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RAILWAY CONVENTION COMMITTEE

(2014)

(SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(RAILWAY BOARD)

**Action Taken by Government on the
Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained
in their Seventeenth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on Facilities
given by Indian Railways to Differently Abled Persons
(Divyangjan)**



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

December, 2018 /Pausha, 1940 (Saka)

TWENTY NINTH REPORT
RAILWAY CONVENTION COMMITTEE
(2014)
(SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(RAILWAY BOARD)

**Action Taken by Government on the
Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained
in their Seventeenth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on Facilities
given by Indian Railways to Differently Abled Persons
(Divyangjan)**

Presented to Lok Sabha on 31.12.2018

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 31.12.2018



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

December, 2018 /Pausha, 1940 (Saka)

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- I. *Minutes of the Fifty Fourth sitting of the Railway Convention Committee (2014) held on 28 December, 2018.
- II. Analysis of Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Seventeenth Report of the Railway Convention Committee (2014).

* Not Appended with this cyclostyled copy.

COMPOSITION OF RAILWAY CONVENTION COMMITTEE (2014)

Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab, MP - Chairperson

Members

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Abhishek Banerjee
3. Shri Sanganna Amarappa Karadi
4. Shri K. Ashok Kumar
5. Shri Kamalbhan Singh Marabi
6. **Vacant***
7. Ramen Deka
8. Shri Janak Ram
9. Shri Rahul Ramesh Shewale
10. Shri Bharat Singh
11. Shri Liladharbhai Khodaji Vaghela
12. Shri K.C. Venugopal

Rajya Sabha

13. Shri Sanjay Seth
14. Shri T.K. Rangarajan
15. Shri Prem Chand Gupta
16. Shri Abdul Wahab
17. Dr. V. Maitreyan
18. Shri Ranvijay Singh Judev

SECRETARIAT

1. Smt. Kavita Prasad - Joint Secretary
2. Shri M. K. Madhusudhan - Director
3. Shri D. R. Mohanty - Additional Director

*Vacancy occurred w.e.f. 05th July, 2016 vice Smt. Anupriya Patel was appointed MOS.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Railway Convention Committee (2014), having been authorized by the Committee, present this Twenty Ninth Report on Action Taken by Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Seventeenth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on Facilities given by Indian Railways to Differently Abled Persons (Divyangjan).

2. The Seventeenth Report was presented to Lok Sabha and also laid in Rajya Sabha on 20 December, 2017. The Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) furnished their replies on 31 July, 2018 indicating Action Taken on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Seventeenth Report. The Committee at their sitting held on 28 December, 2018 considered and adopted this Report.

3. An analysis of the action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Seventeenth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) of the Railway Convention Committee (2014) is given at Appendix-II.

4. For ease of reference, the Observations/ Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold letters in the Report.

New Delhi:
28 December, 2018
07 Pausha, 1940 (SAKA)

BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB
CHAIRPERSON
RAILWAY CONVENTION COMMITTEE

CHAPTER - I

REPORT

This Report deals with action taken by Government, on the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee, contained in their Seventeenth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on the subject 'Facilities given by Indian Railways to Differently Abled Persons (Divyangjan)':

2. The Seventeenth Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 21 December, 2017 and also simultaneously laid in Rajya Sabha, on the same day. It contained 19 Observations/Recommendations. Replies of Government in respect of all the Observations/Recommendations have been received and are categorized as under:-

(i) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government:

Rec. Para Nos. 2,7,8,9,12,14,15,16,17 & 18.

Total: 10

Percentage: 52.6

(ii) Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's reply:

Rec. Para No. 4,5,6 & 19

Total: 04

Percentage: 21.2

(iii) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration:

Rec. Para Nos. 1,10 & 11.

Total: 03

Percentage: 15.7

(iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government are interim in nature:

Rec. Para No. 3 & 13.

Total: 02

Percentage: 10.5

3. The Committee desire that Action Taken Notes in respect of the Observations/Recommendations contained in Chapter-I and final replies to the observations/recommendations contained in Chapter-V of this Report, be furnished to them, at the earliest.

4. The Committee will now deal with some of their earlier Recommendations which either require reiteration or merit further comments, based on the replies received from the Government.

I. Change in Nomenclature and Concessions to all categories of Divyangjan

(Recommendation Para No.-1)

5. In their Seventeenth Report, observing that the title 'Facilities to Persons with Disabilities' as used by the Railways in their Annual Report & Accounts was not appropriate, the Committee had suggested the Railway Board to start using the nomenclature 'Differently Abled Persons (Divyangjan)' in place of 'Persons with Disabilities', in all their documents, including the concession forms. The Committee had further recommended that concessions in fares be extended to all categories of Divyangjan instead of confining it to only four categories as per the extant practice.

6. In their Action Taken Note, the Railway Board have submitted as under:

“The term ‘Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)’ is being used by Indian Railways as per the notification issued by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment on 17.05.2016. The term ‘Blind’ has been replaced with ‘Persons with Visual Impairment with total absence of sight’. ‘Deaf & Dumb’ has been replaced with ‘Persons with hearing and speech impairment totally (both afflictions together in the same person)’.

The mandate for welfare of persons with disabilities is given to Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. Hence, the cost of revenue to be foregone due to concession to be given to persons with disability should be borne by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. At present, the entire subsidy amount on account of the concessions is being borne by the Railways. The concession may be given to all categories as per terms and conditions of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment if the revenue forgone due to such concession is borne by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. Keeping the above in view, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has been asked by this Ministry vide O.M. dated 07.09.2017 to bear the revenue foregone due to concession being given to different category of disabled persons as per RPWD Act 2016 or Railways may be allowed as a special case to have separate proforma for granting concession to only 4 categories of disabled persons only in extreme cases.”

7. The Committee are dissatisfied with the rigid stance taken by the Railway Board in not replacing the nomenclature ‘Persons with Disabilities’ with ‘Differently Abled Persons’. According to

the Ministry, the term ‘Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)’ is being used by the Indian Railways, as per the notification issued by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. The Committee are well aware that the Act promulgated by the Government of India to ensure equal opportunities to differently abled persons, protection of their rights and their full participation in nation building is titled ‘The Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Act, 1995’. But the said Act does not in anyway prevent the Ministries/Departments to use the term ‘Differently Abled Persons’ in place of ‘Persons with Disabilities’. In fact, a number of Ministries/Departments, including the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, are using the term ‘Differently Able Persons’ in their official documents. The Committee, are therefore, of the firm opinion that Indian Railways, being the largest Government organization, should not have any reservation and rather they should feel honoured in addressing the ‘Persons with Disabilities’ as ‘Differently Abled Persons (Divyangjan)’ in all their official documents, as is being done by other Departments/Organisations.

8. The Committee note that at present the entire subsidy amount on account of concessions given to the Differently Abled Passengers is borne by the Railways whereas according to the Railway Board it should be borne by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. In this context, the Committee find that the Railway Board have requested the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, to bear the said revenue and the response of the latter is awaited. The Committee desire that the matter be expeditiously and amicably settled between the two

Ministries so as to ensure provision of concessions to more categories of Differently Abled Passengers.

II. Engagement of Expert Contractors for Construction of Foot Over Bridges (FOBs)

(Recommendation Para Nos. 10 & 11)

9. Observing lack of ramp facility on many Foot Over Bridges (FOBs) making it impossible for movement of wheelchairs and taking into account the Ministry's assurance that instructions had already been issued to build ramps on the new FOBs, the Committee in their earlier Report had impressed upon the Railway Board to ensure setting up of ramps in all the ongoing and new FOBs besides making efforts for smooth movement of wheelchairs on the existing/already constructed FOBs. Further, taking note of non-availability of sufficient expert contractors which had adversely affected construction of FOBs despite availability of requisite funds, the Committee had recommended that urgent measures be taken to engage more expert contractors so as to ensure establishing safe and Divyangjan friendly FOBs as per the targetted time line.

10. In their Action Taken Note, the Railway Board have deposed as under:

“In order to facilitate easy movement of elderly, sick and differently abled passengers and for smooth access to platforms of major railway stations and for easy movement, escalators/lifts are provided as part of ‘Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan’. As of now 473 escalators at 171 stations and 330 lifts at 137 stations have been provided. Further, there is existing work going on for 303 escalators (for 115 stations) and 306 lifts (for 98 stations).

Further, lifts & escalators shall be provided depending upon feasibility & availability of resources.”

11. The Committee take note of the appreciable progress made by the Railways in the provision of lifts and escalators at various Stations to facilitate easy movement of elderly, sick and differently abled passengers. However, the concern expressed by the Committee in their earlier Report was relating to lack of ramp facility on many FOBs and non-availability of requisite expert contractors to build Divyangjan friendly FOBs, which has not been responded to by the Ministry. The Committee, therefore, once again impress upon the Railway Board to take appropriate measures, so as to ensure provision of ramp facility, in all the existing and newly constructed FOBs, besides engaging more expert contractors to build safe and Divyangjan friendly FOBs.

III. Dedicated Helpline Numbers for the Divyangjans (Recommendation Para No. 12)

12. Taking note of the facility of booking e-wheelchairs through the IRCTC portal at only 22 stations, the Committee in their earlier Report had desired that such facility be extended to all the major Stations. The Committee had also recommended that dedicated Helpline numbers for the Divyangjans be put in place so that any Divyangjan travelling without an escort be extended the requisite help including the facility of wheelchair and porter service upon his/her reaching the station after informing the Station Master concerned.

13. In their Action Taken Note, the Railway Board have submitted as under:

“All possible efforts are being taken by IRCTC to extend the facility of booking of e-wheelchair to all major stations.

Dedicated Helpline numbers 011-23746155 at New Delhi Railway Station by Northern Railway, 9004411111 (for SMSs) in Mumbai by Central Railway & 022-67645555 in Mumbai by Western railway, 033-23503536 in Kolkata (Sealdah) & 033-26411326 in Howrah station by Eastern Railway & 044-25354457 in Chennai by Southern Railway have started functioning. These help lines are meant to provide all assistance to Divyangjan during their train journeys.”

14. The Committee appreciate that all possible efforts are being made by the IRCTC to extend the facility of booking of e-wheelchair to all the major Stations. They are also pleased to note that dedicated Helpline numbers, meant to provide all assistance to Divyangjan during their train journeys, have started functioning at New Delhi (Northern Railway), Mumbai (Western Railway and Central Railway), Kolkata (Eastern Railway) and Chennai (Southern Railway) Railway Stations. The Committee desire that the provision of booking of e-wheelchair through IRCTC, be extended to all the major Railway Stations in a definite time frame and dedicated Helpline numbers for the benefit of the Divyangjan, as provided in the four Metros, be expanded to other Stations, in a gradual manner.

New Delhi:
28 December, 2018
07 Pausha, 1940 (SAKA)

BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB
CHAIRPERSON
RAILWAY CONVENTION COMMITTEE

(Vide Para No. 3 of the Introduction)

**ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON
OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE SEVENTEENTH
REPORT OF THE RAILWAY CONVENTION COMMITTEE -2014
(SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA)**

		Total	Percentage
I.	Total number of Recommendations	19	-
II.	Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government: (Para Nos. 2,7,8,9,12,14,15,16,17 & 18)	10	52.6
III.	Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies: (Para Nos. 4,5,6 & 19)	04	21.2
IV.	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which Government's replies have not been accepted by the Committee and which requires reiteration: (Para Nos. 1,10 & 11)	03	15.7
V.	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which final replies of Government are of interim in nature: (Para Nos. 3 & 13)	02	10.5
Total		19	100%