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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
RAILWAYS
(2021-22)
SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA**

**MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(RAILWAY BOARD)**

**[Action taken by Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the 6th Report of the
Standing Committee on Railways (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on 'Passenger Amenities including
Modernization of Railway Stations']**

TENTH REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

FEBRUARY, 2022/MAGHA, 1943 (SAKA)

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[Action taken by Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the 6th Report of the Standing Committee on Railways (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on 'Passenger Amenities including Modernization of Railway Stations']

Presented to Lok Sabha on 08.02.2022

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 08.02.2022



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

FEBRUARY, 2022/MAGHA, 1943 (SAKA)

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COMPOSITION OF STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS (2021-22)

Shri Radha Mohan Singh - **Chairperson**

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Shri T.R. Baalu
3. Smt. Ranjanben Dhananjay Bhatt
4. Shri A. H. Khan Choudhury
5. Shri Kaushalendra Kumar
6. Ms. Diya Kumari
7. Smt. Jaskaur Meena
8. Smt. Satabdi Roy[#]
9. Ms. Chandrani Murmu
10. Smt. Keshari Devi Patel
11. Shri Mukesh Rajput
12. Shri N. Reddeppa
13. Shri Achyutananda Samanta
14. Shri Sumedhanand Saraswati
15. Shri Arvind Sawant
16. Dr. Amar Singh
17. Smt. Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo
18. Shri Kodikunnil Suresh
19. Shri Gopal Jee Thakur
20. Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur
21. Vacant

RAJYA SABHA

22. Shri Narhari Amin
23. Shri Chh. Udayanraje Bhonsle
24. Shri H.D. Devegowda
25. Smt. Phulo Devi Netam
26. Ms. Saroj Pandey
27. Shri Ashok Siddharth
28. Dr. Sumer Singh Solanki
29. Shri Binoy Viswam
30. Prof. Manoj Kumar Jha^{*}
31. Vacant

@ Constituted w.e.f. 13.09.2021 vide Lok Sabha Bulletin Part II No. 3192 dated 09.10.2021.

* Nominated as Member w.e.f. 14.10.2021 vide Rajya Sabha Bulletin Part II No. 61163 dt 18.10.2021

Smt. Satabdi Roy Nominated to the Committee w.e.f. 01.12.2021 vide Lok Sabha Bulletin Part II No. 3440 dated 01.12.2021 in place of Shri Sunil Kumar Mondal

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

1. Shri Prasenjit Singh - Additional Secretary
2. Shri Arun K.Kaushik - Director
3. Shri R.L. Yadav - Additional Director

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Railways (2021-22), having been authorised by the Committee to present the Report on their behalf, present this Tenth Report on Action Taken by Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Sixth Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on 'Passenger Amenities including Modernization of Railway Stations'.

2. The Sixth Report was presented to the Lok Sabha and laid in the Rajya Sabha on 08.03.2021. The Report contained 33 Observations/Recommendations. The Ministry of Railways furnished Action Taken Notes on all the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Report on 06.10.2021.

3. The Committee considered and adopted the Draft Action Taken Report at their sitting held on 28.12.2021. The minutes of the sitting are given in Annexure.

4. For facility of reference and convenience, the Observations and Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold letters.

5. An analysis of the Action Taken by Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Sixth Report of the Standing Committee on Railways (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) is given in Appendix.

NEW DELHI:
04 February, 2022

15 Magha, 1943 (Saka)

RADHA MOHAN SINGH
Chairperson,
Standing Committee on Railways

CHAPTER I REPORT

The Report of the Standing Committee on Railways deals with the action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in their Sixth Report (17th Lok Sabha) on "Passenger Amenities including Modernization of Railway Stations".

2. The Sixth Report was presented to the Lok Sabha and laid in Rajya Sabha on 08.03.2021. It contained 33 Recommendations/Observations.

3. Action Taken Notes in respect of all the Observations/Recommendations have been received and categorized as follows:-

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

Para Nos.: 2,4,8,9,12,13,18,19,21,22,23,24,25,27,30,31 and 33

Total : 17

Chapter – II

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

Para Nos.: 1,3,5,6,7,10,11,14,15,16,17,20,28,29 and 32

Total : 15

Chapter – III

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

Para Nos.: 26

Total : 1

Chapter – IV

(iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which final replies are still awaited:

Para Nos. NIL

Total : NIL

Chapter - V

4. The Committee trust that utmost care will be given to the implementation of the Recommendations accepted by the Government. The Committee desire that final action taken

notes to the Observations/Recommendations contained in Chapter-I and Chapter-V of this Report should be furnished to them not later than three months of the presentation of this Report.

5. The Committee will now deal with the action taken by the Government on some of their recommendations/observations.

A. MODERNIZATION OF RAILWAY STATIONS

Recommendation (Para No. 13)

6. The Committee note that the proposal for redevelopment of 400 erstwhile 'A-1' and 'A' category stations as World Class Stations, was approved in June 2015, on 'as is where is' basis, by inviting open bids from interested parties with their designs and business ideas duly providing for amenities and other requirements of the Railways including permitting commercial development by zonal railways. They have been informed that initially, 19 stations were identified for development by resorting to the PPP mode as per issued guidelines. The Committee note that at a later stage, this number was increased to 50. They were further informed that the Expert Group on Modernization of Indian Railway had subsequently recommended modernization of 100 major stations at the cost of Rs. 1.10 lakh crore in 5 years under PPP mode and consequently, Indian Railways Station Development Corporation Ltd. (IRSDC) was developed. The aim of this scheme was to harness the real estate potential of land around and the airspace above the stations without any additional cost to the Railways besides envisaging the provision of modern facilities at stations such as food plazas, hotels, ATM facilities, Currency exchange counter, car rentals etc. The Committee note that the first phase of station redevelopment program by Zonal Railways was launched on 08.02.2017 and bids for redevelopment of 23 railway stations were invited. The Committee have been informed that bids for only two (2) stations of Jammu Tawi and Kozhikode were received. To their utter dismay, they also find that bids for other stations had to be foreclosed owing to not-so-encouraging response from the bidders. The Committee desire that the Railways should find out the reasons for low response for the bids and take out corrective measures in this regard.

7. In their Action Taken Replies, the Ministry of Railways have stated as under:-

"The first phase of station redevelopment program by Zonal Railways was launched on 08.02.2017. Bids for redevelopment of 23 railway stations were invited in the first phase. However bids for only two (2) stations i.e. Jammu Tawi and Kozhikode were received. In view of not-so-encouraging response, bids for other stations were foreclosed.

During various interactions with developers, investors and other stakeholders, various issues including longer lease period for commercially developed assets, multiple sub leasing, simplified bid procedures etc were repeatedly raised.

Accordingly, Ministry of Railways has revised the strategy and obtained Cabinet approval in October 2018. Station Redevelopment is planned by leveraging real estate potential of sparable 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. The selection of developer is done following a transparent and competitive bidding process.

A Group of Secretaries (GoS) was constituted by Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) for redevelopment of 50 railway stations. The GoS inter-alia suggested the levy of a nominal user fee for redevelopment of stations, which is presently under consideration.

At present, works for Habibganj and Gandhinagar station are at advanced stage of progress. Works are in progress at Ayodhya and Gomti Nagar stations. Contracts have been awarded for Ajni and Safdarjung stations. RFQ finalized for 8 stations (Nagpur, Gwalior, Sabarmati, Amritsar, Nellore, Tirupati, Puducherry and Dehradun). RFQ invited for 3 stations (New Delhi, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus and Ernakulam)."

8. After taking note of the recommendations of the Expert Group on Modernization of Indian Railway and emergence of 'Indian Railways Station Development Corporation Ltd.' (IRSDC), first phase of station redevelopment programme was launched on 8th February, 2017. Accordingly, bids were invited for redevelopment of 23 stations. However, 21 bids had to be foreclosed due to poor response from the bidders. The Committee had desired the Ministry to find out the reasons for poor response of the bids and take corrective steps in the matter. In compliance of their recommendation, the Committee find that the Ministry have interacted with the developers/investors and other stakeholders wherein the latter have repeatedly raised various issues such as longer lease period for commercially developed assets, multiple sub leasing, simplified bid procedures etc. The Committee are happy to note that the Ministry has revised the strategy and obtained Cabinet's approval in October, 2018. They are satisfied to note the progress with regard to redevelopment of the Railway Stations and hope that the projects will be completed in the scheduled time frame.

B. DRINKING WATER FACILITY

Recommendation (Para No. 26)

9. The Committee observe that safe drinking water is the most needed and essential amenities at stations and in trains. Though the Railways have taken all out efforts for supply of potable water, yet additional efforts are required to be taken to eradicate the problem of scarcity of drinking water particularly during peak hours. The Committee have, however, been informed that when the existing sources of drinking water are found inadequate, water supply is augmented through water tankers and various other sources like bore-well, municipality, rivers/dams etc. Further, the Ministry have endeavoured to proliferate Water Vending Machines in railway stations so as to ensure availability of safe and pure drinking water to travelling passengers at affordable rates. The Committee note that the supply of free potable water is maintained through water taps. In addition, Water Vending Machines (WVMs) have been installed at railway stations for sale of drinking water at nominal cost. However, the packaged drinking water has been the most preferable and plausible drink among the passengers. The Committee find it imperative on the part of the Railways to make additional efforts for exuberant supply of packaged drinking water over railways. The Committee are, however, distressed to note that there is shortage of huge quantity of railway's packaged

drinking water i.e. Rail Neer over railways. Currently, 11.22 lakh litres i.e. 62% of Rail Neer is being produced from 14 plants as against the demand of 18 lakh litres per day and the shortage of six point seven eight (6.78) lakh litres of Rail Neer is met by other Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) approved brands of Packaged Drinking Water (PDW). Though the railway has commissioned seven (7) more plants, yet the Committee are not happy with this scarce and deficient arrangements of the Railways which is invariably leading to unauthorized entrants selling fake brand of packaged drinking water in railways and causing serious threats to passengers' health besides loss to exchequer. The Committee would like to suggest the Ministry to come forward with a suitable plan to augment Rail Neer for ample supply not only to refrain unauthorized entrants for sale of fake brands of packaged drinking water but also help save the health of the passengers.

10. In their action taken reply, the Ministry of Railways have stated as under:-

“Current production of PDW from 14 Rail Neer plants is 5.67 lakh litre/day, with overall capacity of 14.08 lakh litre per day. At present, the demand of Rail Neer is being fulfilled by IRCTC.

Further, one more Rail Neer plant at Una (H.P.) has already been commissioned, which shall be operational shortly.

In addition, 5 new plants are in the pipeline to be commissioned.”

11. **The Committee had noted that though the Railways facilitate supply of free potable drinking water by way of taps installed and operated at various locations in railway premises and stations and sale of drinking water at nominal cost through Water Vending Machines (WVMs), yet they were distressed to note that there was huge shortage of railway's packaged drinking water i.e. Rail Neer over railways. The Committee had found it mandatory on the part of the Railways to make additional efforts for exuberant supply of packaged drinking water, the most preferred and plausible drink, among the passenger. The Committee are happy to note that the Railways are taking adequate steps to augment the need of potable drinking water (PDW). For this purpose, one more Rail Neer Plant at Una (HP) is already commissioned and 5 new plants are in the pipeline to be commissioned. However, the Committee note that against the overall capacity of 14.08 lakh litre per day, the current production of PDW from 14 Rail Neer Plants is only 5.67 lakh litre per day. The Committee desire the Railways to exploit the full potential of the available capacity.**

C. OTHER FACILITIES/INITIATIVES

Recommendation (Para No. 28)

12. The Committee have been informed that as an alternative, the Railways have started sale of platform tickets through mobile phone/mobile App in Western Railway, Central Railway and Northern Railway (New Delhi and Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Stations). Though this step of the railways is laudable, yet the Committee find that this is a very small number to cater to the large number of passengers. The Committee wish to point out that railway counters are already over-crowded, more so, a lot of time is consumed for purchase of platform tickets. They feel that all major railway stations of each zone should be covered under this facility. The Committee also desire that the Ministry should think for sale of platform

tickets through IRCTC website on the lines of sale of e-tickets/i-tickets which may go a long way both in de-congestion of railway counters and saving of revenue incurred on printing of platform tickets”.

13. In their action taken reply, the Ministry of Railways have stated as under:-

“The passengers intending to procure platform tickets can do so from the unreserved ticket counter, Automatic Ticket Vending Machines (ATVMs), currency/coin/card operated ticket vending machines (COTVMs) as well as UTS on Mobile App. The facility of UTS on Mobile APP has since been extended to all zonal Railways. In UTS on Mobile App, provision is already there for issuance of paper and paperless mobile ticket including platform tickets. In case of ATVMs/COTVMs, the passengers can purchase platform ticket through smart card/cash. After completion of integration with QR code, passengers will also be able to purchase tickets through ATVMs by scanning QR code through any banking app, which will ease ticket-booking process”.

14. **The Committee though lauded the efforts of the Railways for facilitating sale of platform tickets through mobile phone/mobile App in some of the railway zones yet they were not satisfied with this scanty expansion restricted to selected zone (s)/ railway stations. Keeping in view the over-crowded railway counters and consumption of plenty time in purchase of platform tickets, they felt that all major railway stations of each and every zone should be covered with this facility. Apart from this facility, the Committee had also desired the Ministry for consideration of sale of platform tickets through IRCTC website likewise e-tickets/i-tickets so as to de-congest the railway counters and save the expenditure of railways from being incurred on printing of platform tickets. The Committee while reiterating their earlier recommendation, desire the Ministry to come forward with a suitable and speedy action in the matter under their intimation.**

CHAPTER-II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Para No. 2)

The Committee note that Railways provide three kinds of amenities at railway stations viz. Minimum Essential Amenities, Recommended Amenities and Desirable Amenities as per the stipulated norms. The Minimum Essential Amenities are provided soon after the construction of a station and remain in existence at all times, the Recommended Amenities are facilitated over and above the Minimum Essential Amenities provided on the basis of volume of travelling passengers handled as per norms subject to availability of funds and relative priority of works. The Desirable Amenities are considered to be desirable to improve customer satisfaction and the interface at stations depending upon the category of stations viz. catering, vending stalls, adequate parking and circulating area, train indication board, public address system among others. The Committee further note that the Recommended and the Desirable amenities are provided keeping in view the volume of passengers and interface. They have been informed that these amenities are provided subject to relative priority and availability of funds. From the information furnished, the Committee find that funds earmarked for the Head of Passenger Amenities in the years 2014-15, 2015-16, 2018-19 and 2019-20 remained un-utilized to the tune of 16.3%, 38.2%, 4.3% and 44.4% respectively. They desire that since the passenger amenities are directly connected with the customer satisfaction and interface, there should be no dereliction on the part of Railways for proper utilization of funds under this 'Head'.

Reply of the Government

Instructions have been issued to Zonal Railways in this regard.

Recommendation (Para No. 4)

The Committee have been informed that the Railways have formulated a well developed system of ensuring the maintenance of passenger amenities which are intensively inspected and monitored at regular basis at various levels viz. station, division and headquarter levels. The Committee note that it is through the effective monitoring, the slippages in amenities are seen and corrective actions are taken expeditiously. The Committee have been informed that Service Improvement Groups (SIGs) have been formed for this purpose. Besides, inspections are also carried out by Officers, Passenger Amenities Committee (PAC) and Passenger Services Committee (PSC) to further ensure monitoring. The Committee also note that the zonal railways have 'Indian Railway Project Sanction and Management Module' (IRPSM) to capture the data base of passenger amenities at each station for ensuring regular updation in co-ordination with divisions and action for the slippages is taken by them. Though, this step of zonal railways is certainly laudable, yet the

Committee feel that much is required to be done in this regard. The Committee are in agreement with the findings of the C&AG that there is absence of robust monitoring mechanism to ensure maintenance and upkeep of the assets created for passenger facilities which has led to regular breakdown of the assets and caused inconveniences to passengers and defeated the intended purpose of their creation. The Committee, therefore, recommend the Ministry to put in place a concrete method for effective and rigorous monitoring of amenities including updation of data in IRPSM by zonal railways.

Reply of the Government

Instructions have been issued to Zonal Railways in this regard.

Recommendation (Para No. 8)

The Committee have been informed that the Railways have launched a Mobile application "IRCTC Rail Connect" for booking of reserved ticket as well as to promote digital payments. The Committee feel that this application be disseminated in the public and widely publicised so that more and more rail users could avail the benefit of this App for booking tickets.

Reply of the Government

Instructions have been issued to IRCTC to disseminate the information regarding IRCTC Rail Connect App for information of general public.

IRCTC Rail Connect Mobile App has been promoted extensively by IRCTC to all its users through mailers, banner advertisement on website and push notification on mobile phones. As a result more than 75% of IRCTC users have downloaded this Mobile App.

IRCTC Rail Connect Mobile Apps have gained popularity in the public leading to majority of online tickets being booked through Mobile App. IRCTC Rail Connect Mobile App is one of the Top Most Rated Mobile App of India in Google play store.

Recommendation (Para No. 9)

The Committee note that Railways have endeavoured setting up of 288 PRS centres at various Post Offices so as to make available PRS tickets at non-rail head. The Committee appreciate this initiative of the Railways and desire the Ministry to ease out technical and commercial feasibility for providing more PRS Counters at Post Offices for booking hassle free rail tickets by the rail users particularly residing in remote and rural areas of the country.

Reply of the Government

With a view to provide facility to passengers to book reserved tickets, computerized Passenger Reservation System (PRS) counters were provided in Post Offices in 2007. An analysis of number of

transactions being handled at PRS counters provided in post offices from time to time has revealed that at more than 60% of the locations, the number of transactions handled are less than 10 per day which does not justify the expenditure incurred by Railways in providing hardware, software and its maintenance and also, the cost of manning being borne by Department of Posts.. Accordingly, Department of Posts has been requested to explore the feasibility of providing facility of booking reserved tickets through internet instead of computerised PRS counters of Indian Railways.

Recommendation (Para No. 12)

The Committee note that the Railways have undertaken modernization of railway stations under various schemes such as Model Station Scheme, Modern Station Scheme and Adarsh Station Scheme. The year 1999-2000 being a 'Passenger Year', railway emphasized to improve passenger amenities at important stations. Each Division was given at least one station for immediate improvement in the quality of service as a Model Station. Under this Scheme, 590 railway stations were selected for modernization. The Committee also note that in the year 2006, the criteria for selection of stations for modernization was revised to include all 'A' and 'B' category stations on the basis of annual passenger earnings. The Zonal Railways were entrusted nomination of five stations per Division for development of stations as Modern Stations. In all, 637 stations were selected for upgradation. Further, the emergence of Adarsh Station Scheme in the year, 2009 aimed 1253 stations for development as Adarsh Station. The Committee, however, find that in spite of considerable passage of time, only 1200 stations have, so far, been developed and 53 stations are yet to be developed as Adarsh Station. They are very unhappy with this tardy progress and emphasize that the very purpose of the scheme gets defeated if there are delays in its execution. The Committee, therefore, recommend to prepare a time bound action plan for development of these stations.

Reply of the Government

Instructions have been issued to Zonal Railways in this regard.

Recommendation (Para No. 13)

The Committee note that the proposal for redevelopment of 400 erstwhile 'A-1' and 'A' category stations as World Class Stations, was approved in June 2015, on 'as is where is' basis, by inviting open bids from interested parties with their designs and business ideas duly providing for amenities and other requirements of the Railways including permitting commercial development by zonal railways. They have been informed that initially, 19 stations were identified for development by resorting to the PPP mode as per issued guidelines. The Committee note that at a later stage, this number was increased to 50. They were further informed that the Expert Group on Modernization of Indian Railway had subsequently recommended modernization of 100 major stations at the cost of Rs. 1.10 lakh crore in 5 years under PPP mode and consequently, Indian Railways Station Development Corporation Ltd. (IRSDC) was developed. The aim of this scheme was to harness the real estate potential of land around and the airspace above the stations

without any additional cost to the Railways besides envisaging the provision of modern facilities at stations such as food plazas, hotels, ATM facilities, Currency exchange counter, car rentals etc. The Committee note that the first phase of station redevelopment program by Zonal Railways was launched on 08.02.2017 and bids for redevelopment of 23 railway stations were invited. The Committee have been informed that bids for only two (2) stations of Jammu Tawi and Kozhikode were received. To their utter dismay, they also find that bids for other stations had to be foreclosed owing to not-so-encouraging response from the bidders. The Committee desire that the Railways should find out the reasons for low response for the bids and take out corrective measures in this regard.

Reply of the Government

The first phase of station redevelopment program by Zonal Railways was launched on 08.02.2017. Bids for redevelopment of 23 railway stations were invited in the first phase. However bids for only two (2) stations i.e. Jammu Tawi and Kozhikode were received. In view of not-so-encouraging response, bids for other stations were foreclosed.

During various interactions with developers, investors and other stakeholders, various issues including longer lease period for commercially developed assets, multiple sub leasing, simplified bid procedures etc were repeatedly raised.

Accordingly, Ministry of Railways has revised the strategy and obtained Cabinet approval in October 2018. 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. The selection of developer is done following a transparent and competitive bidding process.

A Group of Secretaries (GoS) was constituted by Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) for redevelopment of 50 railway stations. The GoS inter-alia suggested the levy of a nominal user fee for redevelopment of stations, which is presently under consideration.

At present, works for Habibganj and Gandhinagar station are at advanced stage of progress. Works are in progress at Ayodhya and Gomti Nagar stations. Contracts have been awarded for Ajni and Safdarjung stations. RFQ finalized for 8 stations (Nagpur, Gwalior, Sabarmati, Amritsar, Nellore, Tirupati, Puducherry and Dehradun). RFQ invited for 3 stations (New Delhi, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus and Ernakulam).

Recommendation (Para No. 18)

The Committee are happy to note that the Railways have endeavoured to constitute the State Level Security Committee for Railways (SLSCR) under the Chairmanship of DGP of respective States / UTs for regular monitoring and review of security arrangements over Railways with a view to strengthen the security of rail passengers. However, they are distressed to find that only 18 States / Union Territories have, so far,

constituted these committees. They take a very serious view of it. They are of the view that delay in setting up of SLSCR would certainly nullify the intended purpose of the plan and usefulness of the initiatives taken for passenger safety and security. The Committee, therefore, urge the Ministry to take proactive steps to expedite constitution of these committee in remaining States and UTs for holding meetings to ensure regular monitoring and review of security arrangements in railways.

Reply of the Government

As on date 30 States/UTs have constituted the State Level Security Committees for Railways (SLSCRs) under the Chairmanship of DGP/Police Commissioner of respective States/UTs. Other states/UTs do not have substantial Railway connectivity.

Recommendation (Para No. 19)

The Committee appreciate the initiatives taken by the Railways for chalking out Action Plan for security of women passengers which among other things, provides for installation of CCTV cameras at platforms to cover ladies coaches during halt and in ladies coaches of sub- urban trains. They have been given to understand that special drives are also taken against offenders to help protect women passengers as per the Railway Act. The Committee laud these initiatives taken by the Railways. They would like to be apprised about the extent the offences/offenders curtailed against women passengers post implementation era of the Action Plan.

Reply of the Government

Indian Railways is committed to provide safe and secure journey to all its passengers including women passengers. Consistent efforts are being made to ensure safety of women passengers. Based on the data provided by Government Police Railway Stations, there is 11 % decrease in the number of cases of crimes against women passengers registered u/s 354 (A to D) Indian Penal Code in trains and in railway premises during the year 2019 as compared to those registered in the previous year 2018. Also, there is decrease of 64% in such cases registered during the year 2020 as compared to 2019, but that may be attributed to less running of trains as the nation battled the pandemic COVID-19.

It is also worth mentioning here that regular drives are conducted by RPF against entry of male passengers into compartments reserved for women passengers and persons apprehended are prosecuted under section 162 of The Railways Act, 1989. During the years 2019 & 2020, a total of 114170 & 23498 male passengers respectively have been arrested for unauthorized entry/travel into compartments reserved for women passengers.

Recommendation (Para No. 21)

The Committee are happy to note that a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on care and protection of children over railways has been jointly prepared by the Ministry of Railways and the Ministry of Women

and Child Development (MOWCD). Accordingly, a round the clock Child Help Desk/Kiosk (CHD) has been set up at 126 railway stations. The Committee are happy to find that the Child Help Desks have rescued 11178, 13091 and 11869 children in 2017, 2018 and 2019 respectively. Though the initiative is certainly laudable, yet the Committee are distressed to find that out of more than 8700 railway stations over the network, only 126 stations have, so far, been equipped with this facility. They are of the opinion that this is an abysmally small number to cater to the large number of trains carrying huge number of passengers including children per day that are being operated on the Railway Network. The Committee desire that more stations particularly stations of child trafficking prone areas should be brought within the ambit of CHDs so that the menace of child trafficking could be eradicated.

Reply of the Government

The Ministry of Railways, in collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD) and the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has issued a Standing Operating Procedure (SOP) which includes a protocol for rescue of young children found abandoned on railway stations or trafficked through trains.

As per the instructions contained in the SOP, Indian Railways have to provide space of 6x6 feet at Railway station for setting up Child Help Kiosk/Help Desk. These Child Help Kiosk/Help Desks are to be manned by representatives of the organization nominated by Ministry of Women and Child Development. In addition, RPF supplements the efforts of GRP of the State concerned in rescuing the children from trafficking and to ensure safety and security of children at stations.

The Ministry of Railways have approved extension of facility of Child Help Groups to a total of 262 important railway stations in coordination with Ministry of Women and Child Development in a phased manner. Presently, CHDs have been set up at 132 important railway stations and the process of setting up of CHDs at more stations is under process in phased manner.

Recommendation (Para No. 22)

Indian Railways carry more than 23 million passengers per day passing through more than 8700 Railway Stations over the network. Therefore, it becomes imperative on the part of the Railways to maintain proper hygiene, cleanliness and sanitation at all times and to monitor them strictly. Though the Committee appreciate the initiatives taken by the Railways for introduction of mechanized cleaning to provide comprehensive cleaning of station premises, yet they are distressed to note that this service is operational only to areas of conducive surfaces furnished with tiles/kota stones. Therefore, the Committee would like to suggest the Ministry to explore possibilities to extend mechanized cleaning service to other areas where conducive surfaces have not yet been provided.

Reply of the Government

IR is gradually adapting to mechanized cleaning with a view to bring visible improvement in the level of cleanliness. Mechanized cleaning is being done at around 950 major stations. On rest of the stations cleanliness is being managed at local levels. Efforts were made to use mechanized cleaning on non-conductive surface but satisfactory cleanliness standard could not be achieved.

Recommendation (Para No. 23)

The Committee further note that most of the cleaning activities under the mechanized cleaning system have been outsourced to professional agencies to maintain high standard of cleanliness including 'Pay & Use' toilets for better maintenance and 940 stations have, so far, been covered as such. Though the initiative is certainly laudable, yet the Committee are dissatisfied to find that out of total 8738 stations over the network, this is abysmally small number to fulfill the aspirations of the passengers of high magnitude. They, therefore, desire the Ministry to cover more and more stations under the umbrella of mechanized cleaning system to maintain high standard of cleanliness.

Reply of the Government

Indian Railways accord a very high priority for ensuring cleanliness and hygiene at station. One of the initiatives taken to improve cleanliness Standard at Station premises including toilets is introduction of mechanized cleaning at more and more station over Indian Railways. The activity is mostly outsourced to professional agencies to maintain high standard of cleanliness on the railway premises including toilets under 'Pay & Use' scheme for better maintenance. At present, more than 1130 stations are already covered under mechanised cleaning. Zonal Railway have been advised to adopt Pay & Use model over most of the stations under their jurisdiction.

Recommendation (Para No. 24)

The Committee note that periodical review is conducted to monitor cleanliness and railways take remedial measures for prompt rectification of the deficiencies as and when noticed. The Committee learn that third party annual survey is conducted at major stations for cleanliness. In addition, action is taken against the staff/contractors who are found wanting in the performance of their duties for maintaining cleanliness. The Committee laud the measures taken by the Railways for strict compliance of cleanliness activities and sanitation in railways. They are of the considered view that such a step would certainly add in ensuring monitoring mechanism. At the same time, they would like to exhort the Ministry to further intensify them for robust monitoring so that deficiencies are made good as and when noticed.

Reply of the Government

Indian Railways accord a very high priority for ensuring cleanliness and hygiene at stations. However, owing to high density of usages of the stations, this is a very challenging area. To ensure proper

cleanliness at stations and also to identify weak areas to take remedial measures along with regular checks/inspections, surprise checks at various levels are carried out and deficiency are made good whenever noticed. Service Improvement Groups (SIGs) at the Zonal/Divisional Headquarters and Station level have been activated to inspect amenities including cleanliness at Stations and to take remedial measures as and when required. Health Inspector are also deployed at major Stations of Indian Railways to monitor hygiene and sanitation at stations. Enforcement of Indian Railways (Penalties for activities affecting cleanliness at Railway premises) Rules, 2012 have been intensified. Instructions have also been issued to Zonal Railways to use Close Circuit Televisions (CCTVs) to monitor cleanliness at railway premises. These measures are reviewed on a monthly basis by Additional General Managers (AGMs) at Zonal level and by Additional Divisional Railway Managers (ADRM)s at divisional level. Every effort is being taken at various levels to monitor the cleanliness of stations.

Recommendation (Para No. 25)

The Committee note that the Railways have introduced 'On Board House Keeping Service' (OBHS) in 1100 pairs of trains for cleaning of coach toilets, doorways, aisles and passenger compartments during the run of the trains. Though the initiatives is certainly appreciable, yet the Committee are distressed to find that this is insignificantly small number to cater to 13,169 number of passenger trains that are being operated on the railway network. The Committee desire that more trains should be brought under the aegis of OBHS Service so that crores of rail users could avail the benefit of this service.

Reply of the Government

On Board Housekeeping Service (OBHS) has been provided in 1100 pairs of trains including Rajdhani, Shatabdi and other important long distance Mail/Express trains for cleaning of coach toilets, doorways, aisles and passenger compartments during the run of the trains. Starting from 2008-09, OBHS was provided in 416 pairs of trains up to March, 2014. Around 1100 pairs of trains i.e. 2200 trains are presently having facility of this service. It may be noted that total around 3300 mail / express trains are being operated. Remaining are mostly short distance passenger, EMU/ MEMU, DEMU etc.

Recommendation (Para No. 27)

The Committee note that the Railways have taken various steps to improve the punctuality of trains such as redressal of the problem of capacity constraints and real-time monitoring and regular review and conversion of coaches by LHB (Linke Hofmann Busch) coaches having higher speed capacity and replacement of conventional passenger trains by MEMU (Mainline Electrical Multiple Unit) trains. The Committee though laud the initiatives taken by the railways, yet they are distressed to find that most of the projects targeted for improving the capacity constraint, are pending since long. The Committee are of the view that the initiatives taken by the Railways would gain no score unless the projects to de-congest the

capacity constraints, are completed in time and without any extension of time leading to cost overrun. The Committee, therefore, desire the Ministry to rigorously monitor their projects to complete them vigorously.

Reply of the Government

Ministry of Railways (MoR) fully agrees with the recommendation. MoR is working in the same direction and main focus is to complete the important capacity enhancement projects. Projects have been prioritised into super critical and critical categories. 58 Super Critical projects are targeted to be completed by March, 2022. Out of these 28, Super Critical Projects have been completed upto March, 2021. Similarly 68 projects have been categorized as critical projects and these are targeted to be completed by March, 2024. Out of these 04 Critical projects have been completed upto March'2021. Capacity enhancements projects are being monitored rigorously at various levels (field level, divisional level, zonal level and Board level) and regular meetings are held with the officials of State Government and concerned authorities to resolve the pending issues that are obstructing the progress of projects.

The observations of the committee are noted please.

Recommendation (Para No. 30)

The Committee note that the Railways have initiated setting up of the scheme of Multi Purpose Stalls (MPS) at stations for availability of all items of travelling needs for passengers on payment basis. They are aware that the scheme is at implementation stage. The Committee are of the opinion that once this scheme is implemented, it would cater to all items of travelling needs of passengers. They, therefore, desire that the Ministry should take all preparedness to implement the same urgently.

Reply of the Government

Proliferation of Multi Purpose Stalls at stations is done by Railways keeping in view the master plan and requirement of passengers at stations, which is a continuous process.

At present there are 910 Multi Purpose Stalls (MPS) at 425 Railway Stations.

Recommendation (Para No. 31)

The Committee find that 3382 ICF design rakes have been provided with divyangjan friendly SLRD coaches. The Ministry have informed that Production Units have already started manufacturing LHB type coaches for divyangjan passengers which are inducted in Indian Railway progressively. The Committee are of the opinion that Railways should make available the maximum facilities for divyang passengers in these coaches. They desire the Ministry to take expeditious proliferation of divyangjan friendly LHB Coaches in Railways.

Reply of the Government

The following action have been taken to proliferate divyanjan friendly LHB coaches:

- a. Around 3382 disabled friendly ICF design coaches (SLRD) are available in the fleet of Indian Railways. These coaches have a suitable designed compartment & toilet adapted to the needs of the disabled/wheel chair borne passengers.
- b. In these coaches, wider entrance door, wider berths, wider compartments, larger lavatory and lavatory doors, etc. have been provided. Inside the toilets additional grab rails on the side walls for support and wash basin and mirror at a lower height are also available.
- c. It is endeavored to have at least one coach in each Mail/Express train having ICF type coaches.

LHB Divyang Coach Design:

1. Production units have started manufacturing LHB type coaches for Divyang Passengers which are inducted in IR progressively. At present, 316 Nos. of LHB type LSLRD/LDSLRL are manufactured over Indian Railways and further proliferation of LSLRD with augmentation in production plan has been planned.
2. These coaches are provided with Seating capacity for 31 Passengers and 8 Divyang Passengers
3. In these coaches, wider entrance door-suitable for wheelchair passengers, wider berths, wider compartments, larger lavatory and lavatory doors, etc. have been provided.
4. Inside the toilets additional grab rails on the side walls for support and wash basin and mirror at a lower height are also available.
5. These coaches are Equipped with fire and smoke detection system.
6. Further, all Production Units have been advised to provide at least two doors of 920 mm width one on each side of the normal coach in future in all newly manufactured coaches. This will ensure improved accessibility to Divyangjan passengers inside coaches for wheel chair passenger.
7. Braille Signage inside Divyangjan Coaches are been used. It has been advised to use Braille signage on partition pillars of aisle for seat numbers.
8. It has been advised for Exterior Marking of "TRESSPASSERS SHALL BE PROSECUTED" in the exterior of Divyangjan Coach to caution the other passengers.

CHAPTER – III

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT'S REPLIES

Recommendation (Para No. 1)

The Committee note that the guidelines administering amenities for rail users defined as 'basic amenities' and 'additional amenities' were issued in 1952. These guidelines were revised in 1955 to expand their scope. In the course of time, deficiencies were further noticed which led to revisions in the years 1999, 2003 and 2007. As per norms, these guidelines are revised after every five years and railway stations are categorized accordingly. In 2012-13, the Railways had categorized the stations in seven categories viz. A1, A, B, C, D, E and F, based on the parameter of annual yield of passenger earnings of the railway stations in the preceding year of 2011-12. The Committee have been informed that the recent categorization has been accomplished in 2017-18 and this time, the Railways have considered another criteria/parameter of footfalls/outward passengers handled at the station during the preceding year of 2016-17 in addition to the earning criteria. In this regard, the Committee recall their earlier recommendation (19th Report 15th Lok Sabha) suggesting the Ministry not to review the categorization of railway stations solely based on the annual passenger earnings but also to take into account other factors like relative importance of the stations keeping in view their historical and cultural importance, geographical location, industrial hubs, ports, agricultural/horticultural production centres, educational/professional institutions in remote areas from where a large travelling public are expected. The Committee find that the Ministry has not taken their suggestions into account while categorizing the stations as (i) Non- Suburban Grade (NSG), (ii) Suburban Grade (SG) and (iii) Halt Grade (HG) which have further been divided in Grades ranging from NSG 1 to NSG 6, SG 1 to SG 3 and HG 1 to HG 3. The Committee feel that the factors suggested by them should have been considered by the railways with a view to yield better results in attracting more and more travelling public for accrual of better revenues to Railways exchequer. They hope that the same will be given due consideration at the time of next categorization of stations.

Reply of the Government

The Indian Railways has more than 8700 stations. For provision of passenger amenities, railway stations are presently categorized as Non-Suburban Grade 1-6, Suburban Grade 1-3 and Halt Grade 1-3 based on the annual passenger earnings (reserved and unreserved) and number of outward passengers handled at stations for the year 2016-17. The earlier station categorization(s) for provision of passenger amenities was done based on the passenger earnings and as per the new categorization, both footfall and passenger earnings have been taken into account. In addition, Zonal Railways have been given powers to categorize a station as Non Suburban Grade 4 category if it is a place of Tourist importance and /or is an important junction station.

Besides, Modernisation/Upgradation of facilities at stations has also been undertaken under various modernization schemes and presently stations are upgraded under the 'Adarsh Station Scheme' where stations are selected based on identified need for provision/upgradation of passenger amenities. However upgradation of amenities is a continuous process.

Recommendation (Para No. 3)

The Committee note that the railways have not been able to utilize MPLADS Funds and funds provided by Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOCL) as an initiative under CSR activities, for installation of key amenities at railway stations due to negligence and non-pursuance of the matter by the Zonal Railway Authority. The Committee wish to point out that provision of these funds and CSR activities of the PSUs may play a vital role in shaping the customer friendly images of the railways particularly in a situation where the Railways are in want of funds for providing better passenger amenities. Hence, the Committee desire that the Ministry should act proactively and take all preparedness to ensure that the funds are utilized promptly and in right earnest so that the amenities are augmented in an efficient manner.

Reply of the Government:

The PSUs are required to take up Corporate Social Responsibility related activities in compliance to the Companies Act, 2013 and Companies (Corporate Social Responsibility Policy) Rules, 2014, amended from time to time. They are also required to follow the 'Guidelines for CSR expenditure of CPSEs', issued by Department of Public Enterprises vide O.M. No. CSR-08/0002/2018-Dir (CSR) dt: 10th December, 2018. Further, Department of Public Enterprises has also issued directions on "Observance of Transparency & due diligence in selection and implementation of activities under CSR by CPSEs" vide O.M. No. CSR-15/0008/2014-Dir (CSR) dt: 1st August, 2016, which is also required to be followed.

Instructions with regard to proper utilization of funds have been communicated to Zonal Railways.

Recommendation (Para No. 5)

The Committee have been informed that funds for works relating to passenger amenities are allocated under the unified Plan Head 53-'Passenger Amenities' under DRF, DF and RRSK. They note that no allocation is made category-wise or scheme-wise within this head and multi departments such as electrical, mechanicals, civil etc. are involved in the activities of passenger amenities. In their 19 th Report (15 th Lok Sabha), the Committee had recommended for separate allocations for each of the categories of the passenger amenities to have more transparency in utilization of funds, to better monitor the progress and to set both physical and financial targets for each item of passenger amenities instead of having a common

head. The Committee, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation and desire the Ministry to keep apprise the steps taken in this regard within three months of the presentation of Report.

Reply of the Government

To have more transparency in utilization of funds and better monitoring of the progress of work, from financial year 2018-19 onwards, Ministry of Railways has introduced the concept of Umbrella works in PH-53: 'Passenger Amenities'. Under this scheme, not only Department wise, but also allocation-wise (CAP, RRSK, DF, DRF)/work-wise separate Umbrellas have been created to sanction similar passenger amenities works.

Accordingly, separate Umbrellas for works related to quick watering system under Mech. Deptt., Soft upgrades/improvements at station under Civil Engg. Deptt., Minimum essential amenities-telecom, expansion of information system under S&T Deptt and provision of lifts & escalators under Elect. Deptt . have been created.

Recommendation (Para No. 6)

The Committee note with concern that actual expenditure on passenger amenities has invariably witnessed shortfalls against RE allocations during the years 2014-15, 2015-16, 2018-19 and 2019-20 to the extent of 16.3%, 38.2%, 4.3% and 44.4% respectively. They further note that in 2014-15, Rs.1025.70 crore was allocated and out of this amount, Rs.858.61 crore could be spent. In the year 2015-16, an amount of Rs.1081.21/- crore was spent as against allocated amount of Rs.1748.50 crore. In the year 2018-19, the actual remained to the tune of Rs.1585.88 crore against the allocation of Rs.1657.86 crore. Also in the year 2019-20, Rs.1903.11 crore could be spent against the allocated fund of Rs.3422.57 crore. The Committee are not convinced with the rationale of the Ministry that variation in utilization is also due to late introduction of New Fund 'Rail Sanraksha Kosh (RRSK)' during the year 2017-18. They, therefore, recommend the Ministry to act proactively and prepare the realistic budget so that financial and physical targets are optimally achieved and the allocated funds could not be surrendered to Government account.

Reply of the Government

The outlay and utilisation of funds under Plan head 53-Passenger Amenities for 2014-15 to 2019-20 under Budgetary sources [excluding EBR(P)] is shown in the following table-

(Rs. in cr.)

Year	RE	Actual	Utilisation
2014-15	1045.91	858.61	82%
2015-16	1200.11	1081.21	90%
2016-17	917.91	981.24	107%
2017-18	1470.79	1286.8	87%
2018-19	2022.75	1585.88	78%

Year	RE	Actual	Utilisation
2019-20	1889.71	1903.1	101%

As can be seen from the above table, there has been utilisation of funds ranging from 82% to 107% of Revised allotments during the period, except 2018-19. Utilisation lesser than RE allotment can be attributed mainly to limited fund availability under Internal Resources due to resource constraints. However, observations of the Hon'ble Committee have been noted for making all out efforts in achieving targets optimally and utilising allocated funds to the full.

Instructions have been issued to Zonal Railways in this regard.

Recommendation (Para No. 7)

The Committee note that the Railways have installed 10554 Passenger Reservation System (PRS) terminals at about 3553 locations throughout the network. In addition, 6242 Unreserved Ticketing System (UTS) locations have also been provided over Indian Railways. Apart from PRS and UTS, 4077 Automatic Ticket Vending Machines (ATVMs) have also been commissioned to issue tickets and to incentivize the passengers with an incentive of 3% of recharge value given to them on usage of card on every recharge of ATVM for promoting use of ATVM and cash/card based ATVMs (CoTVMs). Also, 2185 Station Ticket Booking Agents (STBAs) and 226 Yatri Ticket Suidha Kendras (YTSK) have been engaged for booking tickets to avoid hardships to rail passengers. The Committee laud the efforts of the railways in providing these ticket terminals to arrest the hardships of the passengers. However, the Committee are of the opinion that the number of ATVMs is abysmally low which is inefficient to cater to the large number of commuters on the railway network. They desire that more stations should be brought into the ambit of ATVMs. Further, the Committee find that out of 4077 ATVMs, only 3332 ATVMs i.e., 82% are in working condition. The reason explained by the Ministry attributing that non-functioning of ATVMs is due to completion of codal life, is not acceptable to the Committee. The Committee are of the view that railway should work proactively and take all preparedness before completion of their codal life and replace them in a time bound manner to ensure their functioning round the clock so that no passenger could put to any hardship on this count.

Reply of the Government:

Replacement of ATVM and related equipment exceeding Rs.1.00 Cr. have been sanctioned from Board. Sanctioned ATVM and related equipment replacement works sanctioned during the last 2 years is as under:

Year	Replacement of ATVM sanctioned	Replacement of ATVM equipment sanctioned
2018-19	714	220
2019-20	1019	146

Further, powers have been delegated to General Managers of all Zonal Railways to sanction works costing upto Rs.1.00 crore under DRF for replacement of IT equipment.

Recommendation (Para No. 10)

The Committee have been given to understand that Mobile ticketing vehicles are presently not functional in the rail network and instead the passengers can book the tickets online, through Mobile Phones and Automatic Ticket Vending Machines etc. The Committee would like to suggest the Ministry to explore the feasibility of booking tickets through non- conventional methods such as provision of mobile ticket vehicles especially for the commuters of remote, rural, hilly and far-reaching areas of the country.

Reply of the Government

Mobile ticketing vans, introduced earlier, have been discontinued long back due to very low patronage and high cost of maintenance/ equipment, including vehicle.

After introduction of e-ticketing system various efforts have been made to make this system more robust, dynamic and user-friendly.

Reservation facility on Internet has now become very popular with more than 72% of reserved tickets are being booked online on website www.irctc.co.in. Mobile applications on various platforms are also available for booking reserved tickets.

Recommendation (Para No. 11)

The Committee have been informed that about two third of total reserved tickets are booked from IRCTC website. The Committee concur with the views expressed by the Ministry that purchase of tickets through IRCTC website is not only convenient but also helps in decongestion of the ticket counters and abort the menace of touts. The Committee note that the Railways have taken various steps to modernize the ticketing process of IRCTC Website such as launching of next generation e-ticketing system with increased server capacity, implementation of multi-layer security comprising frontend and backend firewall, web application firewall etc. Further, new user interface e-ticketing system is more user friendly for easier navigation and provides easy and fast way of booking rail tickets by automating the journey planning and purchase of tickets. Though the Committee are happy to note that the capacity of e-ticketing has increased from 2,000 per minute to 15,000 per minute, yet they wish the Ministry to take holistic measures to make the Website more robust and further enhance the capacity in order to get a much needed boost in the capacity of the server for booking/yielding tickets.

Reply of the Government

Ministry of Railways has revamped and upgraded its e-ticketing website www.irctc.co.in and Indian Railway Catering And Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) Rail Connect Mobile App, which are used for booking of 'online' Railway tickets on 31st December, 2020. Railway customer has been the focus of the design of the revamped application. Novel user personalization features linked to user log in have been incorporated,

along with customizations for seamless travel experience, one stop train selection for booking, and integrated booking for meals and accommodation with tickets.

IRCTC Rupay card has been launched recently in collaboration with the State Bank of India (SBI), as a travel credit card with value back benefits to regular rail users, on booking of tickets through the IRCTC website. IRCTC has also integrated new payment modes like e-wallets, BHIM/UPI, Scan and Pay along with Credit Card, Debit Card and Net banking payment modes to give variety of payment modes for ease of transaction by customers.

Ministry of Railways has taken several steps from time to time to modernise the ticketing process. Next Generation e-Ticketing (NGeT) system, has been upgraded constantly to handle increased load of 15,000 tickets per minute in 2016-17, 18,000 tickets per minute in 2017-18, 20,000 tickets per minute in 2018-19 and 25000 tickets per minute in 2019-20. A record number of 26,458 tickets were booked in a minute on 5 March, 2020.

Recommendation (Para No. 14)

The Committee further note that the railways have not indicated any time frame for redevelopment of stations. The Committee are concerned to note that no railway station has so far been developed under PPP mode. They feel that there is something amiss in the planning of the Railways so far as redevelopment of Stations are concerned. The Committee desire the Ministry to chalk out a time bound action plan for redevelopment of railway stations for providing modern and state-of-the-art amenities to rail users.

Reply of the Government

Station redevelopment program is first of its kind and complex in nature and requires detailed techno-financial feasibility studies and involves multiple stakeholders consultations including pre-bid conferences. Various statutory clearances from Urban/local bodies are also required. Therefore, no time-frame can be indicated at this stage.

Recommendation (Para No. 15)

The Committee note that a three tier security system has been put in place which is handled by the Railway Protection Force (RPF), the Government Railway Police (GRP) and the District Police with their defined roles and responsibilities vested in each of them. While the GRP is a wing of State Police which, with a strength of 38,000 personnel, has been deployed for prevention and detection of crime and maintenance of law and order in station premises and stations, the RPF is responsible for protection and security of railway property, passenger area and passengers and related matters to supplement the efforts of the States. The Committee happy to note that as a result of these synergizing activities, 11178, 13091 and 11869 children were rescued from the clutches of the criminals from being trafficked in 2017, 2018 and 2019. Further, 36834 and 36,849 cases of Theft of Passenger Belongings (TOPB) were registered in 2018 and 2019 respectively. The Committee have been informed that several proposals for sanction of GRP

posts in MP, Karnataka and Rajasthan are pending with the Ministry of Railways. They desire the Ministry to clear these proposals urgently with a view to further strengthen the security in Railways.

Reply of the Government

Further, 3925 & 1788 children were rescued in year 2020 and 2021 (till March). 11375 & 1388 cases of theft of passenger belongings were registered in 2020 and 2021 (till February).

Indian Railways have to implement strict austerity measures in view of the crisis created by pandemic COVID-19. Therefore, it has been decided not to process for creation of any fresh post.

As and when austerity measures are withdrawn, further action in the matter will be taken accordingly.

Recommendation (Para No. 16)

The Committee further note that the Railway Protection Force (RPF) has no power to register and investigate the passenger related offences in passenger area. However, with a view to synergize activities related to passenger security and to empower RPF to deal with passenger related offences in passenger area, a proposal for amendment in the RPF Act was initiated by the Ministry. The Committee, in their 19th Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) had also strongly felt it to be a positive step for consolidation of security to be handled by a single agency for quicker reaction in case of emergencies and also avoid inter-agency issues. The Committee fail to appreciate that the proposal could not be supported by the Ministry of Home Affairs. They have been given to understand that the Ministry have instead initiated a proposal to amend the Railways Act, 1989 to empower authorized officers to deal with seven (07) new sections covering the offences of Theft of Passenger Belongings (TOPB), eve teasing and drugging etc. which has been supported by the MHA, Ministry of Women & Child Development, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities and National Security Council Secretariat/NSA as well. The Committee desire the Ministry to expedite the proposed amendment in the RPF Act, 1989 so as to help curb crime graphs vigorously.

Reply of the Government

The proposal for amendment in RPF Act for empowering RPF to deal with passenger related offences could not materialize due to the proposal not being supported by 18 States. The MHA too, did not support the proposal. The Ministry of Railways could not proceed further in the instant case in view of the opposition by states.

A policy decision has been taken by Ministry of Railways to empower authorized officers to deal with certain passenger related offences by proposing amendment under Railways Act 1989. The implementation of the policy decision is under way and entails following of legal procedure and consultation with stakeholders. Completion of many steps in the legal procedure are beyond the competence of the Ministry of Railways and likely to take considerable time.

Recommendation (Para No. 17)

The Committee learn that the Railway Protection Force (RPF) with their strength of 74,830 personnel, is supplementing the efforts of GRP for strengthening and synergizing the railway security. The Committee laud the initiatives of the Ministry taken to augment this strength to further strengthen it. In this regard, the proposals for creation of 4,192 and 2,187 posts are under consideration in the Ministry of Finance. They have been given to understand that once these proposals are cleared, overall security environment in railways would certainly be improved. The Committee, however, to their utter dismay, find that these proposals are still pending in the Ministry of Finance (Deptt. of Expenditure). They take a strong view of the delay in clearance of the proposals involving passenger safety and security and recommend the Ministry to vigorously pursue the matter with the Ministry of Finance (Deptt. of Expenditure) on top priority for early clearance. The Committee would like to be apprised of the action taken in this regard.

Reply of the Government

Brief description of the progress of creation of 4192 and 2187 posts in RPF/RPSF:

A proposal for the creation of 3243 posts (1056 for 08 Mahila Vahinis & 2187 for 03 RPSF Battalions including 01 Mahila Battalion) was sent to Ministry of Finance (MoF) on 15.02.2011. Another proposal for creation of 4192 posts for women RPF personnel was sent to Ministry of Finance on 26.08.2014.

Matter is still under inter ministerial consultation. Meanwhile, Indian Railways had to implement strict austerity measures in view of crisis created by pandemic COVID-19. Therefore, it has been decided not to process creation of any fresh post. As and when austerity measures are withdrawn, further action in the matter will be taken.

Recommendation (Para No. 20)

The Committee are glad to note that the report on 'Action Plan' has also suggested the Railway Board to issue instructions to change colour of the coaches earmarked for ladies, to install announcement system or panic button in coaches for disseminating information to security in case of need, construction of barracks, changing rooms, washrooms on priority. The Committee wish to point out that these measures of the Railways would certainly go a long way to curb crimes against women commuters. The Committee urge the Ministry to expedite implementation of these suggestions on an urgent basis and give wide publicity among rail users particularly women passengers to increase their awareness so that they could use these facilities for their safety and security.

Reply of the Government

The matter of changing color of lady coaches suggested in the action plan has been examined. In general, there is no separate reserved coach earmarked for ladies at present in mail/express/passenger trains. However, seats are provided in last unreserved SLR coach of train and earmarked as ladies coach

(marked outside on the panel) in all/express/passenger trains for facilities of ladies passengers. Hence there is no need for changed colour of such coaches being the last coach of the Train formation.

So far as provision PA system of panic button is concerned, at present Emergency Alarm Chain is already available in coaches, which are being used by passengers (including women) in case of emergency or any issue related with safety/security.

However, provision of talk back and panic button in every coach is under consideration through revision of RDSO specification of PAPAIS (Passenger Address and Passenger Information System).

Comparative figures of construction of barracks for ladies, ladies changing & washing rooms existing prior to 2018 and additional provided from 2018 to till date for RPF/RPSF ladies officers/staff is mentioned below:

No. of ladies barrack constructed/ No. of other buildings modified as ladies barrack		No. of ladies changing rooms		No. of ladies washrooms	
Existing prior to 2018	Additional provided from 2018 to till date	Existing prior to 2018	Additional provided from 2018 to till date	Existing prior to 2018	Additional provided from 2018 to till date
38	179	79	176	131	161

Recommendation (Para No. 28)

The Committee have been informed that as an alternative, the Railways have started sale of platform tickets through mobile phone/mobile App in Western Railway, Central Railway and Northern Railway (New Delhi and Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Stations). Though this step of the railways is laudable, yet the Committee find that this is a very small number to cater to the large number of passengers. The Committee wish to point out that railway counters are already over-crowded, more so, a lot of time is consumed for purchase of platform tickets. They feel that all major railway stations of each zone should be covered under this facility. The Committee also desire that the Ministry should think for sale of platform tickets through IRCTC website on the lines of sale of e-tickets/i-tickets which may go a long way both in de- congestion of railway counters and saving of revenue incurred on printing of platform tickets.

Reply of the Government

The passengers intending to procure platform tickets can do so from the unreserved ticket counter, Automatic Ticket Vending Machines (ATVMs), currency/coin/card operated ticket vending machines (COTVMs) as well as UTS on Mobile App. The facility of UTSONMobile APP has since been extended to all zonal Railways. In UTS on Mobile App, provision is already there for issuance of paper and paperless mobile ticket including platform tickets. In case of ATVMs/COTVMs, the passengers can purchase platform ticket through smart card/cash. After completion of integration with QR code, passengers will also be able to purchase tickets through ATVMs by scanning QR code through any banking app, which will ease ticket-booking process.

Recommendation (Para No. 29)

The Committee learn that pursuant to announcement made in the Rail Budget 2016-17, Zonal Railways were advised to ensure availability of baby food, hot milk and hot water at Railway Stations on payment basis. Accordingly, the 'Janani Seva' was introduced to ensure provision of packaged baby food, milk powder, hot milk and hot water from catering stalls and in Trains on payment basis on MRP. Though the initiative is certainly laudable, yet the Committee are distressed to find that only 1131 stations have been identified for 'Janani Seva'. The Committee are of the opinion that this is an abysmally small number to cater to the large number of passengers over the network. They, therefore, desire the Ministry to bring more stations under the umbrella of 'Janani Seva' so that passengers could avail the benefits and get their items of all travelling needs during the trip.

Reply of the Government

The provision of warm water/milk, milk powder etc. is made by Railways through catering and vending units on the railway stations as per the demand and requirement of the passengers.

In addition, under new Multi Purpose Stall (MPS) policy, MPS have also been mandated for sale of dry/spray Milk powder etc. making the availability of such items more convenient.

Recommendation (Para No. 32)

The Committee are happy to note that the Railways have initiated to promote digital payments and cashless transactions for purchase of ticket through Point of Sale (POS) / Swipe Machines at ticket counters. In the opinion of the Committee, cashless transaction has become the need of the hour particularly in wake of the technological revolution. It not only helps cashless transaction through cards and promote digitization but also refrains railway counters from being duped of fake currency/coin received from sale of tickets. The Committee are distressed to find that only the important stations have been facilitated with the digital payment and many of them have been deprived with the facility. The Committee, therefore, feel that more stations should be brought into the ambit to cater to the needs of large number of passengers travelling over the network.

Reply of the Government

Payment through Credit/Debit card is enabled only at those counters where POS device is available, however, payment through UPI is already enabled at all UTS counters across Indian Railways except Konkan Railway. Recently, integration of Automated Ticket Vending Machines (ATVMs) application is done with SBI UPI QR code, Paytm QR code and Freecharge QR code which is under testing. After completion of testing, it can be enabled in all ATVMs & Currency/coin/card operated Ticket Vending Machines (COTVMs) of Indian Railways, which may proliferate digital transactions in Unreserved Ticketing System.

CHAPTER – IV

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AND WHICH REQUIRE REITERATION

Recommendation (Para No. 26)

The Committee observe that safe drinking water is the most needed and essential amenities at stations and in trains. Though the Railways have taken all out efforts for supply of potable water, yet additional efforts are required to be taken to eradicate the problem of scarcity of drinking water particularly during peak hours. The Committee have, however, been informed that when the existing sources of drinking water are found inadequate, water supply is augmented through water tankers and various other sources like bore-well, municipality, rivers/dams etc. Further, the Ministry have endeavoured to proliferate Water Vending Machines in railway stations so as to ensure availability of safe and pure drinking water to travelling passengers at affordable rates. The Committee note that the supply of free potable water is maintained through water taps. In addition, Water Vending Machines (WVMs) have been installed at railway stations for sale of drinking water at nominal cost. However, the packaged drinking water has been the most preferable and plausible drink among the passengers. The Committee find it imperative on the part of the Railways to make additional efforts for exuberant supply of packaged drinking water over railways. The Committee are, however, distressed to note that there is shortage of huge quantity of railway's packaged drinking water i.e. Rail Neer over railways. Currently, 11.22 lakh litres i.e. 62% of Rail Neer is being produced from 14 plants as against the demand of 18 lakh litres per day and the shortage of six point seven eight (6.78) lakh litres of Rail Neer is met by other Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) approved brands of Packaged Drinking Water (PDW). Though the railway has commissioned seven (7) more plants, yet the Committee are not happy with this scarce and deficient arrangements of the Railways which is invariably leading to unauthorized entrants selling fake brand of packaged drinking water in railways and causing serious threats to passengers' health besides loss to exchequer. The Committee would like to suggest the Ministry to come forward with a suitable plan to augment Rail Neer for ample supply not only to refrain unauthorized entrants for sale of fake brands of packaged drinking water but also help save the health of the passengers.

Reply of the Government

Current production of PDW from 14 Rail Neer plants is 5.67 lakh litre/day, with overall capacity of 14.08 lakh litre per day. At present, the demand of Rail Neer is being fulfilled by IRCTC.

Further, one more Rail Neer plant at Una (H.P.) has already been commissioned, which shall be operational shortly.

In addition, 5 new plants are in the pipeline to be commissioned.

CHAPTER – V

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLIES ARE STILL AWAITED

-NIL-

New Delhi;
04 February, 2022
15 Magha, 1943 (Saka)

RADHA MOHAN SINGH
Chairperson
Standing Committee on Railways

APPENDIX

ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE 6TH REPORT (17TH LOK SABHA) ON "PASSENGER AMENITIES INCLUDING MODERNIZATION OF RAILWAY STATIONS"

Total number of Recommendations/Observations	33
(i) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government –	
Para Nos. 2,4,8,9,12,13,18,19,21,22,23,24,25,27,30,31 and 33	17
Percentage of total	51.51%
(ii) Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies –	
Para No. 1,3,5,6,7,10,11,14,15,16,17,20,28,29 and 32	15
Percentage of total	45.45%
(iii) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration –	
Para Nos. 26	01
Percentage of total	3.03%
(iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which final replies are still awaited -	
Para No. NIL	NIL
Percentage of total	--

MINUTES OF THE THIRD SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS (2021-22)

The Committee met on Tuesday, the 28th December, 2021 from 1400 hrs. to 1525 hrs. in Room No. 63, Parliament House, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Radha Mohan Singh - Chairperson

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Shri T.R. Baalu
3. Ms. Diya Kumari
4. Smt. Jaskaur Meena
5. Smt. Satabdi Roy
6. Shri Arvind Ganpat Sawant
7. Smt. Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo
8. Shri Gopal Jee Thakur

RAJYA SABHA

9. Shri Narhari Amin
10. Shri H.D. Devegowda
11. Smt. Phulo Devi Netam
12. Shri Ashok Siddharth
13. Dr. Sumer Singh Solanki
14. Prof. Manoj Kumar Jha

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri Prasenjit Singh - Additional Secretary
2. Shri R.L. Yadav - Additional Director
3. Smt. Archana Srivastva - Deputy Secretary

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (RAILWAY BOARD)

1.	Sh.Sanjeev Mittal	Member (Infrastructure), Railway Board & Ex. -officio Secretary to the Government of India.
2.	Sh. O.P. Singh	Additional Member, Land and Amenities
3.	Sh. Ved Prakash Dudeja	Vice Chairman, RLDA

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee. Thereafter, the Committee took up for consideration the draft Report on Action taken by the Government on the Observations /Recommendations of the Committee contained in their 6th Report on "Passenger Amenities including Modernization of Railway Stations".

The Committee adopted the above-mentioned Report without any modifications.

3. The Committee authorized the Chairperson to finalize and present the Report to the Parliament during the next Session.

4. xxxx xxxx xxxx xxxx

5. xxxx xxxx xxxx xxxx

6. xxxx xxxx xxxx xxxx

7. A verbatim record of the proceedings of the Committee has been kept.

The Committee then adjourned.

xxxx – Not related to the Report