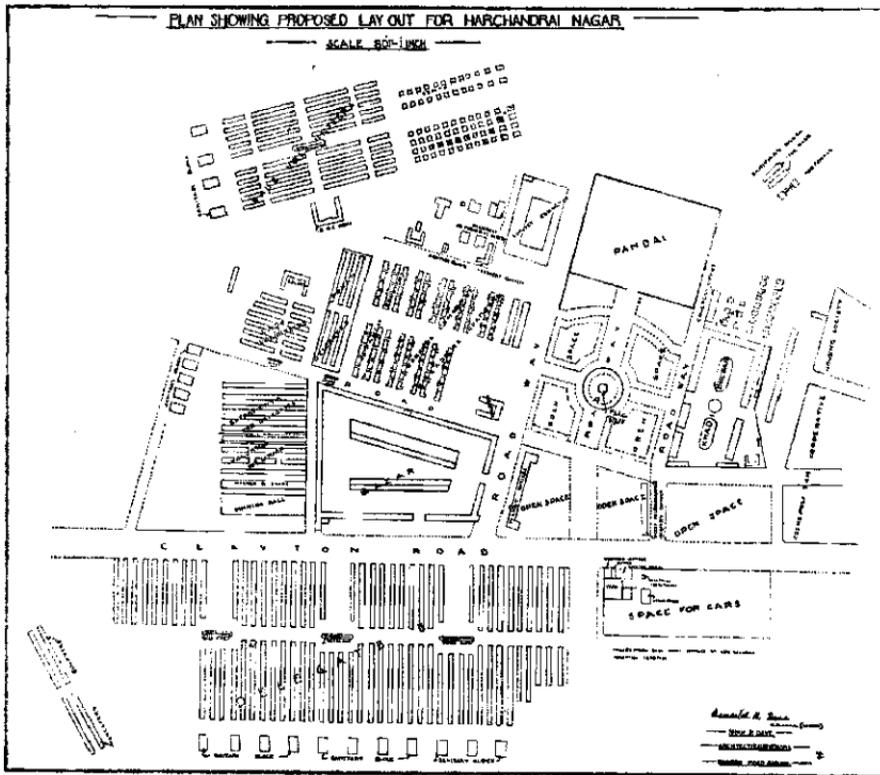


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PLAN SHOWING PROPOSED LAY OUT FOR HARCHANDRAI NAGAR

SCALE 800'-1"=1"



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## FOREWORD.

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The report of the Karachi Sessions of the Congress was just ready for print when there was fresh fight with the Government in the beginning of 1932. The sudden arrest of leaders not only upset the arrangements for publication of the report but owing to peculiar circumstances attending the fight, most of the records of the report were lost. It was with great difficulty that whatever was available of the lost material was recollected and consequently many shortcomings have crept in the report that is now being submitted. The Reception Committee begs to be excused for these shortcomings which were due to unforeseen circumstances.

## INTRODUCTION.

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The 45th Sessions of the I. N. Congress was held at Karachi under circumstances that were memorable and unique. The Gandhi-Irwin Truce had brought to a provisional conclusion the first pitched battle between the National Congress and the alien Government of India, and the Sessions of the Congress was in fact a council of war to decide if the Truce provided a proper basis for peace. The Weapon of Satyagraha had been tried and tested, for the first time, on an unprecedented scale, and a new hope filled the Nation with the unquestioned success that it had achieved. The non-Co-operation Movement of 1921 was acknowledged by the powers that be, to have come within an ace of success; the Civil Disobedience Campaign of 1930 certainly were far beyond it and transcended the expectations of the most optimistic of Congressmen: it seemed like success itself. Government of India felt obliged to hang Bhagatsingh on the eve of the Congress to make its existence felt, while never before had a session of the Congress been held under circumstances of greater buoyancy and confidence, the task of organizing the Congress was one of the equally unprecedented difficulty. The General release of Congress Leaders took place only a fortnight before the Session was to commence. Only a handful of workers had finished their sentences a little earlier and those were patriotically supported by the entire Mercantile Community of Karachi that had stood by the Congress throughout the Campaign and made wonderful sacrifices. Thanks to the Karachi Municipality and its President who placed the entire resources of the Municipality at the disposal of the

Session. The reception Committee was formed while our comrades were still in prison and set to work, to complete in a fortnight what usually takes much bigger towns than Karachi in normal circumstances almost the whole year to accomplish. A sum of Rs .90,000/- was collected in a few days and meanwhile the best engineering talent in the town was harnessed to the Creation of the *Harchandrai Nagar*, as the Congress Camp was called after the first Sind Congress-man who dominated the 1913 Session of the Congress held in Karachi and who literally laid down his life in the services of the country travelling to Delhi against the advise of his medical advisers, in most precarious health to record his vote against the Simon Commission.

The site chosen for the Nagar was the large open space round the Roubrite factory where now slowly the second Amil Co-operative Colony is rearing its head. Hardly a mile from the camp was the Central Prison. Three weeks of ceaseless toil of three thousand workmen labouring day and night under the directions of a hundred men forming different communities brought into existence a model township with its well laid roads, plentiful water-supply, modern conservancy, and neat little huts and tents to house ten thousand delegates and visitors and a spacious stadium to seat fifty thousand persons besides shamianas and pandals to house the Subjects Committee, the Khadi exhibition and a big Swadeshi Bazaar.

The sketch of the Nagar is given to scale.

A structural feature that deserves special mention

i, e. the Stadium open to the sky which was entirely a new departure that commended itself to every body. Happily the plot selected for the Nagar happened to include the old Roubrite factory enclosure which just fitted it with our requirements. The enclosure was turned into perhaps the finest and the most comfortable habitation in which a Congress Session has ever been held. Here under the canopy of the blue sky, on a cloth flooring of rich red, green and white, the three colours of the national flag, the golden sun sinking slaughtered to its resting place in the west, with the pale waxing moon rising over head, the Session commenced every evening while cool soft spring breezes caressed the crowd and the artistic picture below was completed by mysterious stars rising every hour in their age-appointed places.

**DECORATIONS :—**The stadium was artistically decorated. Gay tri-colours fluttered over a circular wall round the stadium, and the rostrum and the President's dais under a richly decorated canopy were a veritable feast of colours. Light green pillars, bordering on the edges of the various platforms, bore crowds of shaded light imparting a cool and subdued glow. Special lights illuminated the high-perched rostrum to which the speaker rose by a flight of steps, and two powerful spot lights, placed at a height of over 30 feet, flooded the stadium from two opposite sides. Loud speakers were installed at convenient spaces all over the stadium and, thanks to the Chicago Telephone Company of Bombay, who were in charge of them, they served efficiently throughout the sessions, carrying the voice of every speaker distinctly to every nook and corner of the stadium.

**KHADDAR ALL ROUND :—**The entire decorations in the stadium were of Khaddar : not an inch of swadeshi cloth or foreign trinklet was used. Red, green and white sheets of Khaddar covered the floor, the platforms, and the pillars and posts ; and the soft quilts that adorned the presidential dais were also of Khaddar. So were the fringes and trappings and other decorative material all of Khaddar. And the whole gathering was a forest of Gandhi caps.

**VOLUNTEERS :—**The Success that attended the organisation of the Session was due very largely to the corps of 3000 volunteers including 500 women. Nearly 600 of these came from Bombay for which our thanks are due to the Bombay National Militia and other volunteer organizations. We are conscious of the difficulties and strain to which the volunteers were exposed. Their quarters were the last to be completed while they were the first in the field with their trying duties. Their uniforms took time to be tailored and a large number had to get on with only one suit with inadequate washing arrangements, but they bore it all cheerfully and maintained their discipline to the last.

**FEEDING ARRANGEMENT :—**The cleanly kept and well-ordered kitchen and the neat, spacious and comfortable dining hall made an inviting appearance. The variety the quality of food was appreciated by those who availed themselves of the feeding arrangements which were made by a batch of leading Gujarati merchants.

**DRINKING-WATER SUPPLY :—**A novel feature of this Sessions of the Congress was the arrangement of drinking-

water supply made by the Shikharpuri Seva Mandal from early morning to late at night the volunteers of the mandal supplied water to people visiting the Congress Nagar most untiringly and courteously.

**DEMONSTRATION Lecture:**—In order to give an opportunity to masses to hear Mahatma Gandhi and other leaders an open demonstration was held to which admission was made by four annas tickets, about forty thousand people attended the demonstration and it proved a great success.

**CONDUCT OF BUSINESS:**—The introduction may fittingly be concluded by a note on the conduct of business which, no less than the arrangements above described, was a great improvement on most of the previous sessions.

Punctually at 6. P. M. the business commenced on the three days that the Congress was in sessions, each day's sittings lasting for above 6 hours. Within the short space of about 20 hours, a heavy agenda was disposed of, including resolutions on such controversial subjects as the ratification of the Gandhi Irwin pact, affirming of the Lahore Independence Resolution, the Fundamental Rights Resolution and the resolution on Sardar Bhagatsingh. This was due in no small measure to the business-like habits of mind of Sardar Valabhbhai Patel, the President.

**PEACEFUL PROCEEDINGS:**—Another notable feature of the business proceedings was their thoroughly peaceful and smooth conduct without any scenes of uproarious turbulence of untoward incidents.

## Names of the Members of Working Committee of the Reception Committee.

Dr. Choithram P. Gidwani,	<i>Chairman</i>
Swami Govindanand,	}
Moulvi Mohomed Sidique,	
Sjt Naraindas Anandji.	
Shrimati Kikiben,	
Acharya Gidwani.	
Lala Jaswantrai Churmani.	}
Sjt Naraindas Lalji.	
Sjt R. K. Sidhwa.	}
Dr. Tarachand J. Lalvani,	
Sjt Mulji Narsi,	}
Sjt Ram Motwani.	
Sjt Manlal Vyas	
Miss Parpati Gidwani.	<i>Secretary Ladies Section:</i>
Sjt Santdas Idanmal,	<i>General Officer Commanding.</i>
Sjt Lalchand Panachand	<i>Treasurer</i>
Sjt Issardas Varandmal	"
Seth Doongersi Dharmasi	<i>Secretary Food Committee</i>
Sjt Shivdas Velji	" <i>Steamer facilities Com.</i>
Sjt, D. D. Chodury	" <i>Railway " "</i>
Sjt, Jeramdas Doulatram,	" <i>Collection Committee.</i>
Sjt Shivram Chawn	" <i>Receiving Delegates "</i>
Maharaj Rewachand	" <i>Stores Committee</i>
Sjt Gulrajmal	" <i>Transport " "</i>
Dr. Popatlal, A. Bhoopalkar	" <i>Hospital " "</i>
Swami Krishnanand	<i>Delegate Accomodation Committee</i>
Sjt Lalji mahrotra	<i>Secretary Special Camp</i>
Sjt Ghansham Jethanand	" <i>Subjects Committee</i>
	" <i>Arrangement " "</i>
Sjt N R Malkani	" <i>Pandal Arragement</i>
Mahraj Vishnu Sharma	" <i>Procession Committee</i>
Sjt C. T. Valecha	" <i>Printing Committee</i>
Sjt Parsram V. Bahitramani,	" <i>Volunteers Committee</i>

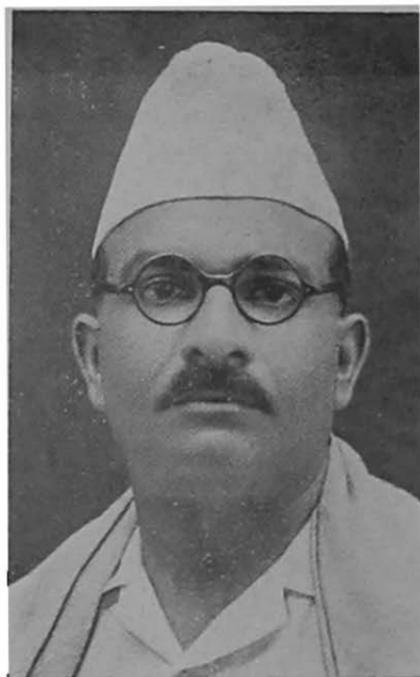


**Dr. Choithram P. Gidwani,**

Chairman, Reception Committee 45th Session of the  
Indian National Congress held at Karachi March 1931.



**Syt. R. K. Sidhwa.**



**Dr. Tarachand J. Lalvani**

General Secretaries Reception Committee 45th Sessions of the  
Indian National Congress held at Karachi March 1931.