

# Contribution of Indians in Kenya-Uganda Railway

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**Abstract:** The British government in Africa decided to build the railway from Kenya to Uganda to connect the interior parts. For this they needed a labour force on a large scale. The slavery, the system for obtaining cheap labour, was banished. Therefore British employed Indians on a contract basis to build the railway line. They were called 'indentured labours'. As the process started labourers faced many difficulties. This article describes how the Indians adjusted in the difficult situations while construction of Kenya-Uganda railway was going on. After the completion railway was useful to African society in many ways. The article explains the important role Indian indentured labours played in constructing the railway and later what changes the railway brought in the African society.

**Keywords:** railway, labour force, large scale, African society.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Migrating Indian population to East Africa was rarely interested in the agricultural sector. Indians who were settled were predominantly involved in commerce and craftsmanship, while crop production was mostly in the hands of Europeans. The profession in which Indians were working in East Africa was actually a big proof that they were skilled labours unlike free Indians in Fiji, Natal and in the West Indies Island. Many Indians settled in East Africa were the free Indian migrants who had migrated to East Africa independently and later settled there permanently. However many thousands of Indian coolies had also migrated to East Africa at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Chattopadhyaya, Haraprasad 1970, p. 5).

The 'Imperial British East Africa Company' (IBEAC) was founded in 1888 for the purpose of governing and developing East Africa colony (History World N.D). By 1896 the construction of railway track from Mombasa to Lake Victoria was started. It began at Mombasa in 1896, in 1899 it reached at Nairobi, in 1900 it was completed till Nakuru, which reached Kisumu at the coast of Lake Victoria (Kisumu was formerly known as Port Florence) in 1901 (Ogonda R.T. 1992, In Ochieng, William Robert & Maxon, Robert M. (Eds.), p.143). In the second stretch railway was built up till Kampala in 1903 (Maina, Kiarie 2011). Most of the credit goes to Indians who worked arduously, risked their lives in the areas of man-eating lions like Tsavo (Kenya) and that too on the small amount of fifteen rupees per month to build the railway. Some of the migrated coolies returned to India after the completion of their contracts, while others thought to stay behind who were then joined by other Indians migrated independently (Chattopadhyaya, , Haraprasad 1970, p. 5).



Railway officials and government dignitaries at the ceremony to begin the first construction of Uganda rail line on 30<sup>th</sup> May 1896

(Chao, Tayiana 2014).

## 2. REASONS BEHIND THE DEMAND OF INDIAN INDENTURE LABOUR

- i. One of the causes for the demand of Indian labour in East Africa is the existence of significant number of White colonizers who needed large number of workers to work on their farms. Low-cost and large-scale indenture labour from India were made available more into East Africa as compared to other parts of Africa in order to work on the farms and mines owned by Europeans.
- ii. India was the cheap source of labour because Indians used to work on low wages (Chattopadhyaya, Haraprasad 1970, pp. 11,12).
- iii. Moreover, India also had the capacity to provide vast number of engineers, skilled, semi-skilled labourers, and artisans as compared to other countries (Chao, Tayiana 2014).

The British knew the usefulness of Indians coolies to develop their colonies in Africa protectorate. The British, Germans, and French had farms of cocoa, rice, tea, coffee, sugar, and rubber etc. So they needed labourers to produce the crops. Most of the times, their first choice was the Indians whom the colonizers sent to African countries so that they could grow crops for the Europeans (Davids, Leo 1964, p. 386). With the help of Indian labours, the railway from Mombasa to Lake Victoria Nyanza, commonly known as 'Uganda Railway', was built (Chattopadhyaya, Haraprasad 1970, p. 5).

**Importance (objectives) of development of Mombasa Railway:** When construction of Railway from Mombasa to Uganda started, it wasn't only for commercial purpose but also for philanthropic, political, strategic, and other crucial reasons (Hamshere, C.E. 1968).

- i) Having control over the Nile River was very important for the British and Germans in order expand the empire. Therefore building a railway over it looked like a great strategy to both of them. Charles Miller writes in the book *The Lunatic Express*, "Whatever power dominates Uganda masters the Nile, the masters of the Nile rules Egypt, the ruler of Egypt holds the Suez Canal" (Miller, Charles 1971, p. 244).
- ii) From the point of view of developing a colony, the railway would have increased contact between African hinterlands and the outer world.
- iii) Slavery wasn't acceptable to the British colonizers. But it had to be replaced by some alternative system which would put a complete end to slavery. The construction of the railway made the indenture system more famous. And thus, it was helpful to end the practice of slave trade.
- iv) The British wanted to establish an easy way of transport for the natives, settlers, traders and missionaries. The railway would have reached the core areas of the country which would make it easier to carry goods to the markets in the rural areas.
- v) Creating commercial place for cash crops and making world markets available to them.
- vi) Railway was the one way to strengthen the rule over colonies, which was the political aim of the British.
- vii) By building the railway, the British authorities in East Africa wanted to win the hearts of the Germans and East Africans.
- viii) Running a colony needed money. The British saw the railway as a good way of earning revenue from which colonies could be run (Forster, P., Hitchcock, M. & Lyimo, F. 2000, pp. 48-51).
- ix) Bringing down the expenditure on administration at Uganda (Chattopadhyaya, Haraprasad 1970, pp. 333,334).

The 'British Foreign Office' issued a following statement on 20<sup>th</sup> December 1890 during the 'Second Ministry of the Marquis of Salisbury' in which the urgency of railway from Mombasa to Victoria Nyanza is very visible (Chattopadhyaya, Haraprasad 1970, p. 334).

"The Coast (of East Africa) is the outlet of the sea-borne Slave Traffic; the interior is the source from which it springs. The ivory and other produce are carried to the coast by captured slaves who, notwithstanding the activity of the British cruisers, are Shipped in Dhows and conveyed in considerable numbers to the markets of slave-owning countries. Experience has shown . . . that no ships, no coast-police can effectually stop the traffic and that the remedy is the establishment of interior stations and the constructions of roads and specially of railways which will provide cheap and safe transport. The imperial British East Africa Company, which undertook to open up East Africa to British influence and civilization is prepared to construct a Railway from Mombasa to Victoria Nyanza" (Chattopadhyaya, Haraprasad 1970, p. 334).

### 3. THE HISTORY OF UGANDA RAILWAY

Uganda railway is also known as ‘Lunatic Line’<sup>1</sup>. (Chattopadhyaya, Haraprasad 1970, pp. 333,334). Towards the end of 1891, orders were given to look for the possible chances of having a railway from Mombasa to Victoria Nyanza. In the first report of 1893 the required route for railway was released according to parliament paper C-7025 under the title of ‘Mombasa –Lake Victoria railway survey’. According to this report the railway line of 657 miles was needed to built. This report was found unsatisfactory and therefore Her Majesty’s government rejected it. Then on 1 May 1891, Sir Guilford Molesworth presented another report. But five-man committee for the Uganda Railway Project by Government was formed only in 1895. It comprised Sir Percy Anderson, Sir Montagu F. Ommammey, Sir Alexder M. Rendel, Sir John Kirk and Sir Henry Colville (Lubega, Henry 2016).

The five-man committee studied the reports presented by MacDonal and Molesworth and suggested the construction of a moderately equipped railway. In August 1895, the British Parliament voted to start the railway line construction. In 1896, the funds were approved for the Uganda Railway Act of 1896. The team of three-man was formed including Sir Percy Anderson as its Chairman, Sir Mongatu Ommanney and Sir G. L. Ryder to look after the work. However, project required a huge workforce to complete (Lubega, Henry 2016).

The proper steps were applied to select and appoint indentured coolies. Such as:

- i) They visited crowded cities and rural areas where they could get poor people who needed employment.
- ii) Then coolies who were selected for the plantations were brought to Calcutta depot so that they could be fully inspected.
- iii) After that, the number of years they would work for was decided and they would be given a free pass which they could also use while coming back (Davids, Leo 1964, p. 386).

In the railway project, thus a proper procedure was followed. It took various steps from the railway proposal (1891), to its sanctioning (1895), to raising the funds (1896). The first step in the construction process was taken under Sir Percy Anderson’s chairmanship (Forster, P. Hitchcock, M. & Lyimo, F. 2000, p. 83 / Sofer, Cyril & Sofer, Rhona 1955, pp. 48–51). In 1895, the ‘Third Ministry of the Marquis of Salisbury’ sanctioned the construction of the railway on a barren land of Africa. This was finished confounding the suspicions of British pessimists about its economic, political utility. Before the actual construction, the initial rough evaluation about the expenditure of project was done by British East Africa through the survey of an area on which railway was supposed to run. In this purpose one hundred Punjabi’s from India were shipped to safeguard those investigators working on the field against any probable hostility of local tribes. At first, the Africans were chosen to build the railway. But soon it had to be stopped because with the African labour the construction wasn’t going in the way the authorities expected. It became difficult to make uninterrupted supply of sufficient number of native workers. Therefore, Government of British East Africa finally resorted to import Indian coolies to build the railway (Chattopadhyaya, Haraprasad 1970, p. 335). When British started the survey of land for building the railway, the Zanzibar was the most important centre along the coastal line of East Africa (Hamshere, C.E. 1968).

#### *The Construction:*

George Whitehouse was appointed as the chief engineer of the project. On 11 December 1895, George and his team arrived at Mombasa and started their work in the next month. Till 30<sup>th</sup> May 1896, the first line near Kilindini was laid. The class ‘A’ second-hand engines were imported from India. The construction companies included Pauling and Company, Messrs King, Barraud and Burnless – which had a vast experience of successfully constructing railways in India, proposed a 3ft 6inch gauge (Lubega, Henry 2016).

Following are the terms of contracting and assigning Indian labours as approved by the Government of India:

1. The period of contract should not be of more than three years.
2. The coolie’s nature of work to be taken place in Africa should be recorded in contract in detail.
3. The payment should not be less than Rupees 15/- per month and labours were also eligible to receive the free rations besides the cash payment.

<sup>1</sup> The term Lunatic Express was coined by Charles Miller in his 1971 book *The Lunatic Express: An Entertainment in Imperialism*. Now even after the three decades, no other term best describes The Uganda Railway.

4. The payment should begin before from the date of embarkation from India.
5. The coolies had the right of a return-passage at the expenditure of Imperial British East Africa not only to India but also to the place of employment must be granted to coolies during six months of expiry period or before. In any condition, the expiration of the agreement must be secured to the contracted labours and should not be subjected to fine even by misconduct.
6. However, Chief Engineer of the railway has the right to cease the contract of the coolies even before the expiry date, if desired by the Imperial British East Africa Company. In that situation the would be given a prior notice one month before with the condition that it would also determinate the contract of the dependants of coolies involved along with him and wish to return to India.
7. Moreover, Coolies willing to return would get full wages till the time they reach India. Coolies would not face the financial burden, as Company would manage the fare of their return journey if they were willing to come back, up to the place where they had been recruited.
8. According to Kirk, British company would be answerable if any disability or death of the coolie takes place while under indenture. Therefore, it was also the responsibility of a Railway Authority to look after labour's family and other dependents in India (Chattopadhyaya, Haraprasad 1970, p. 336).

Indenture labour system started with the 'Indian Indenture Act of 1896'. On 24<sup>th</sup> January, 1896 first batch of 350 Punjabi's was recruited at Mombasa. All of them were from Punjab. From then until March 1897 almost four thousand Indian labours, craftsmen, and engineers were recruited for the indenture contract (Chao, Tayiana 2014). Imperial Government appointed the important position of Emigration Agent with approval of Government of Bombay at the port of Bombay or Karachi, to supervise coolies from which they were to sail. The Emigration Agent at Karachi looked after the buying and dispatching of the goods required mainly for the construction of Railway to Africa. It also carried out employment and shipping of the labours from Karachi to Africa. After the epidemic of 1897, the sailing port of Indian coolies was changed immediately for a limited period during the predominance of epidemic, from Bombay to Calcutta with the Epidemic Disease Notification No. 836 of 6<sup>th</sup> March 1897. The agent at Calcutta was also given added responsibility (Chattopadhyaya, Haraprasad 1970, pp. 335-336).

The British premier Lord Salisbury in October 1897 highlighted the political and military importance of railway in one meeting between Salisbury and the chief engineer of the project (Lubega, Henry 2016).

Salisbury said, "The line should be pushed on as soon as possible. It's a political necessity that we should get to the lake (Victoria) as soon as possible as the French were doing something on the Nile" (Lubega, Henry 2016).

The demand for more locomotives and cars increased as construction progressed. Again Indian Government was requested to send the same. But Indian Government was not ready to give away their latest engines. So it dispatched class 'F' engines of 1879 to East Africa. George Whitehouse had written in his diary that somehow 22 locomotives were made available by Indian Government to the construction company. They all were brought from India but many of them were not good enough and out-of-date to cope the needs of buiding a railway line (Lubega, Henry 2016).



The engines were imported from India. Most of them were second hand.

(Chao, Tayiana 2014)

Indian workers were acquired from different regions of India in which Punjab was predominant in the labour supply. Some coolies were imported from other places like Baluchistan, Makran, Sindh, North-Western India. Kirk had confirmed that 18,000 was the biggest size in the employment of coolies at one time (Chattopadhyaya, Haraprasad 1970, p. 335). Indian labour fitted well across all the criteria. Unskilled, semi-skilled, and skilled workers, engineers, artisans, etc. were also imported from the important ports of Bombay and Karachi (Forster, P. Hitchcock, M. & Lyimo, F. 2000, p. 83 / Sofer, Cyril & Sofer, Rhona 1955, pp. 48–51).

According to the report, 7,500 skilled workers and 20,000 unskilled workers were imported from India. But famine in 1899 led to the shortage of native labours (Lubega, Henry 2016). On the whole over 32,000 Indians were employed in construction and as many as 18,000 Indians were on the construction site at one time. Colonel J.H Patterson was an engineer of Uganda Railway. In 1898 the work had to be paused for three weeks as man-eating lions killed twenty eight Indians and uncounted number of Africans when entered 100 miles up the country. The workers successfully built up some part of the railway line through desserts and forests in the presence of merciless animals, flooded rives, mountain passes and wild tribes. However, man-eating lions created intense fear among all the labourers that they stopped working further towards the further extension of the railway. The eye witness of this brutality of lions, Terror got reduced to some extend when Colonel J.H Patterson killed some of the man-eating lions (Chattopadhyaya, Haraprasad 1970, pp. 337,338).

Two lion had created the terror for more than nine months. Therefor fear of lion was so intense that there was no choice but to stop the work for three weeks. In the beginning lions would not be always successful in hunting. But over a period of time they became expert to stalk men at work. Methods lions followed were unusual and well-timed that Indian labours began to believe that two lions are surely some devils who have entered the body of lions. Patterson was told that two lions were the angry spirits of two departed native chiefs who wanted to stop the construction of railway line I the country. And this is the reason spirits are protesting in this way to take revenge of the insults (Patterson, John Henry 1908, pp. 20-21). Patterson depicts the panic situation in the following words,

“A man-eating lion had taken up his quarters at a little roadside station called Kimaa and had developed an extraordinary taste for the members of the Railway staff. He was mostly daring brute, quite indifferent as to whether he carried off the station-master, the signalman or the points man; and one night, in his efforts to obtain a meal he actually climbed upon the corrugated iron sheets. At this, the terrified ‘baboo’ in charge of the telegraph instrument below sent the following laconic message to the Traffic Manager: ‘Lion fighting with station. Send urgent succour’. Fortunately, he (the lion) was not victorious in his fight with the station; but he tried so hard to get in that he cut his feet badly on the iron sheeting, leaving large bloodstains on the roof” (Patterson, John Henry 1908, pp. 282-283).

But man-eater was not killed. Therefore, unsecured atmosphere and consecutive attacks of lion on the railway employees continued for long (Chattopadhyaya, Haraprasad 1970, p. 340). Patterson writes,

“Another night, however, he succeeded in carrying off the native driver of the pumping-engine, and soon afterwards added several other victims to his list. On one occasion, an engine driver arranged to sit up all night in a large iron water-tank in the hope of getting a shot at him and had a loop-hole cut in the side of the tank from which to fire. But, as so often happens, the hunter became the hunted; the lion turned up in the middle of the night, over threw the tank and actually tried to drag the driver out through the narrow circular hole in the top through which he had squeezed in. Fortunately, the tank was just too deep for the brute to be able to reach the man at the bottom; but the latter was naturally half paralysed with fear and had to crouch so low down as to be unable to take anything like proper aim. He fired, however, and succeeded in frightening the lion away for the time being (Patterson, John Henry 1908, p. 283).

The problem of lions continued even after railway crossed Tsavo. After Nairobi railway began to proceed towards rift valley. This area again was more dangerous than the man-eaters in Tsavo. On 6<sup>th</sup> June 1900, lions pulled Charles Ryall, (superintendent) from his wagon and made him their food (Lubega, Henry 2016). According to George Whitehouse, the Chief Engineer, the 330 miles line from Mombasa to Nairobi was the most difficult to build. The area was plagued by most of the hardships such as, drought, disease, man eating lions, desertion etc. (Chao, Tayiana 2014).

In May 1899, construction of the railway reached Nairobi 326 km from the coast that later evolved into a vital port. In the same year the railway construction committee was moved to Nairobi from Mombasa (Kilindini), making it capital Nairobi. Administration office of the East African Protectorate was set up in Nairobi (Lubega, Henry 2016). However, the

sufferings of workers did not end with the man-eating lions. The extension of railway beyond Mombasa in 1899 led more sufferings due to marshy area. The epidemic of plague had to be brought in control quickly and effectively by Patterson to save the coolies (Chattopadhyaya, Haraprasad 1970, p. 339). In the beginning the first railway headquarters was at the Mombasa till 1899. But when train reached Nairobi in 1899, the railway headquarters were shifted to Nairobi. It was also a centre for transport where assembling and repairs of the materials took place before building line at Rift Valley (Ogonda R.T. 1992, p. 143). Patterson writes about the emergence and suppression,

“Nairobi was to be the headquarters of the Railway Administration; so there was an immense amount of work to be done in converting an absolutely bare plain. . . . into a busy railway centre. Roads and bridges had to be constructed, houses and work-shops built, turn-table and station quarters erected, a water supply laid on, and hundred and one other things done which go to the making of a railway township. Wonderfully soon, however the nucleus of the present town began to take shape, and a thriving bazaar sprang into existence with a mushroom-like growth. In this, however, a case or two of plague broke out before long; so I gave the natives and Indians who inhabited in it an hour’s notice to clear out, and on my own responsibility promptly burned the whole place to the ground” (Patterson, John Henry 1908, pp. 291-292).

The impediments in the construction work increased more as the railway was extended closer to a Lake Victoria and condition of coolies got worsen. The Railway authority could complete the construction within the span of six to seven years solely because of Indian indentured coolies and their hard work. They struggled hard for fifty-four hours per week to work on a small wages. They had a fighting spirit required to work relentlessly against malaria, scurvy, jiggers, dysentery etc. The Indian labours rapidly progressed the railway line from the coast to Nairobi in 1899 and to Lake Victoria in 1903 despite of all the dangers and terrors of man-eating lions of Tsavo. According to the Kirk’s estimation, the completion of railway lines could have taken at least twenty years if the Company would have relied wholly on native workers. Company made use of their full labour but refused them facilities required for normal and descent life. Indians had to take all pressure and go through all odds and risks of life to build the railway transport form Mombasa to Victoria Nyanza. It was again only Indians who volunteered to help the Railway Authority to run the trains on the newly built up railway line. The Indians were still then in danger of man-eating lions (Chattopadhyaya, Haraprasad 1970, pp.337-339).

According to engineer Preston that laying a track for the railway on the land of rift valley was easier than on the land after Nakuru because of cold and had a slope. In the favourable conditions the Indians would built link the 5,200 ft. of line in the span of one day (Lubega, Henry 2016). The commissioner of Uganda accepted that,

“The construction team suffered badly from wet and cold conditions in the highlands of the Mau, and then from the tropical fevers on the humid, swampy, flat lands of Kavirondo, approaching Lake Victoria” (Lubega, Henry 2016).

In all 31,983 Indians were recruited to build the railway : 6,724 exercised their option to remain and work in the protectorate once the construction of the railway was over, 2,000 of whom were employed to work in the railway departments (Chao, Tayiana 2014).. ---

On 19 December 1901, the Engineer Preston and his team built 10,400 ft of railway line ending at Port Florence (Kisumu) on Lake Victoria. On the next day chief engineer Whitehouse and Commissioner of East African protectorate (Kenya), Sir Charles Elliot witnessed the end of the project. The completion of project was declared to King Edward VII and premier Salisbury through one telegram. However, railway line was further extended till Kampala by 1903. The Uganda Railway Committee, which was setup to manage the work of construction, was abolished in September 1905 (Lubega, Henry 2016).

In the process of construction, the Indians faced many challenges and went through hardships, such as:

- i) Man-eating lions at Tsavo: The construction of the railways reached the Tsavo River. The bridge needed to be built up to reach its destination. In 1898, two man-eating lions attacked the workers while construction was going on in Tsavo. The labourers refused to work further till the authorities killed the lions. The man eaters of Tsavo were thus the most frightful experience for the Indian coolies.
- ii) The bloodshed in Kedong: Before the construction reached the Tsavo River, the attack on the railway workers by the Maasai tribe was another distressing incident that the workers had to go through. In November 1895, two Maasai tribal girls were raped. Out of fury, the Maasai tribes killed more than six hundred railway workers.

- iii) Tsetse Flies: The tsetse flies which bite and create a sleeping sickness in humans, disturbed the construction work for quite some time.
- iv) The outbursts of plague and malaria also harassed Indian labours. George Whitehouse said, "Moving further towards Nairobi malaria and black water fever took their toll until the railhead climbed high enough to go out of range of the mosquitoes" (Lubega, Henry 2016).
- v) Building the railway itself consisted of hazardous tasks. Broken ground was replaced by steel. Coolies had to take up risks like work with high explosives, compelling sunstrokes, tunnelling etc. (DeSanto, Dominic 2017).

In spite of these challenges, the Kenya-Uganda railway proved beneficial in so many ways after its completion.

- i) From the point of view of commerce, the railway reduced unnecessary hardships of the local people to a great extent. Merchants and buyers could reach the markets in the core areas comfortably. Because of the railway, local commuters could reach their destination easily and in less time. Thus, the railway reduced wastage of time and energy of everyone in East Africa.
- ii) Socially, now it was possible for people to visit faraway places more frequently as railway travel was easy. Within a few months, the Kenya-Uganda railway became a part of routine life.
- iii) The trade partners of East Africa were happy because of the easy connectivity. It boosted East Africa's economy. The relations between East Africa and its traders improved (Maina, Kiarie 2011).
- iv) The railway was also used for military purposes at the time of the First World War. Trains were helpful to the Britishers in defeating Germany in East Africa. Through the railway line, other colonies were contacted for help and they could access the British military easily. After some time, a luxurious train journey was also brought along, which is still being used.
- v) Postal Services – The postal services were restricted only to the coastal areas of East Africa before the construction of railway.. Mombasa had the base of postal business and the branch of post office was at Zanzibar. After the construction Zanzibar and Kenyan post services were combined and moved to port (Mombasa). As a result, postal services got developed and spread to the interiors of Kenya.
- vi) Telegraph: Though in Zanzibar telegraph was there since 1877, from 1895 IBEAC felt the need of developing of telegraphic line with the railway line. Telegraph was also confined to exteriors at first but as post began to expand, telegraphic line also grew in parallel railway services. Succeeding the railway construction Telegraph was introduced first at Kikuyu in 1898 and then in 1899 at Kisumu.
- vii) During 1898-99 at the time of famine, droughts, and infectious diseases it played a great role to save many lives of people. Railway was used to transport free rice from the coastal areas in such difficulties.
- viii) Railway also led to the end of slave trade in Africa because transportation by railway was cheaper than using human for carrying goods (Ogonda R.T. 1992, pp.135,136)
- ix) Railway paved way to the rural-urban migration and there was the growth of urbanisation. There was the growth of urban areas with the revolution of transport and Nairobi emerged as the significant city, a hub of transport and communication. It became the centre of trade and commerce and population.
- x) Most of the towns made a huge economic growth and emerged as the big urban centres (Ogonda R.T. 1992, p.143).
- xi) The British influence on land increased multiple times.
- xii) Other regions who were also in business with East Africa got economically benefitted.
- xiii) Some towns also got revenues because they were railway stops. Cities enroute gradually became big trading centres.
- xiv) Capabilities of the huge number of workforce increased because travelling by train wasn't much of a bother. As a result, East Africa became economically strong.
- xv) Tourism industry flourished because many people visited East Africa to see the newly built railway line (DeSanto, Dominic 2017).

The construction of no other railway was as dreadful as Kenya-Uganda railway. After the discovery of gold and diamond the railroads use increased more. Railway not only remained a commercial line but also evolved a tourist line. After some time the modern luxury trains were brought that are still in use (DeSanto, Dominic 2017).

In Kenya the proper transport routes were lacking. There were footpaths joining one village to another and centres only at the coasts such as Mombasa, Malindi, Kalifi, Lamu, Pate etc. So there was need also to construct roads so that wonderful Uganda railway could be connected to the coasts and interiors. This was done from 1902 onwards till 1940 roads. The Mombasa-Vanga, Mombasa-Malindi, Voitaveta and Witu-Mkonunbi were the first roads built up to increase the connectivity to Uganda railway. In 1903, the first road in western Kenya was built from Kisumu-Mumias (town in Kenya) roads (Ogonda R.T. 1992, pp. 130,131).

*Aftermath:*

The question of maintaining railway emerged as construction came to an end. To solve this problem it was required to make more use of railway and generate revenues. Therefore, European farmers were motivated to get settle in the East African highlands so that they will make use of the train to travel and to carry the crops they produced to the coast of East Africa (Ogonda R.T. 1992, pp.130-131,139).

Indians who were indentured to East Africa for the purpose of constructing Railway from Mombasa to Uganda gradually got spread in to the interiors of East Africa i.e Kenya, Uganda, Zanzibar etc. after the construction. They undertook different types of work in each region. Uganda did not have the enough number of job opportunities, though Kenya had. In Uganda vast land available for the agriculture. Uganda Government therefore, used this in order to allure and attract Indians to get settled there. Sir H. Hesketh Bell's, (then Governor of Uganda) had proposed this idea apparently in a letter he wrote to the Secretary of State for colonies on 15 April 1902. According to him, the endless but unoccupied land was available to be cultivated the crops like coffee, cotton, tea, rice, fibres, rubber, cocoa etc.

Bell mentions that, "I am convinced that settlements of such people in the fertile districts of the protectorate would very soon become self-supporting and prosperous. Under adequate organization they would afford valuable object-lessons to the natives of the Protectorate, and they would probably contribute in a notable degree to the rapid development of this territory. . ." (Chattopadhyaya, Haraprasad 1970, p. 341).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Thus, Indian labours worked very hard and faced many adversities to build the 'Lunatic Line'. Because of railway many changes in a good way took place in East Africa. It paved way of the settlements of Europeans and Indians. It made daily life of the East Africans easier.

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