Public Works (1897) Department.

G.O., No. 590 R

DATED 24. August 1897

[Despatch Abstract.]

Detention of trains at Arkonam. Pros: L & M. Deptt recording with remarks correspondence on the subject of the — for the medical examination of passengers forwarded to the Consg. Engineer for Rys for communication to the Agent & Manager, Madras Railway.

C/38

[P.W. 25. 5,000—30-11-96.]

Indexed. 6/9/97

BACK PAPERS.

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

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
	953R		11-11-97				

---

rrent No. 753 of 1897

D. G. No. 46

The Madras Standard – 25th June 97

Examination of Passengers at Arkonam.

Sir,—Will you kindly permit me to bring to the notice of the authorities concerned, what I consider to be a very great hardship to passengers by the S.-W. and N.-W. trains at the Arkonam junction. I allude to the examination conducted there in connection with the plague. The doors of all carriages are locked at the station just before Arkonam on both lines. On arrival at Arkonam first and second class passengers are examined by the Doctor himself and this part of the examination is over in a few minutes. The officers then proceed to one end of the train for examination of third class passengers. The examination is conducted compartment by compartment, the passengers in each being made to come and stand out in two rows—men and women, separately. After examination, they are *locked up again and remain locked up until all the carriages have been examined.* I noticed, that passengers in compartments that had been examined and locked up were struggling to be let out to go and ease themselves. In one case a third class passenger after struggling in vain to get out actually eased himself in the compartment in which he was locked up. After the examination was over, the train stopped only for eight minutes—and this I need hardly say, is quite insufficient for passengers to walk up to the latrine which is at one end of the long platform and be back in time. There could certainly be no objection to the examination being conducted with the greatest strictness; but I fail to see what particular object is gained by locking up passengers who have been examined, and I do think from what I have seen that the process adopted is unnecessarily rigorous inasmuch as the comfort and convenience of passengers are altogether disregarded.

I bring the matter, therefore, to the notice of the authorities concerned, and trust that they will be good enough to make the examination as easy as is consistent with public safety.

R. N. PRAGASA MUDALIAR.

My dear Sibthorpe

Will you kindly inquire of the Medical Officer in charge at Arkonam whether, if there is any hardship, such as is complained of in the newspaper extract in the margin, anything can be done to remedy it

Yours sincerely

Ooty
30/6/97

P.S. Please return this with your reply

Statement shewing detentions to Up mail and passenger train at Arkonam on account of plague Examination for the month of June 1897.

Date. 1897.		Up S. W. Line Mail train.	Up N. W. Line Mail train	Up S. W. Line Passenger train	Up N. W. Line Passenger train.
June	1	16 Minutes	3 Minutes	8 Minutes	"
	2	20 "	8 "	11 "	11 Minutes.
	3	14 "	12 "	20 "	4 "
	4	15 "	8 "	"	"
	5	16 "	8 "	16 "	4 "
	6	16 "	5 "	11 "	"
	7	18 "	10 "	21 "	9 "
	8	38 "	11 "	23 "	9 "
	9	31 "	20 "	23 "	9 "
	10	20 "	17 "	29 "	"
	11	33 "	5 "	13 "	9 "
	12	22 "	7 "	20 "	8 "
	13	36 "	7 "	12 "	7 "
	14	21 "	15 "	32 "	13 "
	15	28 "	7 "	34 "	23 "
	16	28 "	13 "	41 "	22 "
	17	38 "	36 "	45 "	28 "
	18	39 "	29 "	27 "	18 "
	19	33 "	20 "	41 "	15 "
	20	48 "	20 "	57 "	20 "
	21	36 "	28 "	53 "	28 "
	22	39 "	29 "	65 "	16 "
	23	44 "	9 "	39 "	16 "
	24	39 "	9 "	47 "	23 "
	25	36 "	9 "	56 "	12 "
	26	41 "	9 "	46 "	38 "
	27	44 "	28 "	40 "	38 "
	28	54 "	25 "	50 "	39 "
	29	37 "	21 "	54 "	20 "
	30	64 "	22 "	60 "	28 "

Enc. No. 1 to E. R's. C. No. 3045 of 1897
Letter No. 659 d/ 13.7.97
From Arn

3
2876 May 96

Encl
C No. 147/0

C 9929 B
29888

Madras Railway Company,
Traffic Manager's Office,
Central Station, Madras,
9th July 1897.

The Ag Agent and Manager,
Rayapuram.

Dear sir,

Referring to the article which appeared in the "Madras Times" of ~~yesterday~~ 7th July 97 upon the alleged hardships to which native passengers are subjected at plague examining stations, and especially at Arkonam, and to letters containing similar complaints which have previously appeared in the press, and also to the strong complaints which the public, through the press, the Chamber of Commerce and other channels, have recently made regarding the unpunctuality of our up trains, I beg to enquire whether you are disposed to address Government with a view to moving them for an addition to the staff of Medical Officers employed at those plague examining stations and to an investigation of the methods in force there.

2. The duties to be performed by the Medical officers at those stations are both invidious and difficult, and we have been anxious

to give them every assistance in our power and to refrain from making complaints or pointing out the results of their method of performing their duties as long as possible, but the detentions at Arkonam especially are increasing so rapidly in duration and the complaints from the public are getting so serious, that it seems now advisable to bring the matter to notice.

3. I enclose a statement showing the time occupied at Arkonam in the examination of mail and passenger trains each day during the month of June last, and you will notice that the average time has considerably increased in the latter portion of the month. This, I understand, is in consequence of certain changes in the procedure which the Medical staff at that station have carried out, and it appears to be these changes which have caused the complaints from the public. The method now is to empty each compartment successively and put the passengers back after examining, again locking them up and not allowing

any passengers to leave the train until the whole of the carriages on the train have been inspected. The result is that these passengers when finally let out to answer the calls of nature &c are very difficult to deal with and cause additional delay to the train, whereas under the former system, when as each carriage was completed its inmates were, if found unaffected, allowed to get out of the carriage they were reseated in good time, the train was got away with far less confusion and far less loss of time.

4. This part of the question no doubt chiefly concerns the public, but in the interests of our passengers it seems advisable to bring it to notice. In the interests of the Railway I beg further to urge that the strength of the Medical Officers at those stations should be increased. Some of the trains contain over a thousand passengers, and for this number to be examined thoroughly by a staff of only 2 Europeans and 4 natives involves great delays.

5. At Guntakal also, the staff appears

insufficient for the purpose. Since the institution of the new train service the mail train has been detained from 20 to 45 minutes daily, and when once thrown out of its running it is very difficult for it to make up time.

Yours faithfully,
Sd/ D. Ross Johnson.
Ag Traffic Manager.

Encl/1

(True copy)

for Ag Agent & Manager.

ENC. No. 2 TO E. R's. C. No. 3045 OF 1897
LETTER No. 659 of 13·7·97
FROM Am

2
2876 m/96

(A. & M. 1.)

No. 9553.
659

MADRAS RAILWAY.

AGENT AND MANAGER'S OFFICE,

Madras, 13th July, 1897.

From

The Actg: *Agent and Manager.*
Madras Railway.

To

The *Consulting Engineer for Railways.*
MADRAS.

SIR,

I have the honor to forward a copy of a letter No. C $\frac{9929}{29888}$ B of 9th July 1897 from the Acting Traffic Manager from which it will be observed that some improvement is urgently needed in the system of carrying out the provisions of the Epidemic Diseases Act 1897 at Arkonam with a view to mitigate the great inconvenience and hardship to which passengers are now subjected, and to minimize the detention to the trains at this Station.

2. The statement submitted by the Ag: Traffic Manager shews that during the latter part of the month of June the detentions, owing to the medical examination for the detection of the plague, amount to periods varying from 3/4 to a full hour, whereas in the earlier part of the same month the detention did not as a rule exceed half an hour.

3. Owing to the serious complaints made by passengers as well as by the press the matter calls for early remedy, and

it is requested that in the interests of both passengers and the Company the Medical Staff may be increased, without delay, and the present unreasonable detention to the trains at Arkonam prevented.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most Obedient Servant,

Henry West

Ag: Agent & Manager.

Enclo 2

C. No. 3045
Recd. 14/7/97

MADRAS RAILWAY.

From
The Agent and Manager.

To
The Consulting Engineer
for Railways.

Dated
Recd.
No.

1/2876 of 97

[L.&M. 1,000—11-96.]

Local & Munl. (1897) Department.

~~CURRENT~~ D.O. No. 72

No. 757 dated 15th July 1897.

Transferred to the Public Works (Railway) Department.

Secretary to Government

Ootacamund {15th July 1897}

From The Surgeon-General with the Govt of Madr

No.

Dated 14.7.97
Received do
Registered 15.7.97
Enclosures 1
Spare copies

SUBJECT.

Reply to D.O No. 46. regardi detention of trains al Arkonam for medica examination.

To The Public Works (Railway) Dept.

Plague Camp Arkonam
9th July 1897

No 2 11
580/6 97/7

From

Surg. Lieut. F. D. Browne M.B
Medical officer on Plague duty

OFFICE OF SURGEON-GENERAL
10 JUL. 1897
WITH GOVT OF MADRAS.

To

The Secretary Surgeon-General
with the Govt. of Madras
Madras

Sir,

With reference to the Cutting from the "Standard" of 25th June 1897 forwarded to this office its Contents are Correct as a whole

2. The passengers of first and Second Class after examination are locked in Carriages till the examination of the whole train is Completed. This is done to keep the Platform fairly clear and in accordance with the recommendation No 7 of the Sanitary

G.O. 1003 M
with the Venice
Convention file.

Sanitary Commissioner Bengal as Contained in his Inspection Report of 10th Feb 97.

3 If however a passenger is found urgently requiring to seek the Latrine his ticket is taken by myself or Assistant Surgeon (this necessitates his immediate return) and is allowed to go.

4. If the Carriage doors are not locked up it is impossible with small number of Constables to prevent passengers walking up and down the Platform in and amongst those who are undergoing Inspection thus causing confusion.

5 The difficulty could easily be got over if the Railway authorities allowed the trains to stop for quarter of an hour after the Inspection is completed.

6 By this means I dont think any more time would be spen than if the Carriage doors wer unlocked so causing troubl and waste of time during inspection.

I have the honor to be
Sir
Your most Obedient Servant
F. Browne MB
Surg. Lieut I.M.S.
Medl. Officer on Plague Duty

L&M. C No. 1470

No. 885. D dated 21/7/9

D. O. No.

L&M. D.O. No. 72

Office of Surgeon-General
with the Government of Madras,
Ootacamund ~~Nungumbaukum~~, 14th July 1897.

My dear Forbes,

Kindly see Browne's answer. I think his suggestion is sound if we could get the railway authorities to detain the train

Yours sincerely,

C Sibthorpe

Encl:
C No. D.O. 72.

Encl:
C No. 20/72.

No. 885. D dated 21/7

with ref to Letter No. 757 of 15/7/67 please see letter from Agents Mad. Madras ✗ Ry No. 9553/659 of 13/7/67

The suggestion of Surg. Dr. F. D. Brown to keep the train a quarter of an hour after the inspection does not seem feasible. It is evident from the table submitted by the traffic manager that the delay is getting more & more serious. The Agent seems to think this is partly due to the staff not being sufficient but the method of examination now adopted appears to cause unnecessary inconvenience to passengers as well as delay to trains. It is suggested that when a carriageful of passengers has been examined those not detained should be allowed to re-enter the carriage at their own conven

To
The Local & Municipal Deptt

with reply.

16/7/67

Copy of extract from the Hindu dated 16th July Inst

Railway Passengers and Plague Regulations.

(From a Passenger)

While so much is said about the working of the regulations elsewhere, it is well that they pay some attention to the way in which the medical men are working them here.

2 Besides in some out of the way places, a rigid examination has been going on at the Guntakul and Arkonam Junctions. The European Medical Officer and his Assistants at Guntakul, observe the rules laid down with great scrupulousness and propriety; and I wish the European Medical officers at Arkonam were equally good.

3 In April last I travelled to Madras second class. The European Medical officer, a young man, accompanied by the Sub-magistrate and a posse of Constables came to my compartment. He felt my pulse, and in pushed me aside gave a jerk to my hand which he held in his hand without even looking me in the face. I would have resented it, had I not known that I would be detained at once if he were so minded. I had to pocket the insult coolly, and thanked my stars for the small mercies shown

4. The family of a Sub-Judge were travelling from Kurnool Road to Salem; and at Arkonam they were detained for 24 hours because a baby was ailing from fever, and lodged in the plague sheds. Next day they were somehow let go; and they quickly came back abandoning their trip to Salem.

5. A few days back a gentleman was travelling with an Assistant Surgeon in a third class compartment. Both of them were marched up the platform, and made to stand in a row along with other passengers between two ropes held on both sides and guarded by Police Constables, so as to prevent ingress and egress. Passengers were ordered to tie their cloths round their waists as they do what they call Kummerbund. The doctors examined them, raised their arms up and down, and let them go. But there were two poor devils of passengers from Kalahastri to Madras, hale and healthy to all appearance. These two people on a motion from the doctors precipitately removed; and the train started with all their luggage. Fancy their consternation.

6. Now, the higher authorities should consider the absurdity of detaining passengers who travel from places which are so far removed from the plague-stricken parts ~~at~~ as Kurnool Road and Kalahasti, on the flimsiest of pretexts, and lodging them in the plague sheds. The Medical officers at Arkonam seem to think that they must be doing something, to justify their existence at Arkonam; and unless they are reminded of the hardships they are inconsiderately inflicting on the passengers by their light-headed procedure, they would continue to annoy people like this.

7. Further, these Medical men are wanting in ordinary sympathy and politeness which are so marked features of the Chief Medical Officer at Guntakul. If they remove a passenger

and detain him or her, they should have humanity to see that his or her luggage is not carried away by the train. Is it so difficult to see to this? Railway Guards in charge of trains may be apprised of the detention of the passengers, and the passenger's luggages removed.

8. So you will see that there is room for complaint even in this Presidency; and I sincerely trust that the higher authorities would insist on the Plague officers at Arkonam behaving better in future.

9 As matters stand, we feel considerable trepidation to send our wives and children to Madras, or to travel via Arkonam. It is civilization not to complain of the plague regulations which have caused more trouble and alarm than the plague itself; but I hope it is not ingratitude if I crave for a little more care, decency and humanity in enforcing regulations.

10. As it is, Medical Officers here are more dreaded than even the much abused Police. How to bring them to book for their questionable conduct and where to appeal? It is therefore all the more incumbent on Government that there is no medical tyranny in the name of Science and civilization.

(True Copy)
A.F.L.
23/1

ENC. No. 1 TO E. R's. C. No. 3223 OF 1897
LETTER 704 d/ 24.7.97
FROM Am

(No. II.)

No. 9553
704

MADRAS RAILWAY.

AGENT AND MANAGER'S OFFICE,

Madras, 24th July 1897

Dewers

From

The Ag. Agent and Manager.
M. R. Co.

To

The Offg. Consulting Engineer for Railways.
Madras.

Sir,

CMS 26/7

Flag M

With reference to para I of this Office letter No. 9553/659 of the 13th instant, I have the honour to enclose copy of an extract from the Hindu of the 16th instant.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,
R. Pearall
for Ag. Agent & Manager.

ER

The "Extract" I consider bears testimony to the excellence & ~~rigid~~ strictness of the Examination.
The para which details how a detained passenger's kit was seen on in the train, reflects on the Company.
The fact appear to have "recorded" the previous correspondence or this case be filed.
CMS. 27/7

(1 Enclo:)

FM

F.W. 28/7

CMS

Wase

O.F. 365

re: examination of passe
at Arkonam Stat

C. No. 3223
Recd. 26/7/97

MADRAS RAILWAY.

From
The Agent and Manager.

To
The Consulting Engineer
for Railways.

Dated 188
Recd.

No.

L.&M.
1,000—11-11-96.

Public Works (Ry)
~~Local & Munl.~~ (1897) Department.

CURRENT No. 7330

No. 3372 (C, D) 28 July 1897

Recorded with reference to No. 885 D Flag D of 21st July 1897.

28/7

D.R.

From The Local and Municipal department

No. 1620 M

Dated 17. 7. 97
Received
Registered } 24. 7. 97
Enclosures
Spare copies

SUBJECT.

Recording, with referen
to Correspondence transf
with Endt No. 757 dd 15. 7. 9
Memo: of the P. W. D
inviting attention to
para. 17 of the repor
on Native Newspaper
for fortnight ending 30-6-
re: examination of passe
at Arkonam Stat

INDEXED

29/7/97

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following paper :—

Memorandum from the Public Works Department (Railway Br) inviting attention to para. 17 of the Report on Native newspapers for the fortnight ending 30th June 1897, regarding examination of passengers at Arkonam station.

Order:-No.1620 M. Mis., dated 17th July 1897.

Recorded with reference to the communication from the Surgeon General on the subject which was transferred to the Public Works (Railway)department with endorsement No.757 dated 15th July 1897.

/True Extract/

Secretary to Government.

To

The Public Works (Railway) department.

---

saw several men taken to this room and
particularly noticed one man being brought
down

Copy of a letter No C. 35577 dated 29th July 1897 to the Ag Traffic Manager from the Assistant Traffic Manager, Arkonam.

I beg to report that I was a passenger by the 21-25 of 21st instant from Arkonam.

I arrived at the Station almost on the arrival of the Train which to the best of my recollection remained at the platform for about an hour.

The Plague Examination had commenced and the whole of the Platform from end to end of the train was roped in so as to prevent passengers leaving the Train before it was fully examined as also to prevent outgoing passengers to enter the train.

The Plague Inspection Officer Dr Browne was examining the front portion of the train. The rear rope was across the platform just in front of the Station Master's Office so as to leave that Office free. I stood by this rope from my arrival almost to the departure of the train.

From this spot to the Lavatory where "suspects" are reexamined is only 4 paces. I saw several men taken to this Room and particularly noticed one man being brought down the platform about 50 paces away by a Constable as usual and no sooner he arrived at the Lavatory than he the (Constable) took the passenger by the back of the neck and pushed him with all his force into the room. I immediately called for his number which was given to me as No 85 and I asked the East Indian Sergeant whether he had seen the treatment and he said yes. I said I would report the matter. I know the Sergeant was surprised at the Conduct of the Constable because I saw a look of Surprise on his face and turned round to see whether I had noticed the assault.

Last Evening Dr Browne said he had heard that I had reported one of his men for illtreatment of passengers and I told him that I had not done so as yet. He said it would not be any use because the passenger only got his deserts that he had been placed in the room for "Suspects" (4 yards from where I was standing) and would not allow his apothecary to take his temparature, had rushed from the room almost upsetting the Police Constable who was placed over the room and that Constable No 85 brought him back using the force I mentioned above.

above.

As I said previously Dr Browne was in the front of the train and I had been standing 4 yards away from the Examination room fully quarter of an hour before the assault was made watching the proceedings and I am Confident that there was no such Escape as mentioned to me by Dr Browne or it would have at once attracted my attention.

However taking the Statement of the native Apothecary and 2 Police Constables against my Statement I submit that Constable No 85 was absolutely wrong in taking the law into his own hands and "chucking" a passenger into the Examination Room by the scruff of his neck.

I have asked Dr Browne to take notice of the Policeman's action and he declines doing so saying that the man was justified in the assault Committed.

I bring this to your notice as I am sure you will agree with me that it was never the intention of the Government when they ordered the Examination of all trains that passengers should be maltreated; and recent events shew that the utmost care should be taken in carrying out this most disagreeable duty and that when a report is made by an Officer in my position serious notice should be taken.

Dr Browne may say that he has not received an Official Complaint but I have spoken to him and also written to him on this subject and he has declined to take notice of the Constable's Conduct and upholds him in his action.

Copy of a Communication from the Ag Traffic Manager, to the Ag. Agent and Manager Rayapuram, No C $\frac{39772}{30058}$ dated 31st July 1897.

Plague Inspection at Arkonam

x x x x x

In Continuation of this Office letter No C $\frac{9929^{B}}{29888}$ of the 9th instant, I beg to forward Copy of a report I have received from the District Traffic Officer at Arkonam in which he gives particulars of an instance in which, in his opinion, unnecessary and unjustifiable violence was used towards a passenger by the Police under the orders of the Plague Inspection Officer at Arkonam.

2. You are aware that Complaints on the part of the public as to their treatment by the Medical Staff at Arkonam are increasing in number. As a rule it is very difficult to obtain accurate information as to the facts in such Cases, and, as the facts are Clear in the present instance you may think it advisable to bring the matter to the notice of the Consulting Engineer in Connection with the question raised in my letter above quoted.

3. I may mention that I have before

me a Complaint from a partner in an influential Mahomedan firm in Madras Complaining of unjustifiable detention and illtreatment on the 7th instant. His allegations have been denied by the Plague Inspection Officer to whom I referred the Complaint and I have had to tell this native gentleman that the arrangements for plague inspection at Arkonam are in the hands of Govt officials.

Copy of Communication from the Agent and Manager, Madras Railway to the Consulting Engineer for Railways, Madras, No $\frac{9553}{742}$ d 5.8.97.

In continuation of my letter No 659 of the 16th Ultimo I have the honour to send herewith Copy of a letter from the Ag Traffic Manager and the Enclosure referred to therein.

It will be noticed that the Conduct of the Police Constable was witnessed by an Officer of the Company and the Case appears to be one which Calls for investigation.

No 3499 C of 13-8-97

E Rs' Current No 3399.

---

550 R

A. M's letter No. $\frac{9553}{742}$ of 5th August 1897 with enclosures.

Transferred to the Local & Municipal Department for favour of investigation in continuation of D. O. D. No. 885 D of 21st July 1897.-

F M R.

9/8/97

D 13/8/97

INDEXED

16/8/97

R. O.S. ui15

Public Works (1897) Department.

CURRENT No. 8852

From the Local & Municipal Department

Order

No. 1840 M. Mis

Dated 21st August 1897.
Received } 3-9-97
Registered }
Enclosures
Spare copies

SUBJECT.

Medical Establishment at the Arkonam station in connection with Plague.

Stating that nothing can be done at present in the way of increasing the ______, as the plague is subsiding.

BACK PAPERS.

No.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

No.	Date.

Re. Local & Municipal Department

[illegible] No. Mis.

21st August 1897.

Medical Establishment at the Arkonam Station

Stating that nothing can be done at present in the way of increasing the medical establishment [illegible]

---

[25]
2,000-3-11-96.

GO 550R
24/8/7

Local and Municipal Department.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

READ the following paper :—

Endorsement of the Public Works (Railway) department, No.885 D., dated 21st July 1897, forwarding letter from the Agent and Manager of the Madras Railway Co., stating that as the detention of trains at Arkonam for the examination of passengers for the detection of plague cases is unduly long, the medical establishment employed there may be increased.

Letter from the Surgeon General, No.273 dated 6th Aug. 1897, submitting his remarks on the above subject.

Order:-No.1840 M. Mis., dated 21st August 1897.

Recorded.

2. As the plague is subsiding and as considerable difficulty is already felt in providing the requisite medical staff for famine relief works, nothing can be done at present in the way of increasing the medical establishment employed at the Arkonam station. The Government is satisfied that if there have been some cases of delay in the carrying out of inspection, they have been quite exceptional. While plague arrangements are in force, and it would not be safe to alter them at present, the railway administration and passengers must submit to inconvenience which cannot be avoided.

/True Extract/

S Forbes
Secretary to Government.

To

The P. W. D (Ry. Branch) ✓
,, Surgeon General
,, Collector of North Arcot.

No. 590. R dated 24/8/97.

(R.) Form No. 3.

P.W. DEPARTMENT.
Ry Branch

18/-

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

READ the following

Endorsement from the Local & Muni: Depts	H.E. No: 757 of 15th July 1897
Endorsement from Jt. Secy: Ry: Board to L & M Depts with enclosures	" — " 883 D of 21st July 1897
Procs: of the Madras Govt: Local & Muni: Depts	" — " 1840 M. Mis of 21st Augt 97

Forwarded to the Consulting Engineer for Railways for communication to the Agent & Manager Madras Railway.

3/9/97
D.R.

To
The Consg Engr for Rys 4/9/97