CHAPTER-II

FAMINE IN BELLARY DISTRICT,
1876-78
The Bellary district formed an extensive plateau sloping towards the east. The average elevation was about 1,000 feet above the sea level. In the 1870's its area was 11,037 square miles. It had a population of 16,53,000. It was divided into the following fifteen taluqs:


It realized a land revenue of Rs. 25,00,000 during 1875-76. There were no Zemindari estates in the district.

Owing to the inland position of the district, it was influenced by both the monsoons: south-west monsoon and north-east monsoon. Because it was in a rain shadow region, it did not get the full benefit of either. The district received most of its rain from the south-west monsoon. The climate was very dry. There were few large rivers and few irrigation works. Nearly the whole of the cultivation was of dry land dependent on the local rainfall. Consequently, Bellary was liable to the vicissitudes of the season to a greater degree than any other district in the Presidency. The district, however, possessed an extremely fertile soil and in an ordinary year it yielded a large quantity of surplus food-grain.

SOCIAL COMPOSITION

The district had a Hindu population of 15,25,067, whereas the Muslims and others were of 1,27,943.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brahmans</td>
<td>34,613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kshatriyas</td>
<td>5,362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chetties</td>
<td>28,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>14,56,133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>15,25,067</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Communities</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mahomedans</td>
<td>1,25,666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europeans</td>
<td>1,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eurasians</td>
<td>967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1,27,943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td>16,53,010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bellary district is located in the rain shadow region. As such it used to receive much less rain only next to the region of Thar Desert. Thus this...
region has been a very dry one which received very meagre rainfall. The year 1876-77 was the well known year of famine since that year was the Dhatu year of the sixty-year cycle of Hindu calendar. This famine was otherwise known as the Dhatu famine.

In fact, the district of Bellary had already suffered the famine for one year during the year of Yuva (1875-76) i.e., Fasli 1285, before the commencement of the Dhatu year.

RAINFALL

The Bellary district received less rain fall for the period of famine, in comparison with years prior to and later and the details hereunder explain the same:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Rain Received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1874-75</td>
<td>37.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875-76</td>
<td>22.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876-77</td>
<td>7.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877-78</td>
<td>27.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878-79</td>
<td>32.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rain fall for Bellary district during the Dhatu famine year (1876-77) was the least not only in the Ceded Districts area, but the whole of the twenty-one districts of the Madras Presidency as shown in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>1876-77</th>
<th>Average for 10 years up to 1875</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kadapa</td>
<td>9.21</td>
<td>28.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellary</td>
<td>7.75</td>
<td>22.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurnool</td>
<td>8.74</td>
<td>27.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ganjam</td>
<td>41.17</td>
<td>40.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visakhapatnam</td>
<td>36.14</td>
<td>41.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Godavari</td>
<td>26.22</td>
<td>36.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krishna</td>
<td>20.16</td>
<td>30.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nellore</td>
<td>12.32</td>
<td>33.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madras</td>
<td>21.52</td>
<td>53.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24
Chengalpattu 21.58 50.64
North Arcot 18.10 33.83
South Arcot 25.08 38.29
Tanjore 28.38 37.87
Trichirapalli 23.02 37.06
Madurai 18.82 28.81
Tirunalvelly 18.62 26.91
Coimbatore 18.05 23.71
Neelagiri 36.89 44.68
Salem 18.67 34.66
South Canara 117.46 136.60
Malabar 83.19 107.95

Compared to the other regions of Andhra region of the Madras Presidency, the maximum was with regard to Vishakapatnam which received rainfall of 36.14 inches as against 41.22 inches of average rainfall. It may also be compared to the best rainfall 117.16 inches as against the normal average of 136.59 inches which regard to South Canara. Thus the rain fall in Bellary district was the least either in comparison to the other Telugu districts or non-Telugu districts of the Madras Presidency.⁶

**EARLY FAMINE**

The British administrators and colonial/imperialist historians have said that the famine was for one year of 1876-77. But in fact the famine extended over a large period than one year i.e. 1876-77. In fact 1875-76 and 1877-78 were also famine years. Therefore it was famine for three continuous years.⁷

**EARLY CORRESPONDENCE**

Even during the year 1875-76 the rainfall was much less and famine situation was felt early. For example on 22 February 1875 J.H. Master, Collector of Bellary, wrote at length about the cases of cultivation without durkast (application). It was on 6 April 1875 that the Collector was asked to enquire and dispose all such cases of cultivation without
Normally banjar land belongs to the Government but the ryots were permitted to carry on cultivation by making a durkast. During famine cultivators were permitted to carry on cultivation of such lands. The Collector of Bellary wrote to the Board of Revenue (BR) stating the intricacies of such cases. He informed the BR that the puttas were to be issued to applicants two months after the jamabundy.

If this course is adopted, some difficulty will be experienced in closing the revenue accounts of the taluq, because the correct demand of the taluq cannot be entered in the Balance statement till two months after the settlement. If the jamabundy of a taluq be finished only at the end of May, the revenue of the taluq cannot be known before the end of July.

SEVEN VILLAGES OF GOOTY TALUQ

The seven villages in the Gooty taluq namely Narimella, Havaligi, Vidupankal, Voondabunda, Donekal, Paltoor, Rayampally had suffered crop failure. The Collector of Bellary in his letter to the BR reported that in the seven villages the crops on dry lands had to a great extent withered in consequence of the failure of rain.

**Holding and Actual Cultivation by Ryots of 7 Villages**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Villages</th>
<th>Holding of the Ryots</th>
<th>Actually Cultivated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Acres</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Narimella</td>
<td>727</td>
<td>548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Havaligi</td>
<td>3,794</td>
<td>3,029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Vidupankal</td>
<td>5,895</td>
<td>4,377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Voondabunda</td>
<td>1,416</td>
<td>1,442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Donekal</td>
<td>3,558</td>
<td>3,571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Paltoor</td>
<td>1,950</td>
<td>1,554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Rayampally</td>
<td>1,175</td>
<td>1,373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>17,715</td>
<td>15,896</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

He recommended exemption from the payment of interest, process fees and arrears due by the as relief ryots. Earlier the Sub-Collector sent
his letter to the Collector and recommended a remission of rupees 3,031-12-3 paisa, that is some 30% of the assessment of the lands the crops on which have entirely failed. He provided these particulars in the form of a statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Villages</th>
<th>Land which Yielded some Crop</th>
<th>Remaining, the Crops on which have Entirely Failed</th>
<th>Amount of Remission Recommended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Nurimetta</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Havaliggi</td>
<td>1,881</td>
<td>1,699</td>
<td>399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Vidupankal</td>
<td>1,701</td>
<td>2,490</td>
<td>929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Voondabanda</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>883</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Donekal</td>
<td>1,079</td>
<td>2,393</td>
<td>788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Paltoor</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>942</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Rayampally</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>767</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>6,855</td>
<td>10,358</td>
<td>3,631</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Collector recommended the case of these seven villages as follows:

Application for the remission should have been submitted by the Sub-Collector before this; but, in consideration of the loss incurred in those villages where the crops have entirely failed, I have the honor to request the sanction of the Board for this remission as a special case.

VILLAGES OF PENUKONDA

The Tahsildar of Penukonda, in his season report for March 1876, remarked that the laboring classes in his taluq were bodily off for the means of livelihood. Thereafter, the Collector called upon the Head Assistant Collector to report on the subject with any suggestions as to remedy. The Head Assistant Collector surveyed and reported about the situation in the Penukonda villages. He submitted a list of villages wherein distress was said to have prevailed to a smaller or greater extent in the taluq of Penukonda.
Of the 75 suffering villages, 52 villages were in southern and western portions of the taluq. They were reported to be the worst off. In large villages or towns, and in villages which are not dependent on tanks alone for cultivation, the poor found work and got on, though of course not so well as in favourable seasons. Ragi and cholum were the staple food of the poor. Before the famine ragi was sold 40 seers per rupee but under famine conditions only 26. The case of cholum was also similar. Under normal conditions per rupee 32 seers was sold but during famine 24 seers. He recommended to take up the works relating to the repairs of several irrigation works, roads and digging of wells in the villages. The Collector also recommended to sanction rupees 6825 for irrigation works, rupees 3000 to 4000 for road works and 2000 for digging wells.16

The BR considering the large amount required for relief work, desired and informed the Collector of Bellary:

It does not appear that the Head Assistant Collector has visited the villages in the Pennakondah taluq in which “distress is said to Prevail”, and the collector will be directed by telegram to order him to make a tour through the portion of the taluq said to be affected and report further.17

Accordingly, the Collector directed the Head Assistant Collector to undertake a tour of Penukonda region.16 The Head Assistant Collector received the Collector’s letter on 28 April 1876. He started on tour on the following day through the whole of the southern and western portions of Penukonda taluq19. After completion of the tour he sent a letter on 11 May to the Collector from Penukonda. He stated in his reports that he had personally visited 29 out of the 36 villages.20 He conformed that the poorest classes of the population (by which he meant the Madigas) and people who lived almost entirely by coolly, were in great straits for the means of livelihood.

The story is the same almost everywhere, that they are universally reduced to one meal instead of two-a-day, and that one meager. In several villages, where even one meal-a-day cannot be procured,
they are eking out such small supplies of grain as they get by eating tamarind seeds, and in two villages the leaves of Jungle tree, (Gadarakula) are affording them same subsistence.

... owing the plethora of labourers in these callings, the earnings of each are so reduced and confined that barely sufficient for the day are the scanty ways thereof. Some leaving their houses, go to distant towns and villages more favoured where they find employment, which enables them to return how and then with a supply of food for their families. A few, their occupation gone, set off last autumn to coffee estates on the Nilgiris... ²¹

In his report, the Reddy of Reddam, a gentle man of long experience and almost the largest and most influential puttdar in the taluq, told him that in his opinion the present distress was greater than that of the famine year 1866. He also furnished the list of villages with particulars of normal acreage or total holding of ryots; the cultivated part; the actual yield of some crop; the crops on which entirely failed and finally the amount of remission recommended. The Collector recommended to the BR and it in turn to the Government.²²

H.T. Ross, the Acting Head Assistant Collector, submitted his report to the Collector of Bellary on 2 September 1876 on the condition of the portion of Penukonda taluq which lies to the west of a line drawn from Shah Droog through Corge, Penukonda, Maudli and Rukulhully to the border. He stated that there was no improvement. The tanks were all dry. There had been no rainfall. But a few deceptive showers induced many ryots to sow their dry fields. The young crops, which appeared to be coming on well, had removed the appearance of barrenness in the land. Unless there was decent fall within ten days or a fortnight, these crops were to be wholly lost. This recent cultivation, however, was only about a-fourth of the usual extent. It had afforded practically no relief to the coolly classes, whose ordinary occupation was field-labour. The ryots, finding the times hard, were doing their field-work themselves. The lands under wells and the Pennair Channels were more favoured.
Not much relief had been afforded by the works lately put in hand. The pressure on the lowest classes – the Madigas, Malas, Boyas, and Kurabas, continued more severe. The distress was confined to these classes. Prices had risen at Penukonda, which is the market for all this tract of country. It provided 16 seers a-rupee for ragi and cholum and 11 seers for rice.

H.T. Ross observed the situation succinctly and reported the same to the collector. The prices, according to him was

“... not yet so high as to seriously inconvenience traders, skilled workmen, and persons in receipt of salaries for service, and it will be only if the dry crops wither and the supply of irrigation wells, river channels, and tanks is not replenished by an early north-east monsoon that anxiety need be felt on account of the body of agriculturists. Even among the distressed classes the pressure is not such as to induce emigration in any appreciable degree, and there is no sign yet of mortality from starvation though continued living on leaves and tamarind seeds must sooner or later tell its tale. It is difficult, of course, to get at the exact amount of distress."

However, Ross felt that the starvation was not yet apparent in the physique of the people anywhere. But he was of the opinion that a clear case existed for preventive measures by the continuance of relief-works. He saw that persons seeking work for relief were increasing. He was glad to report that the number of helpless poor who could not work for a living was not such as to justify to start relief houses. The local charity was doing all that was necessary. He felt that the drinking water supply, though scanty and decreasing, was still generally sufficient. Fodder for cattle was exceedingly scarce except in one or two favoured spots, such as Peddamanatooor and Chinnamanatooor. Death of cattle from starvation had already commenced. He found that in nearly every village, one or two cattle were dying daily. They died as simple skeletons. This did no good to the distressed classes who habitually ate carcasses. There was no prospect of rain. It was feared that the loss of cattle was to be very great.
He also inspected the following relief works and reported on their progress and effect. These were:

1) Constructing an anicut Toorkalapatnam.
2) Repairing a well at Manwatoor.
3) Deepening a well at Adathakalpally.
4) Constructing an anicut at Boocherla.
5) Road from Roddam towards Pawgar.
6) Road from Gourazhully towards Nagalmadki.
7) Diversion of Madaksira - Penukonda Road at Peddamanatooor.

He observed that water works, such as anicut and wells, did not confer any immediate benefit in itself on the villages. However, he mentioned that on the road works the results have been wholly good.

The total special relief grant sanctioned for Penukonda taluq was Rupees 7,000 out of which rupees 2,300 was already allotted for the works mentioned above. He estimated that proposal for western section amount to rupees 2,950, leaving rupees 1,750 of relief the southern and eastern sections.

Thus the report of H.T. Ross, showed that the distress in the western portion of the Penukonda taluq was not so serious at the beginning of September 1876. But it was felt there was a need to be careful in managing the distress, if situation would not improve and continued to deteriorate. It is also the opinion of the Acting Collector that the distress in southern taluqs of Penukonda was not yet to be worried, “but still it is absolutely necessary to provide the means of earning wages to the numbers of the labouring classes who are not of employ.”

HARPANHALLY DIVISION

The year 1875-76 was also a bad season, a cause of great anxiety. The Deputy Collector of the Harpanhally, V. Venkatachellum Pantulu, sent his report to the Collector of Bellary on 3 July, 1876. Earlier the Collector had written to him. In that letter the Collector required him to
propose the opening of relief works. The Deputy Collector obtained an
Urzi from the Tahsildar of Harpanhally dated 1 July 1876, which reported
the distressed state of his taluq. He also sent a list of works to be
undertaken immediately for the relief of the suffering of the villages. The
16 villages were Harpanhally, Batru Obalapuram, Tellicherry, Raghy
Masahood, Arsikery, Devaru Tummalapur, Neelgoond, Koolhalli,
Bemuhally, Mydoor, Mothogy, Bangaly, Chigtary, Almaresakary,
Govanhally, Churanahally. The works suggested were repairing of wells,
repair of roads, construction of chuttrums for travellers, laying of roads,
filling of pits, construction of dams, repairs of supply channels of tanks,
clearance of wells, filling in manure pits and so on. In all, people belonging
to 64 villages were to benefit out of these relief works. A total sum of Rs.
15,000 was allotted for these relief works. He requested Rs.12,000 for the
time being from the already granted amount of Rs. 15,000.

DIVISIONAL REPORTS

In the Kudligi, Harpanhally and Huvindhadgully Taluqs, the famine
condition was growing steadily. Poorer classes of the society began to
suffer deeply in these regions. The Divisional Officers submitted their
reports of the then existing famine conditions in their taluqs. Later, the
Collector transmitted those reports sent by the Deputy Collectors of the
Bellary and Harpanhally Divisions. But the BR felt that the information
passed on was "to the last degree, meagre and unsatisfactory". It also
charged the Deputy Collector in a stringent way.

The Deputy Collector in charge of the Bellary Division
does not appear to have moved from his Head-
quarters at the Hujoor station (for which no
explanation is afforded), and he bases his
recommendations for the opening of relief works in
the Kudligi Taluq on an azri of the Tahsildar which
is not submitted with the Collector's letter. As at
present informed the Board are by no means satisfied
that the necessity for exceptional measures of relief in
this taluq really exists.
Equally the BR was severe on the Deputy Collector's Inspection of Harpanhally Division. It needed clarification because the inspection was confined to seven villages in the immediate vicinity of the Cusbah at Harpanhally. The BR were led to believe from previous reports that the distress was spread over the two taluqs of Harpanhally and Huvinhadgully. It was very harsh with regard to the lack of accuracy of the reports furnished by the Deputy Collectors. The logic of the BR was made very clear to the Collectors and Deputy Collectors on the above issue.

The Board desire to impress upon the Collector that whilst they are prepared to give the most cordial support to all well-considered measures having for their object the relief of bona fide distress amongst the poorer classes in unfavourable seasons, it is essential that the necessity for such measures should first be established beyond the possibility of doubt, and this can only be done by District Officers testing by personal inquiry the accuracy of the reports which may be furnished to them by their subordinates, and no expenditure of public funds can be permitted until this has been done. In seasons when there is apprehension of a scarcity of food, Divisional Officer should be constantly on the move within the limits of their charges and so far as his other duties will admit of it, the Collector should do the same. The presence of the superior District Officers will stimulate the efforts of their subordinates where distress really exists, and will put a stop to the submission of exaggerated reports\(^3\).

**COLLECTOR'S REPORT, 11 SEPTEMBER 1876**

The Collector of Bellary sent a detailed report on the visit of the Western taluqs\(^3\). In his report he regretted that matter was much worse than he anticipated. The report contained a sketch-map of the two taluqs of Huvinhadgally and Harpanhally, in which the famine affected villages were marked. His report was quite interesting in many respects. The first crop was otherwise known as the dry crop as shown in the month of June. Though there was rain in the early part of the month, showers of rain was much less. The fall of rain had not only been partial, but not
sufficient to penetrate the soil. The tanks, excepting a very few, in the South-eastern corner of Harpanhally, were dry.

The principal crop was *cholum*. Generally by the month of September the yield must be ready, but the stalk had grown only two to three feet high instead of six to eight feet high in normal times. The Collector felt:

> But what is most grievous is, that just at this crisis, when if the grain formed, a return of some kind would be obtained, the blade is over a very large area drying up altogether. No rain could do any good to fields where this state of things exists.\(^{34}\)

He also compared the distress as greater than it was in 1866.

The Collector continued that the present ‘distress’ affected but not only the labouring classes but all classes. Goldsmiths were to be seen at the relief works. In one instance, a village Reddy with all members of his family was only too glad to be allowed to work. The general rate paid is one *anna*\(^{35}\) and a half for a man, and one *anna* for a woman.

The Collector entered Harpanhally taluq from the east. He halted at Chigatari. A relief work in the shape of a road through the village had been set in hand. There were some 70 persons out of employment. He also referred to a village a little to the north of Chigatari where work had also been put in hand. There were about fifty persons employed. Further he observed

> For the village of Bennyhully, Band, Lalaishwaram and others, nothing had been then done, but road work was directed to be commenced.\(^{36}\)

The next point of the visit of Collector was to Arisekera and Oochengyroog. He gave the impression, that crops were looking better at the two places and in the villages surrounding them. But his observation beyond a few miles of these places is as follows:

> I came upon villages which the Tahsildar had previously reported to be in a sad plight—Raggy, Mussulwada, Teligi, Joladacutta, Wuddarahully, Doogawatty, Bukcutty and others. At that time a well was being repaired at the
first placed. At Doogawatty a new well was being dug. At Teligi road work was going on. Labourers from neighbouring villages congregated at Teligi for this work. At Allagilwada well-work was going on. At Harpenhully there was a large laboring population, the pressure was the greatest. Work in the shape of making roads in the village and filling up pits were provided, but it was soon got through. Therefore people were employed in excavating a supply channel to the Harpenhully tank. It was expected that this may afford employment for a few weeks.

The Collector feared:

...but if the number of laborers increases in the ratio it has been doing, this too will soon be furnished. I did not go to the kusbah myself, as there could be no doubt of the existence of distress there, and I had to get into the extreme south-western corner of the Hadgally Taluq round the range of hills near Haltuagal and Karrubagudy. I may mention, however, that when work was, on the 22\textsuperscript{nd} July, first commenced at the Kusbah of Hurpunhully, 150 persons presented themselves for employment, and by the last report, on the 9\textsuperscript{th} instant, work has to be found for 1,100 persons.

Hollal was the first village visited by the Collector in the Hadgally taluq. There some 320 people were employed in deepening a large hondam. This work was commenced on the 28\textsuperscript{th} July. When it was to be completed, these workers were to be employed in laying a road from there to Mylar village, at a distance of three miles. His next visit was to villages name by Heerahadgally and Mangalam village. In these two villages a severe famine existed because the crops failed so completely one year ago. The work relating a road was made in this village, a well had been deepened and 590 persons were engaged. A small tank was being deepened. Next to that work, a road was to be constructed between these two villages for a distance of six miles.

At Mangalam village things were very bad and people crowded to the works. A road was being laid from this village to river Tungabhadora, and other localities. The Collector found some 650 men and women had been employed. These were from surrounding villages in search of work.
The next point of his visit was the head-quarters of the taluq. From this place a road had been marked out to Holagondy, a distance of four miles and a half. The work was commenced with 77 coolies. But the numbers, week after week, grew where at the time of visit the work had 1,456 coolies. The work was soon completed and new road to the bank of the river Tungabhadra at Madalicutta on the way to Moondrigy, has been marked out. This is a distance of seven miles. He also provided, after completing this work, the proposal to employ them on a large tank at Moodanoor, which was two miles away. This required a good deal of earth work. The Collector expressed the difficulty of the government to the people to implement:

I may mention that it has been impossible to furnish any of these gangs of laborers with tools. They, therefore, bring their own; the condition of being employed being that a man must have a pickaxe or a momaty and a woman a basket. They are only too glad to comply with this condition, even though they receive so small a remuneration⁴⁰.

They accepted the hard condition that existed and he wrote to the BR.

The willingness of the people to accept so small a remuneration is, I think, a test of the existence of real distress. Of course they clamour for more, but when told that they must be content, they submit immediately, only entreating that work may be continued to be provided for them till rain falls. The poor creatures are most grateful for the relief which is being afforded⁴¹.

The BR had sanctioned Rs.12,000 for relief work in these two taluqs. The amount was distributed and the Collector had asked for another Rs.25,000 as a grant for the western taluqs. The system of money distribution is described in his report as follows:

The Tahsildars of the two taluqs, K. Venkoba Row and H. Ragavendra Row, are exerting themselves energetically at the present crisis, and the people evidently feel confidence in them; but it is hard work, for with their extended criminal powers, they must find it difficult to move about as much as they otherwise
ought to do. If distress continues, I must ask for additional hands. At present funds are entrusted to the Reddy and Curnam of the villages where work is going on. Lists of coolies are kept as vouchers. It is absolutely necessary to make daily payments. These are superintended at the Kusbah stations by the Tahsildar or Sheristadar, whoever may be present.

The report contained, in all, ten enclosures of which six were copies of reports of Divisional Officers, one was a sketch map and the other three were of statistical information.

CROSTHWAIT'S REPORT

The Collector recommended road laying work from Singanamala to Garladinna. He pleaded this work would undoubtedly give employment to a number of persons in that locality. He also requested the government to sanction a grant of Rs.10,000 for works, which may be necessary in this sub-division. The other road from Anantapur to Tadipatry was also important as a relief measure. Nine villages of Anantapur taluq were mentioned specifically to. The Deputy Collector claimed that he made a personal inspection of these villages. It was a fact that during the past six years the taluq of Singanamala has not dried since 1870. It was a famous tank which served the villages of Govindrajupet (H.O. Singanamalla) Bundameadapalli, Sivapuram, Peruvall, Sudanapally, Garladinna, Nagalagadam and Chakrayapeta. In other words, all these villages were to a great extent dependant upon its water for their livelihood. The Tahsildar of this taluq personally inspected the conditions of the poorest classes in the above villages. According to him, their bodies were not emaciated to any unusual degree and there were no special indications of insufficient nourishment. It was strange to have the observation of the Tahsildar. But he had accepted the following:

1. Supplement of staple food, cholum to the admixture of a leaf called Devadaru.
2. The spring wells were getting died up.
3. The gathering of firewood for sale, created this situation where the supply exceeded the demand.

37
4. Owners of standing crops were unwilling to employ of coolies.
5. The sowcars were no longer to lend money.

The Tahsildar described that the famine situation in the village of Chakrayapeta is in a lamentable state. Most of the houses are in ruins, the occupants having been ruined by Sowcar's claims, and many have been deserted owing to the bad season. Owing to the bad season many villagers had deserted this village. They were also dependent upon Singanamala tank. Since there was no water, there was no harvest in the month of Vaishakham. All the crops in the village were destroyed by disease. During the season the entire lands of villages were waste as the tank is dry. The ryots of the village clamour for an advance of Rs.10 for each family till the tank receives a supply. They say they cannot otherwise get food, and they promised to repay such advance. The Collector pleaded road work which will improve the situation in the village. He ended his report with the following statement:

I hope this report will be sufficient to show you how urgent is the necessity for the commencement of the road work already recommended by me.

I propose reporting again should I find it necessary to recommend any more special forms of relief.

The BR considered that he did not think special grants for relief works should be treated as grants to particular local funds circles. Because, this course will entitle a charge of 25% for the supervision of Public Works Department. The BR ordered:

It is advisable that the Collector should not be fettered in his disposal of the money but should be at liberty to expend it whenever he thinks proper.

REPORT ON KUDILIGI TALUQ

The Deputy Collector of Bellary Division, N. Murugesam Modiliyar, reported to Collector of Bellary on 16 September 1876, that he had marched 116 miles towards the south, east and south-east at Kudilig
taluoq and had direct conversation with the poor of all classes. Though the
distress was reported to be instant, he found the people not emaciated, not
manifest any fearful symptoms of starvation except in parts of Gudikota
‘Sammat’ where a few of the old and infirm of the Madigas and Boyas and
who had no relatives to take care of them appeared to be the objects of
commiseration. They were fit subjects for local charity and no need to call
for the state charity as this type of distress was not soon large or
universal.

However, he observed that poorer classes were suffering considerably
from want of means to earn a livelihood, as the well-to-do section of the
community had been comparatively impoverished from the grievous
failure of the monsoons, especially in succession of a bad year. Cattle
disease, cholera and fever of a bad type have had their own share of
mischief in the heavy damage suffered among man and beast. Want of
fodder for tilling cattle was excessively felt among the ryots. One ryot at
about Mahadevapure had suffered a loss of over 200 cattle from this want.

Almost all the tanks were dry and therefore no wet cultivation had
been practicable. The villages where dry lands have been with partial
success cropped with _ragi_ and _cholum_ with the aid of well or “Duramule”.
Irrigation were few and far between, and all other lands depending for
moisture on rain-fall had been either ploughed or sown. In the latter case
the seeds germinated to a span or cubic height and sadly withered away.
The wells and ‘nalas’ were fast running short of supply, and the few that
had the appearance of such were scarcely capable of affording sufficient
moisture to mature a dry crop$^7$.

He reported that some of the ryots in Gudikota and Hosahally were
clamouring repeatedly for fixing a “Niruk” in the “Santa” or markets of
Huralihally, Kattoor and Ooginny _etc._ for regulating the sale of food
grains. At the same time many of the poor had earnestly solicited for
orders to compel the grain possessing _soucars_ to lend or sell to them
_cholum_ or _ragi_ at a fixed rate, which request was refused and the needy
referred to scene of relief works put in hand for coolly work. But when he offered them as one of the best tests to measure distress as suggested by the Collector -- 1½ Annas for a male and 1 Anna for a female cooly, they appeared dissatisfied and refused to leave their homes, children, and cattle for the road-work, which in some cases are sufficiently far away from being availed of.

He described the conditions of the people that ryots and the poorer classes who have had in favoured seasons two or one good meal a day respectively, calculated to sufficiently endure their hard physical exertions peculiar to their callings, are now complaining most bitterly of the want of sufficient nourishment, specially the hand-to-mouth living portion of the community, whose grievance is doubtless well grounded. All that they want was to show to them a means to earn a livelihood, as they said they have sold much of their agricultural implements to meet demands of Circar kists, and their domestic wants. This they represented when he wanted each of them to go to road-work with a pick-axe, a mamoty, or a basket. In view of the above distress, the Collector recommended for a further grant of rupees 8000 on relief works which were submitted for approval. Though Collector did not wholly agree with the above report, he saw the necessity for starting relief works soon 48.

**COLLECTOR'S INSPECTION OF HOSPET TALUQ**

J.H. Master, Collector of Bellary, in his letter to the BR on 22 September 1876, reported that he had inspected the taluq of Hospet, and felt that things were not very bad at that time. This he said, was due to the fact that:

The laboring classes about Naraindeverkerra, Hospett, Kamlapore, and Kumply find employment in those villages which are watered by the Toongabhadra channels, and those about Gadiganum, Woodoo, Doraji, and Anantapur find employment in bringing firewood to Bellary, an article which always fetches a high price there. The tank at Doroji is perfectly dry, but although there are many laborers, so to speak, out of work, they being within a reasonable
distance of Bellary, find employment in connection with
the requirements of that town in the way of fire-wood &c. 345328

As he was passing through the places mentioned above, he found
that a few at each place clamoured for employment, but they have
uniformly refused to take the rate of wages he offered them -- an anna
and a half for a man and an anna for a woman. This fact, he said, proved
that they were earning more. However, he feared that as season advances
the Government should institute relief works in this taluq also.

INCREASING CRIME IN THE DISTRICT

He also observed that the crime was also on increase. He mentioned
many instances of torch light decoits during the last few months, the
majority had been in the southern division. He felt that in the western
division, where the distress have been hitherto most felt, curiously enough
the crime had not been very prevalent. This was due to the timely opening
of relief works in the western division. However he said that from the
experience of last year, his administration was more prepared to expect
distress there as in other places. He was alarming at the rapid increase of
prices -- cholum was sold at Hindupur and Penukonda at 12 seers the
rupee and at Harpanahally 13 seers. He feared that this high rate will
continue in spite of the supply of large quantities of grain soon by rail to
Bellary.

With regard to the pasture, he said "there is none, either upon the
hills or in the plains, and last year's stock of dry fodder has been almost
exhausted".

In the above letter he also said that the distress was universal in
the district, and there was no doubt about it, he said that he had
authorized the Sub-Collector to institute relief works without actually
waiting to verify himself the reports by Tahsildars. He hoped that his
action be approved by the BR. He was satisfied with the allotments
hitherto made by the grant of rupees 25,000 by the BR. But at the same
time he expressed his fear that the north-east monsoon due in October fails as did the south-west monsoon, the distress will be indeed widespread and severe. He expressed hope that the Government would be prepared to sanction funds as the requirements will be very large.

REPORT ON PENUKONDA TALUQ

H.T. Ross after completing a tour through the eastern and southern portions of Penukonda taluq, reported on 16 October 1876, that the distress requiring relief prevails everywhere. That the condition of the whole taluq, was much worse and in the south, the distress was more serious than in the east. The poorer people of the southern villages have been for some time living mainly on the “Yetharaku” and a tolerable pleasant root called “Kunkaragadda”, but the supply of these also exhausted and they were now reduced to eating a root called “Thitagadda”, which was not nutritious, and causes great irritation. When this too was exhausted, he said that he started relief works without waiting for Collector’s approval.

He explained that in the east there were cases on which immediate rain might save a forth of the dry crops sown in July and August, but on the south nearly all have withered. Much ragi has been lost owing to the complete drying upon water supply in many of the southern tanks. Only ¼ to ⅛ of the usual outturn of ragi was there to meet the needs of the people. Under the Bukkapatnam tank there was a fine spread of paddy cultivation. But it was also in a penilious state. As there was no chance of immediate water supply, there is little hope of getting the crop. In the south, cattle had been dying from starvation as there was no sufficient pasture to keep off death among cattle. He also said the drinking water supply was very much insufficient in many villages where there was immediate necessity of digging wells and providing relief. He observed that the price of ragi and cholum had risen since his earlier report from 16 to 11 seers per rupee, and the pressure thus caused was felt by many
classes, e.g., Vedders, Kapus, Weavers, Tailors, Mussalmans, Setty Balijas, who were not seriously inconvenienced before.

When the crops failed hopelessly many of the poorer cultivators were seeking relief and distress had developed rapidly. As there was no slightest sign of north-east monsoon, matters were becoming most serious everyday. Ross, however, opined that there was still plenty of grain coming into the local markets, and what the Government had to do was to put money into the hands of the people through relief works. But he was afraid of the certainty of a general collapse, if north-east monsoon became a failure. He urged the Government to prepare a scheme of importation which was to be put into operation at a very early time.

As the pressure was increasing and becoming so general, Ross said that he was compelled to open relief works to all points in the taluq. He emphasized the need of strengthening of the taluq staff, which become necessary for the supervision of so many works. As the relief works at present do not provide for a longer period, he wanted an amount of rupees 31,840 of which he requested to send rupees 5000 immediately to Tahsildar. He also expressed his difficulty to provide tools for the increasing number of relief works daily. So he requested the sanction of rupees 500 for each taluq to purchase tools from the local ironsmiths. He also mentioned about the large numbers of aged and infirm persons in distress who were fed by local charity. He very much doubted the continuation of this charity if the north-east monsoon fails. So he requested the Acting Collector to authorize him to open relief houses whenever necessary.

REPORT OF ROSS ON HINDUPUR TALUQ

H.T. Ross, in his report to the Collector 26 October 1876, said that he had been on tour in Hindupur taluq for the last fortnight and had found the Tahsildar’s reports on the extent of distress were painfully true. During his tour in Hindupur taluq, he observed:
In one spot only (Palasamudram) are the ordinary wet crops were in a good and safe state. In a few places where the tanks had received a small supply, either a poor outturn (varying from an eighth to a fourth of the usual produce) has already been harvested, or (as in the majority of cases) owing to the complete failure of the scanty supply on the strength of which the wet fields were sown, the crops have perished. Everywhere without exception, unless a few stunted castor-oil plants can be considered an exception, the dry crops have withered past all saving, so that wherever you turn the eye it falls on a miserable expanse of waste and withered fields enlivened but rarely by a patch of water or a few acres of flourishing sugar-cane. There is not yet the slightest sign of the north-east monsoon, and none of the land, except under a few wells, is being prepared for a later crop. There is, therefore, little hope of the now-rapidly diminished supplies of the people being replenished from the taluq itself, and as the failure of the monsoon is becoming more certain every day, the greatest danger I apprehend is the sudden stoppage of supplies to the local markets.

He gave his justification for the sanction of importation and making arrangements to get large quantities of grain at a very short notice. He stated:

Any one who has observed the course of trade in these rural parts far from the railway, knows that there is no such thing as importation properly so called. The dealers in the local markets do not, as a matter of fact, purchase and carry grain from a distance. Until market-day itself they have no knowledge of what grain is coming to market. The supply is not an imported supply, but depends wholly on what the ryots (who carry on speculation to each market) have to dispose of. The continuation of the present in-coming supplies to the local markets therefore now depends on the setting in of the monsoon.

He further elaborated that there was hope among the cultivators in many parts that the monsoon would bring enough to enable them to cultivate for the next crop. So they were willing to part with some of their surplus stock and put it into the markets. When the ryots knew there was no chance of the monsoon they were not to part with any of their existing supplies. The fear was that the change from a sufficiently stocked to a barren market will not be gradual but sudden.
He foreseen the situation as follows:

If when this happens I am not in a position to import grain, the difficulty will be very seriously felt, and I earnestly request you will sanction importation, and make such arrangements as will enable you to send me from the railway taluqs large quantities of grain at very short notice, and that you will let me know at an early date whether I can rely on getting what I want from railway towns, such as Gooty and Tadpatry. Having referred to this danger already in my report on eastern and southern Pennakondah, I ought not perhaps to occupy this letter with it also.57

In his long letter he said that he merely laid stress on it because the danger he apprehend cannot be over-stated. He knew the actual system of trade. He said there was no ground to fear any disorganization of it by Government importation, because as there was no importation by private merchants.

He described the condition of poorer classes in Hindupur as deplorable and the poorest in many places could not latterly get even the unpleasant roots Thitagadda, but were substituting after a fashion on common leaves. Besides these, he reported, many persons of better classes than the Boyas, Madigas etc., came in numbers to the relief works. He gave an estimate of nearly 11,000 able-bodied persons who were at present in severe distress, and submitted a sketch map divised to provide labor for all Hindpur for a considerable length of time. On 15 works that were in hand for the whole taluq, an amount of rupees 34,450 was sanctioned. As the Tahsildar had already received rupees 7000 and he had expended rupees 2000 and the number of coolies were increasing, he requested the Collector to send him a further sum of rupees 5000.

Commenting on the report of the H.T. Ross, J.H. Master felt that the works Ross had put in hand were all judicious. But he differed with the Ross on availability of very little grain in the country, and the no importation of grain was being carried on by merchants. He felt that, if the grain is not be procured in the local markets for the coolies, then it must be sent from Bellary where there was yet a good deal at grain. He
also observed that Hindupur was situated about midway between Bangalore and Bellary, so that the merchant will not supply from one another of these centres. Hindupur town, he considered, was one of the largest grain markets in the district and had supply generally from the Mysore territory as it looked more to Bangalore than to Bellary.

Finally he felt that there ought to be no lack of grain either at Bangalore or Bellary. The BR also agreed with Collector’s opinion and stated that Hindupur was a large town with many merchants who carried on business both with Bangalore and Bellary.

RESPONSE OF THE COLLECTOR

Responding to the letters of the Collector along with the telegrams of Madras Government regarding the establishment a system of grain payment, H.T. Ross wrote a letter to the Collector enclosing a copy of the draft of a circular to his Tahsildars on the subject. In this, he explained, how he was endeavoring to give effect to the wishes of Collector and of the BR, and difficulties he was facing to get supplies from the local grain merchants. He explained that he had not the least hope of ever being able to carry out a system of grain payments throughout the division except by regular government importation as urged by him earlier.

He expressed his inability to introduce grain-payments anywhere in the division. In Madakasira, Hindupur and Dharmavaram, he could not introduce it as there was no time enough. At Penukonda he notified the proposed arrangements to the grain merchants, but he could get only a few 100 rupees worth besides the premise of one merchant to deliver 200 rupees worth. Beyond this, he lamented, no one had offered to supply any grain. He reported that the quantity available was not sufficient for the upkeep of the Penukonda relief-house, much less sufficient to make grain-payments to the large numbers of coolies on the relief works.

He also explained that he was doing his best to get the merchants to come forward with grain for Government, but they were very shy about
entering into contracts and persist in saying that they had no grain in
stocks, which according to Ross was not a fact. He urged the Government
to send him in the meanwhile the grain he had asked for in his earlier
letter.  

When he found that the adverse remarks made by the Collector on
his report were accepted by the BR, Ross wrote a letter to the Collector
explaining about the remarks made by him regarding the scarcity of grain
in the local markets and made it clear that his remarks were entirely
misunderstood. By 23 November 1876, the BR sanctioned a grant of 3
lakhs of rupees for relief works in the district, and entire amount was
distributed to the taluqs.

Thus the above information indicates the eagerness of the local
authority in meeting the distress immediately and ably and the hesitating
attitude of the district and provincial authorities.

SPREAD OF FAMINE

The failure of the North-east monsoon during 1876-77 aggravated
the famine conditions. The situation began to deteriorate sharply after
the failure of south-west monsoon from which the district used to received
more rain. As a result all the 15 taluqs of Bellary district gradually came
under the grip of severe famine. The Collector J.H. Master, had sent
report on 21 October, 1876 and it carried the number of persons employed
upon relief works. These figures did not include information from four
taluqs, because of their number not received, even without these four
taluqs. The number of persons on relief were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taluq</th>
<th>Persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bellary Town</td>
<td>10,154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospet Taluq</td>
<td>1,007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kudligi</td>
<td>1,972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadgally</td>
<td>7,238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harpanhally</td>
<td>4,547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alur</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goosty</td>
<td>3,910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tadpaty</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raidrug</td>
<td>1,297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anantapur</td>
<td>855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dharmaveram</td>
<td>1,615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>36,095</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The station master of Bellary provided following information about the tonnage of grain imported:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Tons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>1637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>1755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>2723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>3421</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above statistics clearly indicated that the grain imports gradually increased, which showed the growing difficulties of the famine.

The Collector again stated in his letter to the BR on 17 November 1876, that the number of persons actually at work in each taluq from which reports had been received was 1,09,972 upto date.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taluq</th>
<th>Persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bellary</td>
<td>53,898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospett</td>
<td>7,451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kudligi</td>
<td>3,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hudgally</td>
<td>4,949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harpanhully</td>
<td>4,516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alur</td>
<td>1,428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoni</td>
<td>6,308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gooty</td>
<td>9,329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tadpatry</td>
<td>4,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raidrug</td>
<td>3,912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anantapore</td>
<td>1,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhurmaveram</td>
<td>5,733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madaksara</td>
<td>5,818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>109,972</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

He reported that this number might become double during the next three months, thus indicating the increasing trend of the distress in the district.
COLLECTORS REPORT, NOVEMBER 1876

J.H. Master, again on 27 November 1876, reported to the BR, mentioning how rapidly coolies flocked to the relief works when they were first opened at Bellary on the 6 October 1876. In 24 days, the number had increased to 30,000. He expressed his difficulty to overlook this mass of people and to extract work from themselves as there was no proper establishment at hand, nor would he devise a plan in a moment. In each day, he said, the coolies poured upon in an increasing ratio. However, he said, all that could be done was done to meet the crisis. The only possible way of exacting task-work would have been, he felt, to measure the whole work done each day and to distribute the value to the multitude in proportion. Each cooly would have found a good proportion of his Anna and a half deducted, but it would not have been possible to distinguish those who had worked well or those who had not. He was afraid that this discontent would have arisen, and probably a riot would have resulted. This course he suggested was subject to the possibility of measuring of the whole work. However, he felt that it was not possible as he had not an establishment of capable of doing this in time and to calculate the work and its proper remuneration each day.

Thus it was evident that seriousness of the distress was spreading rapidly throughout district and caused alarm to the administration. Though the BR also recognized the difficulties and some measures were taken temporarily to overcome the prices, J.H. Master had to content with at first, with a hope that the work becomes gradually systematized.

J.H. Master submitted a memorandum on 28 November 1876, showing the number of coolies employed on relief works in the district. The total number of coolies were 147,996 as shown below.
Coolies employed on Relief Works in Bellary District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Month and date</th>
<th>Taluqs</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total number of coolies in the last week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>Bellary</td>
<td>25,270</td>
<td>23,568</td>
<td>5,432</td>
<td>54,270</td>
<td>53,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>25&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Hospett</td>
<td>4,133</td>
<td>7,731</td>
<td>1,119</td>
<td>12,983</td>
<td>16,260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>24&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Kudlighi</td>
<td>2,560</td>
<td>3,171</td>
<td>687</td>
<td>6,418</td>
<td>5,462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>24&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Hadgally</td>
<td>3,452</td>
<td>5,985</td>
<td>538</td>
<td>9,975</td>
<td>6,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>24&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Hurpanhally</td>
<td>1,227</td>
<td>1,622</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>3,304</td>
<td>3,971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>Alur</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>Adoni</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>13,688</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>25&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Gooty</td>
<td>4,898</td>
<td>6,700</td>
<td>2,102</td>
<td>13,700</td>
<td>10,977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>24&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Tadpatry</td>
<td>1,017</td>
<td>1,183</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>2,504</td>
<td>1,717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>25&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Raidrug</td>
<td>1,334</td>
<td>1,430</td>
<td>734</td>
<td>3,498</td>
<td>4,096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>24&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Anantapur</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>704</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>1,269</td>
<td>1,338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>24&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Dhurmavaram</td>
<td>1,724</td>
<td>3,724</td>
<td>2,081</td>
<td>7,529</td>
<td>4,519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>24&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Pennacondah</td>
<td>1,534</td>
<td>1,693</td>
<td>899</td>
<td>4,126</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>23&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Madaksira</td>
<td>1,007</td>
<td>1,431</td>
<td>678</td>
<td>3,116</td>
<td>9,408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>23&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Hindpur</td>
<td>1,360</td>
<td>1,567</td>
<td>689</td>
<td>3,616</td>
<td>10,634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>...</strong></td>
<td><strong>...</strong></td>
<td><strong>...</strong></td>
<td><strong>...</strong></td>
<td><strong>147,996</strong></td>
<td><strong>146,908</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A glance at the expenditure incurred on coolies reported by Tahsildars clearly indicates the general prevalence of famine condition throughout the district. The following is the information culled out from the reports of Tahsildars as furnished by the Collector on 6<sup>th</sup> January 1877:  

**TOTAL NUMBER OF COOLIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taluqs</th>
<th>Number of persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellary</td>
<td>53,403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospett</td>
<td>11,872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kudligi</td>
<td>19,974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadgally</td>
<td>12,064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harpanhally</td>
<td>7,502</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

50
Aloor  31,630  53  
Adoni  49,478  800  
Gooty  24,069  427  
Tadpatry  10,330  253  
Raidrug  8,136  
Anantapur  14,367  77  
Dhurmaveram  12,305  652  
Penukonda  33,589  3,768  
Hindupur  38,773  14,158  
Madaksira  25,723  2,175  

Total  353,215  29918

In all the number of persons taken care were 3,83,133.

**TOTAL AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taluqs</th>
<th>Amount paid daily in each tauq.</th>
<th>Amount granted to each taluq.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rs.</td>
<td>A. P.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellary</td>
<td>6,481</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospett</td>
<td>1,214</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kudligi</td>
<td>2,100</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadgally</td>
<td>1,237</td>
<td>3 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harpanhally</td>
<td>882</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aloor</td>
<td>3,225</td>
<td>3 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoni</td>
<td>4,392</td>
<td>9 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gooty</td>
<td>2,496</td>
<td>10 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tadpatry</td>
<td>1,079</td>
<td>7 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raidrug</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>7 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anantapur</td>
<td>1,495</td>
<td>12 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhurmaveram</td>
<td>2,053</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penukonda</td>
<td>1,954</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindupur</td>
<td>5,241</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madaksira</td>
<td>2,093</td>
<td>8 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>17,52,824</td>
<td>3 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus we have seen an amount of Rs.17,52,824 was granted for the whole of the Bellary district. In addition, the following expenditure was also reported.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Rs.</th>
<th>A. P.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amount paid on account of grain</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount paid for the purchase of tools</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing charges</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>6,715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repaid to the District Engineer</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2,12,733  13  10
Thus an amount of Rs.19,65,558 was spent. The above statistical information proved the grave situation of the famine in the district.

FOUR POINTS OF PRICE

There was a lot of corruption and such other things in the process of offering relief work. The BR sought clarification on the subject of the allowances to be paid in grain. The Collector conveyed the query of the BR to the Additional Sub-Collector of Bellary, J.F. Price, who was on Special Duty. Price explained to the query that the allowance of rice given before money payments were entirely abolished. This happened before he came to the district on special duty. When money-payments were discontinued, Price spoke to J.H. Master. As per the suggestion of Master, things were carried on by Price. He complained that the coolies grumbled at getting the grain. Price pleaded with the authorities:

I would, with all deference to the opinions of Government and the Board respectfully beg to advance my chief reasons for advocating the continuance of this allowance, irrespective of the consideration of its cost to the State.

He had put forth four points in the regard. First, the coolies were not in good condition. He argued forcefully to explain his four points.

One cannot positively call them emaciated, but they are below the mark, and getting any decent amount of work out of them will, unless they are fairly fed, end in the appearance of sickness; certainly cholera and probably fever and dysentery which will soon cut them off by hundreds. The recent outbreak of cholera, which made its appearance after a slight shower of rain, showed how prone the coolies were to take disease.

The second point he mentioned was that there were no relief houses on the works. All that was given by way of relief to persons were those who were too much emaciated to work, or "who were blind or maimed". He said:

We employ only those able to work, and the coolies have from their earnings to support a brood of children, and perhaps an aged relative or two. If the allowance is cut
down, the working members of the family, as they have either to do their tasks or to receive reduced wages, must eat what they get, and the family must go hungry. As the State will not allow these to starve, it must maintain them by that pernicious institution (relief-houses) which I took upon as an incentive to pauperism and rascality of all kinds. To say nothing of their evil effects, the cost of relief-houses would be a far heavier charge upon the public purse than that of the small extra allowance of rice given to the actual working coolies.

The third issue was about not giving an amount of food which allowed the working members of a family. He described beautifully the Native sentiment in English language that has brought forth as follows:

The interior arrangements of Jails are now-a-days so comfortable that people in these famine times often prefer the regular, plentiful and varied diet, the easy work, and comfortable quarters which accompany a sentence of imprisonment to the hard life of the free man. Persons with these views are not, as the present state of the District Jail shows, very few, and they will cost the State many hundreds of pounds long after the famine has become a thing of the past.

The fourth point he mentioned was about the price of everything in the district was very high. By the time that a cooly had bartered a portion of his day's wage of grain for salt and condiments or eventually die from the simple fact of his eating rice, he had less than half of what was considered among natives to be ordinary amount of food which a labourer in hard work could consume. He pleaded for a better treatment for the labourer that it should not be reduced on the ground that it was already in excesses. However, he had no alternative if the government prescribed any charge.

Having been for two months brought in constant contact with a very large body of famine coolies whom I have carefully observed I consider it my duty to state why I think that the present scale of payment should be adhered to. If another is ordered, I will at once introduce it, but I feel bound to express my conviction that it will lead to much misery and want, to the necessity for opening relief-houses and to increased
crime and disease, and that it will eventually add to the burden which the State has taken upon itself\(^9\).

The K.C. Canal was planned and completed of its construction between 1861-72\(^1\). The canal was a great boon to the eastern parts of Rayalaseema particularly on either side of the canal. The canal was constructed by a private company known as Madras Irrigation and Canal Company. So long water was available, the K.C. Canal was a great boon. The government obtained water for irrigation and fixed payment of water rate by ryots for dry crops\(^2\).

**OBJECTIONS TO CHILDREN**

By 23 December 1876, it would appear 9,368 children were fed in the relief camps and the J.H. Master felt that this was very extraordinary (men-2,309; women-2,628; children-9,368). So he asked the Assistant Collector in charge to ascertain from the Tahsildar whether he allowed children whose parents were employed and inform the same as possible. Again on 2 January 1877, he stated that according to return received from the taluq of Hindupur on 30 December 1876, it would appear that 9,305 children were fed gratuitously. As he felt this number also was extraordinary, he demanded explanation from Assistant Collector in charge to ascertain the fact from Tahsildar, who in his view, did not use discretion, “as to what children should be fed and what not”.

Regretting no response from the Assistant Collector in charge in regard to the enormous number of children who were fed gratuitously in the taluq of Hindupur, he wrote again on 10 January 1877, mentioning about the return of 6 January 1877 from Tahsildar which said that 10,867 children were fed. So the attention of the Assistant Collector was called to the above letters and he was requested to furnish the required information with no further loss of time.

The Acting Head Assistant Collector, in responding to the above, wrote to the Collector on 11 January 1877 forwarding Hindupur
Tahsildar's explanation regarding gratuitous relief that was afforded to a large number of children in his taluq. He reported that the Tahsildar stated he fed none except those who have no parents, or whose parents were either unable to work or were too poor to spare any portion of their wages for their support. The daily wages which a cooly gets was barely sufficient for his support for that day, and it was hardly fair to expect that he should manage to provide for his youngsters out of his scanty earning. Moreover the influx a large number of Mysore subjects migrating into our territory in families has swelled and threatens to swell still more the numbers both on our relief works and in our relief houses. The Acting Head Assistant Collector further said the Tahsildar got from each Reddy in charge of a relief house a daily return of persons, and on these returns he framed his reports. So he said that he was commencing a personal inspection of relief houses and would report if necessary.

In another letter on 14 January 1877 to the Collector, he admitted that he took no action towards stopping the feeding of a single soul fed in this taluq because he believed that the Tahsildar was right in feeding all the children. Every person who came forward was fed except those who were themselves able to work, or were not requiring such relief. He also accepted to implement the principle laid down by the Collector that the aged and infirm as well as the very young children should be fed up and those who had sons and daughters able to work, or the relative who usually support them were not be allowed. At the same time, he said:

I am strongly of opinion that the children of, and aged and infirm persons belonging to, able-bodied persons who earn their livelihood by working on our relief works should invariably be fed, because the little these able-bodied persons get as wages at the Government rates is only sufficient for the individual earning it.

In this connection he also requested instructions as to whether or not to feed the following classes of persons.
1. Children who have parents earning wages on our relief works, or who could, if they worked, earn a livelihood in this way.

2. Orphan children usually supported by relatives able to work and earning wages on our relief works, or who could, if they worked, earn a livelihood in this taluq.

3. Children of persons who by reason of caste custom or the custom of their class cannot work on our relief works and are known to be unable to support their children properly, e.g., certain Muslims.

4. Orphan children usually supported by relatives who cannot work for the same reasons.

5. Children of persons earning a livelihood in ways other than on our relief works, e.g., carpenters, goldsmiths, durgers, but who are known to be able to earn only sufficient now for the support of their individual selves.

6. Orphan children usually supported by relatives earning a livelihood of the same kind as Class 5.

7. Aged or infirm persons usually supported by relatives able to work and earning their livelihood on our relief works, or who could, if they worked, earn their livelihood in this way.

8. Aged or infirm persons usually supported by relatives who cannot work for caste or class reasons, and who are known to be unable now to support their old and infirm people properly.

9. Aged or infirm persons usually supported by relatives earning a livelihood in ways other than on our relief works, but who are known to be able to earn only sufficient now for their individual selves.

10. Aged or infirm persons who have houses or lands or both from which they can now get on livelihood, and who are known to be in abject poverty, but who could relieve their immediate wants by parting with their houses or lands.

11. Pregnant women or women with very young infants, say less than a month old, who could ordinarily earn their livelihood, and whose husbands are earning a livelihood known to be sufficient only for their individual selves.

Finally he said that if it was left to his discretion, he would feed all these above classes gratuitously as he felt that would be not any abuse of the Government relief to do so.

J.H. Master, in turn informed the Assistant Collector incharge of Head Assistant Collector Office on 17 January 1877 that the BR had been
requested to issue orders as to the propriety or otherwise of feeding in
relief houses the children whose parents were employed on famine relief
works. In turn the BR felt that:

The numbers gratuitously relieved in the Hindupur taluq
are out of all proportion, and the Board fear that the
numbers here and in the Bellary District generally are due
to the abuse of the system of village relief houses, which
seem to be placed under the supervision of Village Reddies
over whom there is no check. The Collector is requested to
inquire into, and report on, the system on which
gratuitous relief is afforded in the several taluqs."

It also said that the subject of organizing a system of relief camps
where alone persons should be gratuitously fed, was under the
consideration of the Government and the orders on the subject would be
issued early. Until such time, BR said, where the camps were already
established, the village relief should be certainly be confined to persons
who were already admitted to camps and relief works.

CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM

The government issued a Circular Memorandum to all the
concerned with the famine relief works. The Collector, Assistant Collector
and Head Assistant Collector in turn countersigned and sent these
Circulars for officers under them. It contained very important information
and revealed the mind of the administrators on the famine relief work.
J.H. Master, the Acting Collector of Bellay, wrote to H.E. Stokes, the
Acting Secretary of BR on

As it is evident from an inspection of coolies at present
engaged upon the various relief works in the Bellary
Taluq that many of them are by no means destitute of
means, and as it is not the object of Government to assist
any but those who are really in some extremity of
distress, it becomes necessary that several of the coolies
now employed under Superintendents should be weeded
out..."

...Superintendents and their assistants will for the
future make it an important part of their duty daily to
challenge coolies and demand a production of their
ticket. If it is not forthcoming the cooly's name will be
truck off the putty and the Kolkar and Maistry dismissed...77

It is important that the intention of introducing this measure should not become known until it is actually carried out. Superintendents will therefore keep this communication secret for the present, otherwise coolies will be ready for the test and appear upon the works with a feigned appearance of poverty. In the case of future applicants they will make such inquiries as they can to discover whether such a deception is being practiced78.

The Collector J.H. Master, countersigned another copy of instructions for all the superintendents of relief works. Sir Richard Temple was deputed by the Government of India to visit those parts of the Madras Presidency affected with famine. After his inspection of the Bellary district, he made that the policy which had been hitherto followed by the Government of Madras was not approved of by the Government of India. It was likely that orders were to be received on these subject. He gave no instructions. It was mentioned (accused) that the administrators “had been evidently too indiscriminate in affording relief”. Four remedies were proposed; the first one was that future admissions must be made carefully and not to allow any body under special circumstances. The second was to weed out those who were on the works. The criteria being persons who possessed poverty, those who wear jewels and those who dressed well. The third was to insist on task-work. And finally, the forth one was the reduction of rations79.

This had already been done or was being done under the orders of the BR. Money wages were to be 2 Anna, 1 Anna and 4 pies and 10 pies for man, woman and child respectively. Grain wages were to be a pound and a half, a pound, and three quarters of a pound respectively for a man, women and child. This amount had no purchasing capacity. Sir Richard Temple was evidently aghast at the enormous number already on relief works in the Bellary district i.e., 4,00,000 persons. It was feared what it may amount to two or three months latter80.
WORKS IN ANANTAPUR

The Collector of Bellary informed the BR that the Anantapur Temporary Deputy Collector’s Division task-work was expected on the following scale:\textsuperscript{81}

1) Road-making with side channels and leveling the line passing through gravel and hard soil at twenty cubic yards per gang, consisting of ten men, thirty women and ten children, or about four yards for a rupee.
2) Excavating gravel, including carrying, lifting, and storing, at fourteen cubic yards a gang.
3) Breaking metal, including collecting materials, supplying stone-breakers, and taking, at five cubic yards a gang.
4) Removing boulders by excavation at two cubic yards a Rupee.
5) Blasting rocks at 3 rupees a cubic yard.

ADONI REPORT ON REDUCTION OF COOLIES

W.H. Glenny, the Sub-Collector of Bellary, sent his report regarding the large number of persons on relief in Adoni Taluq. The maximum number reached was 88,723. Of this number, 5\% were to be fictitious. On 13 February 1877, Sir Richard Temple made his first visit to Adoni. On the following day there began a reduction of number by weeding the gangs. Ultimately only 67,984 remained on the works. About 30,000 of these people were inspected by Sir Richard Temple, accompanied by Captain Hamilton, Oldhan and W.H. Glenny\textsuperscript{82}. The Adoni report was also a fairly big one and was dated 28 February 1877.

On 29 January 1877 some more immediate measure were taken to reduce the large numbers on relief works. On 5 February 1877, Glenny sent a circular to Taluq Relief Officers for further reduction. The BR informed the government that the numbers in Adoni were reduced to Rs.56,737. It noted with much satisfaction the high tribute paid to Captain Hamilton by Glenny and hoped that “his hands have ere this been strengthened by further European assistance”\textsuperscript{83}. 
W.H. Glenny, Sub-Collector, dissatisfied with the performance of the existing supervising agency on relief works, wrote a letter to the Collector requesting to send 150 sepoys and two or more native officers to Adoni taluq to take the place of existing staff as superintendents and maistries. The proportion to be one sepay to 500 coolies. He urged that this may be done at least for Adoni, if possible for taluqs in his division. He cited how his earlier efforts to get sepoys were turn down in spite of his repeated requests to Mr. Thornhill who was inspecting the division. He gave elaborate justification about the need of sepoys in view of the experience and altered circumstances. Finally he said that if his request was accepted, order, discipline, punctuality and honesty would take the place of confusion, shirking and cheating.

In continuation of the above letter, Glenny, further wrote to the Collector saying that the discoveries he made convinced him of the urgent need for sepoys as superintendents of relief works in other three taluqs also as in Adoni. He therefore requested to send the following strength of native troops as soon as possible:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taluq</th>
<th>Approximate Number on Relief Works</th>
<th>Number of Sepoys wanted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gooty</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alur</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>52,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tadpatry</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When J.H. Master, forwarded the letters to the BR which in turn submitted to Government with the following observations:

There is no reason why the relief works should not be satisfactorily carried on in Adoni as elsewhere without sepoys, and it is evident that the presence of sepoys would not render other supervision superfluous. The appointment of Brahmin maistries was an extraordinary mistake. A head cooly or maistry, a Musselman, if possible, should be appointed from the members of the gang and held responsible for the work; and, if he is illiterate Mootsadies generally Karamaurs on additional remuneration should be employed to keep the nominal rolls, which should be examined and checked as often as possible.
The number of coolies on relief works in the Adoni Taluq is now 88,000, and there is only one superior European officer, Captain Hamilton, in charge. The board strongly recommend that at least one, if not two, more European superior officers be sent to the taluq. As regards such officers, the Bellary District appears to the Board to be under-manned, and they think that a taluq should have one such officer for every 25,000 coolies.

GLENNY ON RELIEF

W.H. Glenny, Sub-Collector wrote to the Collector on 28 February 1877, regarding the large number of persons (88,723) on relief in Adoni taluq. Of this, about 5% were fictitious and the numbers really on the works were about 84,300. He reported that a reduction of numbers by weeding the gangs began during the first visit of Sir Richard Temple to Adoni. And he ordered concentration which involves the removal of the majority of the people to a distance from their homes. By this double process of weeding and concentration, the total number on relief were reduced to about 68,000. By the sudden and minute examination of the actual composition of some of the gangs by himself and other officials, he detected the dishonest practice of seven maistries and they were prosecuted which inturn, he felt, frightened the remaining maistries into abandoning fictitious entries. In spite of this salutary dread, he urged the Collector not to trust the other maistries and conduct occasional raids.

Though they could reduce the number on relief works to about 68,000 by the closest scrutiny, he believed that this number were fit for receiving the aid of the Government and he could not look forward to any further reduction. On the contrary he feared that when the distress reaches its acme, there would be an increase of about 80 or 90 thousands people on relief works. He found that the cause of the widely spread distress in Adoni taluq was due to the composition of its population. He accepted that it was true that the harvest, though scanty, proved better in Adoni taluq than elsewhere in his division. But co-existant with these
circumstances, he said the facts remain that "the normal condition of the population is worse than elsewhere".

He referred particularly the condition of the weavers, dyers, and other artisans. As their occupation had gone at the present, people had nothing to spare for ordinary beggars. The prostitutes suffered and many of them had come upon the relief works. Domestic servants and the hangers-on, were turned adrift. Coolies were thrown out of work. The condition of the Madigas, always wretched, became deplorable. He found that this very numerous class, as a rule had kept off the works till quite lately, in consequence of which many became emaciated. He believed that these poor people who were treated unclean beasts by their country men, should be saved by the Government from death.

Referring to the abandonment of wives, concubines and children, which was for more general in Adoni than elsewhere, he felt that this was due to the existence of such numbers of polygamous musalmans of a very bad type. He also mentioned about the class of small ryots who were very large in Adoni taluq who did not get a good harvest which was scanty. They suffered from the loss of their bullocks that were carried off by the creditor when he felt that the total or partial crop of the ryot could not meet the total debts.

Describing thus the distressed condition of the Adoni taluq population, he felt the urgent necessity of providing good administration in the place of the existing administrative agency which was the symbol of abuse, fraud, and demoralization. He regretted that inspite of the worst conditions prevailing in Adoni taluq and the population were worse off than elsewhere, the Government was not helping the people who can help themselves. However, he said, it did everything to setforth the true causes of the peculiar distress, but he felt that there was still much to be corrected eliminate to the problems of the people.

By 3 March 1877 Glenny was able to reduce the number of relief works in Adoni to 56,737. Thus it was seen that Glenny was able to arrest
the falsification of the numbers and reduced them eliminating corruption in the administration. He was so confident that none were in receipt of relief who were not fit for it and that’s why he entered at length into the reasons why so large a proportion of the population to come upon the works.

TAHSILDAR’S SUSPENSION

H.T. Ross, Acting Head Assistant Collector, had reported on 12 February 1877 regarding the large number of coolies on relief works in Hindupur Taluq. He also stated in his report that the Tahsildar of Hindupur Taluq, Vencoba Row, was found to be of good character, but wholly unable to reduce the number of people on relief. Because of the neglect of the relief houses. Vencoba Row was recommended for suspension. Ross wrote:

... but it is a serious fault in Vencoba Row that he left his relief houses really uncontrolled in any way, and, as you have requested me demi-officially to report these matters officially, if I think Vencoba Row is deserving of more than severe censure, I have now reported at length, and submit that Vencoba Row having shown himself wholly unfit for famine work in matters in which much has to be entrusted to the vigilance of Tahsildars, and (what is most serious) having brought about a state of disorder simply by neglect of written orders and his own lax supervision, should not any longer be entrusted with any relief charge whatever; and I request that at all events he may be replaced by a competent officer, if it is not considered that his failure to carry out orders, his lax supervision of relief-works, and his total neglect of relief houses merit suspension or reduction.

GLENNY PROPOSAL

Encouraged by the observation and appreciation of the BR, W.H. Glenny, the Sub-Collector of Gooty, had to request permission from the BR to ask the Officers commanding Native Regiments at Bellary and if necessary, those at Bangalore, to have the services of a few Native Commissioned or Non-Commissioned officers to act as pay masters to the
coolies on relief works. He believed that the Commanding Officers would be willing to give a few such men privilege leave for a few months to enable them to hold such employment. His plan was to employ such officers about six for Gooty taluq, about eight for Alur and about four for Tadipatri. He also fixed a salary of Rs. 20-25 per mensem, if the BR approved. He felt:

This would enable me to dispense with the extra Revenue Inspectors and Paymasters, a class of men of whom, after many efforts to get some honest work out of them, I despair. There would be a saving in salaries, but this small saving is hardly worth a thought compared with the advantages of getting rid of these lazy, worthless, dishonest men. Neither inducements, nor threats, nor punishments are of the slightest use. These men, if they belong to the permanent taluq staff, regard themselves as having a freehold of their appointments; when their appointments are temporary it pays them better cheat and be dismissed, after a short time, than to retain their posts and be obedient and honest.

Mr. Wilson, in Gooty Taluq, made two judicious and simple rules which, if obeyed, would put an effectual check on the rascality of these men.

Glenny argued that the Brahmins employed on the relief works were inefficient and the employment of sepoys would rectify it. The government issued G.O No.873, dated 28 February 1877 and G.O, NO 1062, dated 13 March 1877. The government had rejected W.H. Glenny’s suggestion for the employment of sepoys. It also rejected the other proposal that military men of the class in question were quite unfit for such civilian work.

The relief work in the district witnessed much fraud as elsewhere. The case of Adoni was a staple one. The two visits of Sir Richard Temple to the district, galvanized persons like Pampapathy Rao, the Tahsildar of Adoni, Maistries and so on so forth.
MACARTNEY REPORT

There was a fatal outbreak of sickness. It was attributed to Asiatic cholera. J. Macartney, an Agent to the Rajah of Sundoor, sent his letter dated 20 March 1877 to the Collector of Bellary stating that:

... the following causes are sufficient to account for most of the cases and the symptoms observed, to with general debility, enfeebled digestive powers incapable of assimilating food, the drinking profusely of water after eating in order to give a feeling of satiety, and exposure under such conditions to chills during the night.91

He was emphatic in bringing to the notice of British administration about the inadequate measures in the relief centres and other discrepancies.

I do not believe that one pound of inferior grain is sufficient to preserve a working man in vigor, nor that it amounts to anything like what he consumes daily in ordinary times. I know that it is quite common in this part of the country for a strong healthy man in full work to eat, within twenty-four hours, one full seer of cholum, and in not a few instances even a Rajah’s seer, which is equal to one and a quarter of the Bellary measure, and that too of much better quality than can be now procured.92

CLOTH FOR THE NAKED

C. Raghava Rao, Special Deputy Collector, Harpanhally Division, suggested the wretched condition of the women and the neglect of the Government to come to their rescue. The Special Deputy Collector made his proposal as common respect to famine modesty that may demand. Dress, befitting decency, he argued was an essential requirement of a civilized nation. It was preferred as a more urgent necessity for existence to mere life-preservation. He described that destitution and despair had reached their climax, the poor were compelled to disregard this necessity in search of any thing to appease their hunger, and all consideration to decency and modesty were succumbing to the pinching want for a morsel of food.93
As a person on a tour of a village, he came to contact with several distressed souls. He was painfully shocked to see some female coolies in a state verging to complete nudity. He regretted that the pressure of their distress should have reduced them to resign the ordinary privileges of their sex. The wages received were barely sufficient for individual life-preservation and therefore they could not help themselves to procure clothing. He wrote about the plight of women he had seen during the visit:

Of what I have seen, I think that the females of this part of the country always wore and wear a better covering dress than their sisters of the south and north, and I see many of them now moving in horribly dirty and sickening rags with their children stark naked.

The wages that we give are barely sufficient for individual life-preservation, and therefore cannot help them to procure a clothing. Coarse as they are, it cannot be expected that those clothes, which have been worn, can last for years, not withstanding their daily use (as several have only a single cloth and cannot afford to spare it even for a wash), and they must wear away, especially now when their wearers are at hard work on roads and tanks.

I think that this is a crisis for Government generously to respect and protect female modesty by extending the concession sanctioned for the poor in relief-houses to the really helpless and almost naked coolies.

Men could move in public with a piece of cloth around their waist, or with short breeches, but females cannot do so.

He informed that he was told some females confined themselves to their houses for want of covering. So he pleaded the government to do something in this. The BR favourably considered the request.

WRETCHED CONDITIONS

The destitute conditions of persons in the relief camps and elsewhere was striking: The Revenue Inspector observed:

All coolies, men, women, and children represented to me that the wages are insufficient. One of the elder coolly asked me "have I not the virtue of a convict to get bellyful food;" another answered him that "we can also get bellyful food if we commit theft".

66
The coolies are now convinced that the convicts at higher rate of wages, and this is the cause for the increase of offences and overcrowding of Sub-Jail and District Jails.

SALE OF CHILDREN

H.M. Kisch, Divisional Officer of Bellary, in his report No. 1081 dated 21 June 1877 wrote to the Collector of Bellary about the sale of children by mothers. He observed that cases of people selling children had undoubtedly occurred within the past two months in Bellary.

... but I have been unable to trace any one case in which the sale has been proved to have been caused by the mothers distress. The sale, gift or desertion of a child is by no means a rare occurrence in ordinary years.

He mentioned about five cases with a brief description of each case.

1. About a month ago, when I was visiting the relief-camp at Bellary and examining the crowd outside the camp in order to see who were fit for admission, a woman with two little children (about three and five years of age) laid one of them at my feet and asked me to take it. The woman and her children were all in excellent condition, and I sent them at once on to a road work the town and saw the woman and her children there some days afterwards. In this case, if I had accepted the woman's offer of her child, the gift would, I have no doubt, been soon recalled. The offer was clearly made to induce me to admit the woman to the camp instead of sending her to work; but this case, if it had come before those who have a craving for sensational stories, would, in all probability, have been regarded as an instance in which a woman was anxious to rid herself of the burden of her child without even asking for a money gift in return.

2. A native woman (a widow) offered her child for sale for 1 Rupees. The child was not an ordinary one; it had blue eyes and flaxen hair and a skin as white and soft as that of any European child of three years of age. The woman and child were sent in to me at Bellary, and I made minute inquiries of the woman as to her circumstances.
and the reason why she wished to sell the child. She told me that
the child was, in truth, the child of her late husband, but that all
the people of her village abused her and declared it was the child of
some European soldier; she said she was unable to bear the
reproach that the child brought upon her and that she gladly would
make it over to any one who would take it. Neither the woman nor
the child appeared in great distress, and the woman said that after
disposing of the child she should return to her village. I placed the
woman and her child in the relief-camp temporarily while I made
inquiries about an institution into which the child could be taken.
The child died while in the relief-camp, and the Hospital Assistant
states that it was suffering from a peculiar form of leprosy.

3. A little girl about six years of age was found a week ago with some
people of the Bogun caste, who said they had about two months
previously given 4 Rupees as a dowry for the child, whom they
intended to betroth to a boy of their family. After the child had
been two months in her new home her mother came and claimed
her saying the child had been either lost or stolen. There was some
slight evidence forthcoming to show that the child had been sold by
her own father for Rupees 4 and that she was being brought up as a
dancing-girl. The evidence, however, was not enough to justify a
criminal prosecution, and there was no evidence whatever to show
that the sale was caused by the distress of the father or that it took
place with the knowledge of the mother.

4. About a month or more ago a woman not belonging to Bellary asked
another woman (a resident of the town) to take charge of her infant
child for a few moments while she went somewhere in the
neighbourhood. This the Bellary woman did, and the mother of the
child never returned. Cases of this kind are, however, not unknown
even in England and shame, more probably than distress, was the
cause of this dissertation.
5. When I went to the relief-camp at Bellary on Sunday, the 3rd instant, a woman was pointed out to me as having sold her child. I said to her: "Why did you sell your child and what do you want now here?" Her answer was: "I gave my child to a man of my own caste who promised to give me a cloth and 1 rupee 4 Annas if I let him have the child and he has only give me 12 Annas. He has neither given me the remaining 8 Annas nor the cloth". The woman further stated in answer to my inquiry that the man, who was not a stranger to her, was going to bring up the child as one of his own family. I then asked her whether she would keep the child if I got it back for her, and told her that on works she would get the payment both for herself and child. Her reply was: "No, I want the 8 Annas and the cloth, not the child". I then sent the woman on to a relief road outside the town. This is the case referred to in the Madras Mail in a telegram dated the 4th June as the case of a woman who "unfortunately solicited assistance to recover her child sold for 12 Annas".

STARVATION DEATHS

Forty three deaths from starvation took place at Bellary (wide fortnightly narrated on 15 May 1877) of which seventeen occurred in the Civil Dispensary and 26 in the relief camp at Avammu Tope. Of the dead, twenty five were infants below seven years of age and the majority of the remaining were old men and women. H.M. Kisch reported:

As to the class of persons among whom these forty-three deaths occurred, I quote from Mr. Howe's fortnightly narrative, Mr. Howe having been at the time that these deaths occurred in charge of the Division: "All the case belonged to the floating population of beggars which is now very large and which receives reinforcements from every part of the district and from other districts. The majority are old men and women and little babies suffering from atrophy. They will not come to the camp till they are picked up almost insensible and when recovery is impossible. They wander about the country
alone and in charge at their parents before they are
reduced in condition, they constantly refuse work, and
they come into hospital when nothing can be done. 97

SYSTEM OF FRAUD

A. Salmon, Special Relief Assistant, conveyed from Dharmavaram
on 3 August 1877, about the extraordinary way in which the expenditure
of this taluq had been managed. He mentioned about the remarkable
manner in which a system of fraud was carried out. On his inspection of
Dharmavaram taluq cutcherry, he was informed by the Additional
Sheristadar, from whom a written statement was also taken.

That over four lakhs of rupees have been expended, but
for which vouchers for about half the amount have not been
received up to this date. That Head Supervisors of coolies
and Villages Relief Inspectors never send in their accounts
or vouchers immediately after payments, but keep them for
unlimited periods varying from one to three weeks, and
some have not been sent in at all since the time relief was
opened. That stamped books were not sent from the
cutcherry (until just a few days before my arrival) to the
several Road Supervisors, or Paymasters, leaving it in their
hands to make up any number they pleased. 98

RELIEF AMOUNT

By mid September 1877, the amount spent on relief was 1,08,53,098,
for the whole of the Bellary district. The details are as follows 99.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Rs.</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hospett</td>
<td>6,44,000</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kudliji</td>
<td>5,35,025</td>
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<td>00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hadghalli</td>
<td>5,48,200</td>
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<td>00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harpanhally</td>
<td>5,64,000</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alur</td>
<td>9,55,510</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>06</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adoni</td>
<td>22,64,000</td>
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<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gooty</td>
<td>6,15,200</td>
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<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tadpatry</td>
<td>4,99,005</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raidroog</td>
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<td>5,03,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dharmavaram</td>
<td>5,54,000</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penukonda</td>
<td>3,17,600</td>
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<td>00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hindupur</td>
<td>3,20,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Madaksira</td>
<td>5,96,000</td>
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<td>00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>94,21,741</strong></td>
<td><strong>01</strong></td>
<td><strong>02</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

70
Famine Officer, Bellary Taluq 10,16,685 01 10
District Engineer 2,800 00 11
Transfer Receipt for purchasing grain 4,11,922 10 00
Grand Total 108,53,098 13 11

FINAL PHASE

The relief measures were effectively administered by the fag end of the famine by dividing each taluq into three sections. Of these, one was to be taken by the Taluq Relief Officer. Another by the Tahsildar and the remaining one by a Superintendent. The Taluq Relief Officer exercised general supervision of all others.100

Since the rain had facilitated to come out of the grip of famine, C.A. Galton in his report to the BR observed that “a very material improvement has resulted from the continuous and abundant rain during the current month” (Sept-Oct., 1877). Towards the fag end of the famine the gratuitous relief was of four kinds, viz., (1) permanent gratuitous relief in cooked food at “village centres”; (2) casual relief in cooked food to wanderers and to persons on their way to relief “centres” or unable to go thither; (3) money payments to gosha women; and (4) relief in uncooked grain to Brahmins101.

Relief was also afforded in the form of advances to puttudars for the construction of wells and advances to the weavers. It was found that no more money was to be spent for giving clothes to women, no grain depots existed.

To fight the diseases like small-fox, fever and cholera, Galton said that three temporary camp hospitals for famine cases have been in operation, one in each taluq. The Gooty Taluq Hospital was at Wajra Karoor; the other two were at Chippagiri in Aloor and Sazzaladinna in Tadpatry taluq. A fair amount of extra work had been done at the Munro Dispensary in Gooty by Apothecary Carapiett. Some use had also been made of the Aloor Local Fund Dispensary; but the Hospital Assistant at Tadpatry had hitherto unfortunately been allowed to shirk a due share of
the burden. The brunt of medical work had fallen on the four Hospital Assistants specially employed on famine work, among whom was the man attached to his establishment.

Thus the above details clearly indicate that the cause of the famine in Bellary district was due to the failure of seasonal rainfall. As a result the crops on dry lands had withered to great extent throughout the district. This fact was clearly established through the Collector's reports on the conditions of the villages. It was felt that the distress was greater than that of the famine year 1866. So the Collector recommended remission of taxes for several villages in taluqs like Gooty and Penukonda initially.

After visiting villages in Penukonda taluq and observing the condition of labouring classes, the Collector recommended to take up the relief works relating to the repairs of several irrigation works, roads and digging of wells. He also urged the government to sanction money for taking up the relief works. Similar visits were undertaken by the Collector and his subordinate staff like Sub-collectors and Tahsildars and initiated relief works throughout the district; some times even without the prior approval of the government where in urgent action was necessary.

Relief measures were effectively administered till the end of the famine. When corrupt practices were found in the functioning of relief camps, the officials concerned were punished. By mid-September, 1877, an amount of 1,08,53,098 was spent for the whole of the Bellary district. With the result of sufficient rain fall after September 1877, the famine began to decline by January 1878. In spite of this, it was reported that about 1/5 of the population of this district were perished during the famine.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


2. Ibid., p.3771.

3. According 1871 census.


6. n. 2; Letter from J.H. Master, Collector of Bellary to C.A. Galton, Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue Madras, No.154, dt. 18-5-1876 and B.P. No. 1,326 dt. 14 Sept 1880, p.5822. Madras Revenue Administration report for 1879-80.


8. B.P. No. 826, dt. 6 April 1875.

9. Letter from the Acting Collector of Bellary to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue (BR) No.524, dt. 22 December 1875.

10. B.P. No. 1093, dt. 25 April 1876, p.3520.

11. Ibid., p. 3511.

12. Letter No. 109, dt. 21 April 1876 from the Collector of Bellary to the Acting Secretary to the BR.

13. n., 11.

14. Collector’s letter dt. 7 April 1876 to the Head Assistant Collector.

15. Letter No. 77 from the Head Assistant Collector to the Collector of Bellary from Penukonda, dt. 13 April 1876.

16. Letter No. 112, dt. 22 April 1876 from the Collector of Bellary to the Acting Secretary to the BR.

17. B.P. No. 1096, dt. 20 April 1876, p.3526.

18. Letter No. 526, dt. 26 April 1876 from the Collector of Bellary to the Head Assistant Collector.
19. Letter No. 106, dt. 11 May 1876 from the Head Assistant Collector to the Collector of Bellary.

20. The reporting seven were, with one exception shrothrium village. All but one of these were of very small extent.

21. n., 19.

22. Letter No. 158, dt. 20 May 1876 from the Collector of Bellary to the Acting Secretary to the BR from Ramandoorg.

23. B.P. No. 2392, dt. 20 September 1876, pp. 7943-44.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.

26. Letter, dt. 3 July 1876 from Deputy Collector to Collector of Bellary.

27. Collector of Bellary to V. Venkatachellum Pantulu, Deputy Collector of Harpanhally.

28. Letter No. 247, dt. 13 July 1876 from Collector of Bellary to Acting Secretary to the BR.

29. B.P. No. 3,385 dt. 20 December 1875 at that time rupees 12000 was allotted from provincial fund and remaining rupees 3000 from local fund.


32. Ibid. p. 6797.

33. Report No. 342, dt. 11 September 1876, from the Acting Collector, Bellary to H.E. Stokes, Acting Secretary, to the BR.

34. B.P. No. 2382, dt. 19 September 1876, p. 7855.

35. 16 Annas made a rupee and 12 paises made a anna.

36. n., 34.

37. Ibid., pp.7855-56.

38. Ibid., p. 7856.


40. n., 34, pp. 56-57.

41. Ibid., p. 7857.
42. Ibid., p. 7858.

43. Letter No. 298, dt. 8 August 1876, from the Acting Collector, Bellary to the Acting Secretary, to the Board of Revenue (BR).

44. Report No. 351, dt. 5 August 1876, from C.J. Crosthwaite, Acting Sub-Collector to the Acting Collector, Bellary.

45. Ibid., para 17 and 18.

46. B.P. No. 2055, dt. 12 August 1876, p. 6993.

47. Letter No. 256, dt. 16 April 1876, from Deputy Collector to J.H. Master, Acting Collector of Bellary.

48. Letter No. 390, dt. 21 October 1876, from the Acting Collector, Bellary to the Acting Secretary, to the BR.

49. B.P. No. 2442, dt. 26 September 1876, p. 8164.

50. Ibid., p. 8165.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid., p. 8164.

53. Letter No. 268, dt. 6 October 1876, from H.T. Ross, Head Assistant Collector to the Master, Acting Collector, Bellary.

54. Ibid.

55. Letter No. 274, dt. 26 October 1876, from Acting Head Assistant Collector to Collector.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid.

58. B.P.No. 2737, dt. 3 November 1876, pp. 8956-57.

59. Letter No. 296, dt. 3 November 1876, from Acting Head Assistant Collector to Collector.

60. B.P.No 2639, dt. 23 October 1876, p.8725.

61. Ibid.

62. B.P. No. 2955, dt. 24 November 1876, p. 9416.

63. Letter No. 459, dt. 27 November 1876, from Acting Collector to the Acting Secretary to the BR.

64. B.P. No. 3004, dt. 29 November 1876, p. 9554.

65. B.P. No. 78, dt. 8 January 1877, p.173.
66. Explanation by J.F. Price, Additional Sub-Collector of Bellary, on Special Duty to the Collector of Bellary Lr No.324, dt. 25 November.

67. Ibid.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid.

70. Ibid.


72. G.O. No. 1420, dt. 4 October 1876.

73. Letter No. 23, dt. 14 January 1877, from Acting Collector In charge to Head Assistant Collector.

74. Ibid.

75. B.P. No. 463, dt. 3 February 1877, pp.1237-41.

76. Circular Memorandum of famine relief works as enclosure No.1, B.P. No. 663, dt. 16 February 1877, pp.1754-55.

77. Ibid., p.1754.

78. Ibid., para 4, p.1755.

79. Ibid., Instructions to all Superintendents of relief works as Enclosure No.3, p. 1756.

80. Ibid.

81. Letter No. 127, dt. 26 February 1877, from the Acting Collector, Bellary to the Acting Secretary, to the BR.

82. Letter No. 54, dt. 28 February 1877, from W.H. Glenny, Sub-Collector to the Acting Collector, Bellary.

83. B.P. No. 1078, dt. 8 March 1877, p. 73186.

84. Letter No. 40, dt. 20 February 1877, from Sub-Collector to the Acting Collector, Bellary.

85. Letter No. 44, dt. 24 February 1877, from Sub-Collector to the Acting Collector, Bellary.

86. B.P. No. 1024, dt. 3 March 1877, p. 2971.

87. B.P. No. 1111, dt. 9 March 1877, pp.3182-86.

88. B.P. No. 1206A, dt. 16 March 1877, p. 3423.
89. Letter No. 66, dt. 10 March 1877, from the Sub-Collector to the Acting Collector, Bellary.

90. Letter No. 218, dt. 22 March 1877 from the Acting Collector, Bellary to the Acting Secretary, to the BR.

91. B.P. No. 1632, dt. 12 April 1877, p.4539.

92. Ibid.

93. B.P. No. 1652, dt. 13 April 1877, p.4586.

94. Ibid.

95. B.P. No. 2116, dt. 7 May 1877, p.5461.

96. B.P. No. 2967, dt. 22 June 1877, pp.7726-27.

97. B.P. No. 3259, dt. 12 July 1877, p. 8277.

98. Letter from A. Salmon, Special Relief Assistant, Bellary to the Acting Secretary, to the BR, dt. 3 August 1877.

99. Letter No. 749, dt. 18 September 1877, from the Acting Collector, Bellary to the Acting Secretary, to the BR.

100. Letter No. 308, dt. 20 August 1877, from the Sub-Collector to the Acting Collector, Bellary.

101. Letter No. 324, dt. 31 August 1877, from the Sub-Collector to the Acting Collector, Bellary.

102. Ibid.