

## HISTORY OF BHAVNAGAR DIVISION

Bhavnagar Division occupies an important position in the history of the Indian Railways. Bhavnagar was the third princely State in the country after Baroda and Hyderabad to begin construction of Railway line with its own funds. In Saurashtra, Bhavnagar was the first and Gondal the second state to build a Railway network.

Railways in this region began in December 1880 with inauguration of the line from Bhavnagar Terminus to Wadhwan City. Sir James Fergusson, Governor of Bombay inaugurated the line in the presence of Sir Takhtasinhji, the ruler of Bhavnagar. The first train was run from Bhavnagar to Limbdi carrying the Governor's entourage and guests. It returned the same evening well in time for a State Bouquet in the King's palace at Neelambaug.

Soon after this the line from Dhola to Dhoraji was also completed with Bhavnagar and Gondal states sharing the cost of the same.

Construction of Railway line from Bhavnagar to Wadhwan, which was initially opposed by the British, was taken up primarily as a relief measure due to extreme famine in the year 1877. Railway lines in other States were built to connect their important cities. These States were Junagadh, Porbandar, Morbi and Jamnagar.

Independence saw integration of the princely states in the Indian Union. Bhavnagar was the first princely state in the entire country to accede to India. After integration, all these State Railways became the property of the then State Government of Saurashtra operating as Saurashtra Railways. They were later taken over by the Government of India and merged with Western Railway at the time of regrouping of Railways in early 1952. Bhavnagar Division was formally inaugurated on 15.08.1956

## GEOGRAPHICAL SPREAD

Bhavnagar Division serves the Southern region of Saurashtra, comprising of Bhavnagar, Amreli, Junagadh and Porbander Districts and parts of Ahmedabad, Surendranagar, Rajkot and Jamnagar Districts of Gujarat. The total route Kilometer of the Division is 1327.15 KMs, consisting 756.43 KMs of Broad Gauge and 570.72 KMs of Meter Gauge. The surface of land in this area in most part is undulating with low hill ranges. The Girnar peak is the highest in Gujarat with a height of 1117 meters.

## AREAS SERVED

Bhavnagar, Surendranagar, Ahmedabad, Rajkot, Jamnagar, Amreli, Junagadh and Porbandar districts of Gujarat are served by Bhavnagar division. The world famous Gir Lion Sanctuary is located in this Division.