CHAPTER IV

PASSENGER AMENITIES - AN OVERVIEW

4.1 INTRODUCTION

To achieve the goal of making transit more attractive to riders and potential riders, Amenities are often viewed as something that can simply be added to a vehicle or transit stop after the fact. The amenities - what works and how and whether or not they are a worthwhile investment - are broad and complex. In addition to being widely perceived as “frills”,

The mode of transit is a factor in determining what constitutes an appropriate level of amenity. Rail stations have, historically, offered the most amenities for passengers simply because they are intended to serve people waiting for somewhat longer periods of time embarking on somewhat longer journeys and paying somewhat higher fares.

Looking back, some of the major achievements of the railways in the field of customer satisfaction and development are indeed noteworthy. The first and foremost among them is, of course, the introduction of the Rajdhani Express in 1969, the first train to travel at the speed of 130 kilometers per hour, revolutionizing the concept of train travel. This trend continued with the Shatabdi Express making the mark in 1988 with a high speed of 140 kilometers per hour. After a wait for over two decades, the 16.45 kilometers long Metro underground railway in Kolkata was fully commissioned. Spanning from Dum Dum to Tollygunge, it provided an immense relief to
thousands of daily commuters in the city. The Konkan Railway Project, the 760 km broad-gauge railway line from Roha to Mangalore touching four States has been another landmark. With 1800 bridges and 88 tunnels, including a tunnel as long as 6.5 km-it has already been hailed as the project of the century and its completion in 1997 was a fitting tribute to the Golden Jubilee anniversary of the country’s independence. The Project Unigauge was launched on April 1, 1992 to develop the backward regions and to connect important places with broad gauge network. So far about 13000 km of metre gauge and narrow gauge has been converted to broad gauge networks. This was a big leap forward to the mantra of “one country, one gauge”. Another such unifying factor is the Computerized Reservation System which at present covers 97 per cent of the reserved passenger population. At present, this facility is spread over 758 locations and it is even available where there is no rail link like Srinagar, Port Blair, Panaji and places in the North East like Shillong and Gangtok.

The Railway's renaissance has been engineered by simple entrepreneurial practices, which have evoked the admiration of internationally renowned institutions and companies alike. In a marked departure from its legacy, the focus on capacity utilization, reduction in unit costs, and improvement quality of service has yielded remarkable results.

4.2 TRANSFORMATION

On top of all the impressive statistics what comes out is the change of attitude in the last 155 years- a feeling of the concern for
the passenger. During the British era, in a train there were just– First, Second, Inter and thereafter Independence, not only the Third Class was abolished but a number of new options were also provided- 3 Tier, 2-Tier and Chair Cars suiting everyone’s choice and pocket. The introduction of air-conditioned coaches brought about a new degree of comfort in travel during the summer and winter months. Even in 3-Tier sleepers, cushioned berths were provided and the days of wooden planks were over.

4.3 PASSENGER COACHES

The state of changes will be clear when passenger coaches are seen. Before 1950, Indian Railways had only wooden coaches which were very expensive to maintain and which often got telescoped with each other during accidents, affecting the safety of the passengers. Moreover, those were only fit to travel at a maximum speed of 96KMPH only. In 1949, the Integral Coach Factory was set up in collaboration with a Swedish concern to manufacture anti-telescopic metal-bodied coaches. Since then, more than 170 designs of coaches have been developed. The new coaches have drastically reduced causalities in train accidents and the speed potential has gone up from 96 KMPH to 140 KMPH. Now with the upcoming light weight high speed fire retardent Linka Hoffmann Busch (LHB) coaches from Germany under manufacture at the Railways’ Coach Factory, Kapurthala, the Indian Railways’ speed with attendant comfort and safety in going up. Indian Railways has also seen the introduction of high capacity power cars and Diesel Multiple Units (DMUs). Now
coach interiors are being designed with improved fittings and features to enhance their crashworthiness and reduce the impact of accidents. On the wagon front, they largely inherited 4-wheelers with vacuum brakes. These have been steadily replaced with 8-wheelers with air brakes and improved track loading density. The freight trains at 100 KMPH are now underway.

At the time of Independence, the Indian Railways had only steam locomotives. Indian Railways has seen the indigenisation of the imported diesel electric loco, achieving and indigenous content of more than 95 per cent. The high-speed passenger loco (WDP-1-2300 HP) and the high capacity diesel freight loco (WDG-2-3100 HP) were also designed and developed during this time. Push-Pull trains and Rail Buses, both running on diesel, were introduced for low-density passenger traffic. Now, high-speed 4000 horsepower diesel locos under a technology tie-up with General Motors of the USA are manufactured indigenously. In the field of electric locomotives, the progress was revolutionary. After Independence, the railways had about 70 electric locos running only in Mumbai and Kolkata areas. The figure, at the end of 2007-2008, has gone up to 311%. In 1947, only 388 route kilometers were electrified. In March 2008, the figure stood at 18145 route kilometers, which is one fifth of our total track. Presently, 65 per cent of freight traffic and 48 per cent of passenger traffic are hauled by electric traction. Now the Indian Railways is manufacturing three-phase 6000 high horsepower electric locos
under a technological tie-up with M/s. Asea Brown Boverie (ABB) a Swiss enterprise.

4.4 ELECTRIFICATION

Electrification has also helped the railways provide some basic passenger amenities. Over the years, the designing and development of different types of air-conditioned coaches which are extremely popular with travelling public. In the sixties, the lighting system in the railways was 24 volt. It has since been replaced by 110 volt system. The difference in illumination is enormous. The earlier system also had some fire hazards which has been removed by the new one. For shorter routes, the railways have introduced Mainline Electrical Multiple Units (MEMU). The new trains have become quite popular with the commuters for reducing journey time and increasing passenger capacity.

The advent of electrification has not only made the railways cleaner and more eco-friendly but also taken a big leap towards energy conservation. With progressive replacement of steam traction by diesel and electric traction, the energy consumption for goods services has come down from 36.4 kg to 17.92 kg of coal equivalent per thousand Gross Tonne Kilo Metre (GTKM). As the expenditure on fuel is about 25 percent of the working expenditure of the Indian Railways, its control is vital for the financial health of the organization.
4.5 TRACKS

Much of the safety and comfort of a rail journey depends on the track and its maintenance. Beginning with the off track tampers for packing off the ballast under the sleepers in the late fifties, the railways have come a long way in the mechanized construction and maintenance of its permanent way. During this period, various types of track laying and maintenance machines have progressively been used. Responding to the ever-increasing passenger and freight traffic, the railways had to go for a heavier track structure to handle this challenge.

The welding of rail joints was hardly known in the pre-Independence era in the country. The replacement of ordinary fish plated joints by welded joints has been one of the thrust areas in the last half a century. It has substantially contributed to safety, economy and riding comfort. These welded rails, known as Long Welded Rails (LWR), Continuous Welded Rails (CWR) and short Welded Rails (SWR) have also saved fuel and electric consumption. The maintenance in terms of labour is also at least 15 per cent cheaper.

From the mid-1970s, the Railways have switched over to the production and use of concrete sleepers in a big way. Prior to that there was total dependence on wooden sleepers. However, to encourage the conservation of forests and to maintain ecological balance, this step was considered necessary. As a result, a production capacity of over 60 lakh concrete sleepers per year has been created.
This has reduced the requirement of wooden sleepers by almost 88 per cent.

4.6 MODERNISATION

The railway signaling system is to be continuously modernized to cope with the rising traffic density and to meet better safety standards. At the time of Independence, the signaling equipment was of a rudimentary nature. Everything was imported from European rail companies and there was no domestic base for producing those equipment. Now the whole picture has changed. The equipment has been modernized and the up-to-date technology absorbed and indigenised. The Railways has three workshops exclusively to manufacture signaling equipment in Podanur, Gorakhpur and Methuguda. In addition, about twelve factories in the private sector are producing equipment. As a result, there is a widespread use of semi-conductor and microprocessor based safety and signaling equipment of higher reliability.

For efficient operations, the railways took a policy decision in the 1960s to build its own communication network. In the last thirty years, about 20,000 route kilometers have been equipped with analog microwave system. This is now being gradually replaced by state-of-the-art digital technology. The Optic Fibre Cable System is also being introduced. Railways has installed over one lakh electromechanical exchange lines which are now being converted to digital electronic exchanges. Optic Fibre Cable System is being installed, to begin with, along the high density routes to cover the four metros.
To optimize train operation and enhance levels of safety in the high-density track route sections, mobile train radio systems have been commissioned over 1700 route kilometers on Itarsi-Bhusaval, Itarsi-Nagpur, Drug-Nagpur and Delhi-Mugalsarai sections. This is for emergency communication between the driver and the guard in case of any major technical problem or emergency and also for communication between mobile trains and also for communication between mobile trains to pre-warn any danger. In another major breakthrough in recent times, the railways have introduced satellite communication so that passengers can talk to any telephone subscriber anywhere in the country and abroad. The satellite phones are now available in all Zonal and Divisional Railways to meet emerging needs.

4.7 EXPANSION

During the pre-independence times, rail travel had a very limited scope. People travelled mainly on work or on business. It is only in the last few decades that the railways are getting involved with the tourism industry. The trend started with the Palace on Wheels pattern and a decision has been taken to launch eight such trains on popular tourist circuits. “Discover India” or INDRAIL passes valid from half-a-day to three months and Rail Holiday package tours are very much on. While such schemes are mostly for international tourists, for local tourists there is 100 Budget Hotels Project which will add 10000 hotel rooms in the organized sector in the country. This would attract an investment of Rs. 10000 crore and generate
direct employment to 30000 people and indirect employment to double that number of persons in related activities. This is an addition to building Rail Yatri Niwases for common passengers.

The introduction of economic liberalization in July 1991 threw a major challenge before the Indian Railways. As a result, it took several measures to modernize the rolling stock, tractions and coaches. Steam locos were phased out altogether. Besides, it entered into joint venture with State Governments to give a fillip to various railway projects, both urban and non-urban. Special emphasis was laid on customer care and user-friendly services. A customer Care Institute was also set up. The railways also launched the National Rail Vikas Yojana at a cost of Rs. 15000 crore outside the Railway Budget as a hallmark of public-private partnership for strengthening the golden quadrilateral routes to provide connectivity to major parts of the country and build four mega bridges in order to remove bottlenecks in this vital infrastructure over a period. In addition, the Indian Railways has been divided into 17 zones and 67 Divisions to ensure efficiency and productivity of rail services through manageable, cohesive administrative units.

In the last 155 years, the Indian Railways has become a major instrument of social change. Now the train criss-cross literally from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and the remote and inaccessible North-Eastern parts of the country are coming up on the railway map. The stage is rightly set for the culmination of 150 glorious years of the Indian Railway and to mark the beginning of more glories with a
renewed pledge to maintain its primacy as well as viability in bulk
transportation of people and goods and to give a fillip to ever growing
trade, commerce and industry. The Indian Railways rededicate itself to
the task of meeting the growing challenge of bulk transportation apart
from meeting the strategic requirements of the nation.

4.8 PASSENGER AMENITIES

The provision of passenger amenities is one of the important
objectives of the Indian Railways both as a business ethic and a social
obligation. The Indian Railways has issued a Citizens’ Charter on
Passenger services in which, it has been pledged to ensure adequate
passenger amenities in trains and at Railway stations. One of the
thrust areas in the VIII Plan was to provide basic passenger amenities
at all stations on a priority basis.

Consequent to the recommendations of the Standing Committee
of Parliament on Railways, the whole gamut of passenger amenities at
stations was reviewed and Railway Board decided (May 1995):

i. To provide/ augment the existing facilities in a planned manner,
   by drawing up a Perspective Plan for the provision of passenger
   amenities and,

ii. To classify all stations into 5 categories (categories A, B, C, D
   and E) depending upon their importance and volume of traffic
   handled at each station.

Additional infrastructural facilities are to be provided based on
the category of the station.
All the Zonal Railways were asked to initiate immediate action to formulate the perspective plans and to ensure that action plans so formulated were amalgamated into one general action plan and intersect priorities for different works assigned.

Based on the suggestions and views of the Railways, following modifications were issued in September 1999 by the Board to the instructions issued in 1995:

i. The amenities were classified as ‘Minimum Essential Amenities’, ‘Recommended amenities’ and ‘Desirable amenities’

ii. Stations were categorised in 6 categories (categories A, B, C, D,E and F) depending upon the earnings. The yardsticks/extent to which the amenities were to be provided were linked to the category of station.

iii. The categorisation was to be reviewed every five year based on the earnings.

4.8.1 Categorisation of Stations

Annual passenger earnings are an important parameter to decide the category of a station to provide passenger amenities. Stations have been categorised into six depending upon their passenger earnings. Based on Passenger earnings, the stations were categorised as follows:

1. Non-suburban stations with passenger earnings of Rs.6 crores and above are categorised as ‘A’.
2. Non-suburban stations with passenger earnings between Rs.3 crores and 6, Stations of Tourist importance or an important junction are categorised as ‘B ’.

3. All suburban stations are categorised as ‘C’.

4. Non-suburban stations with passenger earnings between Rs.0.5 crore and Rs. 3 crores are categorised as ‘D’.

5. Non-suburban stations with passenger earnings less than Rs. 0.5 crore are categorized as ‘E’

6. All Train halt stations are categorised as ‘F’.

4.8.2 Minimum Essential Amenities

The following were declared as Minimum Facilities (which are hitherto called the Basic Amenities) and are to be provided immediately.

Table 4.1
Minimum Essential Amenities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regular/ Flag Station</th>
<th>Halt Station</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. Waiting Hall.</td>
<td>i. Booking-cum-waiting shed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Seating arrangements.</td>
<td>ii. A rail level platform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Drinking water.</td>
<td>iii. Lighting arrangements where trains stop at night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. A rail level platform.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi. Suitable arrangement for lighting.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vii. Latrines.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viii. Shady trees.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Waiting hall/shed:

Waiting hall is a space provided for the passengers who are waiting for their next train. Waiting hall is available in A, B, C, D, & E category stations. And the table shows the space provided for waiting hall according to the station category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Waiting Hall Space (Sq.M)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Madurai Division Passenger Amenities Booklet

Kalligudi, Kalthurithi, Karupatti, Kundara east, Kuri, Mandapam camp, Nagamalai west, Rajagambiram, Tuticorin, Tutimelur, Vadapalanji stations at Madurai division are having shortage of waiting hall space and all other stations are having adequate/more than the space as per the norms.

2. Seating arrangement:

Seating arrangement is made in the platforms for the passengers who wait in the platform till the arrival of train. Seating arrangement is provided in A, B, C, D & E category stations and number of seats located in platform is given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Seats/Platform</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Madurai Division Passenger Amenities Booklet
Bagavathi puram, Keeranur, Kudalnagar, Kumaramangalam, Melakkonnakulam, Natarasankottai, Pamban, Paramakkudi, Ramanathapuram, Sattirakkudi, Sudiyur, stations are in shortage of seats as per the norms and all other stations in the Division are in as per the norms.

3. Drinking water:

In platform Water facility is given to the passengers for drinking purpose. Drinking water facility is provided to all A, B, C, D & E category stations except F category stations. There are two type of drinking water facility provided to the passengers, which are piped drinking water and hand pump drinking water. In A, B, C, D piped water facility is provided and in E category stations hand pump facility is provided. The following table shows number of taps in a platform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Taps per Platform</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Madurai Division Passenger Amenities Booklet

Bagavathi puram, Edamann, Karupatti, Kodaikkanal Road, Kuri, Mandapam camp, Melakkonnakulam, Natarasankottai, Pamban, Paramakudi, Rajagambiram, Ramanathapuram, Sattirakudi, Tituttangal, Valantaravai except these stations all other stations in Madurai Division have fulfilled the norms for drinking water facility.
4. Booking facilities:

Booking facility provided at the station for issue of tickets to the public through Current Booking Window or Advanced Reservation Window, Indian railways offer the facility of advance reservation for the passengers to reserve their tickets from anywhere to anywhere. The passengers can reserve their tickets sixty days in advance, excluding the date of journey at the train originating station. A maximum of six berths can be reserved in a single ticket. The working hours will be clearly displayed at the counters. There is a phenomenal growth of mobile phones and therefore Indian Railways are exploring the option of booking reserved and unreserved rail tickets through mobile phones. Booking Counters are situated in all A, B, C, D, E & F categories of stations. Number of counters specified according to the category of station is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Counters</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Madurai Division Passenger Amenities Booklet

Stations’ in Madurai Division were having adequate number of booking counters even which was not up to the norms only in Madurai station. Advanced Reservation counters-17, Current Booking Counters – 7 and 2 enquiry counters are there it was more than the specified norm.
5. Platform

Platform is one of the amenities provided to the customer to board the train conveniently in a station. In stations, platforms rose at three different models like high, low and rail level platforms. In A & C category stations high level platforms, in B & D category stations low level platforms, and in E & F category stations rail level platforms are there.

6. Lighting:

Lighting facility is provided at night to give illumination to the passengers who travel during the twilight and hours of darkness. All the stations in Madurai division have adequate lighting facility.

7. Urinals Latrines & Sanitation

Urinals Latrines & Sanitation facility provided in platform for the passengers’ convenience. Number of Urinals provided according to the station category except F category and the number are given in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Urinals &amp; Latrines</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4 &amp; 2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Madurai Division Passenger Amenities Booklet

Andipatti, Aryankavu, Bodinayakanur, Chattirapatti, Chettinad, Devakottai Road, Gomangalam, Kallal, Keeranur, Kodaikkanal Road, Kottaiyur, KudalNagar, Kumaramangalam, Maivadi road, Mandapam, Minatchipuram, Palani, Pavurchatram, Pudukkotai,
Ramanathapuram, Rameswaram, Samayanallur, Sattirakudi, Sattur, Theni, Tiruppachetti, Tulukkapatti, Udumalaipettai, Usilampatti, Vadadamurai, Vadipatti stations are in shortage of urinals in Madurai Division.

8. Platform shelters/ shady trees:

In the platform, roof or shady trees are situated to give safety against rain and to give shadow to the passengers. Platform shed/shady trees are facilitated according to the station category i.e. in A, B, C, & D Platform shed and in E, F shady trees. The details of platform shed and shady trees are given the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Platform Shed/ Shady Trees per Platform (Sq.M)</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Shady Trees</td>
<td>Shady Trees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Madurai Division Passenger Amenities Booklet

Stations covered in the Madurai division fulfilled the platform shelter or shady trees as per the norms.

The amenities to be provided as per the recommended norms are given below.

9. Fans:

Fans are installed in the station platforms to avoid sizzling and air flow to the passenger. Adequate number of fans and lights are installed according to the station category.
Ambathurai, Arulmuganeri, Aryankavu, Ayyalur, Chettiyapatti, Devakottai Road, Dindigul, Kadanayanallur, Kalpattichatram, Kodaikkkanal Road, Kottarakara, Kovilpatti, Kundra east, Madurai, ManaMadurai, Manaparai, Mandapam, Oddanchatram, Palani, Pambakovil shandy, Paramakkudi, Pudukkotai, Rajapalaiyam, Ramanathapuram, Samudram, Sankarankovil, Sattur, Segottai, Sivaganga, Sivakasi, Srivilliputtur, Tenkasi, Tirumangalam, Tirunelveli, Tuticorin, Udumalaippettai, Vanchi Maniyachi, Virudhunagar stations in Madurai Division provide fans for the welfare of passengers.

10. **Bathing facilities:**

Apart from urinals and latrines, bathing facilities provided in the stations to the passengers. Bathing facility is available in A, B & D Category stations. In Madurai Division Aruppukkottai, Kadanayanallur, Kottarakara, Madurai, Manamadurai, Punalur, Rajapalayam, Sankarankovil, Sengottai, Sivakasi, Srivilliputtur, Tenmalai, Tirumangalam have bathing cubicals.

11. **Foot over bridge:**

Food over bridge placed at station for crossing the railway tracks to reach other platform by the passengers and Keeping in view the safety of the passengers to reduce the number of accidents and ensure uninterrupted service, the Railway is providing foot over bridges to connect various platforms in a station. This indicates that the Railway is aiming at ensuring safety and comfort to its passengers.
Foot over bridge was provided in A, B, C category stations where more number of platforms are situated. In Madurai Division foot over bridge is available in the following stations: Dindigul, Karaikudi, Kodaikkkanal Road, Kovilpattli, Madurai, Manamadurai, Manaparai, Palani, Sankarankovil, Sengottai, Sivakasi, Tenkasi, Tirumangalam, Tirunelveli, Tuticorin, and Virudhunagar.

12. **Time table display:**

Time table display is placed in all A, B, C, D, E, & F category stations. This provides details to the passengers about the trains which touch a particular station, viz., its arrival time, departure time and other details. All the stations covered in Madurai Division have the time table display boards.

13. **Clock:**

Clock is installed in the platform to show the time in A, B, C, and D, category stations in platforms. In Madurai Division except Akkaraipatti, Chettinad, Keeranur, Kottaiyur, Kumaramangalam, Mettur, Nagamalai west, Sudiyur, Tiruppuvanam and Vadaplanji stations all other stations have clock facility.

14. **Porters**

Licensed Porters are available at most stations to carry passenger’s luggage. These Licensed Porters carry the luggage at stations on payment of prescribed rates notified and displayed at the stations. Facilities for carrying heavier luggage by trolleys at specified rates are also available. The rates for porterage are displayed at stations at prominent locations.
15. **Bed Rolls**

Bed rolls will be supplied free of charge to the passengers of AC I-class, AC 2-Tier and AC 3-Tier classes of all trains, including Rajdhani Express trains. Bed rolls will also be supplied to the passengers travelling in I class, provided a request is made to the Station Manager of the originating station, at least two hours before the scheduled departure of the train, subject to the availability of stock and on payment of Rs.20/- per roll, per journey. Bed roll consists of the following: Bed sheets – 2; Face Towel-1; Blanket-1; Pillow with cover-1. The passengers should return the bedrolls to the Coach attendant well in advance before the arrival of the train at the destination station.

16. **Wheel Chairs and Stretchers**

Wheel Chairs and Stretchers are available at certain stations and can be obtained from the Station Manager. Information regarding the rate payable to porters for assistance with wheel chairs shall be obtained from the Station Manager. Stretchers are also available at selected stations for the use of needy passengers.

17. **Medical Aid**

Medical aid for travelling public is provided by the Railways as a matter of courtesy. A First Aid box is available with all Station Managers and also with the Guards of each train, who are trained in rendering First Aid. For emergencies on train, the TTE/Train Superintendent may be contacted. They will pass on the message to the next station, where a Railway Doctor will attend on the patient at
a nominal prescribed charge. Wherever hospitalization is required, the patient may need to discontinue his journey. In such instances suitable arrangements will be made to guide him/her to the Government Hospital.

Names of Private Practitioners, Nursing Homes and Government Hospitals, with Telephone Numbers, Addresses and Distance from the station are displayed at all stations.

4.8.4. DESIRABLE AMENITIES

To improve Customer Satisfaction and interface process at the station the following desirable amenities are provided.

1. Retiring rooms:

The Railways are also providing lodging facilities to the passengers although to a limited extent in the form of retiring rooms. Retiring Rooms and dormitories (both AC and Non-AC) are one of the Desirable Amenities in stations of category A, B and D. The provision of retiring rooms at stations should be made only where a minimum of 40 per cent occupation was expected. Only those holding valid tickets for inward/outward journey are eligible to make use of this amenity. It is available at a very reasonable cost. The Estimates Committee in their 10th Report (1977-78) 6th Lok Sabha on Passenger Amenities recommended to ensure the utilisation of the retiring rooms to the maximum extent possible. Applications are available with the station manager or matron. Based on the room availability and genuineness of the passengers, rooms are allotted to them. Information regarding the vacancy position of rooms may be obtained from the notice board.
or station manager. Charges for accommodation for Retiring and Dormitory vary according to the importance of station, traffic, and market rate for lodging.

2. Waiting rooms:

Waiting room facilities are provided by the Indian Railways for the comfort of the passengers in A, B, & D category stations. All waiting halls are provided with adequate urinals, bath rooms and toilets, they are available for sleeper class passengers and second class passengers. This facility is especially used by those passengers who have to change trains, or wait for the arrival of trains. Common waiting rooms are available in A, B, & D stations, separate waiting rooms for upper & second class passengers only in A category and separate waiting room for ladies only in A category stations. And apart from this, according to the requirement some stations have complementary waiting rooms.

3] Cloak room:

Zonal Railways have Cloak Rooms and Lockers where passengers can leave their luggage for a period up to one month on payment of prescribed charges. This ensures safe custody of passengers luggage, besides passengers are given freedom to spend a day or two as they desire. All they have to do is to deposit their luggage duly locked whereupon a receipt will be given. The receipt should be surrendered at the Cloak Room for taking delivery of the luggage along with payment of prescribed clock room charges. Luggage will not be delivered without surrendering of the receipt.
Table 4.8
Charges for Cloak room and lockers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cloak Room</th>
<th>Lockers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For first 24 hrs. or part thereof</td>
<td>Rs.10/-</td>
<td>Rs.15/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next 24 hrs. or part thereof.</td>
<td>Rs.12/-</td>
<td>Rs.20/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each subsequent 24 hrs. or part thereof</td>
<td>Rs.15/-</td>
<td>Rs.25/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4] National Train Enquiry System [NTES] and Interactive Voice Response System [IVRS]:

‘National Train Enquiry System’ has been started in order to provide upgraded passenger information on enquiries. This system provides the running position of a train on a current basis through various output devices such as terminals in the station enquiries and Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) at important railway stations. 139 Rail sampark the national enquiry for Indian Railways has been in operation for the benefit of the people. The service on this number i.e. 139 handles enquiries pertaining to arrival, departure, schedules of trains plying between two stations, PNR status and fare enquiry.64 A system arranged by railways to give proper response about the reservation status of tickets, arriving time of train, etc.

64 Indian Railways-November-2008, pg.no: 30
5] **Public Address system:**

Public Address System is available at large stations and all suburban sections where the passenger traffic is very heavy. Such facility is provided for the convenience of passengers to have correct information about the arrival and departure of trains. This system is immensely useful for making important announcements.

6] **Water vending machines and Water coolers:**

To serve cool water to the passengers during summer season, water coolers are installed at important stations and station with a heavy flow of passengers.

7] **Book stalls and other essential goods stalls:**

Books, magazines, journals, and newspapers are sold in the book stalls to cater to the needs of book readers. Other goods stalls which sell snacks, medicine, cool drinks are also available. These type of stalls are in A, B, & C category stations.

8] **Refreshment Room**

Refreshment Rooms, both Vegetarian and Non-Vegetarian are available at certain stations where the passengers can get hygienic food at reasonable cost. The service timings at refreshment rooms vary from station to station depending on the arrival and departure of important trains.

Standard Thali meals (vegetarian and non-vegetarian) will be served in Refreshment Rooms, Breakfast, Lunch and dinner are being served in trains either from Base Kitchen or from Pantry Car.
**Catering:**

Apart from refreshment rooms, restaurants are also located at stations for the convenience of the passengers. These restaurants are managed either departmentally or by contract. Catering facilities are available at all important stations. Passengers are requested to order their requirements well in advance either to the Catering Courier deputed on some of the important trains or to the Guard/Conductor of the train to facilitate meals being served at the nominated stations.

Parking area is the space provided by the Indian Railways to park the vehicles of visitors and passengers. Train Indicator board/ coach indicator board have been installed in the platform to indicate the number of the arriving train and the position of the coach for the convenience of the passengers to board their train easily.

The following table 4.9 gives the desirable amenities provided in the study area.
## Table 4.9
Desirable Amenities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Station Amenities</th>
<th>Station Locations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Retiring rooms</td>
<td>Karaikudi, Kovilpatti, Dindigul, Palani, Madurai, Rameswaram, Sivakasi, Sriviliputtur, Tenkasi, Tiruchendur, Tirunelveli, Tuticorin, Virudhunagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Waiting Rooms –</td>
<td>Ambasamudram, Aruppukottai, Chettinad, Kallidaikurichi, Dindigul, Karaikudi, Kodaikanal road, Madurai, Manamadurai, Nazareth, Palani, Rajapalayam, Sattur, Rameswaram, Sholavandan, Sivakasi, Sriviliputtur, Tirumangalam, Tirunelveli, Tuticorin, Udumalaipettai, Vanchi Maniyachi, Viravanallur, Virudhunagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Ambasamudram, Ambaturai, Cheran mahadevi, Dindigul, Kadanayanallur, Karaikudi, Kodaikanal road, Kottaiyur, Kottarakara, Kovilpatti, Madurai, Mandapam, Palani, Paramakkudi, Punalur, Rajapalayam, Ramanathapuram, Rameswaram, Sengottai, Sankarankovil, Sholavandan, Sivagangai, Sivakasi, Tenkasi, Tirumayam, Tiruchendur, Tuticorin, Tirumangalam, Tiurnelvelitown, Tenmalai, Udumalaipettai, Virudhunagar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Separate for upper &amp;II-class passengers</td>
<td>Ambasamudram, Ambaturai, Cheran mahadevi, Dindigul, Kadanayanallur, Karaikudi, Kodaikanal road, Kottaiyur, Kottarakara, Kovilpatti, Madurai, Mandapam, Palani, Paramakkudi, Punalur, Rajapalayam, Ramanathapuram, Rameswaram, Sengottai, Sankarankovil, Sholavandan, Sivagangai, Sivakasi, Tenkasi, Tirumayam, Tiruchendur, Tuticorin, Tirumangalam, Tiurnelvelitown, Tenmalai, Udumalaipettai, Virudhunagar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Separate for Ladies</td>
<td>Dindigul, Kallidaikurichi, Karaikudi, Kodaikanal road, Madurai, Palani, Rajapalayam, Ramanathapuram, Rameswaram, Sengottai, Tenkasi, Tirunelveli, Viravanallur, Virudhunagar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cloak Room</td>
<td>Dindigul, Kallidaikurichi, Kalthuruthy, Kudalnagar, Madurai, Madurai East, Palani, Rameswaram, Sankaran kovil, Sengottai, Silaiman, Sivakasi, Tenkasi, Tiruchendur, Tirunelveli, Tiruppuvanam, Virudhunagar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Enquiry NTES</td>
<td>Madurai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>PA System</td>
<td>Dindigul, Karaikudi, Kodaikanal road, Kottarakara, Kovilpatti, Madurai, Manamadurai, Manaparai, Oddanchatram, Palani, Pudukkotai, Rajapalaiyam, Ramanathapuram, Rameswaram, Sholavandan, Tenkasi, Tiruchendur, Tirunelveli, Tuticorin, Vanchi Maniyachi, Virudhunagar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Water vending machines, chilling plants and Water coolers</td>
<td>Dindigul, Karaikudi, Kodaikanal road, Kovilpatti, Madurai, Palani, paramakkudi, Pudukkotai, Rajapalaiyam, Ramanathapuram, Rameswaram, Sengottai, Sivakasi, Srivaikuntam, Tenkasi, Tiruchendur, Tirumangalam, Tirunelveli, Tuticorin, Vanchi Maniyachi, Virudhunagar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Refreshment Room</td>
<td>Dindigul, Madurai, Manamadurai, Vanchi Maniyachi, Virudhunagar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Parking area</td>
<td>Madurai, Dindigul, Tirunelveli, Tuticorin, Virudhunagar, Kovilpatti, Kodaikanal road, Sattur, Ramanathapuram, Manaparai, Tenkasi, Manamadurai, Oddanchatram, Sivakasi, Rajapalaiyam, Paramakkudi, Tiruttangal, Thirupparankundram, Sengottai, Sankarankovil, Sholavandan, Srivilliputtur, Sivaganga, Nazareth, Pudukkotai, Karaikudi, Kadanayanallur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Train indicator board, Coach indicator board</td>
<td>Madurai, Dindigul, Tirunelveli, Virudhunagar, Tuticorin, Rameswaram, Kovilpatti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.9 NEW TRENDS IN PASSENGER AMENITIES

Passenger Reservation System which was started in the year 1985, has a huge network covering 702 locations all over the country and using about 3000 terminals does 10 lakh reservation every day; covering about 95% of the reserved accommodation. The existing five Passenger Reservation Systems were integrated into one system in April 1999 by the Centre for Railway Information Systems [CRIS] through the development of a software called Countrywide Network of Computeised Enhanced Reservation and Ticketing [CONCERT] based on the state-of-the-art client server technology. It is real time on-line system. It is now possible for the passengers to book onwards/returns journey tickets from/to any station, at any of the computerized reservation centres. The reservation centres are also available in remote areas like Lakshadweep, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Manali, Joshimath and the entire state-of-North-east region. It is proposed to provide reservation terminal at the District Headquarters in the country.

To take care of the unreserved segment of the passengers, a new pilot project on computer based unreserved ticketing has been launched. Of the 13 million passengers served by the network everyday, nearly 12 million are unreserved passengers. To cater to this huge segment, computer based ticketing systems has been launched for all stations throughout the country. With this, unreserved tickets can be issued even from locations other than the boarding station and

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65 www.indianrailways.org.
will reduce crowds at booking offices and stations. Indian Railways could successfully address the needs of the passengers of unreserved trains. The system comprised a network of terminals wherefrom the passengers could buy unreserved tickets for any journey 3 days in advance.

In addition to ordinary reservation, there is a emergency reservation scheme called “TATKAL”. Reservation for certain trains for which Tatkal reservation is admissible can be done 3 days before the date of Journey. Of course, an additional charge has to be paid for this emergency reservation and such Tatkal tickets cannot be changed or cancelled.

Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation with the assistance of Centre for Railway Information Systems have launched On-line ticketing facility which can be accessed through website irctc.co.in. Computerized reservation facilities were added and at present these facilities are available at locations covering about 96 per cent of the total workload of passenger reservation. Computerized Reservation related enquiries about accommodation availability, passenger status, train schedule, train between pair of stations etc. have been made web enabled.

A pilot project for issuing monthly and quarterly season tickets through Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) has been launched in Mumbai and has been found very successful. Another pilot project for purchasing tickets including monthly and quarterly season tickets through Smart Card has also been launched.
Freight Operations Information System (FOIS) Computerisation of freight operations by Railways has been achieved by implementing Rake Management System (RMS). Such FOIS terminals are available at 235 locations Indian Railways.

Railways have established their own intra-net ‘Railnet’. It provides networking between Railway Board, Zonal Headquarters, Divisional headquarters, Production Units, Training Centers etc.

Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited\(^6\) (IRCTC) is developing modern facilities to meet the pressing requirements of good quality food to travelling public and simultaneously working to enhances Railways’ revenues by introducing the concept of food plazas/fast food units under public private partnership at stations.

Indian Railway Catering & Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) Internet based ticket booking has been launched by IRCTC in Delhi, Chennai, Bangalore, Mumbai and Calcutta this year. Hygienic and air-conditioned food plazas having consumer-friendly ambience has been opened at Pune and Chennai and license for similar plazas awarded. More than half-a-lakh tourists have availed the value added tour package programme launched by the Corporation.

\(^6\) Indian Railways – February 2009, pg.no.15.
IRCTC has also awarded licenses for managing cell kitchens/mini base kitchens. To ensure availability of good quality/hygienic drinking water facility to passengers, Railway Board has given approval to IRCTC’s proposal for setting of ‘Rail Neer’ plants.

Mobile Helpline:

Indian Railways has taken an initiative to introduce ‘Mobile Helpline’ for the convenience of railway users. Vigilance officials of Indian Railways are always available 24×7 on the mobile helpline No. 155210 on which railway passengers can lodge their complaints of bribery/corruption against railway men. The action is taken on real time basis for redressal of their grievances.

4.10 MODEL STATIONS

Model stations were introduced in June 1999 for the purpose of providing passenger amenities and to be upgraded as a model for other stations. Initially 61 stations were selected for this purpose and 287 stations are now declared (in Dec. 2001) all over Indian Railways as model stations to provide upgraded passenger amenities. These include all ‘A’ category and selected ‘B’ to ‘E’ category stations.

Provision of passenger amenities is linked to the category of the station. i.e., ‘A’ category station should be provided with much improved facilities as compared to the model station of other categories. The desirable amenities are treated as yardstick to provide upgraded amenities at a model station. A master plan containing the desirable amenities should be made and they should be provided at the model station according to their category. In addition to the
desirable amenities mentioned above, the revised list includes-washable apron, signages, pay and use toilets, SPTMs, computerization of complaints, AVMs, Modular catering stalls.

Development of a project named ‘Satellite Imaging for Rail Navigation (SIMRAN)’ to collect Global Positioning System (GPS) based mapping of railway network and train tracking to provide information to the public about running of trains through train indication boards on platforms, internet, etc.

4.11 EXPENDITURE ON PASSENGER AMENITIES [Indian Railways]

An attempt is made to find out the Trend and Growth rate of the expenditure on Passenger Amenities in Indian Railways from 2000-2001 to 2007-08. The particulars regarding the expenditure on Amenities in Indian Railways and its trend are presented in Table 4.10.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Claims Paid</th>
<th>Trend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000-2001</td>
<td>-3.5</td>
<td>135.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>-2.5</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>181.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>222.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>256.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>407.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>668.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2215.05</td>
<td>2603.485</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Various Indian Railways year books

Trend \( Y_t = a + bx \) where \( a = \frac{\Sigma y}{N} \), \( b = \frac{\Sigma xy}{\Sigma x^2} \)

\( a = 2215.05/8 = 276.8813 \)

\( b = 2603.485/42 = 61.98774 \)
This analysis (Table 4.1) shows that the growth rate of expenditure on Passenger Amenities in Indian Railways indicates positive trend of Rs 61.98774 crores. It is noted that expenditure on Passenger Amenities in Indian Railways increased from 135.4 to 668.17 crores during the study period. To probe further, the particulars regarding expenditure on Passenger Amenities in Indian Railways and the calculated trend values are graphically plotted in Chart 4.1.

![Chart 4.1 Expenditure on Passenger Amenities](image)

It is inferred from the chart that the curve showing the trend value of expenditure on Passenger Amenities in Indian Railways indicates an increase. The expenditure on Passenger Amenities in Indian Railways curve shows that the expenditure on amenities is consistent throughout the study period. It can be understood that
there was more expenditure in the year 2007-08. An outlay of 852 crores is made for Passenger amenities in the year 2008-2009.

4.12 PASSENGER AMENITY WORKS AT MADURAI DIVISION

An attempt is made to find out the Trend and Growth rate of the expenditure on Passenger Amenities in Madurai Division from 2000-2001 to 2007-08. The particulars regarding the expenditure on Amenities in Madurai Division and its trend are presented in Table 4.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Expenditure on Amenities</th>
<th>Trend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000-2001</td>
<td>-3.5</td>
<td>-87.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>-2.5</td>
<td>-71.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>-46.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>-16.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>10.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>38.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>111.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>266.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>284.21</td>
<td>205.085</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Madurai division official website

Trend \( Y_t = a + bx \) where \( a=\frac{\Sigma y}{N} \), \( b=\frac{\Sigma xy}{\Sigma x^2} \)

\[ a=\frac{2215.05}{8}=\ 276.8813 \]

\[ b=\frac{2603.485}{42} \ 61.98774 \]

This analysis (Table 4.2) shows that the growth rate of expenditure on Passenger Amenities in Madurai Division indicates positive trend of Rs 61.98774 crores. It is noted that expenditure on Passenger Amenities in Madurai Division increased from 135.4 to 668.17 crores during the study period. To probe further, the particulars regarding expenditure
on Passenger Amenities in Madurai Division and the calculated trend values are graphically plotted in Chart 4.2

**Chart 4.2**

**PASSENGER AMENITY WORKS AT MADURAI DIVISION**

It is inferred from the chart that the curve showing the trend value of expenditure on Passenger Amenities in Madurai Division indicates a increase. The expenditure on Passenger Amenities in Madurai Division curve shows that the expenditure on amenities is consistent throughout the study period. It can be understood that there was more expenditure in the year 2007-08. An outlay of 42.99 crores was made up to August for Passenger amenities in the year 2008-2009.
4.13 SUM UP

An attempt is made to review the various amenities provided by the Indian Railways. The amenities - what works and how and whether or not they are a worthwhile investment - are broad and complex. Rail stations have, historically, offered the most amenities for passengers simply because they are intended to serve people waiting for somewhat longer periods of time embarking on somewhat longer journeys and paying somewhat higher fares.

Electrification has also helped the railways provide some basic passenger amenities. Over the years, the designing and development of different types of air-conditioned coaches which are extremely popular with travelling public. The advent of electrification has not only made the railways cleaner and more eco-friendly but also taken a big leap towards energy conservation. The Railways have switched over to the production and use of concrete sleepers in a big way. Prior to that there was total dependence on wooden sleepers. However, to encourage the conservation of forests and to maintain ecological balance, this step was considered necessary.

The railway signaling system is to be continuously modernized to cope with the rising traffic density and to meet better safety standards. In another major breakthrough in recent times, the railways have introduced satellite communication so that passengers can talk to any telephone subscriber anywhere in the country and abroad. The satellite phones are now available in all Zonal and Divisional Railways to meet emerging needs.
The provision of passenger amenities is one of the important objectives of the Indian Railways both as a business ethic and a social obligation. The Indian Railways has issued a Citizens’ Charter on Passenger services in which, it has been pledged to ensure adequate passenger amenities in trains and at Railway stations.

Annual passenger earnings are an important parameter to decide the category of a station to provide passenger amenities. The basic amenities of Booking facilities, Platform, Drinking water, Waiting hall/shed, Seating arrangement, Platform shelters/ shady trees, Lighting, Fans, Urinals, Latrines & Sanitation, Bathing facilities, Book stalls and other essential goods stalls, Foot over bridge, Time table display, Clock, Catering, Porters, Bed Rolls, Wheel Chairs And Stretchers, Medical Aid are provided in the study area. The desirable amenities of Retiring rooms, Waiting Rooms, Cloak Room, Enquiry NTES, PA System, Water vending machines, chilling plants and Water coolers, Book stalls and other essential goods stalls, Refreshment Room, Parking area, Train indicator board and Coach indicator board are provided only in the selected railway stations in the study area.