PNR Status

Nowadays, checking the status of train tickets can be easily done online, using many sites’ services that cooperate with railway authorities of countries to help customers get the required information.

The issues while booking tickets is that there are a lot of people boarding trains. This is especially the case in a country like India, where the population is so vast that it is very likely that whenever required, train tickets would be sold out. So, usually, your tickets would be on a waiting list, if you book it on short notice. This implies that your booking request could either fail or pass, depending on the amount of people booking and on your luck, basically.

In cases where you are put on a waiting list, your ticket is actually booked and so you are liable to pay any cancellation fees. On top of this, you would not be assigned any seat or berth yet. The ticket’s fate really depends on luck and on just how many people have cancelled tickets or if more coaches are added on the train. These tickets would then be confirmed a few minutes before the train departs as well, sometimes.

Since there’s so much uncertainty, the government has offered a way to track the status of tickets on the waiting list. This is done by the PNR number, with this, your **PNR status** can be looked at, at any time and any place. This number is 10 digits long and is given on tickets issued by the railway authorities. Many third-party websites exist online, which use this number and get information about the status of your waiting ticket. Some of these services have evolved so well that they are even capable of predicting your chances of having these tickets confirmed!

This prediction is not magic, but the result of clever use of various machine learning and data analytics techniques. They require a lot of information like the past booking and cancellation patterns, days of the week, the particular festive seasons, if any, the holidays, and a lot of other factors as well. Some of these websites would suggest alternate routes to take, if the prediction of ticket booking comes out unfavourably.

PNR actually stands for Passenger Name Record it can be thought of as an ID given to every boarding passenger and with it, one can easily determine all the required information about a ticket holder’s destination, time of arrival, estimated departure, etc. Even information about a group of passengers can be stored with just this number. In India, the Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS) stores and maintains all information like the current **PNR status** of many passengers across the country, the berth availability in all the different train classes like the sleeper, or AC. They hold this information for about 60 days.

CRIS holds all of this information in a large database which is of a centralised structure, owned and operated by themselves. So much information, just accessed by this single, ten-digit number. To know your PNR number, and thus get the **PNR status** and other information, you should just look at the top left corner of any printed tickets. For all E-tickets, which is the eco-friendly way of going about things, this number is printed right at the top, in a separate box, which is usually termed as a cell.