

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1655
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21.09.2020**

DROP IN NUMBER OF PASSENGERS

1655. SHRI DIBYENDU ADHIKARI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that from 2018-19 to 2019-20 till date the number of passengers who travelled by AC coaches has dropped by over 13 percent and if so, the details thereof;**
- (b) whether it is also a fact that cost of road transport along with the infrastructural development and the air travel prices have become cheaper and it is the cause of consecutive decrease of passengers who travelled by trains; and**
- (c) if so, the action plan taken by the Government to rectify the situation?**

ANSWER

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

(SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL)

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

STATEMENT REFERED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1655 BY SHRI DIBYENDU ADHIKARI TO BE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 21.09.2020 REGARDING DROP IN NUMBER OF PASSENGERS

(a): No, Sir. There is no drop recorded in the number of passengers who travelled by AC coaches in the financial year 2019-20 as compared to the corresponding number of passengers in the financial year 2018-19. However, in financial year 2020-21 due to cancellation of regular passenger trains in view of Covid-19 pandemic, there is drop in number of passengers.

(b): Railways, Road and Airlines are different modes of transport, which are not comparable in terms of their volume, connectivity and convenience. There is no fixed maximum limit of fare in Airlines whereas Railways have fixed maximum fare throughout the year. Airline fare varies significantly depending on time of operation, stoppages, travel duration, Origin – Destination pair, carrier etc. Railways' fare may or may not be higher than the air fare depending upon the class of travel as well as the peak or lean periods. It is the choice of the passengers to opt either for Railway or Airlines as per their convenience.

On the similar pattern, Road transport is mainly for short/medium distances and has different fare structure over different sectors. Railways have uniform local train fare as well as Intercity train mail / Exp fare for short/medium distances depending upon the category of service. Therefore, fare of rail may not be comparable with road transport also.

(c): Indian Railways continuously strives to improve passenger traffic over its network. Accordingly, during pre-COVID period, various steps have been taken by the Railways to enhance passenger traffic including the following:-

- i. Periodical review of reservation quota and making necessary adjustments, wherever required, with a view to ensure optimum utilization of available accommodation.**
- ii. Analysis of waiting list on regular basis so as to augment the capacity of existing trains, to run special trains or to introduce new trains, subject to operational feasibility and commercial justification.**
- iii. Rationalisation of flexi-fare scheme along with graded discount scheme in Rajdhani, Shatabdi and Duronto trains.**
- iv. Offering fare of AC chair Car and Second class unreserved for AC-3tier coaches and Sleeper class coaches respectively having low occupancy on particular sections.**
- v. Introduction of discounted scheme in AC sitting accommodation over full/part of the sections where AC coaches with sitting accommodation are running with low occupancy.**
- vi. Extension of Alternate Train Accommodation Scheme known as VIKALP.**
- vii. Introduction of new passenger services like Vande Bharat Express, Tejas Express, Air-conditioned Electrical Multiple Unit(EMU) services, Gatiman Express, Anubhuti Coaches etc. with improved features and amenities.**

In the COVID-19 situation, resumption of passenger train services has been undertaken by Indian Railways in a phased manner based on the demand pattern subject to Covid-19 situation and Government's directives. Periodical review of occupancy, quota utilization, waiting list of trains is done and adjustments are made, wherever required. Measures to enhance passenger traffic is a continuous and an on-going process.

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