

P R E F A C E

Autonomy and achievement

Transport and Communication are the two important wings of any modern government. So they are in India. In Indian context, Transport is synonymous with Railways.

2. Although they had taken their births at different points of time, the railways and communication - the Posts and Telegraphs developed as twins. For some time they were under the same government department - the department of communications. They got separated for administrative reasons. But their interdependence continued. Even today, bulk of the postal traffic is carried by the Railways. And Railways make use of the communication cables laid by the P&T department. It is on the performance of the Railways in running their trains fast and to time that the efficiency of postal department in effecting quick delivery of mails will largely depend. Equally important is the efficient maintenance of P&T cables for railways to run their trains well.

3. And then, these two public sector undertakings have assumed gigantic shapes - the two between themselves employing about 21 lakhs people - about 70% of the total Central Government employees.

4. Both have their field organisations spread out far and wide. When we think of Railways, we can't help thinking of lone railway employees guarding a busy level crossing gate or passing a train through a station located at a god-forsaken place. Similarly, when we think of Posts and Telegraphs Department, what passes our mind is the face of the poor post man, who turns up at remotest of villages with letters or money orders. There was perhaps, need to have more or less the same type of administrative structure for these two organisations, namely, the Railways and the Posts and Telegraphs Department. Both are having Board type of management. It was thought for these two organisations, autonomy in administrative and financial matters was essential to ensure satisfactory performance.

5. In this brief study of these two organisations, I have attempted to trace:

- (i) Evolution of the organisations of Railways and P&T Departments in India;
- (ii) a comparison between the Railway Board and P&T Board;
- (iii) Necessity of re-structuring the two Boards.

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