Through RSMS

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
RAILWAY BOARD

No. 2018/Sec(Cr.)/45/50/Festival

New Delhi, Dated: 09.11.2018

The General Managers
All Zonal Railways and CMD/KRCL

Sub:- Advisory on effective measures of crowd control and keeping safety over FOBs at Railway stations by Zonal Railways-reg.

This office has issued guidelines vide RSMS message No. 2017/ SEC(INT.) / 51/ 3/4-442 dated 08.10.2018 and letter No. 2018/ SEC (INT.) / 51/ 3/ 4-442 dated 15.10.2018 for proper crowd control at the railway stations in view of the upcoming festive season. Necessary security arrangements must be in place at all important stations by now.

Refer to the incident of stampede at FOB of Santragachi Railway station /SER on 23.10.2018 resulting in to death of 2 passengers and injury to about 12 passengers. There may be several reasons for this stampede for which an Enquiry Committee has been set up. Such incidents have occurred in past also. Structural, procedural and operational shortcomings often lead to stampede. The Solution lies in comprehensive planning and collective work of different branches. There is immediate need to have a security protocol which addressed the issues of over-crowding at FOB, platforms and last minute change of platforms which generally result into such stampede.

The following advisory is being issued for strict compliance to all concerned:-

1. FOBs need to be kept clear of any obstruction. No one should be allowed to squat / sit on the FOB and the stairs leading to it. There should be continuous movement of passengers on the FOBs. Action should be taken to ensure that there are sufficient number of CCTV cameras fixed at proper angles to watch the movement of passengers on FOBs, stations, platforms, entry/ exit points and circulating area. The CCTV control room staff should, round the clock, watch the movements of passengers and whenever there is crowd on FOB or at the platforms, it should be regulated by deploying sufficient number of security staff.

2. In case of rush at the FOBs, security staff should use ropes to ensure one way movement of passengers. Passenger crowd should be controlled at the entry points of the stations, so that platforms and FOBs are not dangerously crowded. For this purpose holding areas should be identified outside the stations. Proper shades & seating arrangements should be provided in these holding areas.

3. It should be ensured that wherever elevators are fixed, it does not reduce the capacity of FOB. Efforts should be made to have separate FOB with elevator. FOBs of inadequate size should be identified and brought to the notice of the concerned officers for increasing their size or numbers. FOBs are to be treated as Safety items with no restriction of budget instead of passenger amenity as per instructions of Hon’ble MR communicated vide Rly Bd’s letter no. 2017/E&R/8(1)/4 dated 4.10.2017.
4. Ensuring announcement / display about arrival and platform position of trains well in advance to reach the passengers at platform instead of waiting on the FOBs to know the platform number.

5. Most of the old FOBs are very narrow in space. Bidirectional movement in such narrow FOBs is one among the major reasons for stampede. New FOBs with adequate width are to be constructed to cater the volume and it should have physical partition to have bidirectional movement.

6. If the position of old FOB is strategically located in a place where it is more convenient for passenger movement, an additional FOB along its side must be constructed so that both FOBs can be used for passenger movement in different directions.

7. During festive occasions and mela times when there is an unusual hike in the volume of passengers, it is advisable to extensively use the pathways at the end of PFs on both UP and Down directions with rope parties. It will very much ease the utility and load on FOBs. These pathways should be the emergency exit routes in security plan during unusual situations and not the FOBs.

8. Co-ordination should be maintained with Operating Control room and senior operating officers for ensuring advance information to RPF / GRP in case of last minute changes in the train platforms. Railway Board has already written to all General Managers vide Fax / COIS MAIL No. 2014/Chg./24/2 dated 4.5.2018 that nominated platform berthing for passing through trains should not be changed at short notice except in case of extreme emergency with the approval of competent authority. It should be ensured that in rare cases of such change, the passengers are immediately informed by announcements on Public Address System. The passengers must be allowed adequate time for reaching their trains / platforms. It should be ensured that Public Address System is working properly and announcements are audible to the targeted passengers.

9. It should be ensured that originating trains are stationed at railway platforms at least 30 minutes before their scheduled departure. During rush days or whenever there is any festival, adequate arrangements should be made to guide the passengers about their trains and platforms at the entry point of the station itself. It would be better if commuter trains and Mail/Express trains are nominated permanently to the separate platforms, as it would help in segregating the Mail/Express train passengers from local passengers.

10. Some terminating trains are known for carrying and discharging large crowd in major stations. Receiving those trains in end platforms (either first or last which are attached to stations exits) will help the huge volume of passengers to exit the station immediately without using any FOB.

11. Booking halls at all important stations should have display boards of adequate size indicating the trains, their departure time and platforms. It will avoid unnecessary cross movement of passengers going to enquiry windows.

12. Digital electronic screening of trains and PFs to be exhibited at important stations and should be remained 24 hrs operational.
13. Unauthorised entry inside the railway stations should be strictly restricted. The concerned Commercial Officers may be requested to regulate the number of platform tickets for each passenger. Proper arrangements, in co-ordination with concerned officers, be made for coolies, porters, handcarts, wheel chairs etc., so that passengers don't feel necessity of taking many attendants with them and thereby crowding the platforms.

14. In a bid to cope with festival rush at major stations Commercial Department may be advised to restrict sale of platform tickets during the specific period.

15. Action should be immediately taken to identify sensitive railway stations with reference to their traffic density and festive season requirements. RPF/GRP should regularly hold a drill at these stations for co-ordinated action in case of overcrowding and announcements for change of platforms. These drills should be supervised by concerned Sr. DSC, at least once a month, at all important stations. Feedback report for appropriate action be submitted to higher authorities after every such drill.

16. Jurisdictional post in-charges should be aware about any crowd gathering in their jurisdiction during mela, immersion of idols and other rush etc. So necessary security arrangement can be made in advance.

17. SIB staff must give feedback about the crowd / devotees gathering well in advance to the division and post.

18. Assessment of physical barriers / obstructions which may lead to chaos/ stampede should be identified and be removed immediately.

19. Study of crowd pattern, their movement and behaviour should be briefed to all staff deployed for crowd management duty.

20. Disaster Management Team/ quick reaction team at stations, where foot falls are more than one lakh per day have to be kept ready at important railway stations to meet any eventuality.

21. Necessary infrastructural changes, modification and up-gradation may be surveyed and be taken up with responsible authorities.

22. Divisional In-charges shall be instructed to take appropriate steps accordingly to the situation apart from the above measures in order to tackle the situation.

The above instructions are not exhaustive and may require additions / modifications to suit local conditions. Necessary coordination should be maintained at all times with concerned railway authorities, civil police, GRP & state administration for effective implementation of the security protocol.

(Arun Kumar)
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Railway Board

Copy to:- (i) PS to CRB, MT and ME for kind information please.
(ii) Principal CSCs/RPF of all Zonal Railways and PCSC/KRCL for kind information and necessary action please.