GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1165
TO BE ANSWERED ON 25.07.2018

DESTINATION ALERT FOR PASSENGERS

1165. ADV. JOICE GEORGE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is planning to introduce the Destination Alert for train passengers and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Government is also planning to refund 50 per cent of the amount against cancellation of Tatkal tickets and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether ticketing facility is going to start soon in Railway Overseas Languages and if so, the details thereof;

(d) the details of the other major decisions taken by the Railways;

(e) whether the Government is of the opinion that these changes will increase the customer satisfaction; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

(SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN)

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

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STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1165 BY ADV. JOICE GEORGE TO BE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 25.07.2018 REGARDING DESTINATION ALERT FOR PASSENGERS

(a): Destination alert facility has been provided in selected trains wherein Short Message Service (SMS) alert is sent to the reserved passengers 20 minutes before actual arrival on the station where passenger will de-board the train during night hours i.e. 2300 hours in the night to 0700 hours in the morning. Destination alert facility is also available through 139 wherein reserved passengers can set destination alert on 139 Railway Enquiry Service Interactive Voice Response (IVR), 139 Railway Enquiry service with assistance from customer service executive and through SMS 139 with one simple keyword. The user receives a confirmation message on his mobile number as Destination Alert Call has been set on your mobile number for destination station name.

(b): If waitlisted Tatkal ticket is cancelled within the prescribed time limit, the refund of fare minus clerkage charge is granted. At present, there is no proposal under consideration to grant 50% refund on confirmed Tatkal ticket.

(c): No, Madam.

(d) to (f): Salient initiatives taken by Railways for the benefit of passengers and to increase customer satisfaction are as under:

 i. Online ticket booking facility through Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) website thereby obviating the need to stand in queues at reservation counters.

ii. Reserved and unreserved ticket booking facility through mobile phones for which App has been provided.

iii. Provision of Automatic Ticket Vending Machines (ATVMs) at Railway stations for dispensation of tickets.

iv. Provision of various cashless modes of payment like net banking, e-wallets, credit/debit cards through Point of Sale (POS) machines, through Unified Payment Interface (UPI)/ Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM), etc.

v. Earmarking of separate counters at various Computerised Passenger Reservation System (PRS) centres for dealing with the reservation requisitions received from persons with disability, senior citizens, ladies, former Members of Parliament, Members of Legislative Assemblies, accredited press correspondents and freedom fighters.

vi. Automatic preparation of first reservation charts at least 4 hours before scheduled departure of train and thereafter booking of available accommodation through internet as well as through PRS counters till preparation of second reservation chart.

vii. Intimation to passengers through SMS in case of change in passengers' reservation status from waiting list/Reservation against Cancellation (RAC) to confirmed, cancellation of trains, late running of train in identified trains.

viii. Cancellation of computerised Passenger Reservation System (PRS) counter tickets through IRCTC website or through 139.

ix. Automatic refund against e-tickets in case of cancellation of trains.

x. Introduction of Alternate Train Accommodation Scheme 'VIKALP' to provide confirmed accommodation to waitlisted passengers in alternate train to ensure optimal utilisation of available accommodation.

xi. Increase in number of berths earmarked as RAC to accommodate more passengers.

xii. Enhancement of the existing combined quota earmarked for Senior Citizens, pregnant women and female passengers 45 years of age and above to 6 lower berths per coach in Sleeper, 3 lower berths per coach in 3AC and 3 lower berths per coach in 2AC class. Further, in Rajdhani, Duronto and fully Air Conditioned/Express trains, the number of lower berths has been increased to 4 lower berths per coach.

xiii. Earmarking of reservation quota of two berths in 3AC class and four berths in Sleeper class for persons with disability.

xiv. With a view to expanding ticketing facilities, centres called Yatri Ticket Suvidha Kendra (YTSK) have been established on public private partnership model to issue reserved/unreserved tickets through UTS-cum-PRS terminals.

xv. Introduction of Sarathi Seva to help old and disabled passengers requiring assistance at the station and strengthen the existing services for enabling passengers to book Battery Operated Car (BOC), porter services etc. on a paid basis in addition to the existing pick up and drop and wheelchair services.

xvi. Provision of Yatri Mitra Sewa at major stations for enabling passengers to book wheelchair services cum porter services.

xvii. Online booking of Retiring Room has been commissioned at 506 Railway stations.

xviii. Provision of cushioned seats/berths, fluorescent lights, air-conditioning, fans, toilet, dustbins and wash basin facilities etc. in all main line trains/coaches being manufactured.

xix. Provision of looking mirrors, snack tables, water bottle holders, coat hooks, small luggage racks, luggage securing arrangements, mobile/laptop charging sockets in identified classes of coaches.

xx. Provision of dust bins in Non-AC coaches, Braille signages in coaches, mugs with chain in Non-AC coaches.

xxi. Introduction of train services with higher facilities like Tejas, Humsafar, Mahamana Express, Deen Dayalu Express etc.

xxii. Introduction of station-based e-catering for widening the range of options available to passengers for ordering food of their choice.

xxiii. Introduction of pre-cooked food ('ready to eat' meals) in the range of options available to passengers.

xxiv.   Operation of Centralised Catering Service Monitoring Cell (CSMC) (Toll free Number. 1800-111-321) for prompt Redressal of passenger grievances related to the catering activities and real time assistance to travelling public.

xxv.   Operation of all India helpline Number 138 for Rail users to lodge complaints/suggestions regarding food and catering services.

xxvi.   A twitter handle -@ IRCATERING has also been made operational to cater to the complaints/suggestions with regard to catering services.

xxvii. Optional catering service introduced on 32 Rajdhani/ Shatabdi/Duronto/Gatiman trains.

xxviii. A third-party audit to examine the quality of food, hygiene and cleanliness in pantry car and base kitchen has been started by IRCTC. IRCTC has awarded Food safety, hygiene audit for 96 trains, 206 Food Plazas/Fast Food Units.

xxix.   Water Vending Machines (WVM) policy was notified w.e.f. 16.06.2015 and 1850 WVMs have already been installed at various stations with the objective to provide potable drinking water of prescribed Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) standards and other regulations to passengers at affordable price.

xxx. IRCTC has set up a Central Control and Monitoring Centre at New Delhi for real time monitoring of its base kitchens across the country through Artificial Intelligence (AI) equipped high definition Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) system. Sharing of live streaming of the Base Kitchens through website of IRCTC has been made operational w.e.f. 04/07/2018.

xxxi. In order to generate printed bill and invoice reflecting all details of transactions undertaken at catering units, hand held Point of Sale (POS) machines have been provided and at present, 100 POS machines are in operation on 26 trains.

Strengthening/upgrading of existing facilities and introduction of new facilities to improve customer satisfaction is a continuous and ongoing process.

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