

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:387

ANSWERED ON:20.02.2014

TICKET BOOKING SYSTEM IN RAILWAYS

Khair Shri Chandrakant Bhaurao; Vasava Shri Mansukhbhai D.

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the procedure laid down for release of berths/seats out of the emergency quota earmarked in various trains;
- (b) whether cases of corruption in confirmation of emergency quota tickets by touts allegedly in collusion with Railway officials posted in Emergency Quota Cell (EQC) have been received;
- (c) if so, the details of the inquiry conducted and persons found guilty during the last three years, zone-wise;
- (d) the locations where EQC have been set up including the number of officials posted in each of these cells; and
- (e) the measures taken by the Railways to simplify the ticket booking system and to check corruption in ticket booking including under Tatkal scheme?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE)

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

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF STARRED QUESTION NO.387 BY SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE AND SHRI MANSUKH BHAI D. VASAVA TO BE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 20.02.2014 REGARDING TICKET BOOKING SYSTEM IN RAILWAYS

(a) Emergency quota is earmarked on different trains/classes in order to meet the travel requirements of High Officials like Ministers, Judges of Supreme Court/High Courts, Members of Parliament, Legislators, senior Government functionaries, etc and to meet the emergency travel demands of waitlisted passengers. This quota is released by according priority as per inter-se seniority in the warrant of precedence and as per a well established practice. After assigning preference to the High Officials and VIPs as per warrant of precedence, the remaining quota is released for urgent travel on account of Government duty, bereavement in the family, medical exigency, etc. Un-allotted berths of the Emergency Quota are automatically given to RAC/waitlisted passengers at the time of preparation of reservation charts.

(b) & (c) The complaints regarding corruption/irregularities in allotment of berths through Emergency Quota received occasionally are examined and action is taken if the complaints are substantiated. During the last three years, there have been two unsubstantiated complaints on Eastern Railway and one substantiated case of irregularity in confirmation of tickets through Emergency Quota by touts in collusion with Railway officials posted in Emergency Quota Cells on South East Central Railway wherein action has been taken under Disciplinary & Appeal Rules against the officials concerned. Further, in two other similar cases reported on Northern Railway the matter has been investigated and appropriate action has been initiated against two officers.

(d) Emergency Quota Cells are located at Zonal/Divisional Headquarters and at some of the important non-Headquarter stations. These Cells normally function under the control of a gazetted officer supported by requisite number of staff posted by Zonal Railways. The number of staff posted in each such Cell varies according to the workload.

(e) With a view to simplifying the Passenger Reservation System and to keep a check on the misuse of general reservation and the Tatkal reservation scheme, steps are taken by the Railways from time to time, some of which are as under:-

(i) To ensure easy access to reserved tickets, the facility of issuing reserved tickets has been provided at 3139 computerised Passenger Reservation System (PRS) locations including PRS cum UTS locations and 270 Post Offices.

(ii) The facility of booking reserved tickets through internet has been made available from 0030 hours to 2330 hours daily.

(iii) The authorized SMS sent by IRCTC containing all vital details when displayed through laptops/palmtops/mobile phones combined with valid photo identity card in original, is treated as an instrument on par with the Electronic Reservation Slip (ERS) of e-tickets.

(iv) Capacity of the internet ticketing system has been enhanced through installation of new High Capacity Database servers, new firewalls and through installation of additional software licenses.

(v) Internet Bandwidth has been increased from 340 Mbps to 450 Mbps.

(vi) The facility of booking reserved tickets through non-internet based mobile phones has also been started recently.

(vii) The condition of production of prescribed proof of identity during the journey by any one of the passenger booked on a ticket has been made mandatory. In case of Tatkal the original proof of identity as indicated in the ticket is required to be carried. In case of non production of prescribed proof of identity, all the passengers booked on the ticket are treated as travelling without ticket and charged accordingly.

(viii) With a view to reduce chances of misuse of Tatkal scheme various provisions of Tatkal scheme have been modified, which are as under:-

The timings of opening of booking of reservation under Tatkal Scheme and general scheme have been staggered to 1000 hours and 0800 hours respectively.

Advance Reservation Period of Tatkal scheme has been reduced to one day excluding the day of journey.

Refunds are not granted on cancellation of confirmed Tatkal tickets except in case of special circumstances like late running of train by more than three hours, cancellation of trains, etc.

Duplicate Tatkal tickets are not issued under normal circumstances. In exceptional cases Duplicate Tatkal tickets can be issued on payment of full fare including Tatkal charges.

At the computerised Passenger Reservation System (PRS) counters, Tatkal tickets are issued only on production of self attested photocopy of one of the prescribed proofs of Identity mentioned in the scheme. While booking e-ticket, the passenger has to indicate the number of identity card in the system.

A restriction of booking of a maximum of four passengers per PNR on Tatkal ticket has been imposed.

Web service agents have been permitted to book only one Tatkal ticket per train per day on internet and only after 1200 hours.

(ix) With a view to protect the interest of individual users, access to Tatkal booking and normal booking on the opening day of reservation through e-tickets by the Travel Agents/Web -service agents/Web Agents of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC), has been disabled between 0800 hours and 1200 hours.

(x) Closed Circuit Television cameras have also been installed at major stations/reservation offices to keep an eye on the activities of anti-social & unscrupulous elements indulging in malpractices in reservation.

(xi) Capturing the transactions being made by RTSAs has been built in to the Passenger Reservation System (PRS) on all bookings/cancellation forms.

(xii) Instructions have been issued for keeping a watch on the counters handling abnormally high number of requisitions particularly during opening hours of reservation.

(xiii) Concept of "Captcha" has been introduced in computerised PRS so that booking clerk cannot make use of the input string in advance.

(xiv) To educate the passengers, frequent announcements are made through the Public Address System at Railway stations advising passengers to purchase tickets only from booking counters of the station or from the authorized ticket counters.

(xv) Regular/surprise checks are conducted by the Commercial Department of Railways in association with Security/ Vigilance Department, at Reservation/ Booking offices, platforms and in the trains also.

(xvi) Instructions have also been issued to all zonal Railways that Sr.DCMs/DCMs should conduct regular inspections of Reservation offices and also personally inspect PRS offices during the opening hours and take immediate steps to check the touting activities.