



## Restructuring of Railway Board

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### Why in News

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The Union Cabinet has approved **restructuring of the Railway Board**.

- The **number of Railway Board members** will be **reduced to five from existing eight**.
- The **eight railway services** will be **integrated** into a central service called the **Indian Railway Management Service (IRMS)**. All employees at the management level will come into the Railways through one service — the IRMS.

The Indian Railways is organised into service departments such as traffic, civil, mechanical, electrical, signal & telecom, stores, personnel, and accounts.

- This is in line with the recommendations of numerous committees, notably **Rakesh Mohan (2001)** and the **Bibek Debroy panel (2015)**.

### Railway Board

- The Railway Board was constituted in **1905** as the **chief administrative and executive body** to assist the Minister of Railways.
- It consists of a Chairman and **seven members** from different service departments such as traffic, civil, mechanical, electrical and signal & telecom.

### Restructured Board

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- The Board will now consist of **five members** – Chairman, who will act as a CEO, along with four members responsible for infrastructure, operations and business development, rolling stock and finance.
- There will also be a **Directorate General - Human Resources (DG - HR)** under the Chairman. The Board will also have some independent members, who will be highly distinguished professionals.
- The modalities and unification of the services will be worked out by the Ministry of Railways in consultation with the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT).

- The Railways will also **upgrade the 27 General Managers (GMs)** working at zonal levels to secretary level grade – highest in the government of India.

## Objective

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- The integration of service departments will **cut the clutter in decision making** and organise the working of the Railway Board and its zones along more commercial lines. This will also **end departmentalism**.

The lack of coordination between the maintenance and traffic staff is said to have played a role in the Khatauli rail mishap near Muzaffarnagar in August 2017.

- It will streamline railway operations and provide flexibility the way Railways deploy people. It is a **step towards corporatisation**.

**Corporatisation** refers to the restructuring or transformation of a state-owned asset or organization into a corporation.

**Source: TH**