PATHAO & SHOHOZ TICKET-SELLING SCANDAL IN BANGLADESH

Key events, allegations, response, and lessons

Background

- Shohoz.com partnered with Bangladesh Railways as the official e-ticket vendor.

- Handled millions of ticket bookings digitally to reduce black-market sales.

Timeline of Key Incidents

- Oct 2022: Engineer charged with black-market ticket sales.

- Mar 2024: RAB arrests 9, including 4 Shohoz staff for involvement in ticket syndicate.

- Mar 2025: Shohoz peon and others arrested for selling 500 tickets/day.

- Jun 2025: Shohoz fined for duplicate ticket sales.

- 2018: Pathao App accused of harvesting SMS, contacts, and hardware data without proper consent—a major breach .

Mechanics of the Scandal

- Employees abused booking system access.

- Syndicate split profits; insiders timed high-demand ticket releases.

- Used real-time access and customer data to control resale.

Consequences and Responses

- Multiple arrests and charge-sheets filed.

- Shohoz fined ~Tk 2 lakh for duplicate sales.

- Shohoz claimed internal malpractice, not organizational failure.

Impact on Users

- Public trust declined due to missing tickets and overbooking.

- Protests erupted at Kamalapur station over poor ticket management.

Measures Taken

- OTP-linked bookings and QR/ID verification introduced.

- Refund delays randomized to disrupt black-market resellers.

- Railways capped tickets per person and mandated ID verification.

- Limit pathao app data collection and enforce transparent privacy policies.

Lessons Learned

- Insider fraud requires active monitoring and layered security.

- Transparency and strong consumer rights are essential.

- Authentication and access limits needed in ticketing systems.

Outlook and Recommendations

- Implement real-time audit logs and privilege limitations.

- Introduce biometric verification for high-demand routes.

- Raise consumer awareness about secure bookings.

- Expand ticketing access through apps and kiosks.