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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
Revenue DEPARTMENT

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V.S.M.

2283

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
4th April 1877. No. 1,109.*

No. 24. Read the following endorsement of the Consulting Engineer for Railways, dated Madras, 20th March 1877, No. 176:—

From W. S. BETTS, Esq., Agent, South Indian Railway, to Lieutenant-Colonel J. H. M. SHAW-STEWART, I.E., Consulting Engineer for Railways, dated Negapatam, 16th August 1876, No. 2,063.

I FORWARD, herewith, a petition from certain inhabitants of Ramnad, who are desirous to have railway communication between their town and Madura. I have informed the petitioners that the granting of their prayer rests with Government and not with the Company I represent.

THE Mathurnama of the respectable inhabitants and great merchants, &c., of the town of Ramnad in the Ramnad Zemindari of the Madura District, and from the undersigned great inhabitants.

THERE are two great zemindari districts in the Southern India, viz., Ramnad and Shevavunga. In the District of Ramnad Zemindari, Ramaswaram is a place more famous than any other sacred Hindoo Temple, and for the Thanuscoti celebrated as a sacred pool.

People from Hyderabad, Baroda, Banares, Mysore, &c., in the north of India, and from the Malabar District in Southern India, and from numerous petty towns and villages therein, continually great number flock as pilgrims to the above-mentioned temple and sacred pool.

A railway line has been constructed and opened for traffic for the benefit of passengers and the inhabitants of the places and villages lying on the north, west, and south of the town of Madura, but none for these that occupy the places east of Madura.

If a similar line of railway be constructed and opened for traffic from the east of Madura town to the large boat-stand adjacent to the abovesaid Ramaswaram, it will not only be beneficial to the people who frequent the abovesaid temple at Ramaswaram for the sake of worship and on a pilgrimage to the said sacred pool at Thanuscoti, but also to the merchants averaging 1,000 a day, who generally carry on their trade by large boats at the seaport towns named Fort St. David, Ayathoray, &c., to Columbo, Candy, &c., but also will yield a great revenue to the Railway Company.

Again, if the railway system be introduced, it will not only enlarge the trade and be convenient to the merchants and traders, but also will afford a great deal of profit to the railway, for it will embrace the said two zemindari districts and their large towns, countries, and villages, and the seaport towns of Keelacaray, the public resting place, Vatharney, Paumben Channel, Fort St. David, and also the salt-pans. The merchants from Rangoon, Moulmein, Ceylon, Columbo, and other places generally load their large boats with rice, cloth, &c., and import them into the abovesaid seaport towns. These articles in question are loaded upon common carts and carried along the above-mentioned two zemindari districts, to Madura, and other important places, and on their return articles of valuable character are purchased and brought down to the said seaport towns for the exportation to Rangoon and other places. Between the abovesaid seaport towns and Paumben there is a piece of sea, in which can be seen a broken dam built of stone, and beyond this a river twenty fathoms long and about three men's depth. It is across this place large boats and ships are passing. Between Paumben Channel and sacred pool, Thanuscoti, there is a plain and open ground extending to forty miles and used for footpath. A railway line along this plain ground may be constructed.

Moreover, it can be seen that a portion of sea between the sacred pool and Ceylon in which a broken dam made up by heaps of sand is visible, in some parts sea of little depth. If a line of railway along this interrupted dam be constructed by laying out a very large amount of money and cost of labor and opened for public traffic, it will entirely put a stop to the exportation and importation of goods of many and valuable character through large boats and ships and

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
4th April 1877. No. 1,109.

effect a direct communication between India and Ceylon, Colombo and Jaffna on one side, and yield great profit to the railway on the other.

In conclusion, the petitioners solicit that, for the present, a line of railway between Madura and the abovesaid boat-stand may be laid out. In the Putanus of Ramaswaram it has been ruled that no person of any caste should keep himself from paying visit to two places. Besides this, they represent that a station may be constructed at Ramnad and Shevagunga for the convenience of travellers and persons who make their pilgrimage to the said holy places, and also to the merchants who carry on their trade generally along these zemindari towns.

From MOOTHOSAAMY PILLAI, Ameean of the Ramaswaram Temple, to Lieutenant-Colonel J. H. M. SHAW-STEWART, R.E., Consulting Engineer for Railways, dated Ramnad, 16th February 1877.

I RESPECTFULLY beg to submit that from No. 5,219, dated 24th October last, issued by the South Indian Railway authorities, I learn that a proposal for constructing a branch line of Railway from Madura to Ramnad appears to have been brought forward for your favorable consideration during the month of August. My attention is also now drawn to it in order that I may address you and remind your honor of the matter.

2. As the inhabitants at Ramnad and the neighbouring villages will be exceedingly glad to hear whether their appeal for the branch line in question was taken notice of by your department, I beg to state that, if the abovesaid proposal be now carried out, it will do much good to the inhabitants at the present pressure by famine and also be more convenient for the travelling public.

3. I therefore beg that your honor will take the matter into your generous consideration and favor me, as well as the inhabitants of Ramnad, with your disposal, if any, upon the subject.

SUBMITTED for the consideration of Government.

2. The papers contain petitions from certain inhabitants of Ramnad and Ramaswaram, praying for railway communication with Madura.

3. The subject of these papers has been under the special consideration of His Grace the Governor, and a note upon the general question of railway extension in the direction of Ceylon was written by the undersigned in August 1876.

(Signed) J. H. M. SHAW-STEWART, Lt.-Col., R.E.,
Consulting Engineer for Railways.

No. 25. ORDER THEREON, 4th April 1877, No. 1,109.

RAILWAY, No. 6.

HIS GRACE the Governor in Council is of opinion that the question mooted in these papers is of importance both to the Madura District and to the State, and should, therefore, be carefully considered.

2. The following seem the principal points on which information is required:—
- (1.) Is Paumben a port in which vessels can be alongside a jetty or pier?
 - (2.) Or at all events very near the shore?
 - (3.) Of what tonnage are such vessels?
 - (4.) Would the port be available for them throughout the year?
 - (5.) What is the nature of the road now existing from Madura to Paumben?

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
4th April 1877. No. 1,109.

(6.) Would the Shevagunga and Ramnad Estates contribute to the cost of the proposed railway?

3. Points 1 to 4 will be referred to the Marine Department, and points 5 and 6 to the Collector of Madura, for the submission of the necessary information.

(True Extract.)

W. M. Stewart

Lieut.-Col., R.E.

Joint Secy. to Govt., P.W.D.,
Railway Branch.

To the Consulting Engineer for Railways.
" Marine Department.
" Revenue "

Exd. A. Gruber.

20 Spare Copies

Revenue Department

285 No 2189

Govt. of 1877 Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

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THE CONSULTING ENGINEER
FOR RAILWAYS.

Dated April 4th.

Issued

Recd 19th April 77

Encl.

G. O., 4th April 1877, No. 1,102.

APRIL

Nos. 24-25.

No 2283.

Communicated through
the Board of Revenue, to
the Collector of Madras
for attention to para 3 of
the foregoing Order

21st April 1877

Railway communication between
and Madras. Requesting information
certain points connected with the scheme
opening

With order

15- To the H. O. of Revenue 23-4-77