

GOVT COLLEGE DEGREE FOR WOMEN COLLEGE GAJWEL ENVIRONMENT AND IRRIGATION IN TELANGANA

Student Study Project

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ENVIRONMENT AND IRRIGATION IN TELANGANA

A CASE STUDY OF NIZAMS

1896 - 1948 A.D.

Introduction :- Environment and irrigation are so closely linked together that most of the traditional irrigation works had helped, improved, enriched and upgraded the quality of their environment both for the use of the human beings and also other living beings viz animals, birds and trees. Most of these features are evident to the irrigation works of South India during the pre-colonial period.

The native State of the Nizam was one such entity in South India. But there is a sustained doubt whether the Nizam's Government had all these considerations in mind while dealing with irrigation matters. Was there an irrigation policy worth to be analysed in the Nizam's dominions in the 19th century.

The historical study of the major irrigation projects is an attempt to prove that the construction of multi-purpose irrigation project is harming the environment and the people as well of the concerned areas. Such facts can better be understood by adopting a case study of some irrigation projects like Nizam Sagar, Nagar Juna Sagar and Hirsaikam dam.

Nowadays many historians and intellectuals are arbitrarily trying to argue that man is polluting or degrading the environment, but what I observed in my paper is that the environment is also causing threat to the life of Man. Thus the chief tools environment on affecting the life of man are famine and floods amongst others. paradoxically, these two - famines and floods are associated with one single fact, that is the rainfall it is high in an year, it may result in floods and if rainfall is low, draught may lead of famines in that year concerned.

This is what exactly the people of Telangana region of the Nizam's dominions had tried to do during the first half of the twentieth century of course in their own limits.

Environment and irrigation in telangana :-

1. Hyderabad Region irrigation project:-

Drought led to a country wide famine in 1896-97 which affected over 9.5 crores of people of whom nearly 45 lakhs died. This was so severe famine that ever happened in telangana. Another epoch making natural calamity in telangana's history was the flood of September 1908, which devastated a considerable portion of city (and even the state) of Hyderabad.

These catastrophe famines and floods were so much so severe that they could please the heart of H.E.H Nizam who immediately established a separate irrigation branch in 1896. Under a chief engineer for irrigation and commissioned Sir mokshagundam Visweswarayya and Nawab Ali Nawaz Jung Bahadur, chief engineer and Secretary of public works department, to inquire into the flood remedial measures. The final result was the "era of reservoirs" in telangana. In other words, efforts were started for harnessing water resources.

In Harvesting water resources chiefly three Methods were adopted they were.

1. Restoration of major old tanks, in most cases
2. Repairs to ancient anicut and
3. Construction of new irrigational projects.

A description of these three efforts will form the main theme of this paper Soil of telangana region is not well suited for wet cultivation: moreover, rivers in the region can not easily be tapped due to their deep courses from which water can hardly be diverted to plain area on account of these facts tanks had to be constructed in telangana as an apparently permanent source of water thus. Most of the 18,000 tanks of the erstwhile Hyderabad State happened to be located in telangana:

2. Warangal District Irrigation project:-

Hence, the eastern part of the State i.e the Warangal Saba is called the land of tanks and rice. Accordingly we know the histrocity and largeness of tanks of Warangal district. Viz, Pakala 1359 miles in its spread. Ramappa, Laknawaram, etc. which were constructed by Kakatiya ruler Ganapati Deva in the thirteenth century.

All of these including thousands of tanks in telangana were restored during the period under review. Famous among them was Singabhoopaliyam large tank which was previously a breached and terminal tank of a group of ten tanks above it and is situated close to the west of Singabhoopaliyam village in Yellandu talka of Khammam District. Its restoration is aimed at irrigating about 2.210 acres of abi and 100 acres of dofasla.¹²

3. Medak District Irrigation projects:-

Many of the old or breached canals were renewed and extended. The famous ones among them consist of irrigation projects of Mahaboobnagar, Paleru and Pendhipakala. Chief engineer Mr. P. Roscoe Allen chose Ghanpur site 8 miles to South West of Medak a small ancient canal and a channel were already existing on the river Manjira a tributary of river Godavari and constructed head works of Mahabubnagar project so called often the name of the Nizam VI, during 1898-1905, with a main channel of $24\frac{1}{2}$ miles length to irrigate about 5,300 acres.¹³

But, its limited commanded area and the consequent poor return (only 3.86% on outlay) were responsible in the construction of Mahabubnagar extension project, during 1915-21, which includes a storage reservoir across the river Aleru, a tributary of Manjira, in the limits of Pocharam village not far from Medak, into which the existing

Mahabubnagar channel drops its water and from there starts a future channel for a length of 36 miles to irrigate 13069 acres of land in 41 villages containing 14 tanks and kuntas in Nizamabad district.¹⁴

4. Khammam District Irrigation projects:-

Still further Fathehnagar project had been undertaken, during 1922-25, with the main channel of $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the left flank of Mahabubnagar ancient and with the altogether $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles branch channels to irrigate 5,400 acres¹⁵. An old ruined ancient near Zakkaipalli in Khammamet taluk, which would feed the Kodada large tanks, was replaced by the Pakau reservoir project which was in the limits of Naikangadem village of Khammampet taluk, constructed during 1922-29 to irrigate 19,680 acres along left and right channels.¹⁶ Like wise a breached old tank along the river Uppuvagu was constructed as Pedhipa-kala project in Nalgonda.¹⁷

5. Nizamabad District Irrigation project :-

The construction of major Irrigational projects became Inevitable. Among such project, the most famous ones are the projects, the most famous projects of Nizamsagar, Syra, Dindi, Rayanpalli, Chintalur and of course, Osman Sagar and Umayat Sagar, The Nizam Sagar project is constructed near Mallareddy village, 7 miles west to Yellareddipet taluk of Nizamabad district" at a cost of Rs. 426.79 Lakhis 19 during 1923-1930.

Its main channel, taking off from its right flant, runs for 62 miles ending near Dichpalli and is able to irrigate about 2,75,000 acres of 371 village in the taluk of Yellareddipet, Bodhan, Nizamabad and Armut all in Nizamabad District 20. Its highest flood discharge capacity is 5,25,000 cuses equal to that of the river Nile²¹

Nyra projects is built 1000 feet above the junction of pangadivagu with the river nyra, a tributary of river mahanu the tributary of r. krishna, in the limits of gundlathmadugu village of khammammet talug during 1932-40 to irrigate 17,390 acres of land²¹ to relieve riots of madhira and khammam talug²². The osmansagar is a reservoir, named the nizam vii on the R. Musi which is constructed between 1913 and 1918, 8½ miles above the city of hyderabad at cost of rs. 84 lakhs with a permanent storage capacity of 3,106 M.C.H. for water supply and irrigation and with a flood discharge capacity 46,829.

'Himayatsagar reservoir, named after the Nizam', apparent, is built on the R. Easi, 6½ miles above the city, at a cost of Rs. 93.09 lakhs during 1918-25 with a permanent storage capacity of 3,806 M.C.H in addition to the flood discharge capacity of 2,623 m. cft²³. concerns of irrigation and industries were also considered in the cases of the osmansagar and himayatsagar projects²⁴.

Rayanpally reservoir is built in 1921-22 about 400ft below the confluence of Pushpal Yera and Lingapur stream, tributaries of R. Haldi (the tributary of the R. Manjira), aiming at irrigating 1,250 acres of land and supplying water to Medak town²⁷, Dindi project on R. Dindi (tributary of R. Krishna) in Devarakonda taluk of Nalgonda District²⁸, and Chintalpuz project on Chintalpuz stream in Commer taluk.

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