

REPORT
OF
THE FORTY-SECOND
INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

HELD AT

MADRAS

1927.

PUBLISHED BY
THE RECEPTION COMMITTEE
THE FORTY-SECOND INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, MADRAS.



Dr. M. A. ANSARI
President.

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SERVANTS OF INDIA
SOCIETY.
POONA.



RECEPTION TO MAHATMA GANDHI.

FOREWORD.

The entire burden and responsibility of collecting and arranging the material for this report of the Madras Sessions of the Indian National Congress, and of seeing it through the press, has fallen on the Secretaries of the Reception Committee of this Congress. That burden should rightly have been borne by the Secretaries of the All-India Congress Committee. But fifteen hundred miles or more separate Madras from Allahabad and the office of the All-India Congress Committee being in Allahabad, it was not easy to supervise the publication of this report from that distance. At our request, therefore, the Madras Reception Committee were good enough to agree to take charge of the work, and on behalf of my co-secretaries and myself, I have to express our indebtedness and thanks to the Reception Committee and their Secretaries.

ALLAHABAD, }
June 16th 1928. }

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU,
General Secretary, A. I. C. C.

INTRODUCTION

TO THE

Madras Congress Report.

I General. Tamil Nadu had for the first time, the honor of inviting the Indian National Congress, after she had been constituted into a separate linguistic Congress Province. The Tamilians therefore eagerly welcomed the idea of holding the Congress, and the Districts vied with one another in having the session in their own Districts. But since the Gauhati Congress gave no choice on the venue, it was decided without much discussion, to hold the Congress in the City of Madras.

II Financial Aspect. The year in which the Congress was held in Madras was unfortunately a famine year in the Tamil Nadu, and further it was also a bad year for businessmen in the city and the towns. So it was a matter of great anxiety and concern to the Reception Committee to find money for the expenses. It was almost feared in the beginning that the Reception Committee would have ultimately to meet a large deficit. But the interest of the people of Tamil Nadu in their National organisation was much greater than their capacity. Even those who could not afford to spare Rs. 25 willingly came forward to join the Reception Committee. The enlistment of members to the Reception Committee had even to be stopped, on the eve of the Session as it was not possible to procure enough accommodation in the Congress Pandal. But the rush for visitors' tickets during the last few days was even greater. As our statement of accounts would show, the proceeds from the sale of visitors' tickets amounted to more than Rs. 85,000. Our tickets were sold like hot cakes, and in this connection, we have to express our regret that some persons had to be disappointed, as our accommodation was limited, though large. The Madras Congress was thus an unprecedented financial success, leaving a surplus over Rs. 85,000 and this only shows the hold of the National Assembly over the people of the Tamil Nadu. It must be said to the credit of Tamil Nadu that she liberally contributed to the funds of the Reception Committee, in spite of the fact that it was a bad year for agriculturists and that she had only recently responded nobly to the appeal of Mahatma Gandhi and contributed more than a lac of rupees to the Khadi Fund.

III Arrangements. (i) *Committees.* The Reception Committee had an influential and active Executive Committee with 80 members including Ten Secretaries, and Sixteen Sub-Committees to attend to the

details of the arrangements. A separate influential Committee was formed to run the Exhibition, which was conducted on a grand style.

(ii) *Lay out of the Congress Nagar.* After a great deal of consideration the Spur Tank in Egmore was selected as the site for holding the Congress session. The site was taken on lease from the Government by the Reception Committee from August 1927, on a monthly rent of Rs. 100. and the site was appropriately styled the Congress Nagar. In the very heart of the Congress Nagar, the South Indian Railway Company put up a temporary Flag Station for the convenience of the Public.

The main entrance to the Congress Nagar was on the Spur Tank Road which led into the Ansari Avenue—It must be mentioned here that the various halls, quarters, streets, and pathways were called after the many respected leaders of the Country—Walking along this avenue led one into the Gandhi Round. In this round there were two approaches to the Tilak Mantap, the Main Pavilion where the Congress was held.

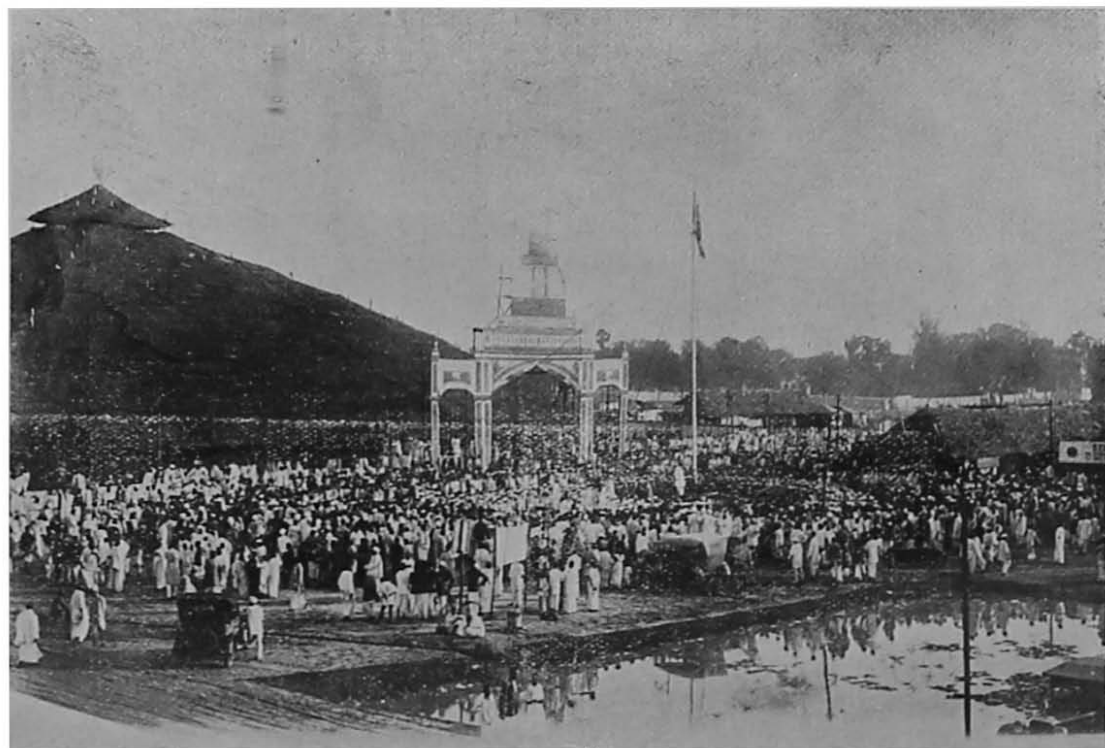
The Congress Pavilion. Although it was the usual practice for the last few years, to hold the Congress under the Khaddar Tent, it was decided very lately, on account of the uncertainty of the weather, to dispense with it, and have a special structure. The Pavilion intended to hold easily about 20,000 people. Its structure was built up of casurina posts, cocoanut leaves and bamboo thattis. It was a huge and magnificent structure which attracted the admiration of all the visitors. It was the biggest pavilion ever run up in the city of Madras and reflects great credit on the designers as well as the contractor who put it up in such a short time.

The decorations in the main entrances to the Tilak Mantap and over the Pavilion were neatly and beautifully done after the style of South Indian Temples.

We must mention here that besides the big session of the Congress many other Conferences, such as the Khilafat Conference, the Social Reform Conference, the Music Conference, the Youth Conference and the M. & S. M. Railway Union Conference were held in the various Pavilions in the Congress Nagar during the Congress week.

The Reception Committee Offices, the Telegraph and Post Offices lay adjoining the Malaviya Maidan. From the Maidan a few minutes' walk led into the Srinivasa Avenue, in which were situated the Subjects' Committee Pandal, a neat little structure called after the late lamented Gopala Krishna Gokhale, the Library, and other Pavilions.

Opposite to the porch in the Ansari Avenue was planted the Congress Flag Staff. It may be noted here that the National Flag was unfurled by the Bengal Leader, Sjt. Sen-Gupta, on the morning of the 25th instant, in a grand, and ostentatious ceremony, characteristic of



THE UNFURLING CEREMONY OF THE FLAG.

Hindu Festivals. The Delegates' quarters and the volunteers' camp were also situated in the Gandhi Nagar. The kitchen and the dining halls were situated to the North-East of the Tilak Mantap.

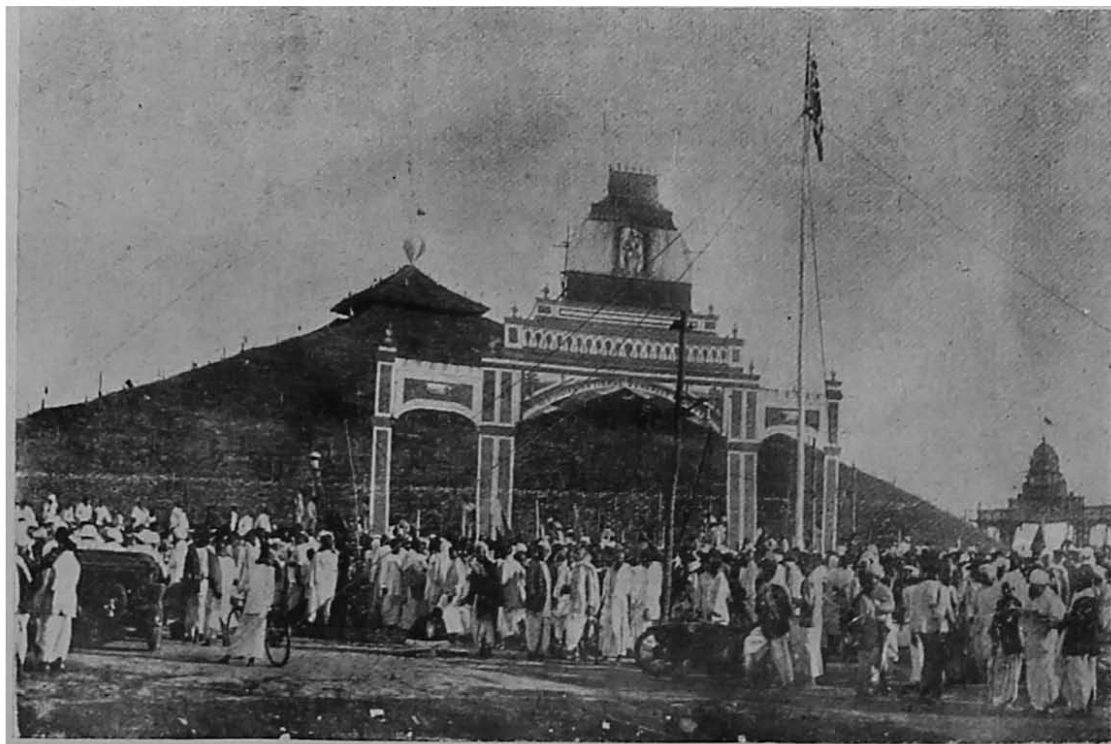
(iii) *Dining arrangements.* Different kitchens were arranged to suit the conveniences of delegates from different provinces, and although catering was left to different contractors the arrangements were quite satisfactory, as they were under the direct and immediate supervision of the Food Sub-Committee.

IV Conclusion. In conclusion, the Reception Committee feel bound to thank the people of the Tamil Nadu who so nobly and patriotically responded to the call of the Congress, the Volunteers, the members of various Sub-Committees, the different contractors and many other friends every one of whom took the cause as his or her own, and co-operated with the Committee in every possible manner and made the Madras Congress a grand success not only from the point of view of the arrangements made, but from the point of view of the epoch-making resolutions passed by the Congress.

Finally, the Reception Committee regret the delay in the publication of this Report under circumstances beyond their control.

Madras,
25th October 1928.

The Reception Committee



ENTRANCE VIEW OF CONGRESS PANDAL.