

Booking of tatkal tickets

†3326. SHRI LAL SINH VADODIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that due to collective booking of Tatkal tickets in a single time slot tickets used to be exhausted in minutes;
- (b) if so, whether Government has received any information in this regard;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and whether Government is considering to take any action in this regard; and
- (d) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (d) On Indian Railways, reserved accommodation including Tatkal accommodation can be booked through computerised Passenger Reservation System (PRS) on first come first served basis. During peak rush periods/days when demand outstrips the availability, reserved accommodation especially in higher classes and on popular routes gets exhausted within short duration of opening of reservation. However, during lean periods, on non-popular and lower classes, the accommodation remains available for longer duration. The phenomenon is more relevant for Tatkal where limited accommodation is earmarked. This happens as the available limited accommodation is accessed simultaneously through more than 10,300 counters at 3465 computerised Passenger Reservation Centers as well as through internet.

In addition, some instances of inconvenience caused to the passengers while booking tatkal tickets also come to notice due to transaction failure while booking or while making the payment through internet. Transactions failures generally occur due to network problem on the users part or on account of payment gateway. As far as server of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) is concerned, it has the capacity of 20000 bookings per minute which is sufficient to handle the present load. However, anticipating more number of tickets booking through internet in future, 5 new Itanium Servers have been installed to enhance ticketing capacity. Some instances of unscrupulous elements involved in malpractices in selling of reserved tickets including tatkal tickets are also reported and action is initiated whenever such cases come to notice of Indian Railways.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

To avoid misuse of Tatkal Scheme, there are some inbuilt features in Tatkal scheme which includes provision of not granting refund on cancellation of confirmed Tatkal tickets except in case of certain special circumstances indicated in the scheme, not allowing any modification of Tatkal ticket, etc. Some additional steps have also been taken to facilitate the passengers and to avoid the misuse, some of which are:

- (i) Staggering of the timings of reservation under Tatkal scheme.
- (ii) Captcha implementation in Registration, Login and Booking page to check fraudulent booking through automation software.
- (iii) Imposition of minimum time limit before proceeding for payment gateway as well as after making payment while booking tickets through internet.
- (iv) Making OTP(one time password) compulsory for all net Banking Payment options.
- (v) Disabling authorised agents to book Tatkal tickets during first half an hour of opening of reservation.

To keep a check on the activities of touts, preventive as well as regular checks are conducted jointly/individually by Vigilance, Security and Commercial Departments, and the action against the culprits is taken as per provisions of Section 143 of Railways Act, 1989.

Use of drone cameras to monitor tracks

3327. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Railways have decided to use drone cameras to monitor tracks in Maharashtra and rest of the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether this practice will be in addition to the present system of monitoring railway tracks; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) to (d) Indian Railways carry out periodic monitoring of track geometry