

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS**

LOK SABHA

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.600
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.12.2025**

OVERCROWDING IN NON-AC COACHES

600. SHRI ZIA UR REHMAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government subscribes to the view that the Railways needs to address overcrowding, particularly in non-air-conditioned coaches on busy routes;**
- (b) if so, the details of the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard and if not, the reasons therefor; and**
- (c) the initiatives taken/being taken by the Government to accelerate the implementation of the Kavach Automatic Train Protection System in a structured mission mode?**

ANSWER

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

(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

(a) to (c): Indian Railways (IR) have significantly increased the facilities for passengers demanding general/sleeper class travel. During the last financial year 2024-25 alone, 1250 general coaches have been utilised in various long-distance trains.

To cater to the travel demand of the low and middle income families, Indian Railways have taken up 17,000 non-AC coaches (general/sleeper).

On IR, the percentage of non-AC coaches, is about 70% as indicated below:

Table 1: Distribution of coaches:

Non-AC coaches (general and sleeper)	~57,200	~70%
AC coaches	~25,000	~30%
Total coaches	~82,200	100%

Due to higher availability of general coaches, the number of passengers traveling in general/ unreserved coaches has shown an increasing trend as shown below:

Table 2 : Passengers in general/unreserved coaches:

Year	Nos. of Passengers
2020-21	99 Cr (Covid year)
2021-22	275 Cr (Covid year)
2022-23	553 Cr
2023-24	609 Cr
2024-25	651 Cr

The number of seats available for non-AC passengers has also increased. The current composition is as follows:

Table 3: Distribution of seats:

Non-AC seats	~ 54 lakhs	~ 78%
AC seats	~ 15 lakhs	~ 22%
Total	~ 69 lakhs	100%

Moreover, to provide greater accommodation for the passengers using General and non-AC Sleeper Coaches, the extant policy regarding composition of Mail/Express trains provides for 12 (Twelve) General class & Sleeper class non- AC coaches and 08 (eight) AC-Coaches, in a train of 22 coaches, thereby providing greater accommodation for the passengers using General and non-AC Sleeper Coaches.

Amrit Bharat service:

To provide affordable means of transportation to the low and middle income families, Indian Railways have introduced Amrit Bharat services that are fully non-AC modern trains. As on 3.11.2025, 30 services are already in operation. The present composition of Amrit Bharat consists of 11 General Class coaches, 8 Sleeper Class coaches, 01 Pantry car and 02 Luggage cum Divyangjan coaches.

High Speed and enhanced Safety standards are the hallmarks of these trains with following enhanced features and amenities:

- Better aesthetics of seat and berths with enhanced look & feel on the lines of Vande Bharat Sleeper.
- Jerk Free Semi-Automatic Couplers.
- Improved Crashworthiness in coaches by provision of crash tube.
- Provision of CCTV system in all coaches and Luggage room.
- Improved designs of toilets.
- Improved design of Ladder for ease of climbing on to the berth.
- Improved LED Light fitting & Charging Sockets.
- Provision of EP assisted braking system.
- Aerosol based fire suppression system in toilets and electrical cubicles.

- **USB Type-A and Type-C mobile charging sockets.**
- **Emergency Talk Back system for two-way communication between Passenger and Guard/Train Manager.**
- **Non-AC pantry with enhanced heating capacity.**
- **Fully sealed gangways with quick release mechanism for easy attachment and detachment.**

Further, to cater to the needs of passengers desirous of availing unreserved accommodation, Indian Railways (IR) operate unreserved non-AC passenger trains/ MEMU / EMU etc. for affordable travel, which are in addition to the unreserved accommodation (coaches) available in Mail/Express services.

By introducing Amrit Bharat Express trains, manufacturing of MEMU trains, and by executing a special manufacturing programme for 17,000 non-AC general/sleeper coaches, Indian Railways is committed to effectively cater to the travel demand of the low and middle income families who prefer to travel by Railways as an affordable means of transportation.

Kavach Automatic Train Protection (ATP) System:

- 1. Kavach is an indigenously developed Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system. Kavach is a highly technology intensive system, which requires safety certification of highest order (SIL-4).**
- 2. Kavach aids the Loco Pilot in running of trains within specified speed limits by automatic application of brakes in case Loco Pilot fails to do so and also helps the trains to run safely during inclement weather.**

3. The first field trials on the passenger trains were started in February 2016. Based on the experience gained and Independent Safety Assessment of the system by Independent Safety Assessor (ISA), three firms were approved in 2018-19, for supply of Kavach Ver 3.2.

4. Kavach was adopted as National ATP system in July 2020.

5. Implementation of Kavach System involves following Key Activities:

a. Installation of Station Kavach at each and every station, block section.

b. Installation of RFID Tags throughout the track length.

c. Installation of telecom Towers throughout the section.

d. Laying of Optical Fibre Cable along the track.

e. Provision of Loco Kavach on each and every Locomotive running on Indian Railways.

6. Based on deployment of Kavach version 3.2 on 1465 RKm on South Central Railway and experience gained, further improvements were made. Finally, Kavach specification version 4.0 was approved by RDSO on 16.07.2024.

7. Kavach version 4.0 covers all the major features required for the diverse railway network. This is a significant milestone in safety for Indian Railways. Within a short period, IR has developed, tested and started deploying Automatic Train Protection System.

8. Major improvement in Version 4.0 includes increased Location Accuracy, Improved Information of Signal Aspects in bigger yards, Station to Station Kavach interface on OFC and Direct Interface to

existing Electronic Interlocking System. With these improvements, Kavach Ver.4.0. is planned for large scale deployment over Indian Railways.

9. After extensive and elaborate trials, Kavach Version 4.0 has been successfully commissioned on 738 Route km on Palwal – Mathura-Nagda section (633 Rkm) on Delhi – Mumbai route and Howrah–Bardhaman section (105 Rkm) Delhi – Howrah route. Kavach implementation has been taken up in balance sections of Delhi – Mumbai & Delhi – Howrah corridors.

10. Progress of key items of Kavach on High density routes including Delhi– Mumbai & Delhi– Howrah corridors are as under:

SN	Item	Progress
i	Laying of Optical Fibre Cable	7129 Km
ii	Installation of Telecom Towers	860 nos
iii	Provision of Kavach at Stations	549 nos
iv	Installation of Track side equipment	2674 RKm
v	Provision of Kavach on Locos	4,154

11. Further, track side Kavach implementation work has been taken up on 15,512 RKm covering all GQ, GD, HDN and identified sections of Indian Railways.

12. Bids have been invited for equipping another 9,069 locomotives with Kavach version 4.0. Kavach is being provided progressively in a phased manner in locomotives.

13. Specialized training programmes on Kavach are being conducted at centralized training institutes of Indian Railways to impart training to all concerned officials. By now more than 40,000 technicians, operators and engineers have been trained on Kavach technology. This includes 30,000 Loco Pilots & Assistant Loco Pilots. Courses have been designed in collaboration with IRISET.

14. The cost for provision of Track Side including Station equipment of Kavach is approximately Rs. 50 Lakhs/Km and cost for provision of Kavach equipment on locomotives is approximately Rs. 80 Lakh/Loco.

15. The funds utilized on Kavach works so far up to June'25 is Rs. 2,015 Crores. The allocation of funds during the year 2025-26 is Rs. 1673.19 Crores. Requisite funds are made available as per the progress of works.
