exist in this suburban area.

Present Position

The position as it stood on September 1st, 1930, was as follows :—

- 4 Municipalities,
- 12 Notified Area Committees,
- 1 District Local Board,
- 1 Cantonment authority, and
- 1 Sanitary Committee.

Government have converted one of the Notified Area Committees, viz. Vile Parle, into a municipality with effect from October 1st, 1930. They have also decided that Andheri should be converted into a municipality and the first steps to that end have already been taken.

It may be better at first to deal only with the unification of local self-government arrangements as it affects a limited area, viz. the area lying between Bandra on the south and the northern limits of Andheri in the north, and bounded on the east and west by the sea and the B. B. & C. I. Railway line, respectively. In this area there are now three Municipalities at Bandra, Juhu and Vile Parle, two Notified Area Committees at Santa Cruz and Andheri, the District Local Board for areas not covered by the preceding authorities, and a Beach Sanitary Committee at Versova. The length of the area is six miles as compared with 10½ miles for the City and Island of Bombay, and its total area is about one-third that of the Island of Bombay which has always been treated as a single unit for purposes of local self-government. It is not necessary to go further back than Act XXV of 1858, when three Municipal Commissioners were first appointed for the Town and Island of Bombay. When the first measure of local self-government was introduced in 1872, the whole Island was still a unit, and it has remained so ever since. In 1882, 1892, and even in 1902, communication between the north and south of the Island of Bombay was more difficult and tedious than it is to-day between Bandra and Andheri which has been the reason for the institution of separate authorities.

There is no doubt that the unity of local self-government, with the unity of general development which followed, has been, on the whole, throughout the last fifty or sixty years, advantageous for the City and Island. It cannot be denied that if local self-government in the Island had been inaugurated on the lines followed in the Bombay Suburban District, for example, with one Municipality in the Fort, another for the thickly populated areas stretching northwards from Carnac Road to Byculla, and a collection of small authorities for Colaba, Mahim, Dharavi, Matunga, Vadala and so on, the development of water supply, drainage, sewerage, communications and lighting, and even the growth of local self-government itself, would have been impeded. In contrast to the long established unity of the City and Island, we have, in an area of one-third its extent, and immediately to the north of it, no less than seven local authorities struggling with the usual problems of local administration. These problems are becoming more intense and cannot be satisfactorily solved without joint action. Water supply is perhaps the

most important problem, as it is one of the main responsibilities of local self-governing bodies, but owing to the multiplicity of separate organisations in the Bombay Suburban District, Government have had to undertake this responsibility. Surface drainage is a problem which is settled not by artificial Municipal boundaries but by surface configuration and geographical conditions. Sewerage is becoming an urgent problem, and the disposal of night soil by existing methods is already presenting serious difficulties.

Previous Proposals

The proposal of the Local Self-Government Organisation Committee in 1925 was that Western Salsette should come under the control of only two Municipalities, one with headquarters at Bandra and the other with headquarters at Andheri. The order* of Government on this recommendation was that a referendum should be made to all the householders of the areas affected. The result of such a referendum might have been foreseen. In a proposed amalgamation of this kind, local feeling is apt to cloud the broader issues. Added to this, communal, religious and sectional differences, and even personal ambitions, come into operation. For instance, Santa Cruz is for all practical purposes now a part of Bandra, and the line of residential buildings along the Ghodbunder Road is practically unbroken at the junction of the two areas. Nevertheless the population of Santa Cruz declared in favour of an amalgamation with the entirely detached areas of Vile Parle and Andheri, rather than for a natural union with their immediate neighbour at Bandra. The point to be emphasized is that the opposition in Santa Cruz to an amalgamation with Bandra is not based on any requirements of water supply, surface drainage, sewerage systems, or other practical problems of local administration, or on lack of geographical affinities, but rests largely on communal, religious, and sectional differences. The feelings of the Santa Cruz people, however, had so much weight with Government that in 1926† Government agreed that the limits of the Bandra Municipality should remain as they are, and accepted a proposal that a joint Municipality for Santa Cruz, Vile Parle, Andheri and Versova should be established with headquarters at Andheri. The position and conditions of Santa Cruz relative on the one hand to Bandra and on the other hand to Vile Parle, Andheri and Versova do not justify this decision, and the only reason for the proposal of the people of Santa Cruz to amalgamate with Andheri seems to have been to avoid amalgamation with Bandra, as when they had gained this point they protested against their inclusion in the proposed joint Municipality the headquarters of which was to be Andheri.

Government again gave way to local feelings in the Bombay Suburban District, and in December 1927‡ cancelled their orders of September 1926 for a Joint Municipality at Andheri.

Having shaken off the amalgamation with Bandra by declaring for fusion with Andheri, and next having refused the amalgamation with Andheri, the inhabitants of Santa Cruz then endeavoured to strengthen their position by seeking to convert their local authority from a Notified Area Committee with its limited powers to a municipal authority. The inhabitants of Vile Parle and Andheri took the same steps.

The existence of strong local feeling is a fact which Government cannot ignore. By taking advantage of this spirit they are able to enlist in the cause of local administration a good deal of civic enthusiasm which might otherwise be wasted. By creating a separate municipality at Vile Parle they have shown their reluctance to override local susceptibilities and their anxiety to create forms of local organisation which will enable the citizens to devote themselves to the intensive development of their particular areas. They have recognised that at the present stage of development intensive work within limited areas is to be encouraged and that in spite of the risks involved a system of local government based on restricted areas may possibly produce better immediate results than a wider organisation.

At the same time it is impossible to contemplate such a state of things as a permanent solution of the problem. It is inevitable that with the process of time the pressure of facts will impel these local bodies to seek a gradual increase in

unification. The problems of water supply, of drainage and sewerage, of the supply of electric power and of communications are common to the whole area and must ultimately modify the present tendency towards separatism and particularism. In these circumstances it is incumbent on Government to proceed with great caution and to hesitate before creating local bodies which may ultimately become obstacles in the way of a wider unification. They have to strike a balance between immediate expediency and the ultimate goal at which they are aiming. Their policy during the present stage must be one which aims at the gradual creation of larger and more efficient local bodies, and which avoids any step which may stand in the way of the realisation of that object while at the same time allowing as much scope as possible for the utilisation of local public spirit and retaining the good will and active co-operation of the population affected.

The discussion under this head so far has been limited to a small area in the west of the Bombay Suburban District and to a restricted amount of amalgamation of local self governing bodies in this area. In considering the amalgamation of a part of the Bombay Suburban District with Bombay City, the Committee of 1924 did not advocate the inclusion of any part except perhaps Kurla within the limits of the Bombay Municipality.

This proposal again seems worthy of consideration as Kurla by reason of its position, its factories and industrial population presents similar problems to those of the City though the Bombay Municipality may object to its inclusion. It is understood that it would make for efficiency especially as its Municipal management and insanitary conditions have long made it a menace to Bombay, and the Bombay Municipality had, before 1924, considered the question of its inclusion in their limits, but had deferred action. There is no doubt that if the Bombay Municipal Corporation would agree to include Kurla in their area, the result would be of benefit to both areas, but the financial obligations, present and future, of the Bombay Municipality in connection with water supply, drainage, sewerage, land schemes and the transfer of the Improvement Trust, if effected, are such as to render it difficult at the present time to extend the Municipal limits northwards.

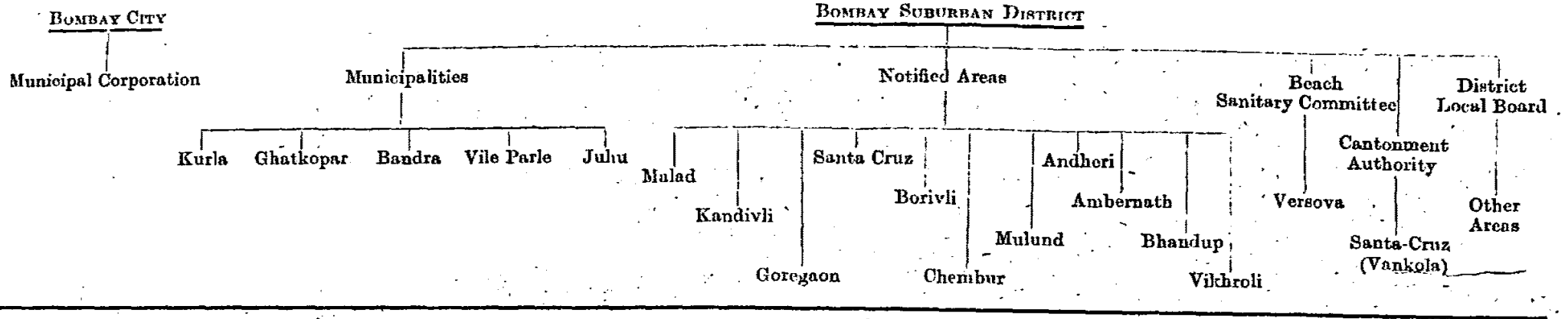
The problem of water supply in the suburbs is one which the existing local authorities have so far failed to solve, and Government have had to incur the responsibility, and it may be added, financial losses in meeting local requirements in this regard. At the moment, the only practical method of transferring this responsibility to a local authority would be to create a Water Board *ad hoc*. This would involve legislation.

Present Proposal

The proposals which have been made in this Note for the other branches of the administration are that the urban and rural areas of the Bombay Suburban District should be, as far as possible, divided and it would appear that this can be done by declaring the area south of a line drawn east from Versova to Andheri and Ghatkopar to be a part of Greater Bombay and the northern part inclusive of Ambernath to be reincluded in the Thana District. This re-adjustment of the boundaries appears to be suitable also for purposes of Municipal administration. It has already been proposed that Kurla Municipal area should be included in the limits of the Bombay City Municipality primarily owing to its peculiar position and secondly owing to the fact that in its present insanitary condition it is a menace to Bombay City. In the remaining part of this area there are 4 Municipalities, 4 Notified Areas, a Beach Sanitary Committee and a Cantonment Authority. Experience has shown that with so many forms of Local Self Government in a small area there can be no degree of efficiency or uniformity and it is therefore suggested that the object to be aimed at should be the establishment of two centres of Municipal administration at Bandra and Andheri respectively in addition to the Water Board already suggested. Under these circumstances the northern part of the Suburban District should be re-included in Thana District Local Board.

LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT

Present



Proposed

