

Railways to Switch to 'Five' – Digit System for Numbering all its Passenger Carrying Trains from December 2010

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In a significant move to make the train numbering system of passenger carrying trains of Indian Railways more scientific, logical, uniform and computer-friendly, Ministry of Railways has decided to use 'five' - digits for numbering trains, in place of the existing 'four'- digit numbering system. The new 'five'- digit numbering system of trains will come into effect from December 20, 2010.

To make the transition smooth and simple under the new scheme, only a prefix of the digit '1' (one) will be added to the 'four'- digit numbers of the existing trains which would cover all scheduled and regular express/mail and superfast trains including the Durontos, Yuva Trains, Rajdhani Express, Shatabdi Express, Jan Shatabdi Express, Garibrath Express, Sampark Kranti Express and all category of trains that have a mail/express character during any part of their journey. The names of the trains are not being changed/modified. All the numbers will be converted to the new 'five' – digit system by simply adding a prefix of digit '1' to the existing 'four'-digit numbers

The special trains run by the Railways to clear holiday/festival rush etc. shall be numbered on the pattern of the mail/express trains except that they shall have the prefix of digit '0' (zero). This shall apply to all special trains, whether superfast, express or passenger train in character, running between any pair of destinations. This numbering scheme shall also apply to special trains run on Full Tariff Rates (FTR) basis. The passenger trains and the suburban trains are also proposed to be renumbered and brought under this new 'five'- digit system and separate notifications for such changes will be issued by the respective zonal Railways.

The introduction of the new system covering all kinds of passenger carrying trains run by Indian Railways will lay scientific and logical basis for numbering of trains on all India basis for all the trains which was earlier confined to express trains only, enabling better dissemination of information to the public. The new system will go a long way in monitoring the movement of trains more effectively on all India basis and in facilitating dissemination and management of train information more scientifically benefiting the public/customers. This major initiative will create a unique "train number" which will be a national level identity for each train and will cover all the passenger carrying trains running in the Indian Railways network.

Five digit train numbering scheme has become necessary in view of the four digit numbering scheme having got exhausted as Indian Railways runs more than 10 thousand trains every day. Need has also arisen to integrate the passenger and suburban train services in various information systems such as Control Office Application, Passenger Reservation System and other software applications.