

MERI SAHELI INITIATIVE

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Rights & Welfare of Women - Schemes & their Performance, Mechanisms, Laws Institutions and Bodies

'Meri Saheli' initiative was launched as Pilot Project by Railway Protection Force (RPF) across South Eastern Railway for security of women passengers in trains originating in that zone. Considering its success in instilling a sense of security among women passengers, this initiative has been rolled over to all zonal railways across Indian Railways' network from 17.10.2020. Meri Saheli Initiative was launched to provide safety and security to lady passengers travelling by trains for their entire journey from originating station to terminating station. Dedicated teams of lady RPF personnel have been formed across all zonal railways for its implementation. Presently, 1176 number of women RPF personnel are being deployed for this purpose on average daily basis across Indian Railways network.

Section 58 of the Railways Act, 1989 provides for earmarking of accommodation for female passengers in trains. Accordingly, in trains carrying passengers, Indian Railways have earmarked following accommodation for female passengers:

The deployment of RPF guard including women RPF personnel in ladies coaches is decided based on the vulnerability of the concerned trains/sections, timing, location of the area, threat perception of the hinterland, analysis of past crime of data among others. Therefore, the deployment is dynamic and keeps changing from time to time. However, Ladies Special trains running in Metropolitan cities are being escorted by lady RPF personnel.

Presently, 14 ladies special trains are operational over Western and Central Railway serving Mumbai area. These are being supplemented by 20 trains having partial earmarking of 03 coaches in the trains which are in addition to the regular earmarking of 3 coaches/4 coaches in 12 Car/15 Car trains. Over Southern Railway, serving Chennai area, 21 services have earmarking of 6.5 coaches/5.5 coaches in 12 Car/9 Car trains. Besides, introduction of additional trains, including Ladies special trains, and augmentation of trains, is an on-going process on Indian Railways.

This information was given by the Minister of Railways, Commerce & Industry and Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, Shri Piyush Goyal in a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha today.

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