FORMATION OF RAILWAYS IN INDIA

Transport is an important infrastructure in the developmental process of a country. The progress of a country depends upon the availability of a viable system of transport facilities. Without a proper means of transport and communication it may not be possible for any Government to administer a vast country like India. Indian Railways played a vital role in the economic development and national integration of our country.¹

India's life line is her Railways. It is the basis of modern civilization. The history of our nation's growth begins with the construction of Railway lines. The genesis goes back to a hoary past. The invention of the wheel was a turning point in the history of mankind and the archaeologists relate it to Indus Valley. The earliest source of power is man assisted by animals. Road and track were as old as civilization.²

India had been famous for her knowledge of road engineering from a very early period. But in the case of Railways, it was an experiment in England and in some other parts of Europe which brought Railways to India. India is held together not only by the silken bonds of our culture and constitution, but also by the ribbons of steel on which it roll day and night unremittingly.³

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World’s First Train

By the end of the 18th century steam engines were widely used to drive machinery in factories and to pump water in mines. Though James Watt is generally known as the father of the stationary steam engine, Robert Trevithick was the originator of the steam locomotive. Though the earliest locomotive was built in 1804, but it was only in 1825 that the first train was run for the public. The first Indian Railway rolled on its tracks just 28 years after the world’s first train had made its initial successful run in England.

In the 16th century, crude railways consisting of horse drawn wagons were used in European and English mines. In the 18th century cast iron rails were used. In England, steam power replaced horse power with the effort of Engineers John Blankenship and Richard Trevithick between 1797 and 1813. In 1820, George Stephenson built the 22 mile Stockton to Darlington Railways, a steam powered locomotive. The Stockton and Darlington Railway made history as the first railway handling public traffic.

The Ancient Greeks have discovered that a man can pull a load eight times greater in a railed way than a normal road. The English used trucks drawn by horses along the highway. The Liverpool- Manchester line laid in 1830, gave rise

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to a number of projects and Europe realized that a new tool was in their hands for the future.\footnote{Aruna Awasthi, \textit{History and Development of Railways in India}, Deep & Deep Publication, New Delhi, 1994, p.8.}

In Britain the Railroad enthusiasts dreamt of covering the earth with cast iron rails. A few parts of the world seemed so desperately in need of a new invention and India, Britain's colony, needed it most.\footnote{Daniel R. Headrick, \textit{The Tools of the Empire}, Oxford University Press, New York, 1981, p.181} The Railways were England's gift to the world. The period between 1832-1867 was known as the age of coal iron and Railways.\footnote{G.M. Trevelyan, \textit{English Social History, A Survey of Six centuries – Chaucer to Queen Victoria}, Oxford University Press, London, 1986, pp.531-532.}

The English came to India in the beginning of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century. For over a century they quietly went about their business enjoying Indian hospitality. The decline of the Mughal Empire enabled the British to conquer India. British trade with India, was one of the motives for the construction of Railway lines, routed through the major Indian ports.\footnote{Sibnarayan Ray, (ed.) \textit{Selected Works of M.N. Roy}, Vol. I 1917, P.22.}

Before the British conquest, India had come under Muslim rule. But they never attempted to bring about major changes in Indian life and in system of administration. The British attempted to bring changes in India. The British become a part of our culture and their policy decisions were made only at London.\footnote{B.V. Rao, \textit{Socio-Economic Change}, Government of India, New Delhi, 1989, p.23.}
The British introduced works of Regeneration

The British introduced works of regeneration. They played a dual role in attaining the objectives which were both destructive and regenerative. Works of regeneration was seen in the construction of Railways, Post and Telegraphs, introduction of Western Education and the establishment of political unity. Two events of great significance occurred at the time when India was ruled by Britain. The first was the Industrial Revolution which increased Britan's demand for raw materials and the other was the loss of her American colonies. On the basis of these two aspects, the imperial policies were framed by the British. The Industrial Revolution was symbolized by “Railways”. The Victorians equated it with the age of progress and civilization. In the words of a celebrated epigrammatist Sydney Smith, “Railways are abolishing time, distance and delay.”

British Economic History

The important stage of the British Economic History is described as the ‘Industrial Revolution’. The industrialization had completely changed the activity of the mercantile world. The British merchants and industrialists were dissatisfied with the existing dimension of Indian foreign trade. They were clamoring for better transport facilities, so that the immense Indian market might be fully utilized and raw materials speedily carried to Britain.15

Prior to 1823, the British Government did not give importance to the improvement of communication. Trucks were used by those who collected stones


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for dams and embankments. Even the main street of the largest town was not suitable for wheels. The only available roads were mountain passes for artillery and they too remained generally damaged due to rain.\textsuperscript{16} Millions of tons of agricultural commodities were carried on by people on their head. In dry weather, crude carts, and in other occasions, bullocks, camels, donkeys and horses were used. Roads were woefully inadequate and metal lead roads were in ruins.\textsuperscript{17}

In villages the bullock cart formed the cheapest means of transport.\textsuperscript{18} Grains could not be taken to distant places. They were often pilfered. Bales of cotton carried to Bombay arrived dirty with road dust or soaked with rain. Only precious cargos of opium, indigo and shellac could bear the cost of long distance freight which was exorbitant.\textsuperscript{19}

It was the general dissatisfaction with inland transport facilities that led to the first proposal for Railways in India. In 1830, mails from England were carried by ships of the East India Company. The service was slow and unreliable and once ashore the subsequent distribution was bad.\textsuperscript{20}

The advent of steam leviathan marked a new chapter in the economic life of India as it facilitated speedy locomotion. The Charter Act of 1833 threw open the door to expansion of trade and investment of British capital in India. The private fortune earned by private trade constituted a valuable addition to the capital resources of Britain in the initial period of her industrialization.\textsuperscript{21}

With the accumulation of capital from trade powerful machine based industries sprang up in England. The English industrialists were faced with problem of rapid disposing of the products and securing raw materials from India.\(^{22}\) Of the total capital invested by Britain in the 19\(^{th}\) century in Europe, America and the other colonies, the economic historians had assigned a major place to the investment in Railways. The capital was raised mainly in England and the Government of India was also willing to invest British capital for the imperialistic purpose. Daniel Thorner consulting Engineer had claimed that the capital moved from England to India formed the single unit of international investment in the 19\(^{th}\) century.\(^{23}\)

The Company’s authorities were afraid of huge sum investments because the people of India were poor and conservative to yield to such construction work.\(^{24}\) Since India had a low rate of saving and poorly developed capital market the companies looked to Britain for capital. Around this time the colonial objectives changed from seizing Indian market. Capital investment in home in this state had reached a saturation point with the complete victory of machine industry in the early branch of production and the construction of basic network of the Railways. So the import of the capital to India was encouraged. The capital imported was mainly for Railways construction.\(^{25}\)

But the private investors were hesitant to raise funds without an assurance or State guarantee of reasonable interest on their investment in railways. The investment came almost entirely from Britain.\(^{26}\) But the risk was borne by the

\(^{25}\) Irfan Habid, “Colonialisation of India’s Economy” 1757 – 1900, Quoted in K.A.Manikumar’s *British Colonialism and Drain of Wealth*, Unpublished Article, 1900, p.4.
Indians whose taxes paid the difference between the five percent guarantee and the lower rate of profit. The guaranteed companies consistently earned much throughout the 19th century.  

Almost all the private capital spent on Indian rail-roads was raised in Britain. Of the 50,000 holders of shares, only 400 were Indians. Shares could only be traded in London and hence Indian capital played a negligible part in the construction. There were two waves of investment in the mid 1840’s and mid 1860’s. Since it was a heavy investment the need to import capital was recognized by the Government with a guarantee of 5% interest and other exception like exclusion from local tax. 

The successful running of Liverpool- Manchester Railways and the profits which it accompanied attracted the attention of the capitalists and wealthy persons who were in search for areas to invest their capital. The first idea of railways was conceived in 1831-32 in the Presidency of Madras when it was proposed before the Select Committee of the Parliamentary Affairs of East India Company, to improve the deplorable state of communication and commerce. It was Captain A.P. Cotton, a civil engineer and R.M. Stephenson, a bridge engineer, who discovered the desirability of rail-roads in India emphasizing their superiority over other means of communication. 

In 1836 Captain Sir Arthur Cotton, suggested that the problems of communication might be solved by a system of cheap Railways to be worked by cattle for bringing materials for the road into the town of Madras. The Madras rail

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road was not a success. It was only an experimental step. The idea was abandoned in 1839.  

The Court of Directors of the East India Company were lukewarm in their response to the proposals they received from the promoters as they anticipated the failure of the railway projects in India. But their indifference was short-lived due to the pressure exerted by the Railway promoters, financiers, mercantile houses and textile manufacturers of Lancashire. Hardinge, the Governor General of India (1844-48) reported on the remarkable facilities for building Railways, which would be of immense value to the Government, Commerce and Military.

Macdonald Stephenson made a proposal to the Bengal Government in 1844 for a Railway line from Calcutta to the North West Frontier. The European businessmen from Bombay suggested a line across the Western Ghats. The magnificent geographical situation of Bombay with this natural harbor made it an obvious point of entry into India when the activities of the East India Company were centred in Calcutta.

First Indian Railway

The first proposal for Railways in India began in Bombay in 1843. An Inland Railways Association was formed in January 1845. In the same year the first step towards the organization of a company entitled the Great Indian Railways to be taken in London. John Chapman, promoter of the Greater Indian Peninsula

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Railways studied the records of Indian House in Westminster and in August 1845 John Chapman arrived in Bombay to inspect the site.\textsuperscript{37}

Lord Hardinge, the Governor General of India, advised the Court of Directors to give liberal concession to private capitalists without waiting for proof that Railways will yield reasonable profit. On 7\textsuperscript{th} May 1845, the Court of Directors sent a despatch to the Governor General in which the policy for the construction was laid down in detail. This despatch formed the first official recognition of the desirability of Railways in India by the Company officials.\textsuperscript{38}

The Indians, however in the beginning opposed the introduction of an expensive undertaking. The economic historian Romesh Chandra Dutt condemned the construction of Railways as a ‘wasteful expenditure’. Sir John Lawrence, the Governor General (1864-69) advocated the importance of irrigation. Some other physical features presented difficulties because India was not a flat country like Russia nor was a small one like England.\textsuperscript{39}

**East India Company**

Even the promoters of Railway companies in Britain insisted on a guarantee because they were so uncertain about the return of the capital in an alien land.\textsuperscript{40} The Court of Directors of East India Company were afraid of the geographic and climatic condition of India. Even though problems were expected from the personnel, the Government of India decided to introduce Railways network with a definite purpose of establishing their political hegemony, military superiority and commercial supremacy. The Court of Directors finally decided to lay Railway lines

\textsuperscript{40} T.V. Ramanujan, *Op. cit.*,p.3.}
inspite of early opposition from the promoters and investors. Advocating Railways for India, the London Times in 1847, however, wrote: “Railways would end famine, check sickness, provide new impulses and opportunities for civilization. Vincent Hardinge, the Governor General of India, emphasized that the Railways would increase the British wealth and improve economic condition.”41

The First proposal for the construction of Railways was made by Robert Macdonald Stephenson to the East India Company for building Railways. He became the Agent and Managing Director of East India Railway which was formed in 1845. It was one of the first railway companies in India. The other one was Greater Indian Peninsula Railway Company incorporated in England.42

In 1845 the Managing Director Stephenson proceeded to Calcutta to survey the line from Calcutta to Delhi through Mirzapur. The survey was completed in 1846. A contract was signed in 1859 between the East India Railway Company and East India Company for an experimental line of 161 kilometer long, which was estimated to cost $1,000,000 between Calcutta and Raj Mahal extended up to Delhi via Mirzapur.

The Greater Indian Peninsular Railway

The Greater Indian Peninsular Railway was incorporated in England by an Act on 1st August 1849 for the operation of an experimental line of 56 km long at the cost of $ 500,000 connecting Bombay with Khandah and to the cotton tract of Berar. John Chapman and Barnet Consulting Engineers sponsored the Greater

Indian Peninsular Railways Company. Industrialist Sir Jamsetjee served as the first Indian Director of the Company.  

George Stephenson was another Director and his son Robert Stephenson was the Consulting Engineer. The Despatch of the Court of Directors on 7th May 1845 gave official sanction on the part of the British Government. The Court of Directors selected F.W. Simms, who was the first Consulting Engineer of Railways reached India in September 1845. He reported after spot study that the peculiarities and the circumstances of India made the building of line difficult but with proper attention and care, Railways could be constructed and maintained perfectly as in any other part of Europe.  

The appointment of Marquis of Lord Dalhousie as Governor General of India in 1848 was in many ways a turning point in respect of transport development in India. He was known as the father and architect of the Indian Railways System. In 1850 The Governor General gave green signal to Consulting Engineer of Railways Simms to proceed to Madras or Bombay to gain firsthand knowledge about the proposals for construction. There was voluminous correspondence between the Governor General, Court of Directors and the Agent of the East India Railways. The Two Minutes written by Lord Dalhousie dated 4th July at Chini in 1850 and 1853 have become famous. The celebrated minute dated 20th April 1853 run to 216 pages. Lord Dalhousie recommended the construction of Railway lines under several different heads given priority to defense first. The minutes were sent to England on 4th May 1853 and on 17th August 1853. The

46 Edward Davidson, Railways of India, W.Clows and Son’s Company, New Delhi, 1868, p.326.
famous despatch of the Governor General ended the hesitancy on the part of the suitability of Railways construction in India.48

The Formal Inauguration Ceremony

On 16th April (Saturday afternoon) 1853, history was made at Bori Bunder in Bombay when to the booming sound of a 21 gun salute the first train started its maiden journey of 21 miles to Thane. It was performed on that day when 14 Railway carriages carrying over 400 guests left Bori Bunder at 3.30 p.m. amidst the loud applause of vast multitude. The day was observed as a public holiday by all Government offices and banks. The line was inaugurated by the Chief Justice of Bombay. The first train reached Thana at about 4.45 pm. With Major Swanson performing the ceremonial, the event was described as a triumph without any humiliation, a victory without any corresponding defeat, a triumph of mind over matter. The guest returned to Bombay at 7 am on 17th April 1853.49 The credit goes to the Great Indian Peninsular Railway Company which opened the first Railway line in India and was thrown open for public on 18th April 1853.50

Lord Dalhousie recommended the line from Calcutta to Delhi since military threat was forthcoming from Kabul and Nepal. He thought the proposed line would provide a continuous link of communication from the seat of the Government to the farthest regions. In regards to the question of connecting Madras with the India Railways System, Lord Dalhousie observed that the presidency of Madras had a

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49 K. Srinivasan, South Rail News Annual Publication, Madras, 1961, p.5
considerable army and it was free from any threat outside. It was found useful to connect the presidency with Bombay for imperial defense.51

Lord Dalhousie pointed out the importance of Railways both for internal order and against external attack. The primary concern of the British Government was the movement of troops to suppress the rebellion. The importance of strategic consideration was emphasized in the despatch of Lord Hardinge who insisted on the concentration of infantry and artillery for the prevention of insurrection, the speedy termination of war and for the internal safety of the British Empire.52

The Madras Railway Company

The first abortive Railway project was put forwarded for a line in Madras as early as 1831-32. In 1836 A.P. Cotton, civil engineer of Madras presented a more serious report on a railway line from Madras to Bombay via Bangalore and Poona. After this the Madras Railway Company was formed in London on 8th July 1845 with the general object of constructing rail road in Madras Presidency.53 But unable to obtain concessions from the Court of Directors, it was dissolved. But in 1849 after the East India Railway Company and the Great Indian Peninsula Railway company succeeded in obtaining the 5% guarantee, the scheme of Madras Railway from Madras to Walajah Road (Arcot) was revived.54 Madras Railway Company gained the confidence of the Court of Directors but the Board of Control did not accept the scheme.

54 G.O.No.1853, Dated 28.11.1848. Public Works Department, Tamil Nadu, Archives, p.6.
The Government of Madras, the mercantile community and elite of the society in Madras took great initiative in building railways in the Presidency of Madras. They held a meeting on 29th May 1849 and resolved to pursue the revival of Madras Railway Company. The promoters of the Madras Railway company again pleaded for support on the grounds of political importance and commercial necessity of Railroads in Madras presidency. 55 In their memorandum dated 20th February 1850, the promoters suggested to undertake the project in public interest. Two years later the Board of Control, East India Company and the Government of Madras approved Madras Railway Company’s proposal and guaranteed return of 4% on the capital. Madras Railway Company was registered on 26th July 1852. History of Railways in Southern India started with the commencement of work on the South-West line on 9th June, 1853. 56 The line from Madras to Arcot, 63 miles, was opened to public on 1st July 1856. 57

The outbreak of the Great Rebellion of 1857 accelerated the process of construction. During rebellion Railways played a major role in the movement of troops although the revolt broke out in an area far away from the Railway network. The 1857 revolt fully demonstrated the importance of Railways. If the construction had been more advanced, the fatal parade at Meerut could have been averted. In the post-mutiny era, the officials have realized the importance of Railways. 58

55 Correspondence between the promoters of the Madras Railway and the Court of Directors of the East Indian Company, East Indi House, part I, 1853, p.3.
57 Ibid.,
Famine and its impact on Railways Development

The outbreak of famine in South India further strengthened the idea of construction of Railway line. Sir George Andrew Clarke Chief Engineer stressed the importance of Railways in the Madras Legislative Council in 1877 saying that “The Railways have proved to be the saviour of southern India”. By the Madras Railways alone, some 800,000 tons of grain were carried into the interior and distributed to the famine stricken areas of Mysore. Sir John Strache also underlined the need of Railways to eradicate famine. ⁵⁹

Mr. Thornhill, the First Member of the Board of Revenue reported in 1878 that the Railway system enormously facilitated the supply of grain to those parts which suffered from most acute distress. The famine prone areas such as Bellari and Cuddapah in the Telugu region and North Arcot and Coimbatore in the Tamil region received food grains only through Railways. The Famine Commission in 1880 recommended the increase of some 20,000 miles to safeguard the people and the Parliamentary Select Committee of 1884 emphasized the speedy extension of Railways to save people from distress. However it should be noted that economic motive dominated all other factors. ⁶⁰

There was no cordial relation between America and England. Hence England wanted to use Indian cotton to compete with America in Business. ⁶¹ The News paper reports in London Times and The Economist highlighted about the abundant resources availability in India. Hence the British businessman wanted to invest in India. From the economic point of view the middle of 19th century the

importance of Railways was realized. The British constructed Railways in the mainland of India and acquired land for the same. The Government followed certain norms and regulations in paying compensation for the acquired land. In order to promote capital investments and attract business, the East India Company provided land free of cost for laying lines. The guaranteed companies got land free according to the Company's contract with the Secretary of State for India in 1849. The land acquired was classified under two categories. One was permanent land which was used to require permanently for construction and the other was temporary land which was relinquished after the work was over. Whenever the Government land was registered, the Collector of the district was transferred to the Railway since he was the custodian of the district. If the land was required temporarily the Collector had no difficulty in making other arrangements.  

**Land Acquisition Act**

By the Land Acquisition Act of 1870 the Government occupied the lands mostly cultivable which were under private holders. While doing construction they gave importance to military needs. The maintenance and construction of roads were under the supervision of military engineers and the trunk roads connected the important commercial and military centers. A change in this policy was made by Lord Dalhousie. During his period, the Military Board was superseded by Public Works Department (PWD).  

For control and superintendence of Railways, Lord Dalhousie had established a central public work secretariat. Soon this control was decentralized.

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and Railways work was placed under the control of Consulting Engineers, Deputy Consulting Engineers and Agents. On the whole, the construction process was carried out through a “hierarchy of interested parties”.64

**Achievements of Dalhousie**

Lord Dalhousie is regarded as one of the greatest Governor Generals of India and his contribution to the building up of British India is enormous. Lord Dalhousie was born in 1812 and he came to India as Governor General at the age of 35. He was famous for the Doctrine of Lapse, annexing the dependent state whose ruler died without a natural heir to succeed him. In the field of transport and communication his contribution was remarkable. The appointment of Lord Dalhousie as the Governor General of India in 1848 was a turning point in respect of transport development in India.65 He can be called as the architect of the Indian Railway system.66 In 1850, the Governor General gave green signal to Simms, a Railway engineer, to proceed to Madras or Bombay to gain firsthand knowledge about the proposals for construction of Railways in India. Lord Dalhousie was able to form a balanced judgment over Railway 23 matters. As Lee Warner remarks “The Marquis of Lord Dalhousie found the country without a single line of railway. He left it with nearly three hundred miles either open to traffic or under construction.”67 Lord Dalhousie’s great energy, careful investigation and real interest in the Railway enterprise accelerated the work.68

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In a historic minute written in July 1850 from the hill station of Chini, in the Himalayas he stressed the success of the experimental lines. The celebrated minute dated 20th April 1853 is one of the greatest documents of Indian Railway history. Lord Dalhousie recommended the construction of Railway lines under several different heads giving priority to defence. He pointed out how both Britain and India would benefit by the increase of trade and anticipated the economic and social developments which Railways would bring to the country. The famous despatch of the Governor General ended the hesitancy on the part of the Secretary of State and Court of Directors regarding the suitability of Railway construction in India.

After Independence

After 1947 the entire transport system of India attuned to the developmental needs of the economy. Soon after independence, as an initial step, all the Railways in India were brought under the direct management of the Government of India. After independence of India the Railway Department was known as the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) with effect from 29th August 1947. The integration of the Indian states during 1949 - 50 resulted in the taking over of the state Railways by the Government of India. These Railways were later on merged with the contiguous Railway systems when the Zonal Railways were formed.

72 Subhas C.Kashyap, Transport in India, Asian Publication, New Delhi, 1987,p.4
74 Guide to the Sources of Asian History, Published under the Auspicious of UNESCO, National Archives of India, New Delhi, 1987, p.116.
75 G.S.Khosla, Railway Management in India, Thacker & Company Ltd, Bombay, 1972, p.29.
The following table shows the important state Railways which were taken over by the centre and were later on merged with the adjoining Railway system.\textsuperscript{76}

**TABLE – I**

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<tr>
<th>Important State Railways</th>
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<tr>
<td>Name of Railway</td>
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<td>Scindia State Railway</td>
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With a view to secure uniformity in practice and improving efficiency and for better and more economic use of the assets of the Railways, it was decided by the Central Government to establish a smaller limits of Railways.\textsuperscript{77}

The different Government Railways were therefore regrouped and formed into six Zonal Railway systems.

1) Southern Railway:

Southern Railway was formed on 14\textsuperscript{th} April 1951 by the amalgamation of Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway, the South Indian Railway and the Mysore State Railway. It’s route mileage was 6016(9682km).\textsuperscript{78}

2) Central Railway:

Central Railway was formed on 5\textsuperscript{th} November 1951 by the amalgamation of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Company, the Nizam’s state, the Scindia and Dholpur state Railways. Its route mileage was 5428 (8735km).\textsuperscript{79}

3) Western Railway:

Western Railway was formed on 5\textsuperscript{th} November 1951 by the integration of the Bombay, Baroda and the Central India Railway Company, Saurashtra Railway,


\textsuperscript{79} J. Johnson, \textit{The Economics of Indian Transport}, Allied Publishers Pvt.td., Madras, p.96
the Jaipur State Railway, the Rajasthan Railway, the Cutch State Railway and the Marwar - Pulad section of the Jodhpur Railway. It’s route mileage was 5461 (8788kms).  

4) Northern Railway:

Northern Railway was formed on 14th April 1952 by the integration of the Jodhpur Bikaner State and Eastern Punjab Railways, Lucknow Moradabad and Allahabad divisions of the East Indian Railway and the Delhi -Rewani - Fazilka section of the Western Railway. Its route mileage was 6000 (9656kms).  

5) Eastern Railway:

Eastern Railway was formed on 14th April 1952 by the amalgamation of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway with the divisions of the East Indian Railway not transferred to the Northern Railway. Its route mileage was 5667 (9120kms).  

6) North Eastern Railway:

North Eastern Railway was formed on 14th April, 1952 by the integration of the Oudh - Tirhut and the Assam Railways and the Kanpur -Achnera section of the Western Railway. In 1955 the Eastern Railway was divided into Eastern and South Eastern zones. In 1958 the North Eastern Railway was divided into the North East and the North East Frontier Railways. In 1966, the ninth Railway Zone, the South Central Railway comprising portions of Southern and Central Railways was formed.  

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80 Ibid.  
81 Deshabhimani Daily, dated 15.4.1952.  
82 Malayala Manorama Daily, dated 15.41952.  
83 Mathrubhoomi Daily, dated 15.4.1952.  
84 V.V.V.Subburaj(ed), Malayala Manorama Year Book 2009, Thiruvananthapuram, 2009, pp.625-27.  
With the introduction of Railways in India a turning point began in the transport system of India. Even though the British started Railways for serving the needs of their administration, it became a boon to India. Different Railway companies like Great Indian Peninsula Company, East Indian Railway Company, Madras Railway Company, Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway Company and the Bengal Nagpur Railway Company played an important roles in the introduction of Railways in India. The year 1853 is remarkable in the history of India as it laid the foundation of the Railways.

The next chapter explains about Railways in Madras Presidency.