

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1562
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27.11.2019**

TICKET TOUTS

†1562. SHRI RAMPRIT MANDAL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the touts get the rail tickets booked in advanced especially in the Bihar bound and Eastern India bound trains;**
- (b) if so, the number of touts arrested for hacking the software relating to Tatkal booking system of railways during the last three years; and**
- (c) the measures taken by the Railways to streamline the reservation system and rationalize the fares during the last three years?**

ANSWER

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

(SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL)

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

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1562 BY SHRI RAMPRIT MANDAL TO BE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 27.11.2019 REGARDING TICKET TOUTS.

(a) and (b): The ticketing systems over Indian Railways are designed to provide services to a diverse set of passengers in a user-friendly and transparent manner. In order to enhance passenger convenience and provide sufficient time for making travel plans, the Advance Reservation Period (ARP) for booking of reserved tickets has been kept at 120 days. Also, with a view to meet the urgent travel requirements of passengers who have to travel at short notice, Tatkal scheme has been introduced. The reserved tickets can be simultaneously booked across online and offline ticketing channels on a first-come-first-served basis on all trains.

Further, the demand for reserved tickets over Indian Railways is not uniform. It varies across different sectors and seasons. During the peak rush period such as festival season and vacations, demand outstrips supply and the reserved accommodation in popular trains gets exhausted within a short period. In such times, some instances of misuse of the reservation system including the Tatkal facility have been detected. In such cases, action is initiated against the persons found to be involved in such irregularities. During 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019

(upto October), the number of cases registered against touts along with action taken against them is as under: -

Year	No. of cases registered	No. of persons arrested
2016	2082	2441
2017	1859	2060
2018	2843	3192
2019 (upto October)	2990	3511

In the year 2019, massive and intensive drives have been launched against touts, especially touts engaged in procuring e-tickets.

(c): In order to streamline the reservation system and to curb ticketing malpractices, a number of preventive and punitive measures have been taken by Indian Railways. Some of the important initiatives taken in this regard are as under:

- (i) Instructions have been issued to ensure that tickets are not booked on abbreviated names and full name of the passenger and the surname wherever applicable are captured at the time of booking reserved tickets.**

- (ii) Carrying of prescribed identity proof has been made compulsory for one of the passengers while undertaking journey in reserved class.**
- (iii) Regular checks are conducted in mass contact areas such as Passenger Reservation System (PRS) centres, booking offices, platforms, trains etc. to prevent unauthorized ticketing activities including the use of scripting software. Such checks are also intensified during peak period like festivals, holidays etc.**
- (iv) Checks conducted at Reservation Offices are supplemented by checks on the trains to detect the cases of transferred reserved tickets i.e. persons found travelling fraudulently against accommodation actually reserved in the name of another passenger.**
- (v) Surveillance at reservation offices is stepped up by installing Close Circuit Television at important PRS locations to keep watch on any possible misuse of reservation system.**
- (vi) In case of online booking of tickets, checks have been applied on minimum time required to enter the passenger details and CAPTCHA and no ticket can be booked before 35 seconds. User IDs are checked on daily basis and those IDs found using malpractices like fast booking of tickets are deactivated.**

- (vii) Setting a limit of booking 6 Railway tickets by an individual user in a month in case of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) portal. This limit has been revised to 12 Railway tickets in a month for those individual users who have linked their IRCTC user ID with their respective Aadhaar number and ensured that at least one of the passengers in the passenger list is verifiable through Aadhaar.**
- (viii) The authorized agents of IRCTC have been restricted from booking tickets during first fifteen minutes of opening of Advance Reservation Period (ARP) booking and Tatkal booking.**
- (ix) General public are also educated through Public Address System and media, not to buy tickets from unscrupulous elements and consequences of buying tickets from these sources.**
- (x) Additional computerised Passenger Reservation System (PRS) counters are opened during peak rush period/festival seasons at various locations.**
- (xi) In order to cater to additional demand during peak rush period, special trains are run and carrying capacity of existing trains is augmented, keeping in view the pattern of traffic, operational feasibility and availability of resources.**
- (xii) Computerised Passenger Reservation System (PRS) has also been streamlined by making a provision for automatic preparation of**

reservation charts at least four hours before the scheduled departure of train and to allow booking of vacant accommodation thereafter till preparation of second reservation charts through internet as well as any computerised PRS counter.

- (xiii) With a view to providing confirmed accommodation to waiting list passengers and to ensure optimal utilization of available accommodation, an Alternate Train Accommodation Scheme (ATAS) known as “VIKALP” has been introduced to cover all types of trains on all sectors. The scheme aims at providing waiting list passengers accommodation in alternate train having vacant accommodation.**

Measures to streamline reservation system and deter unscrupulous elements from misusing the reservation facility meant for genuine passengers is a continuous and an on-going process. As far as rationalization of fares is concerned, there is no increase in passenger fares in 2016-17, 2017-18 & 2018-19. Further measures taken to implement variable fare are as follows:-

- (i) Introduction of flexi fare scheme in Rajdhani, Shatabdi and Duronto trains with effect from 09.09.2016. Further, Flexi fare scheme in Rajdhani, Shatabdi and Duronto trains has been rationalized with**

effect from 15.11.18 for journey commencing from 15.03.2019 as under:-

- a. Discontinuation of Flexi fare scheme from 15 trains for two full years and from 32 trains during pre defined lean period of 3 months (February, March & August).**
- b. Maximum cap of flexi fare scheme has been reduced to 1.4 times in all flexi fare applicable classes.**
- c. Graded discount has been introduced in flexi fare trains, where class-wise occupancy is less than 60%, 4 days prior to scheduled departure of the train as under:-**

Occupancy	Discount
Up to 70%	20% on last fare
70 to 80%	10% on last fare
Above 80%	Nil

- (ii) Discounted fare schemes have been offered in Shatabdi trains running underutilised over 4 sections viz. Bengaluru-Mysuru, Mysuru-Bengaluru, Ahmedabad-Vadodara and New Jalpaiguri-Malda Town sections.**

- (iii) 10% discount is given on vacant berths/seats after preparation of first chart.**
- (iv) Powers have been delegated to Zonal Railways to declare AC-3tier as AC chair car during day time if running vacant on the section.**
- (v) Power have been delegated to Zonal Railways for discounted fare to the extent of 10% to 25% in CC and EC class if the same is running underutilized for the particular section.**
- (vi) Differential fare structure based on the facilities provided have been introduced in trains like Vande Bharat Express, Tejas Express, Antyodaya Express, Humsafar Express etc.**
