

Revenue (1897) Department.

ROUTINE SERIES.

G.O., No. 8/5

DATED 28th April

[Despatch Abstract.]

Disposing of petition from Venkatnarayana
Pillai and others, Chidambaram Taluk, South
Arcot District under para 2 of C. Petition
rules.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

Memo for papers

Revenue (1897) Department.

Note for the Madras Revenue,

CURRENT No. 3290.

*Please find out if these papers
any had come up before.
I don't find any papers in 1895, 1896 & 1897.*

*Mk
23/4.*

No papers in 1890, 91, 92, 93 & 94 also.

*on
26-4-97*

From

*Kerhatamarayana Pillai
& others
Chidambaram
Taluk*

No.

*R. J. M. D. H.
Order R. No. 815 of 28th April 97.
Para 2 of C.*

Petition rules.

*Mk
28-4-97*

*Dated 8-4-97
Received 19-4-97
Registered 21-4-97
Enclosures
Spare copies*

SUBJECT.

*Praying that the supply
of water to their lands may
be regulated and that the
assessment rates may be
fixed with reference to the
quantity of water supply.*

To the petitioners dtd. 30.4.97

*Mk
27/4.*

*K. J. M. D. H.
27-4-97*

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

10 க்கு கீழ்க் கட்டிய பணம் - திரைக்காட்சி காட்டி
கட்டிய பணம் - திரைக்காட்சி காட்டி

Rev.

PETITION

0381

REVENUE DEP.

CHIEF SECRETARY
10. APR. 1897
GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

19/4/97

The humble Petition of the Villagers under the
Irrigation of the channels Karungali, ^{Butthamudai} ~~Perumpuntha~~
issuing from the Veeranam Tank, Chidam-
baram Taluq.

MOST RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH,

1. That they most humbly beg permission to represent their grievances and hardships, on account of water supply to their wet fields and of an enhanced rate of assessment under the recent settlement, with the full hope that they will obtain the remedy sought for at the hands of your Excellency's benign Government.

2. That the Veeranam Tank, which is the feeder of ^{the above} three channels, Karungali received supply by means of diversions by ^{coramudai} ~~ring bunds~~ prior to the construction of the Lower Anicut in the Coleroon river and was to some extent dependent on rain also. There was no stint of water supply under the then state of things.

3. That the Lower Anicut was formed in 1837 for the benefit of Shiyali and Chidambaram Taluqs and also in view to bringing a large dry area under wet cultivation in Chidambaram Taluq. To prevent the flooding of the lands in the two taluks, it was arranged that the southern section of the Lower Anicut should be $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet and the northern 8 feet. The head of the Rajam Vaikkal of Shiyali Taluq, was located three quarter of a mile to the west of the southern section of the Lower Anicut; that of Veeranam Tank, that is Vadavar, about 200 feet west of the northern portion, and that of the northern Rajam channel very near the northern part of the northern section. All the three were then on the same level and no diminution of water supply was caused thereby to the Petitioners' lands.

4. That during the 35 years that succeeded the construction of the Lower Anicut, most of the dry lands of Chidambaram were brought under wet cultivation and the entire wet ayacut both the new and old ones were faring well.

5. That sometime after, the ^{head} ~~spring-bed~~ of the southern Rajam ^{Vaikal} ~~channel~~ was removed on the representation of the Shiyali Taluq ryots to very near the southern Anicut and placed on a lower level; also a sand sluice was provided very near the same. The interests of the north Rajam channel and Vadavar were not consulted and left in *status quo*.

6. That this change in the level of the beds of the southern Rajam channel as well as its location at a different point, caused the accumulation of ^{silt} ~~layers of sand~~ in Vadavar and Veeranam Tank to the depth of about 3 feet from the body of the northern section, while at the same time the river bed near the northern Anicut ^{being silted up} ~~has gone down~~ to the extent of 3 feet, ^{the crest of the anicut has become lower} in consequence of which the Veeranam Tank never gets full even during periods of heavy floods in June, July and August, though the lands in other parts of the Taluq from the Anicut down to the sea then lie submerged on account of the inundations of the river Coleroon, but the tank gets full only in September & October, the rainy months of the year, when there is heavy rain on the western side of it.

7. That the Petitioners' wet lands contribute to a net revenue of one and a half lakhs and form about half the portion of wet income accruing to Government. Their case therefore, it is submitted, deserve your Excellency's noble and pitiful consideration by reason of the revenue payable by them. There are 47 channels from the Veeranam, ^{and} ~~Vadavar~~, and the 3 channels irrigating the Petitioners' lands, alone secure to Government as much revenue as the remaining 44 channels.

8. That prior to the accumulation of sand near the northern section of the Anicut, the eight feet depth of water which used to pass through the Vadavar, was apportioned equally between the Petitioners' said 3 channels and the remaining 44 channels in consideration of the equal shares borne by them in the irrigation system without any prejudice to the water supply of even the remotest fields and the ryots had a pretty good season of plenty and the land owners under the Petitioners' channels got on well.

9. That in consequence of the change alluded to in para 5, only 5 feet of water now passes on to the tank through Vadavar in June, July and August, the ryots of the lands lying under the first 44 channels still enjoying the mamal share of water by the advantages of the vicinity of their lands to the Anicut and to the head quarters of the Irrigation Overseer, while the remaining water scantily irrigates the Petitioners' lands which extend to a length of 10 miles from east to west, the lands lying farthest from the tank receiving little or no water and the little that is supplied being only sufficient for the rearing of seed-beds or new nurseries.

10. That your Excellency's humble Petitioners are invariably driven to the necessity of complaining of want of water every year to the Irrigation Authorities, who thereupon allow in a small quantity of water to them, which just suffices for their seed-beds and should heaven be pleased to bless them also with rains, they get enough of water to carry on their cultivation and reap a pretty good harvest. Should there be no rains at all, their lands lie waste or having once been cultivated their crops wither or suffer from want of water. Some of the lands on the north of the Puthoor Road though under the irrigation of some of the 44 channels also share ^{on high land} ~~the same fate~~ as those of your Petitioners on account of their channels being silted up. Thus your Excellency's humble Petitioners continue to suffer for the last 20 years during the cultivation sea-

son for want of proper supply. Their lands if cultivated in the winter suffer also from flood and if cultivated later on they lose the advantage of rains and are put to the unnecessary trouble of directing the spring water of the Coleroon, which too in 9 cases out of 10 prove futile, the Vadavar being silted up, and the supply to the lands having been imperfect. Moreover in the event of no rain in season and in the event of the Irrigation Authorities refusing to help them to the detriment of the irrigation of lands under the first 44 channels when necessary, the Petitioners can receive no Coleroon water supply at all.

11. To be brief (a) only 5 feet of water now passes to the tank, through Vadavar in June, July and August.

(b) The land holders under the first 44 channels still continue to enjoy the usual share of water i. e., 4 feet by the advantage of the vicinity of their lands to the tank and Vadavar and to the head-quarter of the Irrigation Overseer.

(c) The Petitioners' lands under the 3 channels are only supplied with 1 foot of water—lands which extend to a length of nearly 10 miles from east to west.

(d) The lands lying farthest from the tank at times receive little or no water.

(e) The 1 foot of water that is supplied to them is only sufficient for the rearing of their seed-beds or nurseries under the lowest part of the remaining 3 channels which is no use at all in the absence of subsequent rains.

12. That in the year 1884, the Petitioners first suffered from want of water, then from floods after cultivation and then from want of water as the monsoon failed later on. The Petitioners appealed in vain to the Irrigation Authorities at Chidambaram.

13. That the supervisor of the Tanjore District in order No. 504, dated 14th February 1885, granted permission to close temporarily ^{the sluices of} ~~both the main~~ ^{Vaikkal} ~~channels~~ and the 8 sand sluices at the Petitioners' expense and the Petitioners closed the same by means of mud and 50 straw ^{bundles} ~~heaps~~ and removed the deposit of sand and after a lapse of 90 Indian hours, water prevailed over the accumulated sand in the Anicut and Vadavar and finally 2 feet of water found way into the ^{Vadavar} ~~feeder~~ channel.

14. That the Petitioners had further to set watchers near the heads of the 46 channels to prevent the interference by other ryots with the water so diverted and also a watch in the middle of the Karungali channel and about 1000 acres of the 6 Ponneri channels came to harvest by our own exertions.

15. That in February 1885, the Executive Engineer, Mr. ^{Lal} ~~Howe~~, was informed of the said grievances and he personally witnessed the $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet depth of water in the south Rajam Vaikkal, $\frac{3}{4}$ feet of water in the north Rajam Vaikkal and the entire absence of water in the Vadavar. He stated that the same was the result of the silting up of the Vadavar and the Veeranam Tank, that he has sub-

mitted estimates and that the Petitioners would soon find remedy. He has given the Petitioners an endorsement No. 23, dated 9th March 1885.

16. That the deposits of sand at the head of Vadavar were removed afterwards, but neither the Anicut was raised nor any sand-sluice erected or any such provision made in the interests of the Petitioners' channels.

17. That from 1885 till ¹⁸⁹⁰ 1895, the Petitioners' lands suffered for want of proper water supply. The Irrigation Authorities reported to Government and since 1891 it was ordered that the southern Rajam Vaikkal should be closed for two days in the week. Even then our channels received a very imperfect supply as they lie farthest from the Anicut and as the ryots under the remaining 44 channels utilized the water for second crop cultivation with the connivance of the Irrigation Overseer.

18. That the loss of crops that happened to the Petitioners in 1891 by reason of short supply is also known to the local Head Assistant Collector.

19. That during the past 10 years, over ten or fifteen thousand rupees have been spent in removing the accumulation of sand by the Irrigation Authorities with no effect. The Coleroon river and the Veeranam tank have become so far silted up that an attempt at removing the same could not permanently remedy the defect. Every year the sand in front of the Anicut has been removed but the accumulation goes on recurring every year also. Unless the Anicut is properly raised and the heads of Vadavar and north Rajam Vaikkal put on the same level and a sand sluice near the same is constructed, the accumulation of sand cannot be avoided. Even in 1891, Rs. 2000 has been expended and that to no effect.

20. That in the year 1891 there was deficiency of water supply to our lands north of the Puthoor Road and the Petitioners submitted to the Head Assistant Collector the above facts who personally verified the same.

21. That the Head Assistant Collector has in consultation with the Overseer, addressed the Assistant Executive Engineer concerned intimating that unless the Anicut is put in proper working order, there will continue to accrue a loss of 2 lakhs of rupees every year to Government. The Petitioners have had no redress up to date.

22. That owing to the inconvenience detailed above there has been no good harvest for the past 15 or 20 years. Some wet fields have been relinquished, others have been brought to revenue sale and sold at very low rates and some brought to sale by our creditors. The lands now in holding are being cultivated only in part and outturn that is had is quite disproportionate. Most of the Petitioners are almost unable to make a living and are paying assessment out of their other earnings.

23. That the Settlement Department have added insult to injury by imposing on the lands the same rate of assessment as the favoured lands under the Anicut.

- (a) The Paimash rates were fixed in 1861, with reference to the favourable condition of water-supply that then existed. Now about 31 years have elapsed since the Anicut has become lower and the Vadavar and Veeranam Tank silted up. The

^{under the high level channel}
lands north of the northern high level channel, north of Puthoor Road, ^{and those under the last 3 channels Karungali} are suffering from deficiency of water.

- (b) Water supply indispensable to wet cultivation must have formed an important factor in the calculation of the rates of assessment for wet lands.
- (c) The farthest lands ^{irrigated} ~~drained~~ by the north Rajam Vaikkal of the lower Anicut are classed under the fourth taram at Rs. 6 per acre, though they are worth Rs. 300 an acre and can be leased out for 30 kalams of paddy, while those ^{irrigated} ~~drained~~ by the ^{last} ~~remotest~~ channel are likewise classed, and bear the same rate of assessment though they are valued at Rs. 30 an acre and yield about 7 or 8 kalams.
- (d) The lands that enjoy ^{scanty or insufficient} ~~sufficient~~ supply are classed into bits of 10, 20, 30 acres as if of the same kind of soil with the lands benefited by full irrigation.
- (e) The lands at the head of the channel which are not well watered are assessed at high rates and those farthest from the head though they lie close to the village site and are better irrigated are assessed at low rates under the mistaken view that they are always inferior in quality.
- (f) The Petitioners hear that this difference of assessment was due to the incorrect information furnished to the Settlement by the Irrigation Authorities, that the Rajam Vaikkal, Vadavar, and Veeranam Tank are of the same level. The fact that these are not so, will be clear from a reference to the Estimates made by Mr. Lob, the letter of the Head Assistant Collector and the grounds alleged therein.

24. That the Petitioners most respectfully beg to request that your Excellency in Council will be pleased to take all the above into your Excellency's noble and pitiful consideration and grant them the following prayers as respects the regulation of water supply and the rates of assessment.

25. We beg to seek redress in your Excellency's hands, for which act of kindness we shall, as in duty bound, pray for your long life and prosperity, and remain,

Your Most Obedient Servants,

WATER SUPPLY.

1. Both the section of the Lower Anicut should be so raised as to regulate the timely and adequate supply of water to both the Districts, Tanjore and South Arcot.
2. In case the Anicut is raised, the eastern bund of the Vadavar, Veeranam Tank, should also be raised sufficiently.
3. The North Rajam Vaikkal and the Vadavar Feeder to Veeranam Tank should have their heads from one and the same construction built suitably to the purpose and the present North Rajam Vaikkal head converted into a sand-sluiice on the analogy of the situation of the sand-sluiice near the Southern Rajam Vaikkal and made to empty itself into the Coleroon ^{half} quarter of a mile to the east of the present site. The accumulation of sand between Vadavar and north Rajam Vaikkal should be removed.
4. The Petitioners hear that it is under contemplation to make use of the old under sluice construction in the North Rajam Vaikkal for the clearance of sand. The Petitioners greatly fear that as the same lies a mile to the east of the head of Vadavar, the deposit of sand cannot be overcome. The public request that this will merit the serious consideration of the Government.

ASSESSMENT.

1. The assessment rates may be fixed with reference to the quantity of water supply.
2. As the present rates by which 10, 20, and 30 acres are grouped into bits are not of equal quality, the groups must be readjusted and severally classified according to the quality of the soil.
3. Lands should be classified not with reference to their proximity or otherwise to the heads of channels, but according to their fertility, yield and saleable value of the lands.
4. Prior to 1860 all the average assessment was Rs. 3-15-0 per acre. In 1861 the lands were distributed into three classes according to their water-supply, yield and fertility which gave an average assessment of Rs. 5-4-0 per acre. But they are now more highly assessed at Rs. 6-8-0 per acre, though there has been a diminution of water supply. This anomaly must be removed.
5. In the face of the order promulgated by Lord Ripon that the present settlement was not with a view to benefit the Government, the present assessment is 25 per cent. higher even in the case of lands that have suffered from a diminution of water supply for the last 20 years.
6. The following is a striking instance of the great disparity in the assessment. There is an excess throughout of Rs. 6 to the village of Elanangoor, the lands of which are irrigated by the Coleroon water and which will yield 30 kalams per acre, while there is an excess of Rs. 600 to the village of Sivakamasundaripuram, the lands of which are watered by Vadavar, Veeranam Taluk, and which will yield about 7 or 8 kalams per acre. From this it is evident that the assessments are not made with reference to the water supply.