

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	<i>1244</i>	Press ~~Mis.~~
Dated	<i>8-10-</i>	<i>1867</i>

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Read the following papers :—

No. 49. From H. S. THOMAS, Esq., Acting Collector of South Canara, to the Acting Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Mangalore, 10th July 1867, No. 26.

I have the honor to submit the information called for in Government Order, dated 21st June 1867, No. 722.

2. Porpoises occur along this Coast, and visit the rivers on the setting in of the land winds in October and November only. They are supposed to enter the rivers in pursuit of shoals of small fish (called in Hindustanee *Singala*, and in Tulu *Tede*). They do not remain in the fresh water, but go in and out with each tide. They are not seen in shoals, but in ones and twos, and unaccompanied by young ones. In the open sea, they are seen in herds, accompanied by their young. They are of two sorts. The larger (called in Hindustanee *Darya Dukar*”, in Canarese *Samudra Handi*, in Tulu *Kadal Panji*—all names meaning “sea pig”), measures from 3 to 7 and 8 feet in length and has a horny protuberance on the snout, measuring from 4 to 10 inches according to the size of the animal. The smaller (called in Tulu, the language of the fishermen, *Bor Panji*, *i. e.*, smooth or snoutless pig) has no unusual protuberance on the snout, and measures from 3½ to 4 feet—never more. The flesh is eaten by all the lower classes of Hindoos. Mussulmans and Moplahs living on the main land will not touch it, but the Moplahs inhabiting the Amindivi and other islands eat it freely. By fishermen, the flesh of the first Porpoise is superstitiously held to exercise such a weighty influence over their general luck, that the successful captor is not allowed to eat it till he has sent for the head-man of the caste, whose duty it becomes to see the head severed and given to the captor, and the rest divided, so that every member of the caste may have a bit, however small, and they, the while, invoke the name of their demon as they eat it: a single Porpoise has been divided into 400 and 500 pieces.

3. If desired, I will endeavour to secure specimens in October and November, have them photographed, if possible, and the skeletons preserved.

4. Having endeavoured to answer the questions propounded, I venture to suggest the desirability of an intelligent inquiry about the fish of this Coast generally by somebody competent to make it. As grounds for such an inquiry, I may mention that sardines were once so numerous on this Coast that they were the chief diet of the poor in the season; the convicts were fed on them, and the cocoanut trees manured with the surplus; now they have disappeared. For the last three years one small shoal only is reported to have been seen for a short time in this neighbourhood. With them have gone the large Seer-fish, which are now very scarce. It is desirable, I think, that the cause of this loss of an article of food should be ascertained. Similarly, much cod liver oil has been made out of ground sharks and exported, and they have decreased. There is a peculiar and large fish in a tank near Cundapur, which is found in none of the rivers of the Coast, and is said to have been imported for its merits by the former Mussulman rulers. These rivers are not perennial, nor used for irrigation, as in other parts of Southern India, and might be enriched by the introduction of valuable fish, such as the *Siluris Glanis*, and some attention given to their protection and propagation as is now done with the Salmon in England. I believe, I am correct in stating that the history of fisheries all over

the world, whether of oyster, pearl, muscle pearl, cod, salmon, or herring, &c., has deteriorated where it has not been studied, understood, and in some measure protected; and this country is apparently destined not to be an exception to the rule.

No. 50. From H. S. THOMAS, Esq., Acting Collector of South Canara, to the Acting Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Mangalore, 2nd September 1867, No. 31.

In continuation of my letter, No. 26, dated 10th July 1867, and in advertence to the Proceedings of Government, No. 931, dated 31st July 1867, I beg to add that I think no doubt need be entertained but that the animals seen on this Coast and in these rivers are the larger and the lesser porpesse; for my Salt Deputy Collector, Mr. J. Ball, who well understands the peculiar patois of the fishermen of this locality, has ascertained from them that the porpoises have a dorsal fin, small eyes, but not so small as to lead to the supposition that they are blind; have blow holes, rather oval shaped, on the head; that some of them are of a black, others of a bluish lead color on the back, and of a whitish color beneath; and that they both have the peculiarity enjoyed by most, I believe, if not all, Cetaceans—a tail set on horizontally, instead of perpendicularly.

2. Whether they have the same frontal arrangements said by Cuvier to be peculiar to the Gangetic Dolphin, I cannot tell till one is captured.

3. What may be Dr. Anderson's object in this research, and what may be the interest of the Government therein, I do not know—whether purely scientific identification or practical pisciculture. If the latter, I ought to add that the West Coast rivers abound in several varieties of fine fish of from 5 to 15lbs. in weight, which are mainly food for alligators, and the small fish on which they chiefly prey are caught and destroyed in myriads, while very small, in the rice fields. The rice fields are, in practice, the most beautiful and extensive natural breeding pans for small fish that could be devised: the small fry are thoroughly safe from the larger fish, as they cannot follow them into such shallows.

4. I mention this, as I did sea fisheries, because Dr. Anderson has introduced the subject, and may be interested; but I fear pisciculture is as yet in advance of Indian requirements, especially among the vegetarians of this Presidency; and I know no practical way of getting rid of the real difficulty—alligators.

No. 51. From D. F. CARMICHAEL, Esq., Collector of Ganjam, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Chatterpore, 13th September 1867, No. 2764.

With reference to the Under Secretary's Official Memorandum, No. 279, of 5th September instant, I beg to state that I am on the look-out for a lively specimen of the Gangetic Porpoise, and that when I succeed in obtaining it (my expectations lie in the direction of the Chilka Lake), I shall lose no time in measuring the length of its snout, and noting the other particulars required by the Scientific Officer in charge of the Indian Museum, Calcutta.

No. 52. From J. FRASER, Esq., Collector of the Godavery District, to the Acting Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Cocanada, 22nd August 1867, No. 15.

With reference to the Proceedings of the Government, Public Department, dated 21st June last, No. 722, I have the honor to submit the information required regarding the Dolphin or Porpoise question.

1st.—The Porpoise is found in the two main branches of the Godavery, viz., (Vasista) at Nursapore and (Atreya) at Coringa. It is called *Tura* (ತುರ) by the Natives.

2nd.—It is said to come in at high tide from the sea, and go out again with the tide, and to be found only when the freshes are over, or from the month of January to May. It comes about 8 miles up the river as far as Nursapore, and about 20 miles up the Coringa branch, to Kotipilly sometimes, where the water is saltish from the tide reaching so far.

3rd.—The Porpoises go in pairs.

4th.—The Porpoises do not remain in one place, but come up from the sea, to catch fish apparently, and wander about. They have been caught occasionally in their nets by the fishermen.

5th.—The head is round and large, with a small snout, the lower jaw being shorter than the upper. The animal is about five or six feet in length, and a yard in circumference, with a large fan-like-tail, and in color a greyish black.

6th.—No young ones have been seen in the Nursapore, but have been seen in the Coringa, branch of the river. By a report received from the Coringa Sub-Magistrate, it seems probable that they produce their young ones in that vicinity.

7th.—Some report that the flesh is not eaten by any of the Natives. The Coringa Sub-Magistrate reports that, there, those who eat other fish eat this too. On the top of the head there is a curious lump, which fishermen cut off, and from which they extract oil, believed to be efficacious as a cure for rheumatism and other diseases.

2. The above information has been obtained from the fishermen through the Acting Sub-Collector, the Ramachendrapoor Tahsildar, and the Coringa Sub-Magistrate.

3. With reference to the Government Proceedings, dated 31st ultimo, No. 931, Public Department, I beg to state that the Natives in this District call this animal *Tura* (ತುರ) or *Nitipandi* (ನಿತಿಪಂದಿ).

4. I have myself seen a similar animal in the Chilka Lake close to Rumbah in Ganjam. I have seen them close at hand while boating there, and, save in color, which was a greyish white, they did not seem to me to differ from the ordinary blue-water Porpoise.

No. 53. From W. WILSON, Esq., Acting Collector of the Kistna District, to the Acting Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Masulipatam, 14th August 1867, No. 28.

With reference to Government Order, No. 722, dated 21st June 1867, I have the honor to submit an original letter, No. 4, dated 13th current, from Mr. Assistant Collector Newman, whom I requested, on the occasion of a recent visit to Avanigadda and the mouths of the Kistna, to make inquiries into the nature and habits of the Dolphins that frequent the mouths of the river.

2. Their Telugu name is తూర or తూర-మీస.

From H. NEWMAN, Esq., Assistant Collector, to the Acting Collector, Kistna District; dated Masulipatam, 13th August 1867, No. 4.

I have the honor to inform you that on recently passing through Avanigadda, I sent for some of the Pulicarries or fishermen employed about the mouth of the Kistna.

2. About twenty men came to my tent from different villages in that neighbourhood, and I conversed with them, with the object of finding out what information they possessed with respect to the Porpoises or other Cetacea which live in the Kistna river.

3. When I visited the Delta with Mr. Thornhill in March last, I recollect having seen several of these animals playing in the water. They appeared to be of considerable size.

4. By the statements of the fishermen, I am enabled to give the following facts, which appeared to be all that they knew about the Cetacea. The Telugu name of the animal of the kind which lives in the Kistna is *Tura* (తూర)—“it is like a man.” Five thousand years since, in the Pandara war, many soldiers were drowned; these are the men, and their helmets still remain on their heads as lumps of flesh! It pursues fish and eats them, if it cannot catch them it throws a jet of water “from its mouth,” which water kills the fish immediately.

5. The freshes come down at the end of June. Then, for five months, the river is burthened with quantities of red silt. The *Tura* is not seen during this period, but as soon as the water is again clear and freed from the silt, the animal is always seen, and remains for the rest of the year.

6. They appear either singly or in any number; sometimes they hunt fish together in large herds. They are not local in their habits, and they have no reason to suppose that they go in pairs. The size of the Dolphin is from four to six feet by their account. It has a round head with a lump on the top. It has not a long snout. They are seen larger out at sea than those in the river. These are of blackish color, but a species found at sea is whitish, and is called the *Bolli Tura* (బొల్లి తూర.) This kind makes a peculiar noise in swimming. The fishermen have never seen one shorter than a man's arm, so they are doubtful whether they have young in this river. The flesh of the *Tura* is never eaten by any Natives to their knowledge, because it is like that of a man.

7. It is never caught, but is sometimes found stranded. They cut off the lump of flesh on the top of the head to get oil, which is used medicinally, externally, for rheumatism, &c. It has two smallish dorsal fins, and one in the belly. There are no lateral fins. It is said that they will not take a bait.

I have requested the Sub-Magistrate of the Tenali Division to forward a specimen or skeleton, informing him that the fishermen's expenses will be paid at the Cutcherry.

No. 54. From T. A. N. CHASE, Esq., Collector of Kurnool, to the Acting Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Kurnool, 27th June 1867, No. 45.

In reply to Government Order, No. 722, dated 21st June 1867, I have the honor to inform you, from the best of my knowledge, that no Porpoises or Dolphins exist in the rivers in this District, viz., the Toongabudra and the Kistna, and I

think the anicut at Bezwarah would prove an effectual bar to any such fish coming so far into the interior.

2. I may, however, inform you that, when Sub-Collector of the Godavery District, at Nursapore, about 10 miles from the sea, and where the Godavery is affected by the tide, I have repeatedly seen Porpoises generally, only a few at a time; but on one memorable evening in June 1865, when in my sailing boat, I was perfectly surrounded by a large shoal of about fifty.

3. My attention was first drawn to an extraordinary noise, resembling a hoarse cough, about 30 yards from me, and, on turning round, saw something white on the water. I was turning the boat round to approach it, thinking a person was drowning, when a shoal of Porpoises jumped nearly entirely out of the water.

4. The white object proved to be an old Porpoise spotted with white, something similar in color to the trunk and ears of an old elephant; a portion of its dorsal fin was broken, and it frequently spouted water in jets from its snout. It seemed to pursue the others, which were of a bright brown color, with projecting snouts; and the impression on my mind was that the old Porpoise was a male pursuing females.

5. The whole shoal surrounded my boat, and followed me for about a mile further from the sea, and then disappeared. I passed over the same water on my return home, a few hours after, but did not come again upon the Porpoises.

6. As well as I can remember the Native Lascar I had on board called these Porpoises, water pigs (నీరు పంది) *Niru Pandi*. I believe their flesh is not eaten.

7. The length appeared to vary from about four to six feet, the large white spotted one being very much larger than the others.

8. I regret I did not make more inquiries at the time, to enable me to furnish replies to the other questions forwarded by Government.

No. 55. From G. THORNHILL, Esq., Acting Collector of Madras, to the Acting Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Sydapett, 13th July 1867, No. 139.

In reply to the Government Proceedings of the 21st June, No. 722, asking for information regarding the existence of the Dolphin or Porpoise in any of the rivers of this District, I have the honor to state that, from all the information I have at present been able to gather, these fishes are unknown in the rivers or backwaters of this District.

2. I may, however, mention that I have seen shoals of Porpoises in the tidal waters of the Kistna. I shall make further inquiries, as it appears to me likely that they may at times enter the Pulicat lake or the Ennore backwater.

No. 56. From G. A. BALLARD, Esq., Collector of Malabar, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Calicut, 17th September 1867, No. 103.

Adverting to G. O., dated 21st June 1867, No. 722, I have the honor to forward information regarding the Porpoise or Dolphin found along this Coast. The *Platanista Gangetica*, as far as I know or can learn, is unknown.

Questions.

Answers as abstracted from social reports.

1. Does a Dolphin or Porpoise occur in the rivers of your District; and, if so, by what name is the animal known to the Natives?
Natives by the names of *Kadalpanni* (sea hog) and *Kadal Edi*.
2. Does it occur all the year round, or is its appearance restricted to certain seasons. If its visits are periodical, state the months of the year in which it is found?
ary and March; in the Kurumbranad Taluq during the rains; and in the Cochin Taluq, April.
3. Do they appear in herds, or have you observed any facts to lead you to believe that they go in pairs?
4. Are the animals local in their habits, remaining in one place after their arrival?
5. If possible, describe the general form of the Dolphin, and, if this cannot be done, state if it has a long snout?
hog). The general appearance is not ill do not correspond with those noticed as length of the animal is generally 5 or 6 to 10 or 12 feet, and it is about 2 feet in girth.
6. Have any young ones been observed by you, and do you know of any facts that would lead you to believe that the female gives birth to her young in your District?
District, and the fetus, well advanced, have also been observed accompanying the herds.
7. Is the flesh of the Dolphin eaten by any of the Natives, and, if so, by what caste or tribe?
rence of the hog, of which they seem to
1. No Dolphin or Porpoise is found any distance up the rivers of this District, but they are common along the Coast in the tidal mouths of large rivers, and in the sea. The animal is known to the
2. They are met with all the year round save in the monsoon months, say from all June to September. In Cherikul Taluq it is reported as mostly found in the months of November and June; in the Kotayam Taluq, in the months of February and March; in all the months of the year, except April, between the months of November and
3. They generally appear in herds, sometimes of 40 and 50; occasionally they are seen in pairs and at times singly.
4. They are not local in their habits, and do not remain in one place after their arrival.
5. They are of a blackish color; have rather elongated and pointed snouts (bearing some resemblance to that of a hog, hence the name of *Kadalpanni*, or sea hog, given in the enclosed sketch. The points peculiar to the *Platanista Gangetica*. The
6. Many young ones appear to have been observed by Natives in different parts of the District. It is believed that the female gives birth to her young on this Coast, as, on different occasions, female Porpoises have been caught in the womb. Very young ones
7. The flesh is eaten by the various classes of the Natives who use animal food. Some of the Mahomedans, however, do not eat it on account of their abhorrence of the Porpoise is only a species.

Other Moplahs, less scrupulous, appease at once their conscience and their appetite by repudiating the name *Kadalpanni*,* adopting that of *Kadalongi*, and eating accordingly.

* „ Sea pig.”

LABAR COLLECTOR'S OFFICE,
CALICUT,
17th September 1867.

(Signed) G. A. BALLARD,
Collector.

57. From J. A. C. BOSWELL, Esq., Acting Collector of Nellore, to the Acting Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Nellore, 10th August 1867, No. 38.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the Proceedings of Government marginally noted, and to state, in reply, that, from local inquiries, I have been unable to procure any satisfactory information regarding the existence of the *Platanista Gangetica*, or any other Indian Cetacea in the rivers of this District. As, however, there are no rivers that flow continuously to the sea all the year round in the Nellore District, like the Ganges, I think we may safely infer the non existence of this order in our rivers. The Hindoostanee name of the *Platanista Gangetica* is *Susu* or *Susmar*. The fishermen of this District say that it is to be found in the sea along our Coast occasionally. The Telugu name they give it is *Sunaminu*. They also speak of another species, apparently of the same order as *Punavayi*. In Brown's Telugu Dictionary, neither of these names are applied to the Dolphin or the Porpoise. The names he does give belong to fishes of quite different orders.

2. The fishermen say that the *Sunaminu* and *Punavayi* are usually to be found near our Coasts about October. They describe the *Sunaminu* as of a blackish lead color, and the *Punavayi* as of ash colour.

3. Neither of these fishes are eaten by the Natives.

No. 58. From the Acting Collector of Vizagapatam, to the Acting Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Vizagapatam, 12th July 1867, No. 494.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Government Proceedings, dated 21st June, ultimo, No. 722, and in reply to inform you that I have made inquiries, but can get no information on the subject of the Dolphin entering or being seen in our rivers or backwaters.

No. 59. From the Collector of Cuddapah, to the Acting Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Cuddapah, 25th July 1867, No. 28. With reference to the Order of Government, dated 21st June 1867, No. 722, I have the honor to state that there are no large rivers in this District in which Gangetic Dolphin and other Indian Cetacea can be found.

No. 60. From the Collector of Bellary, to the Acting Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Bellary, 29th June 1867, No. 32. With reference to the Proceedings of Government, No. 722, dated 21st June 1867, I have the honor to inform you that there are no Dolphins in this District.

No. 61. From the Collector of North Arcot, to the Acting Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Chittoor, 25th July 1867, No. 55.

I have the honor, with reference to the Order of Government, dated 21st ultimo, No. 722, Public Department, to report that no Dolphin or Porpoise has ever been seen in any of the rivers of this District. These, as you are aware, are dry during the greater part of the year, and flood at uncertain periods. The Sub-Magistrate of Narayanavanam, however, reports that a man, whom he names, has informed him that some 30 years ago a Dolphin or Porpoise, known in Telugu as Pedaka Mosali, పడకా మొసలి, Thuraminu, తురమిను, Nerupandi నెరుపండ్రి, was found in a madugu or pond adjoining the Kudagunta river, in the Zemindary of Venkatagherry, in the Nellore District; that the animal was captured by some 30 persons, of whom he was one, and presented to the Zemindar.

2. The animal is thus described—Snout resembled that of a pig. The scales projected and were pointed. It measured three feet round the body, and was seven feet long from the snout to the tip of the tail. The tail itself was three feet long, and a span broad.

No. 62. From the Collector of South Arcot, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Cuddalore, 26th June 1867, No. 34.

In reference to the Proceedings of Government, No. 722, dated 21st instant, I have the honor to state that the Dolphin or Porpoise, or any other species of Cetacea, is unknown in the rivers of this District.

No. 63. From the Acting Collector of Trichinopoly, to the Acting Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Trichinopoly, 8th July 1867, No. 34.

Returning to the Proceedings of Government, No. 722, dated 21st ultimo, Public Department, I have the honor to report that, from the inquiries I have made, I understand that the Dolphin or Porpoise is unknown in the rivers of this District.

No. 64. From the Collector of Madura, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Paumben, 17th September 1867, No. 1462.

With reference to the Order of Government, in the Public Department, dated 21st June last, No. 722, I have the honor to report that the Dolphin or other animal, of the family of Cetacea, is not found in any river in this District.

No. 65. From the Collector of Tinnevely, to the Acting Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Tinnevely, 1st July 1867, No. 338.

In reply to Government Proceedings, No. 722, dated 21st ultimo, I have the honor to inform you that there is no Dolphin or Porpoise in any river of this District.

No. 66. From the Collector of Coimbatore, to the Acting Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Coimbatore, 9th July 1867, No. 57.

I have received Proceedings of Government, Public Department, under date the 21st ultimo, No. 722.

2. In reply I beg to inform you that the class of fish, known as "Cetacea," appears to belong to the genus "Mammals." These are not to be met with in this District.

No. 67. From the Collector of Salem, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Salem, 18th July 1867, No. 35.

With reference to the Order of Government, dated 21st June last, No. 722, circulating a list of questions regarding the distribution of the Indian Cetacea, I have the honor to report that no fish of the description exists in this District. From inquiries made, I find the Natives are perfectly ignorant on the matter.

No. 68. To the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, dated Fort Saint George, 8th October 1867, No. 1241.

With reference to Mr. Assistant Secretary J. T. Wheeler's letter, of the 22nd

South Canara.	Kurnool.
Ganjam.	Madras.
Godavery.	Malabar.
Kistna.	Nellore.

May last, No. 50, I am directed to forward the annexed copies of replies received from the Collectors of the Districts named in the margin, regarding the Gangetic Dolphin or Porpoise found in the rivers in their respective Districts.

(Signed) A. J. ARBUTHNOT,
Chief Secretary.

Recd from Malabar

Public Department.
No. 1241.

The Secretary to the Government
of India,

Home Department.

Calcutta.

Sir,

With reference to Mr. Assistant Secretary J. S. Wheeler's letter of the 22nd May last, No 50, I am directed to forward the annexed copies of replies received from the Collectors of the Districts named in the margin, regarding the Gangetic Dolphin or Porpoise found in the rivers in their respective Districts.

2 It will be seen that the Collector of Madras proposes making further inquiries as regards the Dolphin entering the Pulicat Lake or the Ennore

Wm

Canara, South.
Ganjam.
Godavery.
Kistna.
Kurnool.
Madras.
Malabar.
Nellore.

Public 1869 Department

No 1241

To the Secretary to the
Government of India
Calcutta 8 October 1869.

1920

Wille 1867 Report
to the
The day is the 4th
of June

Dated 20 October 1867