



# Facilities for Rail Passengers

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Details of major initiatives taken by Government to improve the facilities for Rail Passengers are as under:-

- (i) Online ticket booking facility through Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) website thereby obviating the need to stand in queues at reservation counters.
- (ii) Reserved and unreserved ticket booking facility through mobile phones.
- (iii) Provision of Automatic Ticket Vending Machines (ATVMs) at Railway stations for dispensation of tickets.
- (iv) Provision of various cashless modes of payment like net banking, e-wallets, credit/debit cards through Point of Sale (POS)s machines, through Unified Payment Interface (UPI), etc.
- (v) Earmarking of separate counters at various Computerised Passenger Reservation System (PRS) centres for dealing with the reservation requisitions received from persons with disability, senior citizens, ladies, former Members of Parliament, Members of Legislative Assemblies, accredited press correspondents and freedom fighters.
- (vi) Automatic preparation of first reservation charts at least 4 hours before scheduled departure of train and thereafter booking of available accommodation through internet as well as through PRS counters till preparation of second reservation charts.
- (vii) Intimation to passengers through SMS in case of change in passengers' reservation status from waiting list/RAC to confirmed, cancellation of trains, late running of train in identified trains, etc.
- (viii) Cancellation of computerised Passenger Reservation System (PRS) counter tickets through IRCTC website or through 139.
- (ix) Automatic refund to e-ticket holders in case of cancellation of trains.
- (x) Introduction of Alternate Train Accommodation Scheme 'VIKALP' to provide confirmed accommodation to waitlisted passengers in alternate train to ensure optimal utilisation of available accommodation.
- (xi) Increase in number of berths earmarked as RAC to accommodate more passengers.
- (xii) Enhancement of the existing combined quota earmarked for Senior Citizens, pregnant women and female passengers 45 years of age and above to 6 lower berths per coach in Sleeper, 3 lower berths per coach in 3AC and 3 lower berths per coach in 2AC class. Further, in Rajdhani, Duronto and fully Air Conditioned/ Express trains, the number of lower berths has been increased to 4 lower berths per coach.
- (xiii) Earmarking of reservation quota of two berths in 3AC class and four berths in Sleeper class for persons with disability.
- (xiv) Introduction of Sarathi Seva to help old and disabled passengers requiring assistance at the station and strengthen the existing services for enabling passengers to book Battery Operated Car (BOC), porter services etc. on a paid basis in addition to the existing pick up and drop and wheelchair services.
- (xv) Provision of Yatri Mitra Sewa at major stations for enabling passengers to book wheelchair services cum porter services.
- (xvi) Provision of cushioned seats/berths, fluorescent lights, air-conditioning, fans, toilet, dustbins and wash basin facilities etc. in all main line trains/coaches being manufactured.
- (xvii) Provision of looking mirrors, snack tables, magazine bags, water bottle holders, coat hooks, small luggage racks, luggage securing arrangements, mobile/laptop charging sockets in identified classes of coaches.
- (xviii) Provision of dust bins in Non-AC coaches, Braille signages in coaches, mugs with chain in Non-AC coaches.
- (xix) Introduction of premium services like Tejas, Humsafar, Mahamana Express, Deen Dayalu Express etc.
- (xx) Introduction of optional catering service as a pilot project on 32 Rajdhani/Shatabdi/Duronto trains w.e.f. 01.08.2017 for an initial period of 180 days.
- (xxi) Introduction of station-based e-catering for widening the range of options available to passengers for ordering food of their choice.
- (xxii) Introduction of pre-cooked food ('ready to eat' meals) in the range of options available to passengers.

(xxiii) Operation of centralised Catering Service Monitoring Cell (CSMC) (Toll free Number. 1800-111-321) for prompt Redressal of passenger grievances related to the catering activities and real time assistance to travelling public.

(xxiv) Operation of all India helpline Number 138 for Rail users to lodge complaints/suggestions regarding food and catering services.

(xxv) A twitter handle - @ IRCATERING has also been made operational to cater to the complaints/suggestions with regard to catering services.

However, strengthening/upgrading the existing passenger facilities and introduction of new facilities is a continuous and ongoing process.

Passenger Announcement and Passenger Information System (PAPIS) has been provided in Tejas and Humsafar Trains. As per extant policy guidelines, electronic display boards are provided at 'A-1' and 'A' category stations and public address systems are provided at 'A-1', 'A' and 'B' category of stations and can be provided upto "D" category of stations. Electronic train indicator board can also be provided upto "C" category of stations. Provision and upgradation of facilities at stations and in trains is a continuous and ongoing process and are undertaken depending on the fund availability and relative priority of works.

With a view to encouraging booking of rail ticket through internet, various steps have been taken which include withdrawing of service charge imposed by IRCTC, enhancing the capacity of the server, increasing the options available for making payment while booking ticket through internet etc. Due to these efforts, internet ticketing now constitute approximately 65% of total reserved tickets issued on Indian Railways.

This Press Release is based on the information given by the Minister of State for Railways Shri Rajen Gohain in a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha on 27.12.2017 (Wednesday).

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**AKS/MKV/DK**

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