

1	2	3
19.	Tamil Nadu	1016
20.	Tripura	267
21.	Uttar Pradesh	1308
22.	Uttarakhand	185
23.	West Bengal	802
TOTAL		13675

(c) To achieve 100% electrification of Broad Gauge (BG) rail routes, pace of electrification has been increased from present average of 1700 route kilometer per Annum to 4000 Route Kilometer/Annum which will further be increased to 6000 Route Kilometers in 2018-19.

Further, to expedite electrification of railway lines in the country, various steps have been taken, which *inter alia* include award of Engineering Procurement and Construction (EPC) contracts, better project monitoring mechanism, enhancing power of field units for award of contracts including sanction of estimates and increasing the number of executing agencies from existing three to six by entrusting electrification works to new agencies viz. Indian Railway Construction Company, Rail India Technical and Economic Services and Power Grid Corporation of India Limited.

#### **Facilities for Foreign Nationals and NRIS under FTQ**

130. SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether zonal railways have been advised to sensitise travelling ticket examiners on the validity of passports and visas that are mandatory documents required for travel by foreigners and NRIs, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is a fact that tickets cannot be booked by travel agents under Foreign Tourists Quota (FTQ); and

(c) whether it is also a fact that if the party seeking accommodation requires more berths than what is earmarked under the FTQ, the remaining passengers would be registered and provided confirmed accommodation on the opening day of reservation of general quota, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) Instructions have been issued to Zonal Railways to educate ticket checking staff about the broad features of this scheme including

checking of passport with valid visa, bonafide tourist certificate in case of passengers of Nepal/Bhutan, categories of passengers who can avail this facility, etc.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir. It has been stipulated in the scheme that in case the party seeking berth is more than the available foreign tourist quota, the confirmed accommodation will be provided up to the limit of foreign tourist quota and the remaining passengers will be registered and provided confirmed accommodation on the opening day of reservation. However, with a view to ensuring compaction, berths/seats can be booked in this quota upto 365 days in advance and seat/berth is provided only at the time of opening of reservation as per Advance Reservation Period (ARP) subject to availability. However, fare for all such berths/seats is charged 50% extra of the base fare.

#### **Easing of train travel for Foreign Nationals and NRIs**

131. SHRI A.K. SELVARAJ: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Railways have made train travel easy for foreign nationals and NRIs, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that Railways are offering confirmed accommodation in upper classes of all trains one year in advance for foreign nationals and NRIs, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. With a view to facilitate foreign tourists to book reserved tickets online, a facility to book tickets online upto 365 days in advance has been extended to Foreign Tourists and NRIs. Broad features of the scheme are as under:-

- (i) Facility to book reserved tickets online upto 365 days in advance available in Executive Class/1st AC/2nd AC in all trains including Shatabdi/Rajdhani/Duronto/Gatiman etc.
- (ii) Fare equivalent to 1.5 times the base fare and other charges like reservation fee, superfast charges etc. are realised. IRCTC collects enhanced charges of ₹ 200 per ticket.
- (iii) For booking the tickets, the Passport Number, Nationality and the international Mobile Number of the passengers have to be mandatorily entered.
- (iv) No concession is admissible on such tickets.
- (v) Payment is to be made only through international debit/credit cards. An SMS confirming the reservation of the ticket is sent to the registered mobile number.