

>

Title: Need to retain Town Booking Agents for booking railway tickets operating under Konkan Railway.

SHRI NILESH NARAYAN RANE (RATNAGIRI-SINDHUDURG): I wish to draw the kind attention of the House and through this the Ministry of Railways to the problem of booking of train tickets in Konkan Railway. Since most of the Konkan Railway stations are located far from towns and cities, an innovative concept is in place, which facilitates issue of computerized tickets through Town Booking Agent (TBA) at such places in the Konkan Railway that are far from Rail- Head. These TBAs connect to the stations using modern IT tools and access the quota provided at the station. There are, at present, a total number of 22 TBAs in Konkan Railway - six in Goa, twelve in Maharashtra and four in Karnataka, which issue reserved rail tickets in all classes with a nominal service charge.

Konkan attracts a huge number of domestic and foreign tourists. Besides, lakhs of commuters commute to earn their livelihood. There has been consistent demand from the people of the region to provide more TBAs for booking reserved rail tickets. But instead of increasing the number of TBAs, the Konkan Railway is closing the TBAs by 31 March 2013 due to change in the reservation policy of the Ministry of Railways. For this, the people will be facing a lot of problem in getting a reserved rail ticket. I urge the Minister of Railways to maintain the status quo and to increase their numbers for the benefit of the commuting public of Konkan Railway