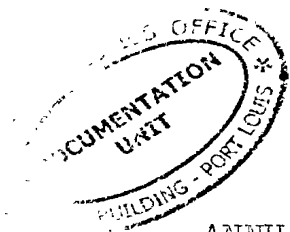
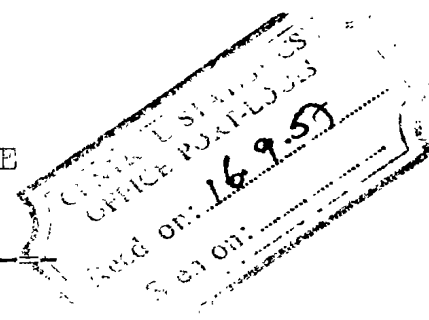


COLONY OF MAURITIUS

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE
FOR THE YEAR 1956



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FUNCTIONS

In July, 1945, a Statistical Bureau was created in consequence of a recommendation made by the Commission of Enquiry into the disturbances which occurred in the North of Mauritius in 1943.

The original functions assigned to this Bureau were to collect and compile accurate information as to wages of labour; the number and type of employment in various industries; the level of prices and the computation of cost of living indices. The Bureau was also assigned the task of supervising and coordinating the statistical data collected in various Government Departments. These functions of the Bureau were gradually extended to involve the periodical statistical survey of every branch of economic activity in the island: agricultural, industrial, financial and commercial. It also keeps under review the demographic, vital, health, educational and other social statistics of the life of the Colony. In July 1948, the original Statistical Bureau became the Central Statistical Office.

The information collected, tabulated and analysed by the Central Statistical Office is presented in an annual handbook, in such a form as it can be conveniently utilised by the Government, the general public and outside institutions. This Year Book of Statistics for Mauritius has been published annually since 1946.

The Office draws up complete annual tables of the Balance of payments of the Colony, of Capital Formation aggregates, of National Income and National Accounts.

In addition, the Central Statistical Office has also to prepare a large number of Statistical Reports for submission to the Colonial Office and to the various agencies of the United Nations Organisation. It has to reply to a great number of enquiries from abroad, in addition to those from local organisations, institutions and individuals. When time and opportunity offer, it also carries out research on the statistical material collected by the Department.

The Central Statistical Office is in constant contact with the Colonial Office Statistical Department, a separate organisation created towards the end of 1948.

/... LOCATION

LOCATION

Throughout the year, the Central Statistical Office was housed at 5, Abbé de la Caille Street, Beau Bassin.

An extension to the existing building was erected in June, 1952, to serve as Census Office and at the same time to accommodate the Hollerith equipment.

STAFF

The strength of the staff as at the end of the year consisted of:-

The Director of Statistics
The Assistant Director
The Statistician
Two Assistant Statisticians
An Office Superintendent
Ten Compilers
A Hollerith Operator
A Typist-Stenographer
4 Punch & Verifier Operators

STAFF MOVEMENTS

Mr M. Etienne, Statistician, who had been seconded to the Secretariat for duty as Schedule Officer on the 19th December, 1955 returned to this Department on the 10th February, 1956.

Mr R. Arékion, Compiler, left the Colony on vacation leave on the 10th of April.

Mr F.R. L'Aiguille, Compiler, left the Colony on leave on the 7th August. During his vacation leave he is reading at the Regent Street Polytechnic for the final examination of the Associateship of the Association of Incorporated Statisticians.

Miss Y. Lesage, Typist-Stenographer, was transferred to the Health Department as Clinical and Clerical Assistant on the 23rd August and was replaced on the same day by Mrs A. Patron.

Mr Y. Desvaux, Compiler, was on the 20th December, granted 90 days leave prior to his retirement.

Mr J.A. Ah-Kong was appointed to the newly created post of Compiler and assumed duty on the 1st December. Mr Ah-Kong is working in the Statistical Branch of the Customs Department.

/... Mr J.I. Benjamin

Mr J.I. Benjamin, a Second Grade Clerk of the Public Assistance Department, was appointed Hollerith Operator in the place of Mr A. de Chapuiset Lemerle, who resigned at the end of last year. Mr Benjamin assumed duty on the 2nd February.

On the advice of the Government Medical Officer, Mrs M. Pouzet, Punch and Verifier Operator, left on sick leave for Reunion Island on the 8th November and returned to her post on the 3rd December.

QUALIFYING EXAMINATIONS

Local examinations were again held this year by the Association of Incorporated Statisticians. Miss I. Smith and Mr Y. Tanyan who took part were "referred" in one subject of Part B at the Intermediate examination for the Associateship.

SURVEYS

A complete survey of the Cinema Industry was carried out in May - July 1956. The investigation was carried out in respect of sitting capacity, attendance and number of performances.

The sample survey on household, budgetary expenditure was completed during the year.

YEAR BOOK OF STATISTICS

The Year Book of Statistics for 1955 was ready in October but owing to typing and reproduction difficulties this Book only issued at the end of the year.

CONSUMERS' PRICES AND COST OF LIVING

Monthly surveys of the current retail prices of a large number of articles of common consumption were continued as heretofore. Indexes of these prices relative to prewar were worked out for 71 articles of food and beverages, 40 articles of clothing and textiles, 43 articles of household necessity, including fuel items.

CONSUMERS' PRICE INDEX

This index (otherwise called "the cost of living index") was computed each month for each of six different categories of consumers. These monthly indexes were regularly published in the Government Gazette.

/... A new general

A new general index of consumers' prices based on the United Nations schedule of private consumption expenditure was also computed using 1950 as year of reference for each of the years 1951 to 1956.

This new index, which was worked out at the request of the Government, purports to give a measure of the general trend in prices.

STATISTICAL RETURNS FOR THE COLONIAL OFFICE

Some 10 Monthly and 11 Quarterly returns of demographic, vital, industrial production and trade statistics were regularly furnished to the Statistical Department of the Colonial Office.

Periodical revision is also effected of the sections on Mauritius in the Digest of Colonial Statistics which is published by the Colonial Office.

STATISTICS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANISATION, FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANISATION AND OTHER AGENCIES

Extensive questionnaires from the United Nations Organisation and its agencies, dealing with demographic and vital data and statistics of cultivation, production, livestock, foodstuffs, external trade, etc., for Mauritius and its dependencies were replied to.

Since January, 1951, monthly Statistical tables (covering various subjects) were in addition furnished for the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics of the United Nations Organisation.

STATISTICS OF THE SUGAR INDUSTRY

As in previous years, the Central Statistical Office undertook the compilation of complete data relating to cultivation, production and manufacture in the Sugar Industry. The tabular statements on the crop results were circulated to the Director of Agriculture, the Chamber of Agriculture, the Central Board and the Agricultural Bank. In addition, with the kind assistance of the Registrar of the Co-Operative Societies, a satisfactorily large sample of data relating to small plantations was analysed and published.

Bi-annual statements of employment and wages for artisans and skilled personnel in the Sugar Industry were collected, compiled and analysed.

/... TRADE STATISTICS

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Complete statistics of Importation and Exportation by sea and air on the basis of the Standard International Trade Classification continued to be compiled in the office with the aid of the Hollerith Equipment in collaboration with the Customs Authorities. Since 1953, a new publication embodying complete trade accounts has been produced by the Customs Department.

In addition, the Year Book of Statistics gives a complementary analysis of the year's trade with relevant index numbers and other information.

NATIONAL INCOME AND NATIONAL ACCOUNTS

The National Income and National Accounts Tables for the current year were prepared in continuation of the published result for previous years and issued for official information in October. Complete information and data on this subject are now available as from 1948.

BALANCE OF PAYMENTS OF THE COLONY

Tables of the Balance of Payments for the year 1955 were computed as in previous years and this work, which necessitated investigations into the records of the Treasury, of the Post Office and the compilation of returns from private banks and commercial agencies, was completed in August.

CAPITAL FORMATION ESTIMATES

Tabular statements of the Capital Formation and Consumption in the Colony during the year 1955 were compiled, and issued as previously at the request of the Secretary of State.

Provisional tables were forwarded to the Secretary of State by the middle of April and final tables in June.

A publication summarising and analysing the estimates worked out over the period 1948 to 1954 was prepared and issued in March.

FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS ON POPULATION

Further investigations in and discussion of the natality and fertility of the population of Mauritius were carried out during the year and a publication "Natality and Fertility in Mauritius (1825-1955)" was issued in June, 1956.

/... CONFERENCE OF

CONFERENCE OF BRITISH COMMONWEALTH STATISTICIANS

At the invitation of the Chief Statistician of the Colonial Office, papers were prepared for the Fourth Conference of British Commonwealth Statisticians and submitted to London.

VISITS

A number of visitors to the island, whose interests were concerned with the commercial and economic or social activities of the Colony, called on the Director for information.

MISCELLANEOUS ACTIVITIES

The office had to reply during the year to a large number of enquiries of a private nature from individuals and institutions both local and abroad, in addition to the numerous enquiries of an official character.

OFFICE EQUIPMENT

A number of valuable books and publications were added to the Library during the year.

In order to cope with the continually increasing volume of work a Facit electric calculator was purchased locally in November.

HOLLERITH PUNCHED CARD EQUIPMENT

In addition to the work of the Central Statistical Office, the Hollerith Equipment is at present used to compile and tabulate:-

- (i) The Trade Statistics of which monthly, quarterly and annual accounts are produced;
- (ii) the statistics of the Health Department;
- (iii) the statistics of the Income Tax Department;
- (iv) complete monthly and annual statements of Vital Statistics for the Civil Status Office;
- (v) certain statistics of the Postal Department; and
- (vi) the statistics of Crime.

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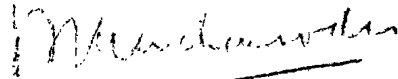
/... A special

A special investigation into the electricity consumption and tariffs in the Colony was carried out from January to May at the request of the Central Electricity Board.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have much pleasure in recording here my appreciation of the good work performed throughout the year by members of the staff.

February, 1956.


~~Director of Statistics~~
(M. HERCHENRODER)

