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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue. DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	1716.	Press
B.P. No.		Mis.
Dated	21-7-1876	196

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No. 533. Read the following endorsement of the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, dated Ootacamund, 19th June 1876, No. 77 W.

Read the following papers:—

From Major G. V. LAW, District Engineer, Trichinopoly, to Lieutenant-Colonel J. MULLINS, R.E., Chief Engineer for Irrigation, dated Trichinopoly, 16th January 1875, No. 527.

I HAVE the honor to report on the damages sustained by the Vanavanellur tank, Udaiyarpoliyam taluq, which tank was last repaired in December 1874 at a cost of Rupees 330.

2. The Sub-Engineer in charge of the Range reports that, on the 13th ultimo, the tank filled in about two hours and reached the top of the bank. The ryots then cut the bank at the western end in spite of which the calingulah at the north-eastern end was carried away bodily.

3. He reports that the tank receives the drainage of nearly fifty square miles, besides a supply from a large jungle stream.

4. He further states that the tank has been regularly breaching for the last ten years, and that the revenue it yields is only Rupees 414-3-0 per annum.

5. In conclusion, I have the honor to request to be informed what steps I should take in the matter, if I should find, on further inquiry, that it would not be advisable to rebuild the calingulah and undertake the repairs.

No. 533-A. Memorandum to the District Engineer, Trichinopoly, dated 20th January 1875, No. 83-A.

No. 533-B. From Major J. VERTUE, R.E., District Engineer, Trichinopoly, to Lieutenant-Colonel J. MULLINS, R.E., Chief Engineer for Irrigation, dated 9th June 1876, No. 241.

HAVING inspected the Vanavanellur tank and had some cross sections taken, I am able to reply to your Memorandum, No. 83-A, of 20th January 1875.

2. The question, as you may remember, is, is the tank to be retained as a reservoir, or is the bed to be given up for dry cultivation?

3. The answer is that, pending a decision as to the partial restoration of the great Ponnary tank, the surplus of which the tank in question will receive, all hope of making use of the tank as a reservoir need not be abandoned, but that not a single rupee should be at present spent on the tank (which is a very poor one) for the following reasons.

4. The tank when full averages $2\frac{1}{4}$ feet in depth, contains 360,000 cubic yards of water, and receives the drainage of fifty square miles. The length of its bund is 1,473 yards and of its calingulah (breached, in fact ruined) 18 feet!!! With a fall of 2 inches over the drainage basin (fifty square miles), and allowing twenty-four hours for the discharge of the same, with a head of 18 inches, a calingulah about 500 feet long would be required. Two inches over so large an area as fifty square miles may be considered excessive, but, on the other hand, twenty-four hours in the Udaiyarpoliyam taluq is a long time to allow for discharge, as there the streams come down and subside

with extraordinary rapidity, owing to causes on which I need not enter. However, whether or no the assumption be extravagant, it is evident that the tank should be provided with a calingulah many times the size of its present one.

5. This is however not all. The soil is extremely bad for making an embankment, and there is no stone revetment, nor means of providing one, except at an enormous expense. The tank was well and thoroughly repaired in 1874-75 at a cost of 330 Rupees; to look at it, you would think it had not been repaired for many years. Under the fore-mentioned circumstances, it can scarcely be a matter for surprise that the tank has only been repaired to be breached. The expenditure during the last ten years has been Rupees 634-0-5.

6. With regard to the Ponnary tank aforementioned, I am about to institute an investigation into the propriety of partially restoring it. It would intercept the large jungle stream which now breaches the Vanavanellur tank, also the Thengal Oday, a still larger stream of good water, which now falls into the Vadavor, and is in no other way utilised. It has an enormous bund four or five miles long, and two very large sluices, one of which I have seen. The sluice is of laterite, cased throughout with well-dressed stone with a very fine cutstone floor, and is quite repairable. The land commanded by the tank is very good and very favorable for irrigation, and altogether if the restoration can be effected at a reasonable cost, I think the project likely to prove a most important one.

7. The tank is said to have been constructed 80 or 100 years ago by a private individual called Ponna; but, looking to the enormous magnitude of the work, I think it far more probable that it was carried out by Kings of the Cholah Dynasty, by whom was built the splendid Pagoda of Gungakondasholapuram (two miles from the tank and commanded by it), and who are said to have made it their capital. If so, there must at one time have been a large population at this place, and it is utterly inconceivable to me how they can have obtained a supply of water if this tank did not exist.

8. In conclusion then I cannot recommend any expenditure on the tank. I have intimated the same to the Collector, sending him at the same time a copy of this letter.

SUBMITTED for the information of Government.

The undersigned has been unable to find on the atlas sheet any of the names referred to in the District Engineer's later letter.

2. A small tank receiving the drainage of fifty square miles, holding but 9.72 millions of cubic feet, or sufficient for 80 to 90 acres of irrigation at most, would, under any circumstances, be not worth any large outlay. In this case, moreover, the soil is reported to be bad, and there is no stone available at hand for protecting the bund. The small escape (18 feet) formerly existing has been swept away, and the tank has been repeatedly breached, an occurrence which must necessarily take place every time there may be a considerable fall of rain. To render it safe a maximum

flood discharge of about 6,500 cubic feet a second would have to be provided for and a surplus weir 685 feet long would

be required with M.W.L. 2 feet above F.T.L. The cost of such a weir would be about 7,000 Rupees, even if a convenient site or sites affording the space necessary

be available, and probably other items of work would amount to nearly 1,000 Rupees additional, so that altogether an outlay of nearly twenty years' average revenue would be necessary. Consequently, the reformation of the tank appears to be out of the question.

3. On the other hand, it is reported that the cost of repairs during the last ten years has been Rupees 634; and, as the revenue of the same period has been upwards of 4,000 Rupees, the tank has not been unprofitable. The undersigned considers therefore that, pending a settlement of the question of the restoration of the Ponnary, it may be desirable to maintain the Vanavanellur tank temporarily, and the best plan in that case will probably be to make a long temporary escape by removing the bund at the two ends so as to afford a waterway of 700 to 800 feet over the natural soil, which may be turfed for a width of three or four yards to prevent scour. The ends of the bund if revetted with turf (not merely turfed) with a foundation of a couple of feet would be fairly secure, and the work done in this way might be expected to last for five or six years. As much of the soil of the removed bund as may be required may be placed on the bund to be retained.

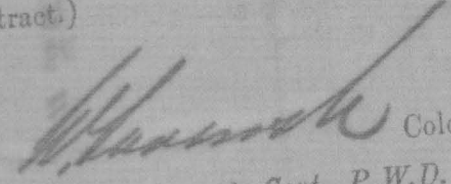
(Signed) JOHN MULLINS, Lt.-Col., R.E.,
Chief Engineer for Irrigation.

No. 534. ORDER THEREON, 26th June 1876, No. 1,605.

IRRIGATION, No. 34.

The District Engineer, Trichinopoly, will be authorized to treat the Vanavanellur tank as an exceptional case in the manner pointed out by the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, should he find it feasible to carry out the arrangements suggested, and to sanction the estimate should it not exceed Rupees 1,200. The amount which would be necessary to render this tank safe and efficient would be far too large to admit of its retention permanently, and if the Ponnary tank restoration be negatived, the Vanavanellur tank can be retained only so long as there is a probability of the revenue exceeding the cost of maintenance, unless the Collector can adduce special reason for its retention.

(True Extract.)

 Colonel,
Offg. Under Secy. to Govt., P.W.D.

To the District Engineer, Trichinopoly.
" Collector of Trichinopoly.
" Chief Engineer for Irrigation.
" Examiner of Public Works Accounts.
" Revenue Department. ✓

Exd. W. J. Lewis.

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Revenue 1875 Papers

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PUBLIC WORKS.

To

THE DISTRICT ENGINEER,
TRICHINOPOLY,
&c., &c., &c.

Dated June 26th.

Issued

Recd. *17 July 1876*

Encl.

G. O., 26th June 1876, No. 1,605.

JUNE.

Nos. 533-534.

Des. No.

Vanavanellur Tank, Trichinopoly District.
—Passing orders on endorsement by the
Chief Engineer for Irrigation submitting
papers from the District Engineer regard-
ing the repairs to the — *17th*

Communicated to the District Engineer

20 July 1876

Dated

196

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