

6 Aug 1970

Too many babies!
e/s
M. 2524
The area of 1511
(30A)

NOTES ON A VISIT TO CHAGOS ISLANDS
BY THE ADMINISTRATOR, BRITISH INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORY

17th July - 2nd August 1970

DP 151

You will be interested in the report of Ms. Todd of his visit to Chagos. The contrast between the labour force in the Chagos compared to the island is now 680. 331 of these are Seychellois, 343 Ilois and 6 are more - Mauritian. See Appendix V.

1. Itinerary

17th July 1970	1200 hours	Departed Fahe in Nordvaer.
22nd July	0600 hours	Arrived Peros Banhos.
23rd July	1400 hours	Departed Peros Banhos.
	1700 hours	Arrived Salomon.
25th July	1200 hours	Departed Salomon.
	1500 hours	Arrived Nelson Island.
	1700 hours	Departed Nelson Island.
26th July	0900 hours	Arrived Diego Garcia.
29th July	1200 hours	Departed Diego Garcia.

The Administrator was accompanied by Mr. Desiré Gendron of Moulinie & Company (Seychelles) Limited.

2. Nelson Island.

(a) Two hours were spent ashore at Nelson Island en route from Salomon to Diego Garcia. Landing was made at low tide at the north east of the island and would probably have been impossible when the tide was higher, due to rollers continuing into the beach. The island is approximately one mile long and half a mile wide at the ends, narrowing to quarter of a mile in the centre, with the longer axis running in an east-west direction. The end sections are composed of raised champignon coral, whilst the centre section has sandy beaches. A small grove of coconuts grows in the centre of the north side of the island and the rest of the island is covered in bushes, mainly velontier (SCREVOLA FRUTESCENS) and bois tabac (TOURNEFORTIA ARGENTEA). A large number of sea birds were on the island, including noddies, frigate birds and boobies (both brown and pink footed). A large number of turtle nests were also seen on the beaches.

(b) The island which is still privately owned is too small to be of economic significance, even though some guano has been reported. No records of its ever having been inhabited have been traced, but there are a number of domestic hens living wild on the island. The only sign of habitation seen was a small temporary shelter believed to have been put up some years ago by the owners of Salomon Island and used as a fishing camp.

3. Plantations

(a) The condition of the plantations remains as in previous reports. On Diego Garcia some areas are no longer being cropped due to the difficulty of clearing, but concentration on more intensive production in the remaining areas has resulted in increased production since this policy was introduced towards the end of 1969.

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Details of production are given in Appendix I.

(b) The cattle on Diego Garcia are doing well as are the pigs on Salomon. These pigs are kept on an open range system and this, rather than sty feeding, is now to be tried on the other islands.

(c) The buildings remain adequate but a number of roofs are reaching the stage where they will have to be replaced if the buildings are to continue in use.

4. Labour

(a) Details of the labour force are given in Appendix III and details of earning in Appendix IV. Relations between management and labour remain generally good. The general condition of the labour lines remains poor, but the standard of cleanliness of the camps has continued to improve. The stock of rations on the islands was adequate and the shops were quite well stocked.

5. Population

(a) Details of the population are given in Appendix V. There has been a small increase in the number of Seychellois on the islands, but the number of Ilois has remained almost static. Two Ilois families left on the Nordvaer for leave in Mauritius and Moultrie & Co. have undertaken to re-employ them on Agalaga.

(b) Details of births, deaths and marriages are given in Appendix VI.

6. Courts

(a) The Peace Officer's records are generally well kept. Details of cases heard are given in Appendix VII.

7. Medical

(a) Both a dresser and a midwife are working on Diego Garcia but on the other two atolls both functions are performed by one person. The hospitals are in good condition and are well supplied with drugs. The general health of the population remains satisfactory.

8. Education

(a) Due to the lack of a suitable person on Salomon, the school there is no longer functioning. There are 24 pupils at Peros Banhos and 30 at Diego Garcia.

9. Communications

(a) The Nordvaer continues to provide the only regular sea link with the islands, calling approximately every two and a half months.

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9. Communications

(b) There are three tractors and trucks and a Toyota pick up on Diego Garcia, but at the time of the visit one tractor and the Toyota were not working. The U.S. Geodetic Survey team have left a Dodge Power Wagon on the island which is being used on the plantation. It is however in very poor condition.

(c) The Meteorological Station on Diego Garcia continues to receive and send wireless messages on behalf of the management to Seychelles and to Peros Banhos. There is no transmitter on Salomon but messages can be received.

10. Geodetic Survey.

(a) The Geodetic Survey team left Diego Garcia early in July. Most of their equipment and stores were removed but a number of generators said to be beyond repair were left behind. A large quantity of diesel, much of which has been contaminated with water due to bad storage, has also been left behind. This is being used by the management.

11. Conclusion

(a) The islands continue to run as well as can be expected without any capital expenditure being incurred and it seems likely that, following the reorganisation of the work on Diego Garcia, there will be a substantial increase in production in 1971.


ADMINISTRATOR

6th August 1970.

COPRA PRODUCTION

APPENDIX I

Island	Diego Garcia	Peros Banhos	Salomon	Total Chagos
Average 1955-58	586	461	264	1311
1967	702	380	202	1284
1968	512	236	193	941
1969	524	272	186	982
Jan-June 1970	377	151	105	633

LIVESTOCK

APPENDIX II

	Diego Garcia		Peros Banhos		Salomon		Total	
	July '69	July '70	July '69	July '70	July '69	July '70	July '69	July '70
Horses	6	5	-	-	5	6	11	11
Pigs	64	60	80	80	47	92	191	232
Cattle	21	31	-	-	-	-	21	31
Donkeys	200*	200*	12	22	5	10	217	232

*Estimated.

LABOUR FORCE (JUNE 1970)

APPENDIX III

	Diego Garcia	Peros Banhos	Salomon	Total
Managers	1	-	1	2 (3)
Asst Managers	1	1	-	2 (-)
Accountants	2	-	-	2 (2)
Dressers/ Midwives	2	1	1	4 (4)
Clerks	-	1	1	2 (5)
Teachers	1	-	-	1 (2)
Senior Overseers	1	-	-	1 (3)
Overseers	6	6	8	20 (21)
Artisans	14* (incl. 4)	6	3	23 (25)
Male Labourers	98	53	32	183 (197)
Female Labourers	68	37	26	131 (121)
Boys	16	16	4	36 (32)
Total	210	121	76	407 (415)

* Apprentices.

Figures in brackets for June 1969.

EARNINGS

APPENDIX IV

	Diego Garcia	Peros Banhos	Salomon	Total
Number employed	211	120	76	407
Total basic (Rs)	7,402	3,218	3,366	13,986
Total extras "	7,407	1,985	1,415	10,807
Total earnings"	14,809	5,203	4,781	24,793
Shop Accounts	6,545	3,942	1,525	12,012

DETAILS OF EXTRAS

	Diego Garcia	Peros Banhos	Salomon
Copra Production	3737 (51%)	1206 (60%)	899 (67%)
Maintenance	1885 (27%)	698 (35%)	487 (34%)
Other	1785 (22%)	81 (5%)	29 (3%)
Total	7407	1985	1415

POPULATION (JULY 1970)

APPENDIX V

		A D U L T S			CHILDREN	TOTAL
		Male	Female	Total		
DIEGO GARCIA	Seychellois	98	51	149	66	215
	Mauritians	1	-	1	-	1
	Ilois	30	25	55	53	108
	Total	129	76	205	119	324
PEROS BANHOS	Seychellois	40	12	52	36	88
	Mauritians	1	1	2	1	3
	Ilois	25	25	50	61	111
	Total	66	38	104	98	202
SALO- MON	Seychellois	23	1	24	4	28
	Mauritians	1	1	2	-	2
	Ilois	21	25	46	78	124
	Total	45	27	72	82	154
TOTAL CHAGOS	Seychellois	161	64	225	106	331
	Mauritians	3	2	5	1	6
	Ilois	76	75	151	192	343
	Total	240	141	381	299	680

APPENDIX V (continued)

	CITIZENSHIP			Origin		
	Legitimate	Natural	Total	Seychellois	Mauritian	Ilois
DIEGO GARCIA	23	48	71	37	2	32
PEROS BANHOS	23	32	55	9	-	46
SALOMON	10	26	36	-	1	35
TOTAL CHAOS	56	106	162	46	3	113

CIVIL STATUS RECORDS

APPENDIX VI

BIRTHS																
	DIEGO GARCIA				PEROS BANHOS				SALOMON				TOTAL CHAGOS			
	1967	1968	1969	Jan-June 1970	1967	1968	1969	Jan-June 1970	1967	1968	1969	Jan-June 1970	1967	1968	1969	Jan-June 1970
Male	7	11	8	3	5	4	8	3	5	3	2	3	17	18	18	9
Female	5	3	6	5	9	6	7	-	5	4	1	2	19	15	14	7
Total	12	14	14	8	14	10	15	3	10	7	3	5	36	31	32	16
Legitimate	4	9	6	3	6	4	3	1	3	4	-	2	13	17	9	6
Natural	8	5	8	5	8	6	12	2	7	3	3	3	23	14	23	10
Still Births	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
DEATHS																
Male	3	1	1	-	3	2	1	1	1	1	-	-	7	4	2	1
Female	-	-	-	1	8	5	2	1	3	1	1	-	11	6	3	2
Total	3	1	1	1	11	7	3	2	4	2	1	-	18	10	5	3
Under 1 year	1	1	1	-	3	2	-	2	1	1	-	-	5	4	1	2
1-10 years	2	-	-	-	6	2	1	-	1	1	-	-	9	3	1	-
11 years+	-	-	-	1	2	3	2	-	2	-	1	-	4	3	3	1
MARRIAGES																
Total	-	3	5	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	3	5	2

PRACE OFFICER'S RECORDS

APPENDIX VII

	DIEGO GARCIA				PEROS BAINOS				SALONON			TOTAL				
	1967	1968	1969	Jan-June 1970	1967	1968	1969	Jan-June 1970	1967	1968	1969	Jan-June 1970	1967	1968	1969	Jan-June 1970
	Affray	4	-	8	4	-	5	1	1	1	5	4	1	4	26	13
Assault	11	18	8	4	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	8	3	5	4
Conduct liable to cause breach of peace.	6	2	5	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
Damage property	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	12	0	2
Drunkenness	6	-	5	1	5	12	1	1	1	-	2	1	6	13	9	6
Obscene language	2	12	6	4	3	1	-	1	1	-	3	-	7	7	1	1
Stealing	7	7	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	7	1	-
Other offences	1	1	-	-	1	6	1	-	5	4	9	2	50	69	38	19
Total	56	40	26	14	9	25	3	3	5	4	9	2	144	161	74	41
DISPOSAL OF CASES																
Placed													26	54	24	11
No. 1-10	19	15	17	11	4	19	1	-	3	1	6	-	8	3	2	-
No. 11-20	8	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	2	-	34	37	26	11
Total	27	16	17	11	4	19	1	-	3	2	8	-	42	91	52	22
Imprisonment													14	26	11	7
1-7 days	9	10	4	3	4	6	2	3	1	2	5	1	1	6	4	1
8-14 days	-	6	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	33	15	8
Total Imprisonment	9	16	8	3	5	6	2	3	1	2	5	1	16	39	19	9
Reprimand	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Not guilty	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-