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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

Government of Madras

Public Works DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	3468	Press
B.P. No.		Mis.
Dated	18 - 12 - 195	6876

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 427. Read the following letter from R. BALAJEE ROW, C. MOOTOO-SAWMY MOODELLY, M. SAMMYNATHA MOODELLY, inhabitants of Mylapore, to Major-General G. W. WALKER, R.E., Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated Mylapore, 12th December 1876 :—

WE have the honor to submit a petition to the address of His Grace the Governor of Fort St. George, in connection with certain proposals of the Junction Canal, and we humbly and earnestly request that you will be pleased to lay this, without failure, before the Council this day, for their favorable consideration.

—
SUBMITTED accordingly.

(Signed) G. W. WALKER, Major-General, R.E.,
Secretary to Government.

12th December 1876.

—

Petition from R. BALAJEE ROW, C. MOOTOO-SAWMY MOODELLY, M. SAMMYNATHA MOODELLY and others, inhabitants of Mylapore, to HIS GRACE the DUKE of BUCKINGHAM and CHANDOS, Governor in Council, Fort St. George, dated Mylapore, 12th December 1876.

THAT your petitioners have learned with grave concern that your Grace in Council has arrived at the resolution of carrying out the junction of the Southern with the Northern Coast Canal as a relief work in this time of distress for giving labor to the working classes, and that the junction is to be effected by a cut through the heart of Mylapore. The evils which the proposed work, when carried out, would inflict on the inhabitants of Mylapore directly, and of all Madras indirectly, were pointed out in memorials submitted to the Government of Right Honorable Mr. W. A. Morehead and Lord Napier, whereon they gave up the plan, and assured the inhabitants of Mylapore that no action would be taken in the matter without their being previously consulted. And yet, to the great surprise and anxiety of your memorialists, your Grace in Council has resolved on the immediate carrying out of a work which at best found favour with few professional men, and had always been stoutly opposed by the people, those most interested in the fruit of the work. Trusting, however, that your Grace in Council will reconsider the matter, momentous as are its consequences, and listen to the humble suggestions and prayers of your petitioners, they beg to lay before you their objections for the carrying out of the plan in its present form, and suggest other modes of relief works calculated to promote the permanent good of Madras.

Your petitioners beg to quote the following from their memorial to His Excellency Lord Napier on the subject in question :—

“ That your Lordship's residence in Madras has been sufficient to give you an idea of the relative importance of the various parts of the Presidency town. It is therefore needless for your petitioners to give a lengthened description of Mylapore. It is admitted to be by far the best part of the town, so much so that people from other parts of the town usually resort to it as a place of health, and respectable people coming from up-country almost always fix their residence there. It is besides too well known to require any proof that the inhabitants of Triplicane, Royapett, and other places carry fresh water for drinking purposes from the wells and tanks of Mylapore.

“ That your petitioners refer your Lordship to official records to show that Mylapore comprises within its area some of the best lands in the Presidency, in which not only paddy, but the most valuable garden products are grown for the Presidency market. A large amount

of capital is sunk in these lands, and they are the only means of support to a large and increasing population of farmers and laborers. The value of this property may be judged of when it is stated that an acre of land will, in its present state, fetch at any time on an average Rupees 1,000 in the open market, and there are upwards of 4,500 acres comprised in the Mylapore limits.

"That if a canal were excavated in the heart of Mylapore, your petitioners apprehend, in the first place, that it would have the effect of draining the tanks and wells on which they now depend for their supply of water. If it do not produce this result, your petitioners fear that the salt water of the canal is sure to corrupt the springs to such an extent as to make the tanks and wells completely brackish. As a proof of this, your petitioners need only refer your Lordship to the effects produced upon Black Town, Chintadripett and other places by the excavation of Cochrane's Canal many years ago, and upon the wells in Black Town by the recent drainage works.

"That your Lordship perhaps may liberally pass over the loss of Government revenue that the measure is calculated to produce, but your petitioners respectfully submit that the majority of the inhabitants will feel a very great hardship by being deprived of the only means of livelihood they have, and of the good water which now contributes so much to the health of the inhabitants and makes the place so attractive in a sanitary point of view."

The objections which existed then do exist now, and have acquired great weight. The value of the lands has increased since, and the necessity has become stronger to preserve the purity of its wells. Last year cholera was very violent in Mylapore, and public health has been going down year after year. It is therefore with the most terrible forebodings that your petitioners look upon the prospect of a standing sewage collection in the midst of the town, similar to what the inhabitants of Chintadripett and other suburbs have suffered from since the Cochrane's Canal converted the Cooum, whose waters were once drinkable, into the most obnoxious sewer that any town can have.

In addition to the above evils of a permanent character, your petitioners beg to call the attention of your Grace in Council to one of a temporary nature, but none the less deserving of serious consideration, viz., that if the canal be dug in the middle of the town, as it is at present proposed to do, it would needs bring into it a large influx of coolies which, in a time of drought and scarcity, cannot but seriously affect the health of Mylapore.

And now as to the question of the usefulness of the junction. Your petitioners humbly request your Grace in Council to peruse all the papers connected with the project, and consider whether the expected extension of traffic is worth the estimated outlay. The existing Railways connect Madras with the interior on all sides, and they serve well enough for purposes of trade. While thus the advantages to Mylapore or Madras generally are few, the evils are serious.

Your petitioners, however, are fully alive to the necessity of starting a great relief work in the vicinity of Madras, and beg to be permitted to suggest to your Grace in Council the advisability of deepening the Mylapore and Nungumbaukum tanks (Arys), and improving tank bunds and repairing the channels. The petitioners are not the first to suggest this scheme to the consideration of Government. Able Engineers, who had studied the wants of Madras best, have proposed the same, and a better opportunity than the present cannot offer itself for Government to carry out a project so beneficial to Madras. Half the lands of Madras are under the irrigation of these tanks, as the quit-rent department will testify; and the land revenue of the town, not to speak of the comfort and health of the people at large, depends on the storage they are capable of. Besides, work in those tanks will keep the laborers out of the town and scattered over a large area, and the sanitary objection urged in connection with the present execution of the canal does not apply to the work the petitioners have suggested.

Finally, should Government insist on carrying out the canal scheme, your petitioners beg humbly to request that the site of the canal may be altered, so that it may run as near the beach as possible, connecting the existing backwaters near the sea, all along the beach.

road on to the south by the Saint Thomé high road. The course your petitioners propose would not only make the canal much less costly, inasmuch as the distance is shorter,—more than half of which is already low waste land, as the existing backwaters may be utilized and as lands may be bought for a trifle,—but save the valuable cultivated lands of Mylapore and leave its fresh-water wells unaffected. It would further aid traffic, as it would be close by the Mylapore market and Triplicane firewood depot.

Your petitioners, in conclusion, pray that your Grace in Council will reconsider the question and save Mylapore from the evils which threaten it.

Your petitioners humbly pray for permission for a deputation from them waiting on your Grace in Council.

For which act of kindness, your petitioners shall, as in duty bound, for ever pray.

No. 428. ORDER THEREON, 18th December 1876, No. 3,461.

CIVIL WORKS, No. 23-B.

HIS GRACE the Governor in Council has given the petition of certain inhabitants of Mylapore his attentive consideration.

Its purport is much the same as that presented by them in 1868, and recorded with G.O., No. 1,148, of 16th April; a portion of which they quote. There is no foundation for the statement that the Junction Canal Project, an important link in the canal communication of the Presidency, was ever abandoned—although it was laid aside by G.O., No. 572, of 27th February 1871, for a time purely on financial considerations.

2. The petitioners may rest assured that every precaution will be taken for providing that sewage shall not enter into the canal, but shall be diverted into the natural drainages which now receive it, and which will be carried under the canal. Their irrigation supply from the Mylapore or other tanks where intercepted by it will also be carefully provided for, and preventive measures will be taken against the water-supply or level of their wells being affected by the canal. The alternative route suggested by the petitioners was fully considered some years since, as well as some other suggested lines, and was thrown out on professional grounds—which decision the recent consideration confirms.

(True Extract.)

Major-General, R.E.,
Secretary to Government.

To Petitioners.
To the District Engineer, Presidency.
„ Revenue Department.
„ Financial Department.

Exd. S. T. Austin.
Spare Copies

(27) P.W.D.

18 DEC 76

failure before the Council

this day for their favorable

consideration - Sketch of 1876

We beg to remain

Sir your most

obedient

the inhabitants of Mysore

Q. Palayee Rao

6. 11. 1876

M. Samayyavar

Submitted as per...

12.12.

12.12.76

12th Dec 76

18 DEC 76

To.

Major General G. W.

Walker. R. Co.

Secretary to Govt. P.W.D.

Sir -

We have the honor to submit a petition to the address of His Grace the Governor of Fort St. George, in connection with certain proposals of the Junction Canal & we humbly & earnestly request that you will be pleased to lay this, interest

No 34619/18 Dec/65
7c

His Grace the
Governor in Council
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claration of certain
inhabitants of
of Myslapore
his attentive
consideration -
Its purport is
much the same
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ed by them in
1868, & recorded
with G.O. No 1148
of 16th April; a
portion of which
they quote - There
is no foundation
for the statement
that the formation
of a canal project
was ever ^{abandoned} ~~given~~
~~up~~ because the
Govt. were convin-
ced that it
would, as alleged
by the Petitioners,

Ref. 16/12

an important link in the
Canal communication of
the Presidency -

inflict certain
evils on them.
~~Although~~ ^{It} was laid aside
by G.O. 4: 572 of
27th Dec 1871, for a time
by in financial
considerations
which ~~have~~ ^{will}
no weight in the
face of the neces-
sity of providing
work for the ab-
solute population
of Madras & its
immediate vi-
cinity -

The Petitioners
may rest assured
that every pre-
caution will be
taken for pro-
viding that Sew-
age shall not
enter into the
canal, but shall
be diverted into
the natural
drainage which
now receive it
and which will

be carried miles
the Canal. Their
irrigation supply
from the Mysa-
pore or other
tanks where
intercepted by it
~~will~~ ^{will} also be
~~carefully provided for~~
~~the Canal~~. In
the event of the
water supply on
level of their
wells being af-
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measures will be
taken against
the water supply
or level of their
wells being af-
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ive ~~apart~~
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Petitioners ^{was} ~~have~~
^{fully} ~~been~~ ^{considered} some years since
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as well as some other suggested lines ^{was} ~~proposed~~, & thrown
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ground - which
decision the recent commission ~~will~~ confirm. C.M.W.
Petitioners ^{See} ~~See~~ ^{Sept} ~~Sept~~
D. President's ^{See} ~~See~~ ^{Sept} ~~Sept~~ ²⁰⁻¹²⁻⁷⁰ ~~20-12-70~~ ^{with} ~~with ^{Chet} ~~Chet ¹⁵⁻¹² ~~15-12~~.~~~~

9176 9176
Govt. of 1876 Madras.
PUBLIC WORKS.

To

The Petitioners

Dated

Issued

Recd.

Encl.

1876 No. 811

Nos. 427/28

Dr. & Comm. Inaction
Canal. Prop. —

Having read a Petition
from certain inhabitants
of Mylapore concerning the
the evils which would arise
in the — being carried
out, and requesting that
the route may be altered

Dr. & Comm. Inaction