

Records of Fort St. George



DIARY AND CONSULTATION BOOK

(PUBLIC DEPARTMENT)

1753

(VOLUME No. 81)

WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

B. S. BALIGA, B.A. (Hons.), Ph.D. (Lond.)

Curator, Madras Record Office

MADRAS

PRINTED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT, GOVERNMENT PRESS

1941

PRICE, Rs. 10-8-0]

Price, 6 pies]

ERRATA.

Introduction to Diary and Consultation Book, 1753.

<i>Page.</i>	<i>Line.</i>	<i>For</i>	<i>Read</i>
v	25	Coat.	Coast.
vii	9	Raja of Viziam Razu.	Raja Viziam Razu.
viii	3	propoed.	proposed.
viii	17	Chidambaraum.	Chidambarum.
xii	18	necessary.	necessary.
xiii	27	Goal Delivery.	Gaol Delivery.

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PREFATORY NOTE

This Volume contains the Proceedings of the President and Council of Fort St. George from 3rd January to 31st December 1753 and is the eighty-first Volume of the Series "Diary and Consultation Books", Public Department.

As in the previous two Volumes of the Series, difficult or obsolete terms have been explained in the foot-notes, a table of shipping has been appended and an introduction has been written describing in the main the events or transactions recorded in the Volume.

The manuscript Volume has been mended and is in a fair state of preservation.

EGMORE,
22nd February 1940.

B. S. BALIGA,
Curator, Madras Record Office.

DIARY AND CONSULTATION BOOK, 1753.

INTRODUCTION.

1753 was in many ways a critical year in the fortunes of both the English and the French. The contest into which the English had entered as allies of Muhammad 'Ali with the French, the Dalavai of Mysore and Morari Rao the Maratha, was not without its brilliant victories. Thrice Lawrence defeated his enemies, twice at the Golden Rock and once at the Sugar Loaf Rock, and relieved Trichinopoly, the city in dispute between the Dalavai and the Nawab. But each time his success proved inconclusive mainly because of the suspicions of the Tondiman, the fears of the King of Tanjore, their tardy attempts to supply Trichinopoly with provisions, and the diplomacy of Dupleix who encouraged the Dalavai, bought the Marathas, intimidated the King of Tanjore and offering the Nawabship to Murtaza 'Ali of Vellore instigated him to raise disturbances around Arcot. In the Deccan the fortunes of Bussy at first suffered a temporary eclipse only to revive again with added vigour and lustre; the intrigues of the Diwan Saiyid Lashkar Khan to discredit the French cost the Nizam the cession of four circars of Ellore, Condapalle¹, Rajahmundry and Chicacole. The contest was, indeed, an arduous test as much in warfare and diplomacy as in finances. To the English the wavering attitude of Tanjore, the implacable determination of the Dalavai to secure Trichinopoly through means fair or foul, and the utter poverty and helplessness of the Nawab were as formidable obstacles as they were to the French, the treacherous behaviour of Morari Rao and Murtaza 'Ali, the rapid depletion of the treasury and the stubborn resistance offered by Lawrence and by Saunders and his Council. Before the year closed both parties were weary and exhausted and both sought a temporary respite in the conference at Sadras. The failure of this conference belongs to the succeeding year; but the motives underlying the failure are clearly discernible in the Military Consultations of 1753².

The Public Consultations rarely mention the military events of the year. But they forcibly depict the conditions caused by warfare. As in the previous year there was in 1753 the same dearth of investments, the same difficulty of getting the merchants and weavers to fulfil their contracts³, the same complaints from the farmers of revenue about the losses sustained at the hands of the enemy⁴ and even more than the same feverish activity on the part of the Government to supply the army with men, munitions and money. The severest strain was put on the Company's finances and to relax it many expedients were devised and several reforms introduced. The year also witnessed the re-establishment of the Mayor's Court and other Courts of Justice and a thorough enquiry into the affairs of the subordinate settlement of Sumatra.

Saunders was at the head of the Government throughout the year. In the beginning he was assisted by a Council of four members, Charles Boddam, Henry Powney, Alexander Wynch and John Smith. In May a fifth member, Charles Bouchier, was admitted into the Council in the vacancy created by the death of William Cockell⁵ (1752). There was nothing remarkable about these Councillors except that, in all vital matters of high policy and administration, they generally co-operated with the Governor to tide over each successive wave of perilous situations. This is notably evident in the ungrudging support they gave to Saunders in his unhappy controversy with Lawrence⁶, in

¹ This is otherwise known as Mustafanagar mentioned in Orme's History—See Maclean, C. D. —Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency, Vol. III, page 207.

² Diary and Consultation Book, 1753, Military Department.
Orme, R.—History of Indostan, 4th Edition, Vol. I, pages 276–337.
Cambridge, R. O.—War in India, 1750–1760—pages 41–60.

Dodwell, H.—Calendar of Madras Despatches, 1744–55—pages 183–185, 209–213.
Ananda Ranga Pillai's Diary, Vol. VIII, pages 272–448.

³ See pages 139; 140, 160, 188.

⁴ See pages 107, 387.

⁵ See pages 134, 137 *sqq.*

⁶ This is abundantly shown in the Military Consultations of 1753; e.g. 1–10, 143, 144, 210–212.