

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1553
ANSWERED ON 31.07.2026

THEFT OF LINEN AND PUBLIC PROPERTY IN AC COACHES OF INDIAN RAILWAYS

1553 DR. MEDHA VISHRAM KULKARNI:
SHRI SANJAY SINGH:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware of reports that large quantities of bedsheets, blankets, towels, pillows and other linen supplied in AC coaches have been stolen, causing significant financial losses to Railways;
- (b) total quantity and estimated value of such items reported missing and financial loss incurred during last five years, zone-wise;
- (c) whether any assessment has been made regarding impact of these losses on passenger amenities and railway expenditure;
- (d) whether repeated shortage of linen has been flagged in internal audits/inspection reports, if so, the finding thereof and action taken thereon; and
- (e) measures taken to prevent thefts, fix accountability and strengthen monitoring of linen inventory in trains?

ANSWER

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

(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

(a) to (e) Indian Railways (IR) provides clean and hygienic linen to all passengers travelling in AC classes. During train operations, some losses of linen items such as bedsheets, pillow covers, towels, blankets and pillows are reported due to theft, pilferage, misplacement during operational handling.

Service providers working for the linen management on trains are responsible for proper accountal of linen distributed to the passengers. These agencies are supposed to distribute fresh linen and collect used linen from the passengers. Recovery on account of shortage or loss of linen is made from the service provider responsible as per terms & conditions of the contract. Therefore, no financial loss is incurred by IR on account of theft of linen.

All depots of Indian Railways maintain inventory of linen items based on average annual requirement which takes into account the loss of linen items due to theft, pilferage and damage due to wear & tear. Supply of linen items is periodically assessed during inventory verification and operational reviews. Wherever shortages are noticed, replenishment is undertaken as per prescribed norms.

IR has taken various measures to minimise loss of linen items, including:

- Strengthening of monitoring and accountability at linen depots and coaching depots by counselling and sensitisation of staff and service providers regarding proper handling and accounting of linen.
- Passenger awareness messages regarding timely return of linen items at the end of journey.
- Maintenance of prescribed inventory registers and periodic stock verification at linen depots.
- CCTV based monitoring of laundry operations and linen management.
- Cases are registered under relevant section of law as and when any incident of theft of linen items is reported.
- Surprise on-board inspections by officials is being done periodically to assess linen management on trains.
