Government of Madras

REVENUE DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. 538, 11th March 1948

Reference from the Board of Revenue, dated 12th November 1947,
CR. No. 18986-Abk./47-XA-3.

Order No. 533, Revenue, dated 11th March 1948.

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1. Country spirits (Arrack).—During the year the consumption of country spirits amounted to 2,296,064 proof gallons as against 2,445,043 proof gallons in 1945-46 representing a decrease of 6.11 per cent. The decrease is ascribed mainly to the introduction of Prohibition in eight districts and to the closure of arrack shops in select areas with effect from 1st October 1946, which has been offset to some extent by the fact that the consumption of arrack in the non-prohibition areas was on the upward trend. The total revenue derived from country spirits increased from Rs. 545.93 lakhs to Rs. 605.77 lakhs. There was an increase of Rs. 45.85 lakhs under licence fees and Rs. 13.89 lakhs under duty.

2. Toddy.—The total number of toddy shops sold in the Province for the toddy year was 6,685 as against 10,382 in the previous year. The total revenue derived from toddy during 1945-47 amounted to Rs. 651.88 lakhs as against Rs. 788.30 lakhs in the previous year. The revenue was made up of Rs. 424.37 lakhs under 'rentals' and Rs. 237.31 lakhs under 'tree tax'.

3. Foreign liquor.—The rates of duty on Indian made foreign spirits, Indian made rectified spirits and Indian made wine and medicated wine continued to be Rs. 20 per proof gallon. The duty on coconut toddy remained at Rs. 75 per proof gallon and that on beer brewed in India at 10 annas a gallon. There was a decrease in the consumption of wines, spirits, and beer and an increase in the consumption of denatured spirit and methyl alcohol. The quantity of foreign liquor imported by sea was 248,912 gallons which showed a substantial increase over the quantity imported in 1945-46, viz., 112,136 gallons. The total revenue from the taxation of foreign liquor was Rs. 58.65 lakhs, as against Rs. 74.26 lakhs in the previous year.

Opium.—The issue price of opium was enhanced from Rs. 140 to Rs. 150 per 20 maunds during the year. Four-hundred and ninety-three shops were sold for the year 1946-47 for Rs. 31.76 lakhs as against 493 shops sold for Rs. 31.76 lakhs in the previous year. The consumption of raw opium amounted to 18,939 seers as against 19,642 in 1945-6. The revenue derived from opium amounted to Rs. 58.93 as against Rs. 69.81 lakhs in the previous year.
6. **Hemp drugs.**—The rates of duty on ganja and bhang continued to be the same as in the last year, viz., Rs. 55 and Rs. 25 per seer respectively. Four hundred and fifty-four shops were sold for the year for Rs. 36.31 lakhs as against 457 shops for Rs. 35.16 lakhs in the previous year. Consumption of ganja and bhang in the Province during the year was 31,684 seers under ganja and 4,551 seers under bhang as against 30,873 seers under ganja and 5,415 seers under bhang in the previous year. The total revenue derived from hemp drugs amounted to Rs. 48.92 lakhs as against Rs. 59.64 lakhs in the previous year.

7. **Revenue and expenditure.**—The total Excise revenue demand for 1946-47 amounted to Rs. 1,441.08 lakhs as against Rs. 1,577.48 lakhs in the previous year. The total collection amounted to Rs. 1,437.40 lakhs. A sum of Rs. 87,600 was written off as irrecoverable. The net percentage of charges to receipts was 3.7 as against 3.2 in the previous year.

8. **Offences.**—The total number of cases under the Abkari Act during 1946-47 was 21,037 as against 21,432 in 1945-46 (this figure excludes the figure for the eight districts in which prohibition was introduced on 1st October 1946). This is exclusive of the cases detected by the staff attached to the Excise Intelligence Bureau. This staff detected 53 cases as against 53 cases in the previous year. Nine thousand one hundred and ninety-four cases were detected in the year under illicit manufacture of toddy as against 8,911 cases detected in the previous year. A number of cases of smuggling of opium was detected during the year.

9. **General.**—There was an increase in the consumption of denatured spirits and methyl alcohol and a decrease in the consumption of country spirits, toddy, wines, spirits, beer, opium, ganja and bhang. The experiment of the closure of arrack shops in toddy-drinking areas continued in the Shiyali and Tirputuraipundi taluks of the Tanjore district and in the Tiruvadanai and Paramakudi taluks of the Ramnad district.

(By order of His Excellency the Governor)

V. K. Rao,
Deputy Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue (Excise),
... Presidency Administration Report Officer.
... Education and Public Health Department.
... Home Department.
... Development Department.
... Director of Information and Publicity.
... Governor's Secretary (with a copy of the report).
... American Consul.
... Principal Information Officer, Bureau of Public Information, Government of India, Gassino Terrace, No. 7, Woods Road, Mount Road, Madras (with a copy of the report).
... Ministry of Finance (Central Revenue) with reference to their letter F. No. 33 (C), E.C. 48, dated 15th February 1948 (with a copy of the report).
... Local Administration Department (with a copy of the report).