

Revenue (1897) Department.

MISCELLANEOUS SERIES.

G.O., No. 1166

DATED 21st March 97

[Despatch Abstract.]

Resolving G.O. (P.W.D.) ordering that the
Correspondence in regard to the construction of the
cost of draining the lands of abandoned lands
under the Public Project be made the basis for
allocation be forwarded to the Govt. of India
for their order.

BACK PAPERS.

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

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
Cox	268/79	Revenue	28-2-99				
G.O.	1504	Revenue	28-2-99				

Revenue (1379) Sept

IRRIGATION.

Government {1899} of Madras.
PUBLIC WORKS.

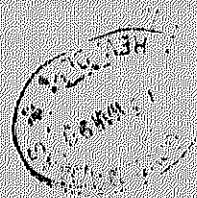
Revenue (1379) Sept

Recd. } 13th March } 1899.
Regd. }

Enclosures
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G.O., No. 201 I., 24th February 1899.

FEBRUARY.



Order No. 1166/21st Mad
1899

Recorded

21/2/99

Copies to
7 The Board of W. & R. }
17-3-99 }
18-3-99 }
18-3-99 }

Periyar Project

Ordered that the correspondence in regard to the incidence of the cost of draining the beds of abandoned tanks under the — to render them fit for cultivation be forwarded to the Government of India for early orders.

Note the P. W. D. charge
was counter-initialed
by the P. D.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

Irrigation.

READ—the following papers:—

From Lieutenant-Colonel O. V. BODDY, R.E., Superintending Engineer, VI Circle, to the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, dated Kodaikanal, 18th May 1898, No. 713 M.D.

Estimates exceeding Rs. 2,500 each have been received for abandoning certain tanks under the Periyár channels in Madura and Melur taluks to be met from Provincial funds under “43. Minor works and Navigation for which neither Capital nor Revenue accounts are kept, P.W.D.”—“Repairs.” In paragraph 2 of your memorandum printed with G.O., No. 710 I., dated 19th August 1896, it is said that the cost of draining the tank beds to fit them for cultivation should be debited to “Land Revenue.” As this sub-head is not to be found in the classification of the transactions of Executive Engineers in Appendix I, Volume II of the Public Works Department Code, I have the honour to request that you will be good enough to inform me whether the classification of the estimates under Ordinary Irrigation—Repairs is correct and whether they may be sanctioned by this office.

Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Land Revenue), 24th August 1898, Mis. No. 2284.

From T. HESKETH BIGGS, Esq., Accountant-General, Madras, to the Chief Secretary to Government, dated 24th August 1898, No. 4052.

With reference to your memo., No. 1673, dated the 9th of August 1898, enquiring to which department should be debited the cost of draining the beds of abandoned tanks commanded by the Periyár channels, I have the honour to report that, as the work is necessary owing to the construction of the Periyár project and will also be carried out by the professional agency of the Public Works Department, the cost should be debited to the Public Works Department under “43. Minor works and Navigation” in charge of Public Works officers.

Endorsement of the Revenue Department, dated 6th November 1898.

Office-note to the Examiner, Public Works Accounts, dated Madras, 11th November 1898, No. 344.

I should be obliged if you will kindly reconsider your No. 734 A./B., dated 13th June 1898, as the case was not fully stated in my endorsement, No. 171, dated 2nd June 1898. Under G.O., No. 1026, dated 7th October 1892, 4 per cent. of the amount realized by the sale of abandoned tanks in the area commanded by the Periyár project will have to be credited to the project, but to give the tank beds any value and fit them for irrigation the beds must be drained or the water level at least lowered in some way so as to lay dry most of the bed. The cost of doing this will be considerable as nearly 1,000 tanks have to be dealt with. Seeing that the project is to have the full benefit of the improvement which drainage will effect, is it allowable to charge the cost of the drainage to other than project funds? and if the project be charged with the cost, to what sub-head of the accounts could the charge be debited?

(Signed) W. HUGHES,
Chief Engineer for Irrigation.

Office-note from the Examiner, Public Works Accounts, dated Madras, 22nd November 1898, No. 1352 A./B.

Under the circumstances now explained I see no objection to the cost of the improvements in question forming a charge against project funds under 49. Irrigation

* Works for which Capital and Revenue Accounts are not kept. —Imperial, or 43. Minor Works * and Navigation—Provincial, according as new

or old irrigation derives benefit from the outlay thus incurred. The particular sub-head affected in the former case would apparently be (2) Main canals and branches—15. Miscellaneous (*vide* Public Works Code, II, Appendix II, page lvii). In the latter case there would be no sub-head.

I think however that, if this be agreed to, the proposal to act accordingly should be reported to India for information and orders.

No. 306 I.

Note by the Chief Engineer for Irrigation.

The estimate of revenue of the Periyár project on which the forecast which accompanied the revised estimate was based, takes into account the irrigation of the beds of the tanks, nearly all of which it was intended to abandon. The Collector's estimate, omitting five tanks which he thought would be retained, gave 22,759 acres as the area of tanks to be abandoned, and of this it was supposed that three-fifths, or 13,572 acres, could be rendered cultivable.

2. Shortly after the project was opened it was felt, chiefly for the following reasons, that it would be rash to give up so many tanks—

First, very little was known of the capabilities of the Periyár reservoir in bad years and it might hereafter prove of very great importance to impound local drainage and save Periyár water.

Second, owing to the capacity of the tunnel being found much less than was intended and to the Suruilyar channel drawing a much larger supply from the river than previously, only about 1,000 cubic feet per second of Periyár water can be reckoned on at the head of the main canal. There is, of course, also the natural supply of the Vaigai, but this is small except when the river is in fresh.

3. Whatever endeavour the ryots may use, it takes a long time to bring a large tract under cultivation, and moreover, contrary to the assumption made in the calculations of the project, ryots who intend to raise only one crop will not begin its cultivation immediately water is let down, but prefer to await the time that suits them best. Though there is much absorption in the early part of the season if full supply is let down, then it would probably not be all used, and if not let down all the more would in ordinary years be lost over the reservoir escape. Whatever error there may have been in the assumption that the period of maximum demand will coincide with the period of good supply in the Periyár will be neutralized by retaining a certain number of tanks and whatever delay in passing on water may be caused by filling the tanks to the level of the higher sluices will be more than compensated by the tanks being full at the end of the rains when it may be desirable to spare the Periyár water.

4. Proposals were accordingly made and approved by Government in G.O., No. 710 I., dated 19th August 1896, to retain 80 of the 231 tanks in the Madura taluk and give up the remaining 151 which irrigated only 5,858 acres and had a waterspread of 3,189 acres, of which probably 2,000 acres can be fitted for cultivation. The tanks to be retained have a waterspread of 8,663 acres, but this includes the five large tanks referred to in paragraph 1. The selection of tanks to be retained was made with a view to catching up all ordinary rainfall drainage, and the tanks given up are the

small and shallow ones from which a large proportion of the water would be lost by evaporation. In exceptional cases tanks which might otherwise be given up are retained where they are required as flood moderators or as distributary reservoirs or for the domestic supply of villages in the hot weather.

5. Of over 1,000 tanks in the Melur taluk, Government approved in G.O., No. 176 I., dated 20th February 1897, of the retention of 47 having a waterspread of 3,284 acres. This reduces the irrigable tank-bed area by another 2,000 acres, or for the two taluks by probably 6,000 acres. The project will lose the possible sale-proceeds of this area, some portion of the expected revenue (as some less productive land will have to be taken up in substitution for it) and the cost of maintaining the tanks will increase the maintenance charges. On the other hand a great part of the water, which, however imperfectly, irrigated some 30,000 acres of land under rainfed tanks, will be saved and the distribution of Periyar water so regulated that a full supply can be issued from the reservoir in the south-west monsoon without any being wasted.

6. In dealing with the so-called abandoned tanks it will not be possible in most cases to cut the bund in the deep part of the tanks, as that is opposite the cultivated land a drainage channel through which would be expensive. In many cases, too, it will be more convenient to lower the tank only to the level of the high level sluices and use the old sluices and distributaries instead of constructing new ones. The lowering of the water level can generally be best effected by lowering the escape and escape channel which are most frequently at the flanks, and channels may have to be cut to them through the tank beds. No rule can be laid down; each tank must be considered separately and the probable cost cannot be ascertained without detailed estimates. The question how the cost is to be met has now arisen. The estimate of "works" of the project contained no provision for it, nor does the estimate of "revenue" contain any credit for amounts to be realized by the sale of the tank beds. The waste land hitherto sold in the Madura taluk has brought in over Rs. 100 an acre, and the tank beds which will be amongst the richest land under the channels and the most easily fitted for irrigation, should fetch at least as much. The sum realized in this way is expected to be largely in excess of the cost of lowering the tanks and as 4 per cent. on the sale-proceeds of the reclaimed land will be credited annually to the project under the Orders of the Government of India, No. 191, dated 11th August 1892 (printed with G.O., No. 1026 R., dated 7th October 1892), it seems fair to treat the cost of draining the beds and fitting them for cultivation as a set off against this instead of debiting it to some head of revenue unconnected with the project. The Examiner of Public Works Accounts states that he "sees no objection to the cost of the improvements in question forming a charge against Project funds under 49. Irrigation—Imperial, or 43. Minor Works and Navigation—Provincial, according as new or old irrigation derives benefit from the outlay thus proposed" as the improvements are intended only for the extension of irrigation and old irrigation will not be affected. The former case is the only one that need be considered. The Examiner thinks that, if the expenditure is to be debited to the project, the sub-head affected would be —

(2) Main canals and branches—15. Miscellaneous;

and advises that if the proposal to debit the project is approved, the proposal to act accordingly should be reported to the Government of India for information and orders. The particular method of treating the charges in the accounts is for the accounts officers to settle afterwards; the question now referred to Government is whether the cost of draining the tanks is to be charged against project funds and what limit is to be fixed to the expenditure. Although no estimate can be given, it is pretty certain that in nearly every case the cost will be well within the sale-proceeds of the tank beds, and if Government desires it can be made a rule that in no case shall the cost of draining a tank or group of tanks exceed the sum which the revenue officers expect to realize by the sale of the beds.

SATTAMANGALAM,
8th December 1898.

(Signed) W. HUGHES,
Chief Engineer for Irrigation.

ORDER—No. 201 I., dated 24th February 1899.

Ordered that a copy of these Proceedings be forwarded to the Government of India with a request that early orders may be communicated on the questions raised in the concluding paragraph of the foregoing note by the Chief Engineer for Irrigation regarding the incidence of the cost of draining the beds of abandoned tanks under the Periyar project to render them fit for cultivation.

[Here enter No. 202 I., dated 24th February 1899.]

(True Extract.)

Under Secretary to Government,
Irrigation Branch.

To the Chief Engineer for Irrigation.
" Superintending Engineer, VI Circle.
" Examiner, Public Works Accounts.
" Revenue Department.
" Financial Department.

Exd. T. K. Narayana Aiyangar.

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