INTRODUCTION

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A number of small rail links constructed by various companies from 1860 eventually emerged as two major Railways viz., Eastern Bengal Railway and Assam Bengal Railway (1). The single line rail route from Calcutta to Assam up to Porbandar (now in Bangladesh) was completed as early as 1860 and its extension to Goalundo (now in Bangladesh) was completed in 1864 - and it reached Amingaon (the north bank of Brahmaputra river facing Guwahati) in 1910. This was the main line of the old 'Eastern Bengal Guaranteed Railway' Company and various other Railway Companies. The link between Amingaon and Pandu with a Ferry across the river Brahmaputra was established in 1910. The 'Assam Bengal Railway' developed its network in the last decade of the 19th Century linking Guwahati to Tinsukia via Lumding and Chittagong (now in Bangladesh) to Lumding through Hill section between Lumding and Badarpur. This Railway covered the network as the South Bank of the river Brahmaputra by 1903. This link between Assam and rest of the Country was made possible by 1910 by ferry over Brahmaputra river between Amingaon - Pandu linking 'A.B.Railway' with 'E.B.Railway'.

(1) History of Indian Railways - (Ministry of Railways - Railway Board, 1960).
The other small Railways like the 'Bengal - Dooars Railway' from the east bank of river Tista to Madarihat near Hasimara was laid in stages from 1893 to 1903.

The 'Assam Railway' and Trading Company Ltd., opened its rail network in the far north-eastern corner of the country in 1882 connecting the Tea Estates and the Coal Fields to the steamerghat at the Brahmaputra river at Dibrugarh. Ledo was connected in 1884(1). This was named as 'Dibrugarh - to Dibru-Sadiya Railway' from Dibrugarh to Ledo via Tinukia which was an isolated railway system in 1882 with the nearest Indian Railway network at Goalando at about 1100 Kms. away at that time.

The 'Darjeeling - Himalayan Railway', a narrow gauge (with toy train) railway was constructed by the D.H.Railway Company Limited in 1881(2).

All these system came to be integrated as one Railway system due to the exigencies of the Second World War broke out in the year 1942. The management of the 'Assam Bengal Railway' was taken over by the Government and amalgamated with the 'E.B.Railway' forming a new Railway called the 'Bengal Assam Railway' (3). The

(1) History of Indian Railways, Ministry of Railway, Rly.Board.
(2) Smith J.B. - The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway. pp-15
(3) Ganguli B.C. - Strengthening of Assam Rail Link - Chapter I pp-13
'Dorhat Provincial Railway' was added to the 'B.A. Railway' in 1943 with the branch line from Mariani to Neamatighat on the bank of river Brahmaputra via Jorhat, now in the Sibsagar district of Assam. Besides, 'Katakhal (now in Cachar District)-Lalabazar Railways' opened in 1923 and A.B. Railway was managing the system. The 'Chaparmukh - Silghat (now Nowgong District) Railway' was opened in 1920 - which was under the management of M/s Martin Burn Ltd., simultaneously with A.B. Railway. The above two sections are still owned by those companies and managed by the Indian Railways for obvious reason.

With the partition of India in 1947, the Bengal Assam Railway system had to be divided according to the political boundaries and as a result the 'Assam Railway' came into being on and from 15th August, 1947 (1). In order to restore quickly the rail links disrupted by partition, the Assam Rail link project taken up in 1948 was completed in record time by early 1950. With the re-organisation of the Indian Railways in the year 1952 into six Railway Zones the 'Assam Railway' was merged with the 'North Eastern Railway' and 'Pandu Region'. During the year 1952 to 1958, the control of the rail network in this region was exercised from N.E.Railways' Headquarters at Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh.

(1) Ibid
In the fifties, traffic developed considerably and for the administrative and other difficulties to be managed from a Headquarters at Gorakhpur - it was felt to bifurcate the Railway into another zona. Thus was born the North East Frontier Railway on 15th January, 1956 with its Headquarters at Maligaon (now in Guwahati) Pandu.

The N.F. Railway was centrally located at Maligaon with Manihari and Katihar as the metre gauge inter-change points with the adjoining Eastern and North Eastern Railway respectively and Khejuriaghat (now chamagram) as the broad gauge inter-change point with N.F. Railway.

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANISATION OF N.F. RAILWAY

The fabric of the N.F. Railway was constituted on district system at the time of the formation. From 1st May, 1969, the system of working on the railway was re-organised on Divisional pattern with Divisional Hd. Qrs. located at (i) Katihar (in Bihar) (ii) Alipurduar Jn. (in North Bengal) & (iii) Lumding (in Assam).

Besides, an operating division was set up at Tinsukia (Assam). Apart from that there are two sub-divisions to enumerate the proper administration of two remote sections viz., Badarpur sub-division, an important rail link between Tripura and Assam through the hill range of North Cachar including Cachar District of Assam. The Second is Rangapara North sub-division - which has been
extended to Murkongselek linking the remote portion of Arunachal Pradesh with Assam.

The Chief Executive of the entire N.F.Railway is the General Manager and all the Departmental Heads are responsible to him so far as their Department concerned. The Additional General Manager (Operation) and Additional General Manager (Technical) are the recent inclusion in the N.F.Railway's executive list with specific functions to assist the General Manager in the Operation (including Commercial) and Technical functions respectively of the N.F.Railway.

The Divisional Administrative Executives of N.F.Railway are designated as Divisional Railway Managers. Accounts Office and the Divisional Security Office is, however, controlled by the Divisional Officers in-charge of those departments. The Divisional Railway Manager is assisted by a number of Divisional Officers who are in Junior Administrative grade/or in Senior Scale. Under them, there are Assistant Officers/Class II Officers. (The detailed classification will be dealt in separate chapter). Although various divisional Officers are under the Administrative control of the Divisional Railway Managers, they are responsible for their Technical efficiency of their respective branches to the Head of Departments at Headquarters at Maligaon.
Apart from the divisions – portion of N.F.Railway has area controlling office at New Jalpaiguri (in Katihar Division), New Bongaigaon (in Alipurduar Jn. Division), New Gauhati (Lumding division) and at Tinsukia under the charge of Area Officers of Senior Scale/District rank.

Since we are concerned with the Personnel Administration of N.F.Railway the organisational factor of which is also to be studied. The Chief Personnel Officer is the Head of Department of Personnel Administration. He is assisted by an Additional Chief Personnel Officer and other Senior and Junior Scale Officer at the Headquarters – responsible for the technical efficiency of their individual sections. For approaching to the structure of official cadre in the Railway Administrative Organisation – the following notes are essential to be mentioned. This, of course deals in the Administrative cadre of Zonal Railways including N.F.Railway and not all the services of the Railways.

Ever since 1949-50 when a number of Company managed Railways were taken over by the Government and re-organised, there has been tremendous increase in traffic and other activities handled by the Railway Administrations. Introduction of sophisticated equipments and growing demands from industry and trade have been the other challenges faced by officers placed at higher level (1). But increase

in Officers cadre at higher levels had not kept pace with the increase in the total number of employees and higher workload due to increase in traffic etc. The ratio of officers to staff on the Railways, therefore, was the lowest compared to other Government Services and this was pointedly mentioned by the study team (Railways) of the Administrative Reform Commission (1). Apart from this study team, the Railways Accidents Enquiry Committee, the Railways Convention Committee and the Third Pay Commission also noted the inadequacy of higher grade posts to provide promotional avenues to Railway Officers and recommended their improvements.

The Administrative Reform Commission recommended that the cadres of various services should be reviewed every three years. Their recommendation was accepted by the Government of India and as a result thereof the first review of Indian Railways services was completed in 1973-74. There has been some delay in the Second review. However, it has been possible to accomplish the formidable task in a comparatively short period and the Ministry of Railways has had the statutory distinction of implementing the approved proposals of the Cabinet before the dawn of 1981.

A comprehensive review of the eight organised Railway Group 'A' (Class I Service other than Indian Railway Medical Service) was made by the Railway Board and as per the procedure prescribed by the Government of India, the

(1) Ambedkar, P. - Indian Railways: A study in Public Utility Administration - Chapter III PP - 156
proposals were submitted to the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms in 1978. These proposals were examined threadbare and after prolonged discussions at various levels, spread over a period of time, a brief was prepared and placed before the cadre Review Committee which is headed by the Cabinet Secretary and comprises of the Secretary(Personnel), the Secretary, Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, the Secretary, Defence, The Chairman Railway Board and the Financial Commissioner of Railways. The cadre review committee set up a working group composed of the Secretary to the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms, Secretary in the Cabinet Secretariat and Director, Management Services, Railway Board, to go into the functional requirements of the posts at the Divisional and Zonal Railway levels, seen in the perspective of their management organisation as existing and as considered essential for the future tasks of Railways. 

After taking an overall view of the organisation and management structure of Railways, a paper was submitted to the Cabinet and they approved the proposals to fill in the structural gaps so as to introduce essential administrative reforms in the systems and for improving the efficiency. A distinctive feature of the restructuring scheme approved by the Cabinet has been to provide avenues of promotion.

(1) Report of the cadre review committee-(Vol-1) 1978
to officers belonging to not only Group 'A' and 'B' but also to Group 'C' since the benefit of such upgradation resulted in multiplier effect in the promotion prospects within Class III (Group 'C') as well as to the various higher grades.

The following tables would indicate the Zonal and Divisional cadre structure as it obtained before the latest review (1).

Illustrative cadre strength of Senior Administrative and Junior Administrative Grade – before and after the recent upgradation at the Zonal Headquarters (including N.F.Railway Headquarters):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Before SA</th>
<th>JA</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>After SA</th>
<th>JA</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civil Engineering</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T.T. &amp; C.D. Operating</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signal &amp; Telecomm</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stores</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>Personnel</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Administration</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: - Posts below Junior Administrative grade have not been shown and there are a number of Senior Scale and Junior Scale/Class II posts to assist the Administrative officers.

The above was the position of the Headquarters of N.F.Railway at Maligaon prior to 31-12-80. New posts in the Senior and Junior Administrative cadre is being ordered to be created by the recent revised policy of Ministry of Railways, Railway Board.

(1) All these Departments are there in the N.F.Railway (as in other Zonal Railways) for the management of the entire N.F.Railway Organisation.
Illustrative cadre strength of Senior Administrative and Junior Administrative Grade before and after the recent upgradations at the Divisional Headquarters of N.F. Railway:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civil Engineering</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T.T. &amp; C.D. Operation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signal &amp; Telecomm.:</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stores</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Administration</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 + 1*</td>
<td>1 + 1*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(* in Rs. 1800 - 2250/- grade)

Note: (1) Posts below Junior Administrative Grade have not been shown and there are a number of Senior Scale and Junior Scale/Class II posts to assist the Administrative officers.

(2) So far as Stores Department is concerned, the posts are operated in the Depots only and therefore, not shown in the above statement.

(3) Some more Senior Scale posts are expected to be placed in J.A. grade in various Department as per recent upgradations. (1)

The Divisional Administrative Officers are under direct control of the General Manager and are responsible to him for their respective Department concerned. The Staff other

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(1) Ibid.
than Officers working in the Divisions are controlled and supervised by the Officers of the division and their personnel matters are also dealt with in the respective divisions.

The General Manager of N.F.Railway has been relieved of certain duties by providing Additional Head of Departments in the various disciplines - whose working is now co-ordinated by Additional General Manager - who report to the General Manager directly supervising the work of various Departments. The organisational structure of N.F.Railway is given in the Annexure 'A'.

The Divisional Railway Managers, who is now placed in the Senior Administrative Grade, has been provided the assistance of Additional Divisional Railway Managers. It is an important feature of the above structure is that the Area Officers with adequate status and powers at places not normally covered by the Divisional Headquarters of N.F.Railway. The Area Officers of N.F.Railway are almost in the Senior Scale /Grade with certain powers and functions(1). One thing may be noted that the Indian Railways Medical Service and Railway Protection Force cadre are not mentioned in the above illustration since their cadre structure is under consideration of the Ministry of Railways. It is hoped that these will be finalised shortly.

(1) Ibid
The re-structuring of the cadre of Railway Officers, the benefit of which has percolated down the line right upto Group 'C' (Class III) including the multiplier effect within Group 'C' posts, has infused a sense of satisfaction among the family of Railwayman all over the country and operating performance in the recent months, has shown signs of improvement. As a Zonal Railway, the N.F.Railway has its due share in the re-structuring of the officers cadre.

SCOPE & AREA OF IMPORTANCE

By 'Personnel' we mean a body of persons employed in some public service and the 'Personnel Administration' is concerned with variety of problems attached to those public service. The problems which enter into the complex of personnel administration policies are (i) Classification of services (ii) Employment/Recruitment (iii) Training (iv) Wage & Salary and other allowances (v) Opportunities of Promotion (vi) Staff relation (vii) Retirement etc. The Personnel Administration of N.F. Railway is concerned with the aforesaid problems and all sorts of services rendered to entire persons engaged in this Railway.

The scope of our study covers not only the administrative organisational structure but also the major activities of the N.F.Railway in the field of
Personnel Administration, which includes staff strength and other aspects relating to their service conditions etc. Practically the scope of study in the field of Personnel Administration is vast and wide-ranged. But our study is oriented only with the subjective and objective aspects and other personnel problems of the employees engaged in the entire N.F. Railway Administration.

An important feature of the study carefully deal with the theoretical aspects, issues and practical implications of the 'Personnel' of an organisation like N.F. Railway along with other problems attached to it.

A brief survey in this context might be helpful in making an assessment.

The management level on the N.F. Railway Administration is comprised of Class II ('B') & Class I ('A') Services. The class II Service which is at the lowest management levels consists of Assistant Officers in each department. Unlike other Central Government establishments, all the posts in Class II Railway Service are manned by personnel promoted from subordinate ranks of Class III ('C') service. The next layer of service namely Class III ('C') covers all such categories as Clerks, Station Masters, Guards, Drivers, Ticket Collectors etc., to whom the execution of the policies of the N.F. Railway Administration rests. At the lowest level, there is considerable number of employees working
as Peons, Khalasi, Cabinman, Gangman etc., which constitutes the Class IV ('D') service of the Railways.

The total number of Employees of the N.F.Railway is about 88,142 (As on 31-12-80) which includes 51,451 Class IV, about 36,103 Class III, about 328 Class II and about 260 Class I. Cost per capita comes to ₹5937 and the capital investment is 226.26 crores upto the end of 1978-79. The number of employees is changing with the development and expansion of the N.F.Railway.

The personnel Administration of N.F.Railway covers the Personnel matters of all the Departments including Divisions and Areas. For the Administrative convenience, the personnel department has been divided into several functional wings - entrusted with individual work. (This will be discussed in due course of our study). The Chief Personnel Officer as the Head of the Personnel Administration Department is responsible to the General Manager in the staff Personnel Management of entire N.F.Railway including the Officers. He is assisted by an Additional Chief Personnel Officers supported by a Deputy Chief Personnel Officer(G) at Headquarters level. Apart from them, another Junior Administrative Officer is there to assist CPO, designated as 'Officer-on-Special Duty(IR)" at the Headquarters at Maligaon. An illustrated Organisational Administrative frame position of the Personnel
Administration Branch of N.F.Railway Headquarters at Maligaon is given in Annexure 'B' (as on 31-12-80).

Divisional Administrative position of the Personnel Administration are: Senior Divisional/Divisional Personnel Officer or Assistant Personnel Officers are placed under the Divisional Railway Manager of respective Division. They are responsible for the staff matter of the respective division to the DRM — although they have direct link with the Headquarters personnel branch in all policy matters.

Personnel matters relating to all the officers including Divisions/Areas are dealt in the Establishment (Gazetted) Sub-section of the Personnel Management Branch at Headquarters. Transfer, posting and promotion etc. of the Executives upto the Junior Administrative level are also dealt with in the Headquarters under the instruction of Railway Board (New Delhi). As recommended by Central Pay Commission — the Administrative Officers of the Railways are sub-divided to (a) Senior Administrative (b) Intermediate Administrative and (c) Junior Administrative. District/Divisional Officers (excepting Divisional Railway Managers/Divisional Superintendents) are those who are drawing pay on the scale applicable to Senior Scale Officers. These Officers belong to Class I Railway Service (details will be discussed in the classification chapter) with an exception to those who has
been promoted from Assistant rank to a Senior Scale by dint of selective examination.

The promotion transfer etc. of the senior scale officers (both Class I and Class IIa Services) are also maintained in the Headquarters (at Maligaon) as per instruction of approval of the Railway Board. If, however, any change is essential in the position of the Officer regarding posting or transfer of the officer will be done with the approval of the Railway Board. In case of Class II Junior/Assistant Officers - the changes in the position, promotion, transfer and posting are done as suggested by the concerned Departmental Head and approved by the General Manager of the N.F.Railway.

In the Divisions of N.F.Railway there is a Senior Divisional Personnel Officer (of Senior scale) at Lumding Division under the DRM/Lumding. One Divisional Personnel Officers (of Senior Scale) each at Katihar and Alipurduar Division under the DRM. The DPO's are responsible to Chief Personnel Officer at Headquarters at Maligaon as a understaff of him in staff personnel matters.

There are three Assistant Personnel Officers at Katihar Division, one at New Jalpaiguri (Area) under Katihar Division, three each at Lumding and Alipurduar Divisions under the DRM's. One Assistant Personnel Officer is there at Tinsukia Division under the Divisional Superintendent (Transportation) on independent charge in staff personnel matters of the Division. Two Assistant
Personnel Officers are posted one each in the Railway Workshop at New Bongaigaon and at Dibrugarh town under the Works Manager with independent charge of staff matters of the workshops only.

From the above it may be seen that the Personnel Administration of the N.F.Railway has a widespread organisation dealing with the personnel matters of its staff as a whole. But in the practical field the personnel Administration is performing the work on the line of rules and regulation provided by the Ministry of Railways - Railway Board. Even if a little change or alteration required - the same has to be referred to Railway Board for clarification/decision. However, in our field of study - we shall have a detailed discussion of this issue along with other in the preceding chapters.

The Personnel Administration Branch of N.F.Railway deals with all the staff personnel matters of entire N.F.Railway through (about) 25 sections and sub-sections in the Headquarters at Maligaon. With a staff strength of 1175 (approx.) Class III clerical staff including the division - the Personnel Administration branch of N.F. Railway deals with the matters relating to staff personnel matters. Out of 1175 employees -335 (1) (approx.) persons are engaged at Headquarters at Maligaon excluding Class IV and Typists.

(1) These figures are of 1978-79 - maintained in the statistical branch of N.F.Railway.
Right from appointment of a person till his retirement - all the matters relating to his personnel service to the N.F. Railway, is being dealt with in the personnel branch - through different sections and sub-sections entrusted with the particular job. The detailed sectional functions will be dealt with elsewhere during the course of our study.