

REFORMS IN PASSENGER AMENITIES IN INDIAN RAILWAYS



*“Indian Railways the growth engine
of the nation's **Vikas Yatra**”*

Shri Narendra Modi
Hon'ble Prime Minister



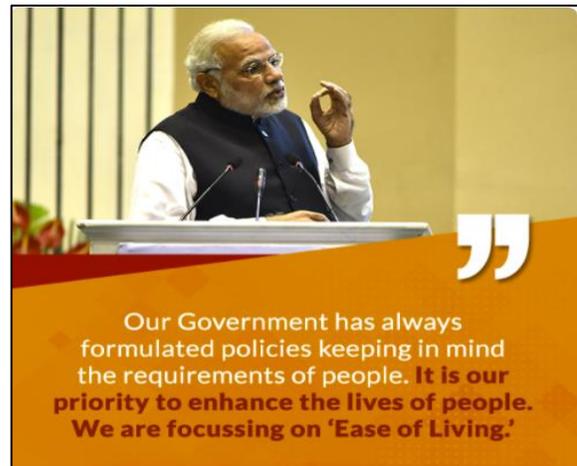
Government of India
Ministry of Railways



REFORMS IN PASSENGER AMENITIES IN RAILWAYS

Present day passengers expect visible, qualitative and effective improvements on each and every item of public utility provided at the stations/platforms. In view of the increased expectations of the passengers/daily commuters, Indian Railways are making all out efforts to provide various facilities at the stations.

A review of categorization of station for provision of passenger amenities has been carried out in the year 2017 based on the annual passenger earnings (reserved and unreserved) and number of outward passengers handled at station for the year 2016-17. For provision of the amenities in an objective manner, stations on Indian Railways have been clubbed into 3 groups i.e. Non-Suburban, Suburban and Halt. These groups have been put in grades ranging from 1-6. The categorization is reviewed every five years.



Certain Minimum Essential Amenities are provided at the time of construction of new stations based on anticipated traffic. Recommended and Desirable Amenities are further augmented from time to time with growth in passenger traffic at stations, based on the needs and expectations of the travelling public and the availability of funds. Indian Railways is providing amenities like escalators, lifts, Wi-fi etc. at stations in a progressive manner.

Modernisation/Upgradation of stations has been undertaken with a view to provide better passenger amenities and has been done under various modernization schemes such as Model Station scheme, Modern Station scheme and Adarsh Stations scheme. At present, stations are upgraded under the 'Adarsh Station Scheme' and 1253

Stations have so far been selected for upgraded facilities like improvement to the facade, waiting room, signage, Pay and Use toilets, etc. depending on the category of stations.

As a part of 'Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan' and with a view to provide better passenger amenities at Railway stations, lifts and escalators are being installed at various stations across the country based on techno-commercial feasibility & availability of funds.

Wi-Fi facility and CCTV based Surveillance system have already been provided at some important stations and these facilities shall be extended to all balance stations (except halt stations) over Indian Railways. The facility of online booking of retiring room through IRCTC website is already available for some stations and this facility will be extended to the remaining stations in phased manner. Janani Sewa has been launched keeping in mind the need of food for babies in Railway premises. The baby foods, hot milk are being made available at all major stations on payment basis.

Station redevelopment is planned by leveraging real estate potential of spareable land and air space in and around the stations, inviting private participation. For this, Railway conducts techno-economic feasibility studies of stations across the country. Based on the outcome of these feasibility studies, stations are taken up for redevelopment in phases.

Vistadome coaches: With a view to make Railway journey more memorable "Vistadome coaches" are also being introduced. These coaches are equipped with roof top glasses and seats which can rotate upto 180 degrees.

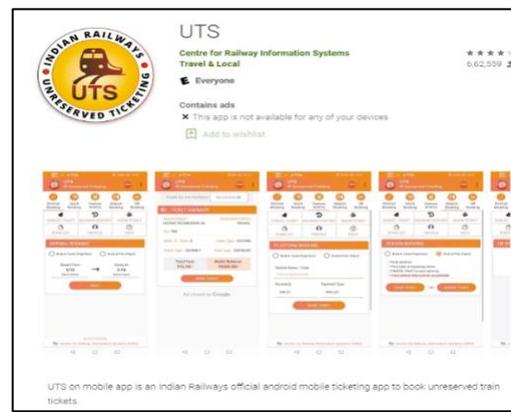
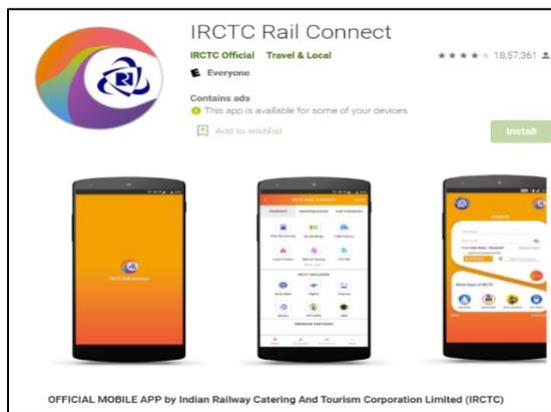
Ticket booking is the first step for a Rail traveller when embarking on a Rail journey. Ticket booking, cancellation and refund rules have been notified from time to time. However, considering the changed technology and transport environment, reforms in ticket booking were the need of the hour. Giving multiple ticket booking options including digital options is the way forward. Security during online booking and ensuring optimal utilization of available berths was implemented over Indian Railways.

Internet ticketing on IRCTC website was started in year 2002 with 27 tickets on the first day. Due to increased demand of e-ticketing and capacity constraint there were problems in ticket booking process and complaints of website slowness and non availability. In addition several passenger centric reforms for ease of booking tickets were need of the hour to make available next level of passenger comfort for booking tickets.



Next generation e-ticketing system (NGeT) was launched in 2014 to handle increased ticket booking. E-tickets can be booked easily and faster through website and the IRCTC website is able to handle more than 25,000 tickets per minute at present. The concurrent user connections were increased from 40,000 to 1,20,000 in NGeT, which has further been increased to 5,00,000. The enquiries in NGeT have also been increased from 1000 per second to 3000 per second. Capacity in NGeT was being continuously increased from 2016 to 2019 by doubling the servers in integration layer and adding storage space.

Mobile ticketing app: Indian Railways through IRCTC has launched IRCTC Rail Connect Mobile App on Android Platform of Next Generation e-Ticketing System on 10-Jan-2017. IRCTC has also launched Mobile App on iOS platform on 10-Oct-2019. Through IRCTC Rail Connect Mobile App on Android & iOS Platforms, a total of 14.15 Crore tickets were booked in FY 2019-20, which is 47% of total tickets booked online. IRCTC Rail Connect Mobile App is fully secured and facilitates the customer with hassle free, seamless & cashless transactions. Similarly UTSONMOBILE app provides facility of booking unreserved tickets, monthly/ quarterly season tickets and platform tickets.



Cancellation of tickets and refund: Passengers having confirmed/RAC/Waitlisted PRS counter tickets can cancel their tickets through IRCTC website or through 139..Moreover, in case of cancellation of trains, refund is granted automatically to e-ticket holders to avoid inconvenience from lodging claim for refund. In addition, new Refund rules have been implemented with effect from 12.11.2015 which has helped in curbing speculative buying and selling of tickets improving availability of berths for common man. These reforms have enabled the Railway customers to claim refund on cancelled tickets in a hassle free manner.



“Indian Railways is transforming through goal-centric effort” : PM

PASSENGER AMENITIES & TICKET BOOKING: Reforms and benefit

Item	Reform	Impact/benefit
Upgradation and modernization of Retiring rooms:	Upgrade and modernize the Retiring rooms through IRCTC.	Provision of better and modern facilities along with proper maintenance of Retiring Rooms.
Plastic Bottle Crushing Machines (PBCMs):	PBCM are being installed at railway stations over Indian Railways.	PBCMs will go a long way in ensuring disposal of plastic waste in eco-friendly manner and thereby ensuring cleanliness.
Yatri Mitra Sewa Scheme:	Introduced at major Railway stations for enabling passengers viz Divyangjans, ailing and old age persons to book wheel chair services and porter services.	Such innovative services provided to rail users assures a significant next level of convenience and comfort for Divyangjan , elderly and sick persons.
VIKALP Scheme	Waitlisted passenger given an option of selecting any other train on the same route, with the original ticket and at no extra premium.	This reform is a step in direction of getting berths for waitlisted passengers in some alternate trains so that they can avail the Rail journey.
Transfer of Vacant Berths after Second Charting:	Post chart preparation, the berths remaining unbooked at the originating stations are transferred to next location.	Better and optimal utilization of vacant berths and thereby ensuring more availability of berths.
Contactless Ticket Checking	Provision of URL with ticket booking for verification and genuineness of PNR and passengers.	Adherence to COVID-19 protocol and to ensure contactless ticket checking in future.
Integrated Indian Railways helpline:	All railway helplines integrated into single number 139 for the passengers.	This initiative has resulted into quick grievance redressal and enquiry during the journey.
Minimum payment time defined:	The minimum time for booking of a e-ticket has been defined in the system.	This initiative was taken as a measure against touting.
Automatic logout in e-ticket after one transaction:	The system of automatic logout from e-ticket portal of IRCTC has been introduced	This initiative was meant to eliminate multiple bookings by touts.
UTS on mobile app	UTSONMOBILE app for booking of unreserved tickets, monthly/quarterly season tickets.	Enabling unreserved segment passengers to buy ticket without standing in long queues

Digital initiative on Indian Railways:

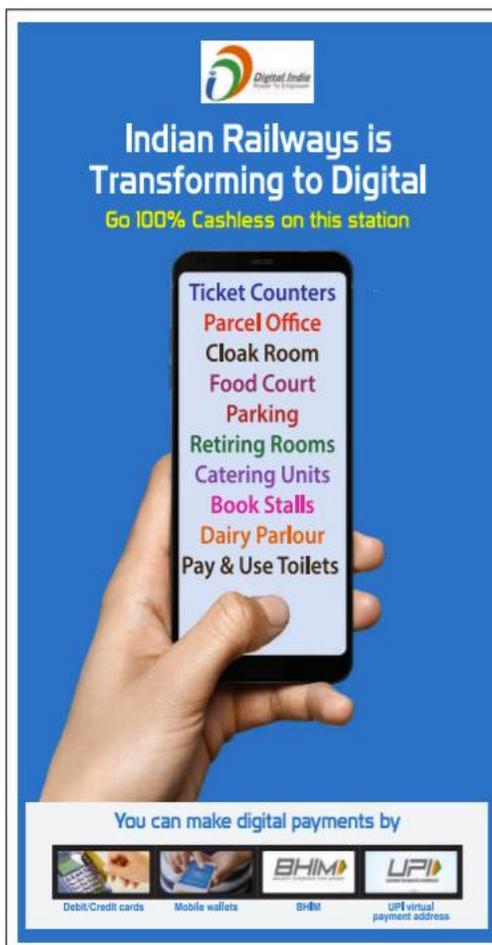
A slew of reforms and initiatives were started by Indian Railways to hop on to the Digital India drive. Some of the measure undertaken were:

Reforms in payment modes for purchase of

Ticket: Acceptance of International Debit /Credit cards has been done for booking e- tickets through IRCTC from 29.04.16. In addition, Yatri Ticket SevaKendras (YTSKs) have been advised to make options of digital payments available for purchase of tickets by the customers (26.12.2016). This reform initiative has facilitated multi-option for payment modes for common man as well as foreign nationals including Pravasi Bhartiya nationals while undertaking rail travel in India.

Integration of UPI & Mobile wallet as payment

option: BHIM (Bharat Interface for Money) which is a Mobile App developed by National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), based on the Unified Payment Interface (UPI) has been added for making payment for e-Tickets booked through IRCTC website on 28.4.17. On Indian Railways all reserved and unreserved ticketing counters are enabled to accept digital payment through UPI BHIM. In addition Mobile wallet options have also been introduced from 22.04.15. These initiatives have enabled ease, comfort and safety for Rail travellers while booking tickets from IRCTC website.



Free WiFi at Railway Stations: To meet the demand of the customers, free Wi-Fi service is being provided at the stations. This a Digital India initiative on part of Indian Railways for convenience and comfort of Rail passengers.

SMS based alerts: SMS alerts are being sent to those passengers who furnish their mobile number at the time of booking of ticket. The message is also being sent at the time of ticket booking / train cancellation/diversion/short termination/ Re-scheduling/delay, and

as when the ticket status changes. This facility is for convenience for Rail passengers to get updated real time status of reserved ticket.

Wakeup call alert service: The facility of Wakeup Call-Destination Alert Facility, wherein, travellers will get an alert on their registered mobile number when their destination station arrives has been introduced. Passengers will be able to activate the wakeup call-destination alert facility on their PNR by calling 139. This has led to convenience for Rail passengers so as to get alert before their destination station.

The digital push in the Indian Railways will not only bring in transparency and prevent overcharging but will also improve the image of Railways as a passenger friendly entity offering multiple modes of payments.

Acknowledgement of efforts of Indian Railways for providing better passenger amenities

