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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. <i>808</i>	Press <u>Mis.</u>
<i>258-261</i>	
Dated <i>23.5.1988</i>	

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Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department,
23rd May 1866.

Read the following papers :—

No. 258. From the Superintending Engineer, 1st Division, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Waltair, 22nd December 1865, No. 2218.

I have the honor to submit, herewith, the Report of the Committee on the Rajahmundry Zillah Jail, ordered in paragraph 6 of the Order of Government, No. 877, Judicial Department, dated 16th June 1865, with the Memorandum alluded to in the 2nd paragraph of the Report, and Plans and Estimates of the alterations and additions recommended.

Enclosures 4.

- * 1 Plan.
- 1 Abstract Estimate.
- 1 Committee's Report.
- 1 Memorandum.

* Forwarded this day by separate under cover.

2. Referring to the Memorandum and Plan :

(1). A and B, sheds in the outer yard, at present used as shop and cook-room, are to be removed, a palisade to be run across from the west side of the middle gateway to the opposite south wall; and in the western of the two divisions of the outer yard thus formed, the new Hospital and its out-houses are to be built. The plan for this Hospital is the same as that for the Waltair Zillah Jail.

(2). C is the present Dead-house in a confined corner of the small yard of No. 16 ward; this, and the two adjacent rooms, are to be entirely removed, and on the site an open shed, for the women's cooking, to be erected.

(12). Blocks F and G contain, each, four arched wards very badly ventilated, and affording a very small cubical space, in proportion to the floor area. Nos. 6 and 10 of block G have an upper story above them (which is used for European prisoners); these cannot, therefore, be treated as 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, and 9, but openings will be made through the end walls, and two ventilating shafts carried up through to the upper roof. All these wards will be provided with iron railed doors, with moveable shutters.

Nos. 6 and 7 are at present used as a Hospital.

Nos. 9 and 10 for female prisoners.

(8). H, at present used as a sick ward for the women, is to be removed; as also is I, at present used for cooking. The walls connecting H and I with the block F will also be cleared away.

(5). The wall on each side of the middle gate, separating the inner from the outer yard, is to be removed, a palisade being put up instead of it.

There will then be no dividing walls inside the Jail.

At K, an additional iron railed gate will be provided. The windows looking into the inner yard from the Guard-room are already guarded by iron rails.

(6) Has already been carried out.

3. With the above explanatory remarks, connecting the written recommendations with the plan, I have the honor to submit, for sanction, the estimate of the cost of the proposed alterations and additions, amounting to Rupees 16,910.

4. I think that every essential improvement is well provided for by the estimate now submitted; but it is matter for consideration whether it would not have been better to have rased the whole of the old buildings to the ground, and build, instead, a new Zillah Jail attached to the Central Jail now under construction.

No. 390.

MEMORANDUM.

Forwarded to the Secretary to Government, Judicial Department, for consideration.

FORT SAINT GEORGE,
22nd December 1865.

(Signed) R. COLE,
Principal Insp. Genl. Medl. Dept.

No. 260. From Lieutenant Colonel W. J. WILSON, Inspector General of Jails, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Madras, 3rd May 1866, No. 1.

I have the honor to return the Report of the Committee upon the District Jail at Rajahmundry, together with the plan and estimate and other papers referred to me for remark.

2. This Jail has been extremely unhealthy for some years past, and two Medical Officers, viz., the Deputy Inspector General of Hospitals in the Northern Division, and Dr. Dougall, Superintendent of the Jail, have expressed very decided opinions upon the point. They believe the walls to be tainted, and urge that the Jail should be abandoned altogether, and a new one erected in the vicinity of the Central Jail now in progress. Such being the case, I cannot recommend the expenditure of 17,000 Rupees upon alterations, the efficacy of which is so doubtful.

3. Early in April, I received a letter from Dr. Dougall, giving a very unfavorable account of the health of the prisoners, and advising the immediate substitution of grated iron doors for the wooden doors now in use; but I preferred, pending the disposal of the general question, to relieve the Jail by transfer, and I also requested Dr. Dougall to see what could be done towards removing the taint, by fumigation or other means. On the 11th April, 60 convicts were removed to the Central Jail, and Dr. Dougall having found, after a careful examination, that the walls had been covered by successive coats of plaster and white-wash to the thickness of nearly two inches, he caused this to be removed, and he now reports a marked improvement in the health of the prisoners, which favorable result he ascribes to the removal of the tainted plaster, as well as to the relief afforded by the transfer. Out of 80 prisoners on the 28th ultimo, there was only one on the sick list, and he was suffering from itch.

4. I therefore recommend that all measures with respect to this Jail be held in abeyance for the present, with one exception, viz., the provision of grated doors in Wards 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, and 15, and in the Hospital Wards 6, and 7, all of which I think it would be well to supply at once.

5. The two communications from Dr. Dougall abovementioned, are herewith forwarded for perusal. He has been requested to complete the removal of the tainted plaster.

From Assistant Surgeon J. DOUGALL, Superintendent of the Zillah Jail, Rajahmundry, to the Inspector General of Jails, Madras; dated Rajahmundry, 30th March 1866, No. 53.

I have the honor to report that the sanitary condition of the Zillah Jail, Rajahmundry, is in a very unsatisfactory state. The whole of the wards are badly ventilated, and I consider that immediate steps should be taken to render the Jail more healthy than it has been for a long time

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past. The following Statement of the mortality during 1865, will at once show how urgent is the necessity for some improvement:—

From 1st January to 31st December 1865.

	Died	Average strength
1st Quarter, January, February and March.	21	126½
2nd Do., April, May, and June.	7	126½
3rd Do., July, August, and September	18	110½
4th Do., October, November, and December.. ...	11	120½
Total...	57	121

2. By the above table you will perceive that the mortality during the last year was close upon 50 per cent. of the average strength.

3. When I entered upon my duty in January 1866, I was much impressed with the appearance of the convicts in this Jail, as compared with those in the one I had recently been in charge of at Vizagapatam. In the latter Jail, which was a temporary erection, and well ventilated, the prisoners had a much more healthy appearance, and though the average strength during 1865 was about 350, the deaths did not exceed 41; while here, the anæmic appearance of the prisoners is remarkable, and, as I have already shewn, that with an average strength of 121 during the past year, the deaths have been 57.

4. This excessive mortality I believe is entirely attributable to the badly constructed and imperfectly ventilated Jail. I consider that the very walls are vitiated.

5. I understand that plans have been submitted by the Superintending Engineer, 1st Division, for the improvement of this Jail. I am not aware what has been suggested by way of improvement, but anything short of the demolition of the present wards and the removal of the old material will be insufficient.

6. In the meantime, I have the honor to request that open grated iron doors may be sanctioned, instead of the present wooden ones; and until this alteration can be carried out, I would request your permission to have the ward doors kept open during the night. This will necessitate additional guards being placed over the cells. In anticipation of your sanction I have, as I considered it a matter of life and death, had the doors of the Hospital kept open at night, and the Superintendent of Police has allowed the necessary guard for it.

I beg to add that the mortality of the 1st quarter of this year has been 17—average strength 129½—which, though not so high as the corresponding quarter of last year, is far above what it ought to be.

From Assistant Surgeon J. DOUGALL, Superintendent of the Zillah Jail, Rajahmundry, to the Inspector General of Jails, Madras; dated Rajahmundry, 28th April 1866, No. 62.

I have the honor to report, for your information, the very favorable change that has taken place in the Jail.

2. On receipt of your letter, No. 1019, dated the 16th instant, recommending fumigation of the cells, or other means, for the improvement of the health of the prisoners, I made a careful examination of the cell walls and floors, and saw that the walls were covered with plaster and white-wash to the extent of nearly two inches—one coating of white-wash after another for a long series of years had evidently been applied without removal of any of the previous coatings—and the plaster had evidently absorbed and retained the taint. I thought no fumigation was likely to be of even temporary benefit; so I set the prisoners at once to work, and had the whole of the plaster removed from the walls, to a height of about eight feet.

3. Since this has been done, the improved health of the prisoners has been most marked, and at present, out of a strength of 80 prisoners, there is only one man on the sick list, and he is only suffering from itch.

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4. No doubt the relief afforded by the removal of 80 men to the Central Jail on the 11th of this month contributed greatly to this favorable result, but I am convinced that the removal of this tainted plaster has had no inconsiderable share in it.

5. The floors of the cells are stone (with the exception of a ward known as the "old Hospital"); and as they are in good order, I would not recommend that they be touched. Before proceeding further, I beg you will sanction what has already been done, and grant me permission to remove the whole of the plaster and white-wash from the arched roof of the cells.

6. I beg to add that no expense has been incurred in this work, and a fresh coating of white-wash over the exposed brick walls, will be the only thing required to make the cells look as well as formerly.

No. 261.

ORDER THEREON, 23rd May 1866, No. 808.

Referring to the concurrent testimony of the Inspector General of Jails, the Superintending Engineer, the Deputy Inspector General of Hospitals, Northern Division, and the local Superintendent of the Jail, as to the extreme unhealthiness of the District Jail at Rajahmundry, the Governor in Council approves of the recommendation made by Colonel Wilson, that no expenditure should at present be incurred on that building, with the exception of providing grated doors for the Wards specified in paragraph 4 of the Inspector General's letter, until it shall be seen what permanent effect the reduction in the number of the prisoners, and the removal of the plaster, &c., has had upon the health of the remaining prisoners.

(True Extract).

Chief Secretary.

To the Inspector General of Jails, with two enclosures, returned.

„ Public Works Department, with Plan and Estimate.

„ Principal Inspector General, Medical Department.

Ed. J. H. Burns.

Judicial Department.

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following papers,

From the Supy. Engineer's Division (Recd. enter 22nd December/66 No. 221)

— Offg. Secy. to the Prin. Inspy. Genl. Med. Dept. (— 22nd — — — No. 390)

Inspector Genl. of Jails (— 3rd May 1866 No. 1)

Order thereon 23rd May 1866 No. 808.

Referring to the concurrent testimony of the Inspector General of Jails, the Superintending Engineer, the Deputy Inspector General of Hospitals, Northern Division, and the local Superintendent of the Jail as to the extreme unhealthiness of the District Jail at Rajahmundry, the Governor in Council approves of the recommendation made by Colonel Wilson that no expenditure should at present be

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W. H. L.

To the Inspector Genl. of Jails
" Public Works Department
" Bm. Shops Genl. Secy. Dept.

Recd 30/5

Rajahmundry Jail

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Judicial 1860. Department.

No. 800.

PROCEEDINGS OF GOVERNMENT.

Atk. 1190. 2598-

2-536/59.

Dated 23 July 1887.