



# ***“Addressing VIP Quota and Culture in Railways”***

**Collective inputs from over 75,000 Citizens in circle**

**“Make Railways Better”**

***(Current state, Issues, Root Causes and Proposed Solutions)***

***January 21, 2015***



## VIP Quota/Culture in Indian Railways

### **Background**

The VIP culture is very prevalent in India. Hence, it swiftly flows into the Indian Railways too. Currently there is an Emergency Quota of 60,000 births a day which is supposed to be utilized for Emergency needs and Official travels of VIPs. However, this facility is not being utilized effectively and in many cases not reaching the citizen who may have a real Emergency at hand and needs to travel.

The 75,000 strong “Making Railways Better” online community has come together to collectively identify the key issues, root causes and solutions for VIP Culture/Quota in Indian Railways and the community expects that the Railways Leadership will work towards implementing the identified solutions.

### **Issues Identified:**

1. 60,000 seats daily being available under Emergency quota is very high
2. VIP quota seats are a large source of corruption
3. VIP quota seats get openly sold in different places
4. TTEs offer these seats to travellers after taking money
5. VIP quota seats frequently get used by railway staff's relatives and friends
6. There is no easy way for the common man to get access to a seat in real emergency
7. VIPs use their free travel privileges even after retirement
8. Some Railway Management travels in coaches especially added for them
9. Trains are delayed to accommodate the VIP arrival
10. Coaches' gets reshuffled for the ease of the VIP. This creates inconvenience to all the passengers
11. VIPs travel with a lot of fanfare/security which causes big botheration to general public

### **Root Causes Identified:**

1. A system to track and allocate Emergency seats is missing
2. A guideline to what comes under Emergency or VIP is missing
3. There is a potentially a nexus between the agents and some railway officials
4. Some railway officials misuse their authority to offer free seats to friends and family
5. It is very easy for TTEs and officials to sell the VIP quota seats to general passengers and make money.



6. Railway officials tend to attend to requests from associates rather than outrightly rejecting requests for booking
7. There is no stated definition of a VIP and hence everyone tries to use this quota
8. There is a large gap between the demand and availability of seats
9. As per the Indian mind set, VIPs are considered above the general public
10. VIPs use their influence and power to keep the train waiting in case they need to board
11. Absence of a discreet report showing what percentage of VIP quota seats were availed in the last years

### **Solutions Identified:**

1. A transparent system for Emergency and VIP seat allocation is needed
2. Guidelines need to be issued defining an Emergency and a VIP
3. Emergency/VIP quota should be cut down by 75% to 15,000 seats a day
4. Optimization system can be implemented so common VIP routes have more seats
5. A citizen should be able to call an Emergency Travel Helpline/Website, upload necessary document and get access to an Emergency seat after validation.
6. Only VIPs and Railway officials should have access to this quota for themselves and for official journeys only
7. Families of VIPs and Railways officials could travel based on seat availability but after purchasing the ticket (or book as any other citizen)
8. Usage of the VIP quota should be limited to a certain number of times
9. Records should be maintained of which VIP is using how many seat and how many times
10. People found misusing this privilege should be debarred from it for life
11. Unused VIP quota seats should be opened to general public after a specific time
12. Controls should be put in place such that unauthorized Railway Officials cannot process or recommend ticket bookings
13. Agents should be barred from booking tickets through Emergency Quota
14. Authorities should make sure that the VIP quota seats are not sold in black market
15. TTEs caught selling seats should be suspended
16. VIP quota seats should be opened to general public after a specific time
17. The time table of the trains should not be changed to accommodate VIPs
18. VIPs are to be treated as any other citizen in a train

### **VIP Culture/Quota in Indian Railways – A few citizen posts and comments:**

1. Don't you believe that the quota culture was meant for the British Officers to enjoy the privileges? Well, they had to do it, since the need was to rule the whole country with iron hand to suppress any sort of uprising against them, to create an INFERIORITY COMPLEX in the minds of the people by having the VIP tag. NOW THIS



IS NOT REQUIRED - but same set of rules and systems are continuing. SCRAP IT. Let there be no such VIPs. Things will automatically fall in place. Let the quota be only for EMERGENCIES – That’s all. Noting more nothing less. - Please think over - this will have double impact of getting rid of corruption and the harassment culture – **Manish Parekh**

2. The most of the VIPs are travelling by air. Then why to keep the VIP quota seats for them which is one of the root cause of corruption in railways – **S. K. Dutta**
3. This one should be easy to implement. After the last seat charting has been done before train departure, make the vacancies transparent for bookings or send SMSs to people on the AC coaches to make the bookings via Text message or pay up at the counter (ill-advised, since venturing out to the ticket counter at stations is the least favourite of all things to do at Rly stations) TT should not be doing any financial transactions. If fine receipts are to be handed, payment should be made either at Rly police or Enquiry counter and the database of defaulters to be shared across the Rly station systems including a scanned copy of the ID card. If anything is to be given to the TT, it should be a handheld fine receipt mounted with a camera to take pictures. – **Ash Kharel**
4. The Railways could every month post a report (showing number of trips travelled by MP, MLA their relatives, their reference quota) in every major stations. This will make the MP MLA MLC ex MP ex MLA ministers, to use the facility prudently – **Ramji Yahoo**
5. Every citizen availing the railway facilities are to be treated equal. VIP quota should be done away. Quota system is not only a corrupt practice but also anti-democratic. VIP them self should not have any preference in seat allotment. They have money. They can reach for official/ personal engagements to the destinations by air or road if they don't get reservation in trains. VIP culture should go from Indian soil. The growth of Naxalite/Maoist activities due to these type of wrong policies fostered by the government – **Narayana Pillai**
6. May I request the concerned authority to install GPRS system by providing vacant seat positions viewed by all so as to know the position and also demand by general public on the vacant seats? One more important thing is there should be a change from public also to pay for the services charged as per the bill produced. Everyone wants their job on priority, so people bribe and get their job done and claims that everyone are bribers. At least to an extent this way some change can be expected through this system to my knowledge. The quota system to be removed before 2 hours of departure of the train so as to get seats for the WL passengers. Increase in coaches on the demanded routes shall also results better. Strict vigil on TTE's and ticket less passengers to be imparted. VIP's involvement in every step of action to be reduced and VIP allotment should be reduced or limited to minimum extent possible. Involvement of VIP's and their subordinates should be curtailed. List of



allotment should be displayed on the passenger charts to know general public for ease. – **Oruganti Venkata**

7. As per my knowledge no MP ever travel in a sleeper class, mostly they use air and even not they use 2AC to travel. This thing can be carried out if passes given to railway employees and VIP should be abolished with a mechanism where quota should be limited to VIP himself and not to his attendants and his family. And finally a ticket should be charged by all railways employees and VIPS which should be reimbursed by their own departments so as to overcome the burden of INDIAN RAILWAYS because many times i have noticed that as there are no cancellations charges for VIP and railways staff they get their tickets cancelled at last time and prepares a fresh journey times and times. Moreover sleeper classes VIP quota should be fully abolished – **Nikhil Khurana**
8. The quota is meant for VIPS like ministers, MP, HC judges etc. and not for rly officials. There is a protocol order to this effect but It is highly misused by rly officers on their whims and fantasies to accommodate themselves and their families and friends. Avery large number of seats in all classes is year marked against this quota and never filled up with the category is year marked. The numbers should be drastically reduced in all classes and abolished in sleeper class where no VIP TRAVELS. The vacant seats should go to the people travelling in emergencies like medical treatment to attend funeral etc. which does not gives time for reservations. As per rules laid down by rlys(but never followed) rly officials should be given berth only when it is vacant and preferably on coach axil location – **Sudhir Sharan**