Concerns in Railways Organisation

What is the issue?

\n\n

\n
- The Bibek Debroy Committee made its recommendation on railway reforms.
\n
- It needs a reassessment with a holistic approach, in terms of addressing the varied concerns in Railways.
\n

\n\n

What are the concerns in Railways?

\n\n

\n
- **Departmentalism** - The Bibek Debroy Committee refers to the negative aspects of functional specialisation as “departmentalism”.
\n
- Departmentalism is a major constraint for bringing about rapid change in the Railways organisation.
\n
- This manifests itself in the form of unhealthy competition amongst departments.
\n
- **Competition** - They compete for appropriating a larger share of scarce resources.
\n
- Competition for usurping a larger share of key general management posts also exists.
\n
- This is for better access to power, authority etc.
\n
- **Personnel** - Narrow departmental goals are pursued at the cost of organisational goals and objectives.
\n
- Resultantly, there is lack of team work and cohesion.
\n
- Departmentalism seems to mix up the issue of career progression with the

issue of departmental bias.
\n
- These are related issues, but it’s important to address them separately to find a solution to “departmentalism”.
\n
- **Cadres** - Currently the personnel for each of the departments are recruited as distinct cadres.
\n
- This takes place through the civil services examination for the four non-engineering disciplines.
\n
- For the five engineering disciplines, engineering services examinations are conducted.
\n

\n\n

What are the concerns with the recommendations?

\n\n

\n
- The Debroy Committee make suggestion for two services, by **merging the different cadres.**
\n
- One, recruited through the civil services examination and the other through the engineering services examination.
\n
- Merger of cadres would help resolve the inter-cadre tussle for top positions.
\n
- It is also expected to free managerial behaviour of departmental bias.
\n
- **Concerns** - However, the departments would still exist, and so would departmental goals.
\n
- So how far would single cadre or just two cadres lead everyone to work towards the organisational goal is uncertain.
\n
- Also, there are technical concerns in the merging of the cadre.
\n
- Decisions taken by non-technical personnel on technical matters would remain a concern.
\n
- Merged cadres may not necessarily lead to more focus on organisational goals rather than departmental goals.
\n

\n\n

What is the way forward?

\n\n

\n
- The merger of cadres is a major surgical intervention proposed by the Debroy Committee.
\n
- It is a possibly way of resolving career progression issues but not coordination issues.
\n
- Strengthening all coordination mechanisms that exist and the creation of such mechanisms where they do not exist is crucial.
\n
- So, unification of performance metrics across departments and merger of indices of performance is essential.
\n
- Departments can thus work synchronously towards the goals of the whole organisation.
\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: Indian Express

\n

