

(1) Number of pages 1023 (2) Date of repair 27-2-87(3) Initials of the Referencer laro

TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Finl' DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.
B.P. No.

420

Press.
Mis.

Back No. (49-50)

Dated

11

3. 1881. 19/

6/7

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Encl. 5

420
1

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

FINANCIAL DEPARTMENT.

11th March 1881, No. 420.

Indian Mail Service.

Read the following paper:—

No. 49. *Proceedings of the Government of India in the Department of Finance and Commerce, dated Fort William, 22nd February 1881, No. 702.*

Read the following letter from the Secretary of State for India, to the Government of India, dated 13th January 1881, No. 13:—

In your Excellency's letter, dated the 2nd of November, No. 57 (Post Office), a strong desire was expressed that the weekly mails should not leave Bombay in the fair season before Friday, and reasons were given for believing that, by an acceleration of the speed of the vessels, or of the mail through Egypt, it would be possible to arrange that it should arrive in London not later than Tuesday, while leaving Bombay at 10 A.M. on Friday. The departure on Monday evening during the monsoon was, you observed, accepted in India.

2. On the receipt of your Excellency's letter, I communicated immediately with the General Post Office, and I now forward a copy of their reply, dated the 6th of December, enclosing a letter from the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company. The latest time which the Company are able to recommend, in order to ensure a uniform delivery in London on Tuesday morning, is five in the afternoon on Tuesday during the south-west monsoon, and on Thursday during the remainder of the year.

3. I have accordingly determined, with the concurrence of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, to adopt these dates, and the decision was communicated to your Excellency in my telegram of the 23rd ultimo.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From S. A. BLACKWOOD, Esq., Secretary, General Post Office, London, to the Under Secretary of State for India, dated 6th December 1880.

I have laid before the Postmaster-General your letter of the 25th ultimo, covering a copy of a despatch from the Government of India and its enclosures, with reference to the day to be fixed for the departure from Bombay of the weekly mail for this country.

It appears that, in consequence of a despatch addressed by Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India in Council to the Government of India on this subject in August last, the Chambers of Commerce of the three Presidencies have been consulted with the following results:—

The Chambers of Commerce of Madras and Bombay accept the proposal made by the Marquis of Hartington that the mails should leave Bombay on Thursday evening in the fair season. But to this the Bengal Chamber of Commerce strongly object on the ground that it would involve the closing of the mails in Calcutta on Monday evening; and, considering the importance of the interests represented by that Chamber, the Government of India think it essential that the mails should not leave Bombay in the fair season before Friday.

The objection to this arrangement is, that the mails would not reach London until Wednesday, whereas a Tuesday's arrival is considered absolutely necessary in the interests of commerce of this country.

But the Indian Government point out that this objection would be entirely overcome if the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company could undertake to perform the journey in one day less than their contract time.

It has been further suggested that, should the Company find this acceleration out of their power, they should consider the alternative proposed by the Government of India in paragraph 6 of their despatch of the 2nd ultimo as to a Friday morning departure from Bombay, with an arrival in London on Tuesday.

The Postmaster-General has communicated on these points with the Peninsular and Oriental Company, and he desires me to enclose, for Lord Hartington's information, a copy of their reply. It will be seen that they cannot adopt either of the schemes proposed for accelerating the Mail Service, and consequently there is no alternative but to consider the best day for a departure from Bombay under the existing contract arrangements, having regard to all the interests concerned, for it is clear that the convenience of all cannot be equally satisfied.

After careful consideration of the whole question, it seems to the Postmaster-General that no better arrangement can be made than for fixing the departure from Bombay on Thursdays and Tuesdays—Thursday during the fair season, and Tuesday during the south-west monsoon.

This will bring the mails into London on Tuesday throughout the year, thus giving ample time for replies on Friday evening to the most distant parts of the United Kingdom.

It appears from the correspondence that Lord Hartington suggested a Monday's departure during the south-west monsoon, but in doing so His Lordship no doubt lost sight of the fact that, under the present contract, only two extra days are allowed for the monsoon voyages, while under the old contract three were taken.

Tuesday is really the day corresponding with Thursday for ensuring a regular arrival in London on a Tuesday.

Considering all the circumstances, Mr. Fawcett recommends Thursday and Tuesday as the best days that can be appointed for the homeward mails to leave Bombay, and, if Lord Hartington agrees in this opinion, he hopes that an early decision will be come to, as it is essential that the working Time Tables for the year 1881 should be issued without delay.

From A. M. BETHUNE, Esq., Secretary to the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, to the Secretary, General Post Office, London, dated 3rd December 1880.

I have the honor, by order of the Board of Directors, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 26th November (No. 145728 of 1880), with reference to the question of the Time Table for the whole of the Company's Mail Services for the ensuing year.

The Directors have carefully perused the observations put forward in your letter, and also the enclosures (returned herewith) transmitted for their consideration.

(1.) It appears to the Directors that the object which it is now desired to attain is the arrival in London of the whole of the Eastern Mails on a certain day of the week throughout the year, and that the delivery should take place at a sufficient interval from the departure of the outward mail on Friday, to give the mercantile interests of this country ample time for the correspondence which has to be carried on with the whole of the East.

(2.) The Directors are clearly of opinion that the latest day which should be thus fixed for the delivery of the mails in London should be Tuesday morning, and in order that such delivery may, under all ordinary circumstances, be put beyond any doubt or question, they think that it would not be advisable that the mails should leave Bombay later than 5 P.M. on Tuesday during the south-west monsoon, and at the same hour on Thursday during the north-east monsoon.

(3.) It would have afforded the Directors great satisfaction if they could have seen their way to comply with the suggestion made by the Indian Government in one of the enclosures of your letter, to the effect that the Company should accelerate the speed of their vessels throughout the voyage from Bombay to Brindisi, but they regret to say they are unable to agree to that proposal. The acceleration in question would bring the contract speed up to very nearly 12 knots, and it will be in the recollection of your department that when the Company sent in their tenders for the Mail Services they asked a sum of 360,000*l.* for a service at the rate of 11 knots between Bombay and Brindisi, and a sum of 400,000*l.* for the acceleration of that service to 12 knots; and it may also be as well to remind the Government of India that the Company's tender for an exceptionally rapid service was lower than that sent in by any of the other competitors for the contract by a sum of no less than 36,000*l.* It may likewise be mentioned that in order to give a speed of 12 knots on every voyage in a contract service, the vessels must be driven practically at a rate of nearly 13 knots, and in giving the contract speed as 11 knots, the ships also require to be driven at a very much higher rate. These circumstances would naturally escape the attention of the Government of India.

(4.) The Directors regret that they are equally unable to admit that the suggestion contained in paragraph 6 of the despatch of the Government of India would, if carried out, fulfil the intention which your department has in view, viz., that of ensuring beyond doubt the delivery of the mails in London on Tuesday. It will be seen, on perusing carefully the latter part

of that paragraph, that the advantages of a departure from Bombay on Friday morning in place of Friday evening are in reality advocated, whereas the Directors consider it necessary, bearing all conditions, including the transit through Egypt, in mind, that the steamers should not leave Bombay later than 5 P.M. on Tuesday or Thursday, according to the season.

(5.) While the Directors think it right thus to state their views as to the conditions under which the object contemplated by the Post Office can best be attained, I am desired to add that should it, in the interests of Calcutta or Bombay, or any of the other communities concerned, be considered desirable to start the mails on earlier days than Tuesday and Thursday from Bombay, the Directors of course would have no objection, provided they left not later than 5 P.M. If, for example, it should be decided to start the steamers from Bombay on Monday at 5 P.M. during the south-west monsoon, the natural result would be that the mails would be delivered in London on Monday morning at that period of the year, a result of which there would probably be no great objection on the part of this country, while at the same time it would not fulfil exactly the generally expressed desire that the mails should be delivered throughout the year on the same day of the week; but the departure from Bombay on Monday evening under the existing period of monsoon allowances would have the awkward result of causing four changes during the year in the days of departure from the ports in China, the Straits Settlements, and Australia, an inconvenience which would certainly be loudly complained of in those quarters. If, then, a Monday departure should be fixed on, it would be very desirable that the monsoon should commence with the first mail leaving Bombay in May, and end with the first mail leaving in October, thus bringing the monsoon voyages completely into harmony with the Time Table from China, so that only two changes in the year would require to be made in the China and Australia Time Tables, viz., at the beginning and end of the south-west monsoon, exactly as would be the case in the Indian Time Tables.

Without this alteration the Directors would certainly not recommend the departure from Bombay on Monday evening, as it would be very unpopular in China and Australia; but granting this modification, the correspondence transmitted in your letter would seem to indicate that while a Monday departure would please India, it would not be unpopular elsewhere.

Copy forwarded to the Director-General of the Post Office of India, to the Governments of Bengal, Bombay, and Madras, and the Chambers of Commerce, Bengal, Bombay, Madras, and Rangoon, for information, in continuation of No. 1759, dated 30th December 1880.

(Signed) E. J. SINKINSON,
Under Secy. to the Govt. of India.

No. 50. ORDER THEREON, 11th March 1881, No. 420.

Communicated to the Postmaster-General and the Consulting Engineer for Railways.

(True Extract.)

R. DAVIDSON,
Chief Secretary.

To the Chairman, Chamber of Commerce.
" Postmaster-General.
" Public Works Department, Railway Branch.

Exd. T. O'Connor.

Govt. of [1881] Madras.
FINANCIAL.

To
THE CHAIRMAN, CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE,
&c., &c., &c.

Dated March, 11th.

Issued

Recd.

Encl.

G.O., 11th March 1881, No. 420.

MARCH
Nos. 49-50.

Indian Mail Service.—Communicating endorsement of Government of India forwarding despatch from Secretary of State fixing the days for the departure from Bombay of the weekly mail for England.

No. 702.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND COMMERCE.

Fort William, the 22nd February 1881.

Read the following :—

No. 13, dated 13th January, 1881.

From—The Secretary of State for India,

To—The Government of India.

In Your Excellency's letter, dated the 2nd of November, No. 57 (Post Office), a strong desire was expressed that the weekly mails should not leave Bombay in the fair season before Friday, and reasons were given for believing that, by an acceleration of the speed of the vessels, or of the mail through Egypt, it would be possible to arrange that it should arrive in London not later than Tuesday, while leaving Bombay at 10 A.M. on Friday. The departure on Monday evening during the monsoon was, you observed, accepted in India.

2. On the receipt of Your Excellency's letter, I communicated immediately with the General Post Office, and I now forward a copy of their reply, dated the 6th of December, enclosing a letter from the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company. The latest time which the Company are able to recommend, in order to ensure a uniform delivery in London on Tuesday morning, is five in the afternoon on Tuesday during the south-west monsoon, and on Thursday during the remainder of the year.

3. I have accordingly determined, with the concurrence of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, to adopt these dates, and the decision was communicated to Your Excellency in my telegram of the 23rd ultimo.

Dated 6th December, 1880.

From—S. A. BLACKWOOD, Esq., Secretary, General Post Office, London,

To—The Under Secretary of State for India.

I have laid before the Postmaster General your letter of the 25th ultimo, covering a copy of a despatch from the Government of India and its enclosures, with reference to the day to be fixed for the departure from Bombay of the weekly mail for this country.

It appears that, in consequence of a despatch addressed by Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India in Council to the Government of India on this subject in August last, the Chambers of Commerce of the three Presidencies have been consulted with the following results :—

The Chambers of Commerce of Madras and Bombay accept the proposal made by the Marquis of Hartington that the mails should leave Bombay on Thursday evening in the fair season. But to this the Bengal Chamber of Commerce strongly object on the ground that it would involve the closing of the mails in Calcutta on Monday evening; and considering the importance of the interests represented by that Chamber, the Government of India think it essential that the mails should not leave Bombay in the fair season before Friday.

The objection to this arrangement is, that the mails would not reach London until Wednesday, whereas a Tuesday's arrival is considered absolutely necessary in the interests of commerce of this country.

But the Indian Government point out that this objection would be entirely overcome if the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company could undertake to perform the journey in one day less than their contract time.

It has been further suggested that, should the Company find this acceleration out of their power, they should consider the alternative proposed by the Government of India in paragraph 6 of their despatch of the 2nd ultimo as to a Friday morning departure from Bombay, with an arrival in London on Tuesday.

The Postmaster General has communicated on these points with the Peninsular and Oriental Company, and he desires me to enclose for Lord Hartington's information a copy of their reply. It will be seen that they cannot adopt either of the schemes proposed for accelerating the mail service, and consequently there is no alternative but to consider the best day for a departure from Bombay under the existing contract arrangements, having regard to all the interests concerned, for it is clear that the convenience of all cannot be equally satisfied.

After careful consideration of the whole question, it seems to the Postmaster General that no better arrangement can be made than for fixing the departure from Bombay on Thursdays and Tuesdays—Thursday during the fair season, and Tuesday during the south-west monsoon.

This will bring the mails into London on Tuesday throughout the year, thus giving ample time for replies on Friday evening to the most distant parts of the United Kingdom.

It appears from the correspondence that Lord Hartington suggested a Monday's departure during the south-west monsoon, but in doing so His Lordship no doubt lost sight of the fact that, under the present contract, only two extra days are allowed for the monsoon voyages, while under the old contract three were taken.

Tuesday is really the day corresponding with Thursday for ensuring a regular arrival in London on a Tuesday.

Considering all the circumstances, Mr. Fawcett recommends Thursday and Tuesday as the best days that can be appointed for the homeward mails to leave Bombay, and, if Lord Hartington agrees in this opinion, he hopes that an early decision will be come to, as it is essential that the working Time Tables for the year 1881 should be issued without delay.

Dated 3rd December, 1880.

From—A. M. BETHUNE, Esq., Secretary to the P. and O. Steam Navigation Company.

To—The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

I have the honour, by order of the Board of Directors, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 26th November (No. 145728 of 1880), with reference to the question of the Time Table for the whole of the Company's Mail Services for the ensuing year.

The Directors have carefully perused the observations put forward in your letter, and also the enclosures (returned herewith) transmitted for their consideration.

(1.) It appears to the Directors that the object which it is now desired to attain is the arrival in London of the whole of the Eastern Mails on a certain day of the week throughout the year, and that the delivery should take place at a sufficient interval from the departure of the outward mail on Friday, to give the mercantile interests of this country ample time for the correspondence which has to be carried on with the whole of the East.

(2.) The Directors are clearly of opinion that the latest day which should be thus fixed for the delivery of the mails in London should be Tuesday morning, and in order that such delivery may, under all ordinary circumstances, be put beyond any doubt or question, they think that it would not be advisable that the mails should leave Bombay later than 5 P.M. on Tuesday during the south-west monsoon, and at the same hour on Thursday during the north-east monsoon.

(3.) It would have afforded the Directors great satisfaction if they could have seen their way to comply with the suggestion made by the Indian Government in one of the enclosures of your letter, to the effect that the Company should accelerate the speed of their vessels throughout the voyage from Bombay to Brindisi, but they regret to say they are unable to agree to that proposal. The acceleration in question would bring the contract speed up to very nearly 12 knots, and it will be in the recollection of your Department that when the Company sent in their tenders for the Mail Services they asked a sum of 360,000*l.* for a service at the rate of 11 knots between Bombay and Brindisi, and a sum of 400,000*l.* for the acceleration of that service to 12 knots; and it may also be as well to remind the Government of India that the Company's tender for an exceptionally rapid service was lower than that sent in by any of the other competitors for the contract by a sum of no less than 36,000*l.* It may likewise be mentioned that in order to give a speed of 12 knots on every voyage in a contract service, the vessels must be driven practically at a rate of nearly 13 knots, and in giving the contract speed as 11 knots, the ships also require to be driven at a very much higher rate. These circumstances would naturally escape the attention of the Government of India.

(4.) The Directors regret that they are equally unable to admit that the suggestion contained in paragraph 6 of the despatch of the Government of India would, if carried out, fulfil the intention which your Department has in view, *viz.*, that of ensuring beyond doubt the delivery of the mails in London on Tuesday. It will be seen, on perusing carefully the latter part of that paragraph, that the advantages of a departure from Bombay on Friday morning in place of Friday evening are in reality advocated, whereas the Directors consider it necessary, bearing all conditions, including the transit through Egypt, in mind, that the steamers should not leave Bombay later than 5 P.M. on Tuesday or Thursday, according to the season.

420
4

5. While the Directors think it right thus to state their views as to the conditions under which the object contemplated by the Post Office can best be attained, I am desired to add that should it, in the interests of Calcutta or Bombay, or any of the other communities concerned, be considered desirable to start the mails on earlier days than Tuesday and Thursday from Bombay, the Directors of course would have no objection, provided they left not later than 5 P.M. If, for example, it should be decided to start the steamers from Bombay on Monday at 5 P.M. during the south-west monsoon, the natural result would be that the mails would be delivered in London on Monday morning at that period of the year, a result of which there would probably be no great objection on the part of this country, while at the same time it would not fulfil exactly the generally expressed desire that the mails should be delivered throughout the year on the same day of the week; but the departure from Bombay on Monday evening under the existing period of monsoon allowances would have the awkward result of causing four changes during the year in the days of departure from the ports in China, the Straits Settlements, and Australia, an inconvenience which would certainly be loudly complained of in those quarters. If, then, a Monday departure should be fixed on, it would be very desirable that the monsoon should commence with the first mail leaving Bombay in May, and end with the first mail leaving in October, thus bringing the monsoon voyages completely into harmony with the Time Table from China, so that only two changes in the year would require to be made in the China and Australia Time Tables, namely, at the beginning and end of the south-west monsoon, exactly as would be the case in the Indian Time Tables.

Without this alteration the Directors would certainly not recommend the departure from Bombay on Monday evening, as it would be very unpopular in China and Australia; but granting this modification, the correspondence transmitted in your letter would seem to indicate that while a Monday departure would please India, it would not be unpopular elsewhere.

Copy forwarded to the Director General of the Post Office of India, to the Governments of Bengal, Bombay, and Madras, and the Chambers of Commerce, Bengal, Bombay, Madras, and Rangoon, for information, in continuation of No. 1759, dated 30th December 1880.

E. J. L. L. L.
Under Secretary to the Government of India.

Ind. (1881) Dept.

Indian Mail Service

R. D.

81

Trans f. of J.

S. & C.

No. 702 / 354 copy

d/ 22 Feb/07

d/ 26

No. 509

Forwarding copy of

certain correspondence with
reference to the day & the fixed
for the departure from Bombay
of the weekly mail for England

68

11th March 1881 No. 420

Received by the

Chamber of Commerce

the Postmaster Genl.

& the Secy: Engrs for

1/3/81

Gt.

1881

Chambers, Chamber of Commerce
Postmaster Genl.
R. D. Dept. of the Branch

420
5

12.3 11/3

R 9/3

Soon
Govt. of 1884 Madras.
Full Authority

DISPOSED OF

11 MAR 81

(5) BY.G.O. No. 420

G.O. No. 188, No.

Nos. 49-50

India Mail Service

Comp. endorsement of f.s.
Des. from Secy State
forwarding, ~~same for~~
fixing the days
regarding the dates fixed
for the departure from
Bombay of the weekly
mail for England.

Soon

Paper + 0-40