

>

Title : Need to withdraw the move of the Railway Ministry to restrict the entry of public to the platforms.

SHRI P. MOHAN (MADURAI): The Railway Minister Shri Lalu Prasad has recently announced that the railways has proposed to put a blanket ban on non-passengers entering the railway station platforms all over the country. Thereby the friends and relatives of railway passengers who either go to receive or send off their dear ones at the railway stations would be prevented from doing so.

This kind of ban preventing access to the Railway platforms would greatly cause inconvenience to the aged rail passengers, patients who travel for treatments, pregnant women and mothers with infants and children. The railway stations are not maintained like airports where the passengers get assistance to go upto the aircraft with their luggages. Even passengers moving with wheel chairs get adequate care during air travel at the airport with exclusive staff available for that purpose to help such passengers. The luggages and baggages are moved in trollies by men hired for this purpose by airlines companies. But in railway stations the platforms are long and there are trains with 24 or 26 coaches necessitating passengers to walk a long distance along the platform with luggages. Even the porters available there offer services at exorbitant rates. Hence, it becomes necessary for railway passengers to get help from their friends and relatives to move luggages or to identify the seats and coaches.

The practice of party workers and volunteers coming into railway stations to either receive or send off their leaders will be affected. It is doubtful whether such access to railway stations on such occasions can be stopped at all without giving rise to law and order problem.

Hence, I urge upon the railways to consider more feasible and user-friendly ways and means to decongest the railway stations both from security and amenity to passengers point of view.

---

\*English Translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.