

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.570
ANSWERED ON 29.11.2024

SHORTAGE OF CONFIRMED SLEEPER SEATS DURING PEAK SEASONS

570 SHRI SANJAY RAUT:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps Government is taking to address shortage of confirmed sleeper seats on trains, especially during peak travel seasons;
- (b) whether Government is planning to increase number of sleeper class coaches on high demand trains to meet growing demand for confirmed seats;
- (c) whether passengers are still unable to secure confirmed sleeper seats despite implementation of AI-based seat optimization and whether the AI system is failing to accurately predict demand and allocate seats; and
- (d) in what manner Railways will improve AI seat allocation model to ensure that it meets the needs of passengers on the waiting list, particularly for sleeper class?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS, INFORMATION & BROADCASTING AND
ELECTRONICS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

(a) to (d) : A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 570 BY SHRI SANJAY RAUT ANSWERED IN RAJYA SABHA ON 29.11.2024 REGARDING SHORTAGE OF CONFIRMED SLEEPER SEATS DURING PEAK SEASONS

(a) to (d) In its constant endeavour to provide additional accommodation to travelling passengers, Indian Railways(IR), in addition to the various types of regular trains, also operates Special train services during festivals, holidays, etc. to cater to the extra needs of passengers. Accordingly, during the year 2024, 13523 trips special trains were operated to meet the extra rush of passengers during Holi and summer vacation. To cater to the rush during Durga Pooja/Dipawali/Chhath, 7983 trips of Special trains have also been notified during the period 1st October, 2024 to 30th November, 2024, to serve approximately 1.8 crore passengers. IR also augments the load of trains, both on a permanent and temporary basis, to generate additional accommodation for different segments of passengers. During the year 2023-24, 872 coaches have been utilized for augmentation of train services on a permanent basis while during the year 2024-25(till October, 2024), 664 coaches have been utilized for permanent augmentation.

Further, to provide greater accommodation for the passengers using General and non-AC Sleeper Coaches, the extant policy regarding composition of Mail/Express trains, provide for 12 (Twelve) General class & Sleeper class non- AC coaches and 08 (eight) AC-Coaches, in a train of 22 coaches, thereby providing greater accommodation for the passengers using General and non-AC Sleeper Coaches. Besides, of the total number of Coaches being presently utilized for running of train services, two-third are non-AC, and one-third are AC variants.

Additionally, Indian Railways have introduced Amrit Bharat services, which have modern State-of the Art technology are equipped with advanced features like Semi-Permanent couplers for jerk free travel, horizontal sliding windows, foldable snack table and bottle holders, mobile holders etc. These services, which are fully non-AC trains, presently comprising 12 Sleeper Class Coaches and 8 General Class coaches, are providing high quality services to the passengers.

Schemes like Alternate Train Accommodation Scheme known as VIKALP and Upgradation have also been introduced. In VIKALP confirmed accommodation in alternate train is provided to the eligible passengers who have opted for the same and in upgradation scheme waiting list passengers of lower class are provided confirmed accommodation in the higher class if there is a vacant accommodation in higher class and waiting list in lower class. Taking such steps is a continuous and an on-going process.

In addition, to provide confirmed reserved accommodation to those passengers who have to travel at short notice, Tatkal Reservation Scheme has been introduced in which reservation opens at 1000 hours and 1100 hours on the previous day of journey from the train originating station for air-conditioned and non air-conditioned classes respectively.
