

**दक्षिण रेलवे/Southern Railway
चेन्नै मंडल/Chennai Division**

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प्रेस विज्ञप्ति /PRESS RELEASE

Elephant Gate bridge in Chennai successfully demolished

The Elephant Gate bridge, the old 9R bridge near Dr.MGR Chennai Central (ROB) constructed during 1933 has been successfully dismantled taking advantage of lock down period. There are eight railway lines from/to Dr. MGR Chennai Central and Chennai Suburban Terminus run under this ROB. For demolition purpose it necessitated cancellation of all trains for two days at Dr.MGR Chennai Central, the busy terminal that deals an average of 100 trains daily and cancellation of suburban trains at Chennai suburban terminus for three days. Now, this work of demolition was taken up on 27th April and completed on 8th May, 2020 in 12 days utilising the lockdown period effectively thus avoiding any repercussions to passenger train operations.

This bridge is just 1km away from the iconic Dr MGR Chennai Central Railway station. The bridge popularly known as the Elephant Gate Road-over-Bridge, is one of the most famous Grade separators in Chennai, situated at the exit neck of Chennai Central yard and connecting the Basin Bridge coaching Depot on the right and the Salt Cotaurs goods yard on the left. Elephant Gate bridge, is the area bounded by four major roads in George Town area of Chennai.

The bridge had out-lived its codal life All the expansion plans of Chennai central yard were hinging on the bottle neck of Bridge 9R, development was restricted to only 8 tracks in total and further development needed expansion of Road-over-Bridge and hence Central station could further be expanded, only after expansion and rebuilding of the Elephant Gate Bridge.

The demolition was planned to be taken up by taking Line Block of more than 72 Hours and train operations at Dr MGR Chennai Central was expected to be cut off. However, due to COVID-19 lockdown was announced and passenger train services were cancelled in March 2020.

Taking advantage of the lockdown period, Chennai Division immediately sprung into action and took concerted efforts by co-ordinating with Tamil Nadu State Government and Greater Chennai corporation authorities for taking up the Demolition work.

Dismantling of Top Slabs and Piers from all 8 Spans was executed by Diamond Wire Saw Cutters, while the slab weight was held by Cranes from Wall Tax side and from opposite Salt Cotours, 4 spans were planned to be cut from either side. Tools such as Diamond cutters, cranes of 250 and 220 MT, JCBs, generators etc were deployed.

Thus, Chennai Division of Southern Railway ensured safety by removing a weak over-head structure. This Demolition also paves the way for construction of new Road-over-Bridge also opening up the possibility of carrying out vital rail expansion works. The Work of re-building of this Bridge has been sanctioned in Pink Book of 2008-09 at an estimated cost of Rs 43.77 Crs.

जनसंपर्क अधिकारी/Public Relations Officer
चेन्नै मंडल/Chennai Division

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