



दक्षिण रेलवे/Southern Railway  
चेन्नै मंडल/Chennai Division

No.PUB/MAS/2021/08/23

Date:21.08.2021

प्रेस विज्ञप्ति /PRESS RELEASE

## **CHENNAI CITY – RISEN WITH RAILWAYS**

Chennai Day is celebrated to commemorate the founding of the city of Chennai in Tamil Nadu. This day is celebrated on 22 August every year.

It is widely agreed that Madraspatnam, a village in northern end of Tamil Nadu was purchased by Andrew Cogan and Francis Day of East India Company from Damerla Venkatapathy, the viceroy of Vijayanagar Empire on 22 August 1639. The name Madras is believed to have derived from the name of the village. The city Madras was renamed as Chennai in 1996. Chennai city celebrates its 382<sup>nd</sup> birth anniversary, this year.

### **MADRAS RAILWAY COMPANY**

The idea of a Railway in South India was mooted when a railway line for Madras was proposed in 1832. This proposal gained momentum in 1845, when the Madras Railway Company came into existence. In 1849, the plans were revived further to the efforts by the mercantile community of Madras Presidency, which lobbied for rail connectivity. The Madras Railway Company was merged with Southern Mahratta Railway in 1908 to form Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway.

Railway was introduced in India initially for quicker and more efficient access to trade. Later the demand for passenger traffic elevated which was not envisioned by the railway promoter or the East India Company. The first railway line in South India was laid between Royapuram and Arcot (now called Walajah Road) in 1853. The railway line was opened for traffic on 1 July 1856 by Governor Lord Harris. The first train, manufactured by Simpson and Company, started its journey from Royapuram to Arcot and the second to a shorter distance, Tiruvallur.

### **ICONIC RAILWAY BUILDINGS REPRESENTING CHENNAI**

**ROYAPURAM RAILWAY STATION** remained the headquarters of Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway till 1922, when the headquarters was shifted to Egmore. Royapuram station remains as the oldest surviving railway station structures of the Indian Railways.

**DR. MGR CENTRAL STATION** is the largest passenger terminal in Southern Railway, designed by George Haring was opened for public on 07.04.1873. An annexure

building was added to the main building in 1998. The century-old building served as the gate to South India during the British rule, and still identified as a landmark for the city and the State.

**CHENNAI EGMORE** is the second largest passenger terminal in Chennai. The main building, designed by Robert Chishom in a striking Indo-Saracenic style was opened on 11.06.1908. Egmore station building architecture stands as an example of fusion of the strength of fortress, glamour of a palace and sanctity of natives.

**SOUTHERN RAILWAY HEADQUARTERS BUILDING**, situated next to Chennai Central was designed by N. Grayson, an architect of the erstwhile Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway. The foundation of the palatial headquarters building was laid on 08.02.1915 by Lord Pentland, the then Governor of Madras and was opened by Lady Willington on 11.12.1922. The Indo-Saracenic type structure with a Dravidian style of classic architecture stands high to complete a century ahead.

Railways had provided the foundation of modern economic and geographical expansion of Chennai city by facilitating the carriage of passengers in large number from southern districts of the State and also from other parts of the country. Development and rapid expansion of rail network linking the city is one of the main reasons for the growth of various sectors in the State Capital.

Today, Chennai stands tall for its astounding growth in Education, Healthcare, IT industry, infrastructure, travel connectivity, tourism etc. It is worth mentioning that without Railways the confound development of the Chennai city is not a possible one.

**Sd/-**

ए.एलुमलै/ (A.Elumalai)

जनसंपर्क अधिकारी/ Public Relations Officer

चेन्नै मंडल/ Chennai Division

Follow us:

<https://sr.indianrailways.gov.in/index.jsp>

<https://twitter.com/DrmChennai>