

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 175
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.02.2026**

FARE STRUCTURE/AFFORDABILITY OF VANDE BHARAT TRAINS

***175. ADV. CHANDRA SHEKHAR:**

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the current fare structure for Vande Bharat trains during the year 2025–26 including average AC Chair Car and Executive Class fares on major routes, comparison with regular Mail/Express trains and passenger occupancy data (often near 100%) as of January 2026;**
- (b) the details of the steps taken to address widespread criticism that high fares make Vande Bharat trains inaccessible to middle and lower-income passengers, despite claims of premium modern travel;**
- (c) the manner in which the pricing policy aligns with World Bank recommendations for inclusive and affordable public transport systems and best practices from the world including Japan's Shinkansen and China's high speed rail which balance speed with broader economic accessibility; and**
- (d) the details of the initiatives taken during the year 2025-26 to make Vande Bharat more inclusive including any concessions, subsidised tickets or special quotas for women, senior citizens or economically weaker sections and their uptake?**

ANSWER

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

(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

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

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF STARRED QUESTION NO.175 TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.02.2026 IN LOK SABHA

(a) to (d) Indian Railways (IR) caters to various segments of the travelling public and, accordingly, operates different types of train services like Suburban/Non-suburban ordinary train services, Mail/Express, Amrit Bharat, Vande Bharat, Vande Bharat Sleeper, Namo Bharat Rapid Rail, Tejas, Humsafar, Rajdhani, Shatabdi, Durgam and Garib Rath services etc.

Ministry of Railways while deciding the fare structure of various types of passenger services gives due consideration to aspects like the cost of service, value of service, type of services/facilities offered, affordability, competition from other competing modes and socio-economic considerations etc.

Vande Bharat services since its introduction in February 2019, have been proliferated to 82 routes (164 train services) up to January 2026.

Vande Bharat trains operate as a distinct passenger service segment having specific fare structure with features like improved suspension systems, faster acceleration with semi-high speed operation, automatic plug doors, ergonomics seats, mini pantry, CCTV's, KAVACH etc.

The fares of Indian Railways are among the lowest in comparison to other countries in the world.

A comparison of the Indian Railway passenger fares (ordinary class) with the fares of the similar segment of services of the neighbouring countries is as under:

Country	Approx lowest fare per PKM	Comparison with India
India	~ ₹ 0.20	
Pakistan	~ ₹ 0.54	~ 2.5x higher
Bangladesh	~ ₹ 0.37	~ 2x higher
Sri Lanka	~ ₹ 0.51	~ 2.5x higher

Keeping in view the affordability, the fare structure of Vande Bharat train services is kept at level below the cost of service. The fare of Vande Bharat AC chair car over a journey between 300 km to 400 km is around ₹2.19 per PKM which is much lower than the fares of similar segment of

services in countries like China, Japan and France, where it ranges from ₹7.00 to ₹20.00 per PKM.

The rationalised fare structure has facilitated the wider expansion of these services across the country reflecting strong passenger demand for these services. Vande Bharat services have high occupancy level on all major routes with occupancy of Vande Bharat near 100% demonstrating a change in passenger preferences.

Indian Railways provides affordable transportation service to more than 720 crore passengers annually. The fare structure of Indian Railways besides considering the socio-economic factors also largely aligns with the relevant best practices adopted by different railway systems of the world.

The total amount of subsidy given in FY 2023-24 on passenger travel is provisionally estimated at ₹60,466 Crore, this amounts to a 45% subsidy on the cost of passenger travel. In other words, if the cost of providing services is ₹100 then the price of ticket is ₹55 only. There is no concession in fare in Vande Bharat trains, however four seats as reserved quota are earmarked for persons with disabilities (Divyangjans) in chair car of each train service.
