

4TH AUGUST 1894, No. 1888, JUDICIAL.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

READ—again the following paper:—

G.O., dated 9th April 1894, No. 849, Judicial.

ABSTRACT.—Passing orders on the report on the Cochin fires of the 2nd, 3rd and 7th February.

READ—also the following paper:—

From W. V. BAKER, Esq., Officiating Executive Engineer, West Coast Division, to the Superintending Engineer, IV Circle, Coimbatore, dated Cochin, 20th June 1894, No. 375-S.E.

With reference to your endorsement (returned) No. 187-W.C., dated 30th April 1894, on G.O., No. 1059 W., dated 24th idem, calling for a report on the proposals made in connection with the recent Cochin fires for readily commanding a good supply of water, &c., I have the honour to state that I am of opinion the suggestion of a steam fire engine combined with a barge need not be seriously considered. For if it was made with a view to also utilizing the barge to tow cargo-boats out to steamers anchored off the port, what is to prevent a fire breaking out while the barge is away on such duty? In fact, then would be the opportunity for an incendiary to carry out his plans.

2. Even assuming that the barge is to be kept solely to assist in putting out fires, how could it deal successfully with such should there happen that two fires broke out simultaneously at the extreme ends of the backwater or some distance apart?

3. The great drawback felt during the late fires was undoubtedly the want of an abundant supply of water *close at hand* to admit of the fire-engines with their limited length of hose being kept constantly playing on the fire.

4. I happened to be present at the fire which occurred on 7th February last in the yard of Messrs. Brunton and Son, and the supply of water at hand was so inadequate that recourse had to be had to passing water by means of buckets from hand to hand, which arrangement proved most unsatisfactory, for by the time a bucket reached the fire end of the line but little of its contents was available, being spilt in the hurry and excitement *en route*.

5. There is an unfailing source available from which the European firms can obtain their supply of water for extinguishing fires, namely, the backwater, for their yards and business premises are so situated as to have the backwater as their northern frontage. It is only the distance between the backwater and the premises which has to be considered, and this is not great.

6. The question is—Why should not each and every European firm so arrange as to have a supply always ready *close at hand* by having the water led into their yards by a service of pipes from the backwater to cast-iron or even glazed-earthenware cylinders sunk down to below the bed-level of the backwater at convenient centres? One pipe at each end of a yard supplying and connecting two or more cylinders is all that is required.

7. The cylinders may vary from 1 to 2 feet in diameter. They need not be above ground-level, and if covered over with a wooden cover will not be in the way. In case of a fire, the hose of the fire-engine has but to be inserted into the cylinder nearest at hand and a constant supply of water is available as each and every cylinder will be connected by pipes to one another and the backwater. This plan would also have the advantage of permitting other fire-engines as they come up to get into action at once, as the other adjacent cylinders can be made use of. The idea is merely sketched by me; its details will have to be worked out in applying the same.

8. I do not see the necessity of Government being put to any expense in this matter. In my humble opinion, each firm in its own interests should provide itself with the necessary steam or manual fire-engine and make its own arrangements for working such in connection with its property.

9. As regards the municipality, a more powerful fire-engine than the one at present in use is, I consider, necessary. I would recommend that at least one of "Merryweather and Son's Railway" fire-engines, No. 1, to be worked by 10 to 15 men, capable of pumping 4,000 gallons an hour to a height of 100 feet, be provided. The total cost of such an engine delivered at Cochin complete with 500 feet of canvass delivery hose ought not to cost more than Rs. 1,500. The English price is £48 for the engine with fittings complete, &c.; for every 100 feet of extra canvass hose and screws, £5-1-0.

10. The plan proposed for obtaining a ready supply of water by the European firms might be adopted by the municipality at one or more convenient centres in connection with the densely-populated native town of Cochin.

No. 263-W.

Copy submitted to the Chief Engineer, Public Works Department, with reference to G.O., No. 1059-W., dated 24th April 1894.

2. The suggestions of the Officiating Executive Engineer appear to be good and likely to prove effective.

2nd July 1894.

(Signed) J. HANNAN,
Superintending Engineer, IV Circle.

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Secretary to Government, P.W.D.

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The Officiating Executive Engineer has apparently not noticed that, if arrangements are made for increasing the water-supply, it will hardly be necessary to purchase more powerful engines or longer hoses and his remarks upon the combined barge and engine scheme are based upon a misapprehension. It was suggested by the District Magistrate that a steam-vessel should be procured for the double purpose of working a fire-engine and towing boats; this suggestion was rejected as impracticable by Government and it was not proposed that any towing work should be done by the combined barge and engine in the event of that alternative scheme being adopted. It now remains for the Cochin Municipal Council to make a selection among the four schemes which have been mooted and which are as follows:—

(1) the Executive Engineer's system of sunken cylinders connected by pipes with each other and the backwater;

(2) the sinking of numerous shallow wells in the neighbourhood of the backwater and in all the more crowded parts of the town;

(3) the construction of a fire-engine affixed to a barge to work along the backwater;

(4) the purchase of a new and more powerful fire-engine with a 500-foot hose.

The views of the Municipal Council should be intimated to Government at an early date.

(True Extract.)

J. F. PRICE,
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To the Local and Municipal Department.

„ Public Works Department.
„ District Magistrate, Malabar.
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Gobt. of {1894} Madras.

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Cochin Fires.

Inviting the views of the Municipal Council of Cochin on certain alternative schemes for effectually putting down fire at that town.

No. 2165-W. dt 1 September 1894

Communicated
to the S.E. IV circle.

(Ed) J.P.
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Exd. A. Raitt.

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No. 2165 W d, 1 September 1894

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No. of G. O.

For what purpose.

When taken.

Name of the party by whom taken.

Gobt. of {1894} Madras.

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Issued

10.5.94

Recd.

18.8.94

Encl.

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6. The question is—Why should not each and every European firm so arrange as to have a supply always ready *close at hand* by having the water led into their yards by a service of pipes from the backwater to cast-iron or even glazed-earthenware cylinders sunk down to below the bed-level of the backwater at convenient centres? One pipe at each end of a yard supplying and connecting two or more cylinders is all that is required.

7. The cylinders may vary from 1 to 2 feet in diameter. They need not be above ground-level, and if covered over with a wooden cover will not be in the way. In case of a fire, the hose of the fire-engine has but to be inserted into the cylinder nearest at hand and a constant supply of water is available as each and every cylinder will be connected by pipes to one another and the backwater. This plan would also have the advantage of permitting other fire-engines as they come up to get into action at once, as the other adjacent cylinders can be made use of. The idea is merely sketched by me; its details will have to be worked out in applying the same.

8. I do not see the necessity of Government being put to any expense in this matter. In my humble opinion, each firm in its own interests should provide itself with the necessary steam or manual fire-engine and make its own arrangements for working such in connection with its property.

9. As regards the municipality, a more powerful fire-engine than the one at present in use is, I consider, necessary. I would recommend that at least one of "Merryweather and Son's Railway" fire-engines, No. 1, to be worked by 10 to 15 men, capable of pumping 4,000 gallons an hour to a height of 100 feet, be provided. The total cost of such an engine delivered at Cochin complete with 500 feet of canvass delivery hose ought not to cost more than Rs. 1,500. The English price is £48 for the engine with fittings complete, &c.; for every 100 feet of extra canvass hose and screws, £5-1-0.

10. The plan proposed for obtaining a ready supply of water by the European firms might be adopted by the municipality at one or more convenient centres in connection with the densely-populated native town of Cochin.

No. 263-W.

Copy submitted to the Chief Engineer, Public Works Department, with reference to G.O., No. 1059-W., dated 24th April 1894.

2. The suggestions of the Officiating Executive Engineer appear to be good and likely to prove effective.

(Signed) J. HANNAN,
Superintending Engineer, IV Circle.

2nd July 1894.

No. 552 D.

Transferred to the Judicial Department with reference to paragraph 6 of G.O., dated 9th April 1894, No. 849, Judicial.

2. So far as he is able to form an opinion in the absence of personal knowledge of the locality, the undersigned endorses the suggestions of the Officiating Executive Engineer, West Coast Division.

OOTACAMUND,
10th July 1894.

(Signed) J. PENNYCUICK, Colonel, R.E.,
Secretary to Government, P.W.D.

ORDER—dated 4th August 1894, No. 1888, Judicial.

The Officiating Executive Engineer has apparently not noticed that, if arrangements are made for increasing the water-supply, it will hardly be necessary to purchase more powerful engines or longer hoses and his remarks upon the combined barge and engine scheme are based upon a misapprehension. It was suggested by the District Magistrate that a steam-vessel should be procured for the double purpose of working a fire-engine and towing boats; this suggestion was rejected as impracticable by Government and it was not proposed that any towing work should be done by the combined barge and engine in the event of that alternative scheme being adopted. It now remains for the Cochin Municipal Council to make a selection among the four schemes which have been mooted and which are as follows:—

Miss W. Sheet for Sept 1891
P. W. D.

No. I Sheet

MEMORANDUM of Papers removed from
the Records of the Madras Government for
reference.

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Encl.

G.O., 4th August 1894, No. 1888.

AUGUST.

Cochin Fires.

Inviting the views of the Municipal Council of Cochin on certain alternative schemes for effectually putting down fire at that town.

No. 2165 W. d. 1 September 1894

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Communicated
to the Super IV
circle.

L. S. S.

cross
2/8/94

Wm. H. C. for
Cochin.

2 s. c. to be taken

S. S. IV circle

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