

South Coast Railway (SCoR) Zone: Divisions, Waltair Split & Economic Impact

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South Coast Railway (SCoR) Zone Latest News

- The Union Cabinet approved the creation of the **South Coast Railway (SCoR) Zone**, the 18th railway zone of India, under the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014.
- PM Modi laid the foundation stone for its headquarters in Visakhapatnam in January. The new zone is formed by reorganizing parts of the East Coast Railway and South Central Railway.

- Additionally, the Waltair Railway Division was split, with one part renamed as the Visakhapatnam Railway Division under SCoR, while the other part will become a new division based in Rayagada, Odisha, under the East Coast Railway.

Reason for Creating the South Coast Railway (SCoR) Zone

- **Mandate Under Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014**
 - As per Item 8 of Schedule 13 (Infrastructure) of the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, Indian Railways was required to examine the feasibility of a new railway zone.
- **Government Announcement and Strategic Importance**
 - In February 2019, the Central government announced the creation of the South Coast Railway Zone.
 - It was done to enhance operational efficiency and cater to increasing passenger and freight demands.
- **Economic and Logistic Benefits**
 - According to a senior railway official, the new zone will:
 - Support industrial and agricultural growth,
 - Improve logistics for major ports like Visakhapatnam and Krishnapatnam, and
 - Boost tourism to Tirupati and other cultural sites in Andhra Pradesh.
- **Political Context**
 - Despite a long-standing demand for a separate railway zone after Andhra Pradesh's bifurcation, it was fulfilled only after political alignment between the state and the Centre.
 - The ruling Telugu Desam Party (TDP), which came to power in 2024, is part of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) at the Centre.

Divisions Under the South Coast Railway (SCoR) Zone

- **Geographical Coverage**
 - The SCoR zone will primarily cover Andhra Pradesh, along with parts of Telangana and Tamil Nadu.
- **Key Railway Divisions**
 - Vijayawada Division (from South Central Railway)
 - Guntur Division (from South Central Railway)
 - Visakhapatnam Division (part of the former Waltair Division)
- **Sections Under Visakhapatnam Division (SCoR)**
 - This division will cover approximately **410 km**, including sections:
 - Palasa-Visakhapatnam-Duvvada
 - Kureru-Vizianagaram
 - Naupada Jn.-Paralakhemundi
 - Bobbili Jn.-Salur
 - Simhachalam North-Duvvada bypass
 - Vadalapudi-Duvvada
 - Visakhapatnam Steel Plant-Jaggayapalem
- **Rayagada Division Under East Coast Railway**

- The remaining part of the Waltair Division (around **680 km**) will be reorganized as a new division with headquarters at **Rayagada**, covering sections:
 - Kottavalasa–Bacheli
 - Kunderu–Theruvai Jn.
 - Singapur Rd.–Koraput Jn.
 - Paralakhemundi–Gunpur

Significance of the Waltair Division

• Major Revenue Generator

- The Waltair Division is a key revenue source for Indian Railways due to its strong freight traffic, primarily linked to the mining and steel industries in Odisha and Chhattisgarh.

• Freight Performance of East Coast Railway (ECoR)

- In **FY 2023-24**, ECoR set a record by loading **250 million tonnes** of freight, surpassing the previous year's record.
- Division-wise Contribution:
 - **Khurda Road Division:** 156.17 million tonnes
 - **Waltair Division:** 74.66 million tonnes
 - **Sambalpur Division:** 19.20 million tonnes
- ECoR became the **first railway zone** to exceed **200 million tonnes of freight loading** for five consecutive years.

• Political Opposition in Odisha

- Leaders from Odisha have opposed the reorganization, arguing that Odisha will suffer economic losses.
- This is because a major revenue-generating part of ECoR, headquartered in **Bhubaneswar**, is being transferred to the South Coast Railway.

South Coast Railway (SCoR) Zone FAQs

Q1. How many zones are there in Southern Railway?

Ans. Southern Railway is headquartered in Chennai and is divided into six divisions namely Chennai, Tiruchirappalli, Madurai, Palakkad, Salem and Thiruvananthapuram.

Q2. How many divisions are there in South Coast Railway (SCoR) Zone?

Ans. The South Coast Railway (SCoR) Zone, headquartered in Visakhapatnam, will now consist of four divisions: Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, Guntur, and Guntakal..

Q3. What is the full form of SCoR in railway?

Ans. SCoR stands for South Coast Railway, which is a railway zone in India. It was the 18th railway zone to be announced in the country.

Q4. What is the new name of Waltair?

Ans. The Division would be renamed as Visakhapatnam Division as the name Waltair is a colonial legacy that needs to be changed.

Q5. What is the meaning of Waltair Division?

Ans. Waltair railway division refers to the name of a former railway division under the jurisdiction of East Coast Railway zone of the Indian Railways.

Source: IE | ET

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