

(a) whether Government has a proposal to allow private sector to invest in the proposed new fertilizer plants; and

(b) if so the facts and reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI H N BAHUGUNA) (a) and (b) Under the existing industrial policy of the Government, fertilizer industry has been placed in the core sector for purposes of licensing and is open to the private sector also. Any proposals from the private sector to invest in the new fertilizer plants, will be considered, on their merits.

**Reservation for Foreign Tourists holding "Indrail Pass" Tickets**

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Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state

(a) whether Railways have streamlined arrangements to enable foreign tourists and non-resident Indians to get reservations within the period of validity of "Indrail pass ticket", and

(b) if so, the salient features regarding this new system the Railways

have introduced recently for the benefit of foreign tourists?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (PROF MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A statement on the subject is placed on the Table of the Sabha.

**Statement**

A Scheme of "Travel as you like" tickets was introduced in September, 1975 permitting unlimited travel for 21 days on Indian Railways. These tickets could be issued only to foreign tourists/non-resident Indians holding valid passports and paying in foreign exchange. They were not valid on Raddham Express trains. Fares fixed were, US \$ 200 for Air-conditioned Class, \$ 80 for First Class/A.C. Chair Car and \$ 25 for Second Class. To further encourage foreign tourist travel and boost up foreign exchange earnings, an improved version of the earlier scheme has been introduced from 1st June, 1977 wherein such tickets are available for validity periods ranging from 7 to 90 days. Nomenclature of these tickets has been changed to 'INDRAIL PASS' on the lines of similar schemes introduced on European and British Railways known as "EURAIL PASS" and "BRITRAIL PASS".

2. "INDRAIL PASS" fares are as follows.—

Period of validity	Fares (in US Dollars)		
	Air Con- ditioned Class	First Class/A.C. Chair Car	Second Class
7 days	70	35	12
15 days	100	50	17
21 days	125	63	21
30 days	150	75	25
60 days	220	110	37
90 days	260	130	45

Children between 3—12 years pay half the fare rounded off to the nearest dollar.

3 As in the past, these tickets are being sold only to foreign nationals as well as Indians residing abroad holding valid passports. Payments has to be made in foreign exchange. These tickets are available for sale at the following places —

- 1 Railway Tourist Guide, Western Railway, Churchgate, Bombay
- 2 Railway Tourist Guide, Central Railway, Bombay V T
- 3 Railway Tourist Guide, Eastern Railway, Fairlie Place, Calcutta
- 4 Central Reservation Office South Eastern Railway, Esplanade Mansions, Calcutta
- 5 Central Reservation Office, Southern Railway, Madras Central, Madras
- 6 Railway Tourist Guide Northern Railway, Baroda House, New Delhi

Besides, they can be sold by recognised Railway Travel Agents holding restricted money changer's licence from Reserve Bank of India

4 INDRAIL PASS entitles the holder to travel within the period of validity by all trains including Rajdhani Express trains, as and when he likes. No separate charge is payable for meals on Rajdhani Express trains as Rajdhani fare is inclusive of meal charges. Besides, no sleeper surcharge or supplementary charge for travel by Superfast trains is payable by holders of "INDRAIL PASS". The period of validity is reckoned from the date of commencement of first journey and upto the mid-night of the date on which the validity expires. No refund of fares on partially used "INDRAIL PASS" or for travel in lower class of accommodation is permissible.

5 Payment in railway offices for purchase of Indrail Pass is accepted

in US Dollars or Pound Sterling only. For other foreign currencies, the tourist has to encash the requisite amount into rupee with an authorised dealer and then pay in rupees along with "Encashment Certificate".

6 With the introduction of 'Indrail Pass' scheme, all other concessions to foreign tourists stand withdrawn, such as students' concession, hill concessions, circular tour tickets, etc.

7 Regarding streamlining of reservation arrangements for holders of "Indrail Pass", they are permitted to make advance reservation upto one year before the date of departure of the train as against six months permitted to other passengers. Quotas have been earmarked for foreign tourists at important stations on selected trains which can also be availed by "Indrail Pass" holders. Besides, Railway Tourist Guides have been posted at Bombay V T, Churchgate (Bombay), Fairlie Place (Calcutta), Baroda House (New Delhi) and Kathgodam station for giving guidance to tourists. The Indrail Pass holder can approach them not only for assistance in obtaining reservation but also for getting suitable itineraries prepared. Besides instructions have been given for accommodating foreign tourists against unutilised H.O.R. quota wherever feasible. This will also apply to holders of Indrail Pass.

8 Recognised tourist agents of Railways have been extended the facility of sending reply-paid telegrams direct to the concerned Reservation Offices upto one year in advance for reservation of foreign tourist groups. Only the total number of berths seats required and the ticket numbers need be given in this telegram, which must be replied by reservation offices within 48 hours of the receipt. Details of the names, nationality, etc of the individual tourists can be advised upto 10 days before commencement of the journey.