

Chapter III

Performance Audit relating to Statutory Corporation

Rajasthan State Road Transport Corporation

3. Performance audit on passenger amenities

Highlights

Considering the importance of providing basic passenger amenities to over 10 lakh passengers travelling by the Roadways buses everyday, due priority was not given by the management for adoption of any standards for this work and putting a monitoring mechanism in place.

(Paragraph 3.7.2)

Actual capital expenditure on creation of infrastructure for passenger amenities was dismal and ranged between 0.07 to 0.22 *per cent* of the total operating revenue per year.

(Paragraph 3.7.3)

There was no policy on waste management and all kinds of garbage was being collected in the same dustbins without being segregated as biodegradable and non-biodegradable in violation of extant rules.

(Paragraph 3.8.1)

Passenger amenities such as toilets and urinals, arrangement for drinking water, seating facilities in waiting halls at bus stands were not at all commensurate with the number of passengers using them and were very poorly maintained. This was further aggravated by the management's failure to prevent unauthorized vendors entering the premises.

(Paragraphs 3.9.1 to 3.9.5)

Provision of required amenities at earmarked *dhabas* such as availability of clean toilets, tap water and eatables of reasonable quality at fair prices, was deficient. Inadequate monitoring by the management on this account resulted in dissatisfaction amongst the passengers.

(Paragraph 3.11)

Measures adopted to create user awareness on existing amenities at bus stands and inside buses were completely inadequate. User perception was also not harnessed to bring about improvement in the system.

(Paragraphs 3.12.1 to 3.12.2)

Management apathy towards safety measures such as fitness of drivers and provision of first-aid box in buses amounted to compromising with the safety of passengers.

(Paragraphs 3.13.1 to 3.13.3)

Introduction

3.1 Rajasthan State Road Transport Corporation (Roadways) was established (1 October 1964) to provide an efficient, safe and comfortable passenger transport service in the State. The Roadways operates 4,551 buses on stage carriage basis from 67 bus stands on 2,715 routes and handled an average of 10.89 lakh passengers per day in the year 2006-07. The bus stands have been categorized into three groups based on population and geographical area. The Roadways is expected to provide adequate passenger amenities at bus stands and in buses. The passenger amenities as prescribed by the Roadways for various categories of bus stands are as given in **Annexure 19**.

3.2 The management of the Roadways is vested in a Board including a Chairman and a Managing Director. Managing Director is the Chief Executive of the Roadways who is assisted by Executive Director (Engineering) in respect of passenger amenities in buses and Executive Director (Administration) for amenities at bus stands.

Scope of audit

3.3 The present review covered cleanliness in buses/bus stands besides provision and maintenance of passenger amenities by the Roadways during the period from 2003-04 to 2007-08. As the Roadways has been running into losses since 1997-98, the appraisal has been restricted to examination of basic amenities only, such as availability of clean toilets/urinals, provision of clean and safe drinking water, cleanliness in buses/bus stands *etc.* Audit findings are based on examination of records at head office and joint inspections carried out with the Roadways authorities at selected 17* (25 per cent) bus stands of three categories and 70 buses. The review was conducted during December 2007 to April 2008. The selection of bus stands was based on stratified random sampling method.

A survey questionnaire was also prepared in consultation with the Roadways management and views of randomly selected passengers (300 respondents) at 17 selected bus stands were obtained, to assess passenger perception on various aspects of cleanliness and other amenities provided by the Roadways.

* Jaipur, Ajmer, Alwar, Dausa, Dholpur, Pali, Sikar, Abu Road, Chaksu, Chauhtan, Kishangarh, Nasirabad, Phalodi, Sanderao, Sardarshahar, Shahpura and Sirohi Road.

Audit objectives

3.4 Performance audit on passenger amenities was carried out with a view to assess whether:

- adequate plans and policies were framed to provide passenger amenities as per norms;
- measures undertaken by the Roadways for cleanliness and provision of passenger amenities at bus stands and in buses were effective; and
- a suitable mechanism existed for prompt redressal of passenger grievances.

Audit criteria

3.5 The performance of the Roadways was assessed against:

- provisions of the Road Transport Corporations Act, 1950, Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 and the Rajasthan Motor Vehicle Rules (RMVR), 1990; and
- policy and norms prescribed by the Roadways for passenger amenities.

Audit methodologies

3.6 The following mix of methodology was adopted:

- review of agenda and minutes of Board meetings as also the annual budget papers with regard to passenger amenities;
- joint inspection with the Roadways authorities at selected bus stands and buses to capture actual conditions of passenger amenities;
- administration of survey questionnaire on randomly selected passengers (300 respondents) to elicit passenger perception on various aspects of passenger amenities and their views on level of maintenance; and
- review of records relating to passenger complaints and action taken thereon.

Audit findings

3.7 Following audit findings were discussed (July 2008) in the meeting of the Audit Review Committee for Public Sector Enterprises (ARCPSE) where the State Government was represented by the Commissioner and Secretary, Transport Department and the Roadways by the Financial Advisor and the Executive Directors.

3.7.1 Plan and policies

There was no separate manual for defining the quality and quantum of passenger amenities such as waste management, user awareness and user perception etc.

The Roadways issued instructions on various issues relating to cleanliness and passenger amenities from time to time. There was, however, no separate manual for defining the quality and quantum of passenger amenities to be provided by the Roadways. The Personnel and Administrative (*Karmik & Prashashnik*) manual merely defined the duties of different officers of the property-amenities wing regarding the supervision of works related with passenger amenities and did not comprehensively cover different issues such as waste management, user awareness, user perception etc.

Citizens Charter brought out by the Roadways also did not prescribe any norms regarding the quantum or quality of amenities, apart from standard of cleanliness to be maintained at the bus stands and in buses. The amenities were, therefore, provided on an ad-hoc basis *i.e.* on the requirements received from depot managers from time to time based on passenger complaints or their own assessment.

3.7.2 Inadequacy of standards, action plan and norms on passenger amenities

Maintaining a clean and hygienic environment and providing basic amenities to the passengers at the bus stands and in buses by the Roadways is imperative as over 10 lakh passengers travel by the Roadways buses every day. Considering the number of passengers, it was required that standards of cleanliness and norms for various amenities were set in advance by the Roadways along with a comprehensive action plan for its implementation. It was, however, observed that:

The Roadways did not have any monitoring mechanism to ascertain the status of passenger amenities at bus stand and in buses. Further, no long term plan had been prepared either for cleanliness or passenger amenities.

- The Roadways had not adopted any standards or performance indicators (*i.e.* the expected quality of the outcome) for any cleanliness/amenities related activity carried out at bus stands and in buses against which the actual performance could be judged. The Roadways also did not have any monitoring mechanism in place to ascertain the status of passenger amenities at various bus stands and in buses.
- No long term action plan had been prepared by the Roadways either for cleanliness or for passenger amenities and emphasis was laid on short term campaigns or occasional drives instead of having a regular sustained plan for provision or augmentation of passenger amenities and their maintenance.

Thus amenities and cleanliness related activities were largely viewed as low priority areas.

The Government stated (July 2008) that orders had been issued (October 2007) to the Managers and the Chief Managers to assess the position of amenities. The General Manager was also required to conduct inspection of the amenities on a monthly basis. The reply was not convincing as the order issued by the Roadways was of a routine nature and the Roadways had not developed any norms or long term/short term plans for providing passenger amenities.

3.7.3 *Insufficient expenditure on passenger amenities*

Capital expenditure on construction of infrastructure relating to passenger amenities such as bus stand buildings, platforms, booking offices, waiting halls/sheds, seating arrangements, water supply *etc.* is booked as fixed assets under the head "Passenger amenities". The capital budget and actual amount of capital expenditure on passenger amenities alongwith the total operating revenue for the period of five years up to 2007-08 is as given below:

(Amount: Rs. in lakh)

Year	Budget amount for capital expenditure	Actual capital expenditure	Total operating revenue	Percentage of (3) to (2)	Percentage of (3) to (4)
1	2	3	4	5	6
2003-04	104	50.28	70,110.89	48.35	0.07
2004-05	200	164.31	74,986.91	82.15	0.22
2005-06	145.30	144.79	85,140.35	99.65	0.17
2006-07	134	105.57	94,434.30	78.78	0.11
2007-08	88	72.69	97,508.87	82.60	0.07

In absence of any policy relating to expenditure on passenger amenities, the ratio of actual capital expenditure to total operating revenue was dismal during five years upto 2007-08.

As evident, the Roadways did not incur capital expenditure on providing passenger amenities as planned in the budgets during the four years out of the five years up to 2007-08. Despite allocation of a nominal amount as compared to total operating revenue, the budget amount was drastically reduced by 34.33 *per cent* in 2007-08. In absence of any policy relating to expenditure on passenger amenities with reference to total operating revenue, the ratio of actual capital expenditure on passenger amenities to total operating revenue during the five years up to 2007-08 was dismal and ranged between 0.07 and 0.22 *per cent* only. This was a major reason for inadequate infrastructure creation and provision of amenities as discussed in subsequent paragraphs.

Audit also observed that the revenue expenditure on maintenance of passenger amenities was booked under the common head of repair and maintenance of roads, buildings, walls, pipelines, drainage *etc.* The Roadways, thus, did not have a mechanism either to assess or to monitor the extent of expenditure incurred on maintenance of passenger amenities.

The Government stated (July 2008) that low expenditure on passenger amenities was due to poor financial position and cash flow of the Roadways. Further, the expenditure incurred by the depots on maintenance of amenities was not included in the above figures. Thus the reply only confirmed the audit observation of low expenditure on passenger amenities. Further, the details of expenditure incurred by the depots on passenger amenities were not available with the Roadways.

Bus stands - cleanliness and amenities

3.8 Cleanliness at bus stands

Cleanliness at bus stands includes maintaining cleanliness in the circulating area outside the building and on platform, in the concourse, waiting room, toilets, drains and sewage system inside the stand premises, in addition to the provision of a proper waste management system.

The bus stands were either maintained departmentally through *safaiwalas* or through outsourced agencies. A review of cleanliness related activities revealed deficiencies in the waste disposal mechanism, inadequate provision of passenger amenities such as toilets and urinals, drinking water, dustbins as brought out in the succeeding paragraphs.

3.8.1 Waste management

The Roadways generate large quantities of waste at bus stands and in buses consisting of packaging waste (both paper and plastic) and food waste *etc.* An effective waste management system includes assessment of the quantity and kind of garbage generated, provision of infrastructural facilities, arrangements for collection of waste, its segregation and disposal. This essentially provides the basis for assessing the infrastructure required for collection and disposal of waste. The Roadways, however, did not have any mechanism to assess the quantum of garbage generated at bus stands and its surroundings.

Further, as per the Municipal Solid Wastes (Management and Handling) Rules, 2000, solid waste generated should be segregated as biodegradable and non-biodegradable by providing separate dustbins for garbage collection. With increasing use of various kinds of packaging material, including plastic for food items, segregation becomes all the more important. Inspection of selected bus stands revealed that all kinds of garbage, whether recyclable or non-recyclable were collected in common dustbins and disposed off without its segregation as biodegradable and non-biodegradable, in violation of extant rules.

The Government stated (July 2008) that the arrangements for segregation of waste could be done in future, but it would be successful only after awareness among passengers and their co-operation. It was seen that suitable steps were not taken by the Roadways to educate the passengers on this subject.

3.8.2 Drainage and Sewerage

Due to non-provision and inadequate maintenance of drains and sewerage lines, the drains meant to clear waste water were health hazards in themselves.

Maintenance of a drainage and sewerage system to ensure easy and free flowing waste water is vital for ensuring that the environment is hygienic and in a sanitized condition. It was, however, seen that no drainage system was available at Dausa, Chaksu, Chauhtan, Sanderao, Shahpura and Sirohi Road bus stands. Further, bleaching powder[@] was not sprayed over drains and surroundings for disinfection at 35 per cent of the selected bus stands. Thus due to non provision and inadequate maintenance of drains and sewerage lines, the drains meant to clear waste water were health hazards in themselves.



Drainage at Chaksu

3.8.3 Non-provision of dustbins

As dustbins are the primary garbage collection points, it is necessary that adequate numbers of dustbins are provided at suitable locations so that passengers could use them conveniently. It was, however, seen that no dustbins were provided at 35 per cent of the selected bus stands (Dausa, Chaksu, Chauhtan, Nasirabad, Shahpura and Sirohi Road). Thus non-provision of dustbins rendered the process of garbage collection ineffective from its point of origin.

3.8.4 Inadequacy of cleaning staff

There were no norms for providing *safaiwalas* at bus stands and manpower for the bus stands was fixed on an ad-hoc basis. At 59 per cent of the selected bus stands, service of only one sweeper was provided for cleaning of entire bus stand which was inadequate considering the daily movement of 63 to 292 buses from these bus stands.

3.8.5 Public Notices

For maintaining cleanliness at the bus stands, it is necessary to display suitable instructions for passengers. No such instructions were, however, found displayed at 88 per cent of the selected bus stands.

The Government stated (July 2008) that detailed instructions had already been issued to the depots for providing dustbins and maintaining proper cleanliness at the bus stands.

3.9 Amenities at bus stands

3.9.1 Waiting hall/shed and seating arrangements

As per prescribed instructions, every bus stand should have a waiting

[@] a white powder consisting chiefly of calcium hydroxide, calcium chloride and calcium hypochlorite and used as a bleach, disinfectant or deodorant.

hall/shed with proper seating arrangements along with light and fan facility. The instructions were, however, deficient as norms were not fixed regarding the area of the waiting shed, number of seats and fan/light facility to be provided for a particular category of bus stand.

Joint inspection of selected bus stands revealed that:

- At 24 *per cent* of the selected bus stands (Dausa, Nasirabad, Shahpura and Sirohi Road), the area of waiting shed was insufficient to accommodate the waiting passengers. Further, the condition of one bus stand (Nasirabad) was extremely poor because of leakage in the roof and damaged floor.
- Seating arrangements were inadequate at four bus stands (Dausa, Nasirabad, Shahpura and Sirohi Road) as compared to the passenger load. For example, at Dausa bus stand, only 32 seats were provided against a daily movement of 8,000 passengers.
- The seats were uncomfortable as cement or stone benches were provided at 53 *per cent* of the selected bus stands (Dausa, Alwar, Dholpur, Chaksu, Chouhtan, Sanderao, Kishangarh, Sardarshahar and Sirohi Road). Besides, at 35 *per cent* of the selected bus stands (Dausa, Dholpur, Pali, Chaksu, Nasirabad and Sirohi Road) the seats were found broken.
- There was no provision for light at two bus stands (Shahpura and Sirohi Road) and fans at five bus stands (Dausa, Nasirabad, Chaksu, Sanderao and Kishangarh). Further, light and fan arrangements in the waiting shed/hall in Alwar were inadequate keeping in view the passenger load.
- Considering three levels of cleanliness (Good, Average and Poor) as decided by the joint inspection team, the level of cleanliness in waiting shed/hall at 65 *per cent* of the selected bus stands was found to be average or poor.

Inadequate provision of waiting halls/sheds with inadequate/sub standard seating arrangements led to crowding of passengers at platform and in the bus movement area.



Seats at Dausa and Chaksu

Thus, inadequate provision of waiting halls/sheds with inadequate/sub-standard seating arrangements led to crowding of passengers at the platform and in the bus movement area which hampered cleaning of premises and passenger safety.



Waiting hall at Chauhtan

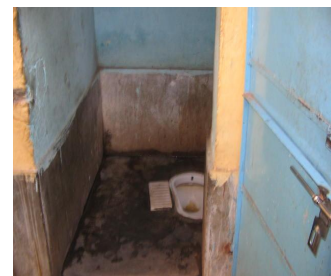
3.9.2 Facilities of toilets/urinals

As per **Annexure 19**, toilets and urinals (separately for men and women) were to be provided at all the bus stands. The norms/number of toilets and urinals, however, at each bus stand according to its category or number of buses/passenger movement was not prescribed. Joint inspection of the selected bus stands revealed that:

- at 53 *per cent* of the selected bus stands, toilet facilities were insufficient in view of the passenger load and area of bus stands as only one to two toilets were provided for daily movement of an average of 2,074 passengers.
- no toilet facility was available at two bus stands (Shahpura and Sirohi Road). Further, separate toilets for men and women were also not provided at two bus stands (Chaksu and Chauhtan).

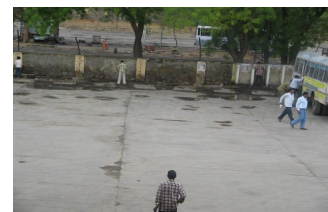
Non-availability of adequate number of toilets and urinals or their unusable condition led to open defecation, creating unclean and unhygienic conditions at and around the bus stand premises.

- at 71 *per cent* of the selected bus stands (Dausa, Dholpur, Pali, Sikar, Chaksu, Chauhtan, Kishangarh, Phalodi, Sanderao, Sardarshahar, Shahpura and Sirohi Road), there was no water supply in toilets making the amenity unusable. This was also confirmed by 57 *per cent* respondents who opined that the toilets were soiled and that water supply and soap were not available in the toilet.



Toilet at Jaipur

- western style toilets were not provided for convenience of disabled passengers at 15 of the 17 selected bus stands (except Jaipur and Ajmer).
- the cleaning of toilets at 71 *per cent* of the selected bus stands was extremely poor and unhygienic with stagnation of waste and suffocating odour.



Urinals at Sikar

Thus non-availability of adequate number of toilets and urinals or their unusable condition led to open defecation, creating unclean and unhygienic conditions in and around the bus stand premises.

3.9.3 Drinking water

Drinking water is a basic amenity which needs to be provided to the passengers at all bus stands. Joint inspection of the selected bus stands revealed that:

Inadequate drinking water supply aggravated by dirty and unhygienic surroundings not only made the amenity unfit for use, but also added to the unclean environment at the bus stands.

- at 24 *per cent* of the selected bus stands (Chauhtan, Sirohi Road, Dausa and Kishangarh) drinking water was provided through a single tap, which was inadequate, keeping in view the daily operation of 46, 105, 200 and 292 buses respectively.
- the area surrounding the water taps was unclean and unhygienic at two bus stands (Dausa and Chauhtan) making the amenity unfit for use.
- water coolers were not provided at 41 *per cent* of the selected bus stands (Dausa, Dholpur, Chaksu, Chauhtan, Nasirabad, Shahpura and Sirohi Road) for providing cold water to passengers during summer season.
- the source of drinking water at 47 *per cent* of the selected bus stands (Jaipur, Alwar, Dausa, Pali, Sikar, Abu Road, Kishangarh and Sanderao) was bore well. No bio-chemical testing of water of these bore wells was ever carried out to assess whether the water was safe for human consumption.
- the drinking water was stored in storage tanks which were not cleaned/sanitized regularly and the periodicity of inspection and cleaning ranged between 6 to 12 months at four bus stands (Jaipur, Alwar, Sikar and Phalodi).



Water tap at Chauhtan

The audit observations are further supported by the fact that 59 *per cent* respondents commented adversely on quality of water and cleanliness around water taps. Inadequate drinking water supply aggravated by dirty and unhygienic surroundings not only made the amenity unfit for use, but also added to the unclean environment at the bus stands.

The Government stated (July 2008) that provision of adequate passenger amenities of waiting hall, toilet/urinal and drinking water was dependent on the financial position of the Roadways and financial assistance from the Government. Further, instructions were already issued to depots for proper maintenance and cleanliness. The reply thus did not address the concerns expressed above adequately.

3.9.4 Display of time table and fare list/provision of enquiry booths

In order to give complete information to passengers regarding the arrival and departure of buses and chargeable fare, the Roadways prescribed for proper display of time table and fare list near the booking window at each bus stand. The Roadways also prescribed a separate enquiry booth equipped with public address system for announcement of arrival and departure of buses at each bus stand.

Joint inspection of the selected bus stands revealed that

- time table and fare lists were either not displayed or displayed with incomplete information at 59 *per cent* of the selected bus stands^π.
- separate enquiry booths as well as public address system were not provided at 41 *per cent* of the selected bus stands^α.

Improper display of time table, fare list and absence of enquiry booth deprived the passengers of essential information.

Thus, improper display of time table, fare list and absence of enquiry booth not only deprived the passengers of essential information for undertaking bus journeys but also led to congestion of passengers at the ticket window which hampered the ticket issuing activity. The same complaint was reiterated by 43 *per cent* respondents who confirmed that public announcements were not being made at the bus stands.

The Government stated (July 2008) that instructions had been issued to the depots for proper display of time table and fare list. The fact remained that the Roadways did not monitor the compliance of its instructions.

3.9.5 Presence of unauthorized vendors/hawkers

Presence of unauthorized vendors/ hawkers and urchins in bus stands hampers cleanliness related activities apart from placing a strain on already stretched resources. Inspection of the selected bus stands revealed presence of unauthorized vendors/hawkers and stray cattle at 10 bus stands as there was no control mechanism to check their entry.



Unauthorized vendor at Dausa

The Government accepted (July 2008) the presence of unauthorized vendors/hawkers and stated that the vendors/hawkers were removed from time to time.

Cleanliness and passenger amenities in buses

3.10 Cleanliness in buses

Cleaning of buses is done in the workshop of the originating depot. As per rules, the driver of the bus is responsible for maintaining the vehicle in a clean and sanitized condition. Joint inspection of the selected buses revealed that:

- the level of cleanliness inside 87 *per cent* of the selected buses was average or poor. The floors of buses were found littered with food and plastic waste *etc.* There was no provision for cleaning en-route as a result of which the passengers were forced to travel in dirty buses over

^π Jaipur, Alwar, Dausa, Dholpur, Chaksu, Chauhtan, Phalodi, Sanderao, Shahpura and Sirohi Road.

^α Chaksu, Chauhtan, Kishangarh, Nasirabad, Sanderao, Shahpura and Sirohi Road.

long durations.

- Ten *per cent* of the selected buses were not clean from outside.
- suitable instructions to passengers for maintenance of cleanliness were not displayed in the bus.

3.10.1 Maintenance of buses

The following position emerged in respect of maintenance of buses as a result of joint inspection of 70** buses:

- The seats of the buses should be of a prescribed standard (Rule 7.14 of RMVR 1990). Audit, however, noticed that in 29 *per cent* of the selected buses the seats were in torn and shabby condition.
- Seat numbers in 27 *per cent* of the selected buses were not provided causing inconvenience to the passengers.



Torn seats in bus

- The doors and windows of the bus should be intact to provide protection to passengers from weather. In 6 *per cent* of the selected buses the window glasses were broken and doors were not functioning properly. Further, the emergency gate was not provided in 34 *per cent* of the selected buses. Thus, the passengers were deprived of comfort and safety while performing journey.
- Every bus should have a luggage carrier with waterproof cover and a piece of rope (Rule 7.24 of RMVR 1990). It was seen that 96 *per cent* Blueline buses[§] did not have any waterproof luggage cover.

3.10.2 Amenities in buses

As provided in Rajasthan Motor Vehicle Rules, 1990, passenger amenities in buses mainly include safe and comfortable motor cab and seats, availability of complaint book and first aid box and good behaviour of the conductor with passengers.

3.10.3 Reservation of seats for women and disabled passengers

The Roadways reserved 33 *per cent* seats in a bus for women passengers and two seats for disabled passengers. It was, however, noticed that in 47 *per cent* of the selected buses, the fact of reservation for these passengers on the seats was not displayed. Due to lack of awareness, the intended facility could, perhaps, not be utilized fully by the persons concerned.

** Blueline buses-46, Starline buses-16, AC buses-3, Deluxe buses-3, City Transport Service bus-1 and Silverline bus-1.

§ 44 out of 46 test checked Blueline buses.

3.10.4 It was also seen that in 29 *per cent* of the selected buses the passengers were allowed by the driver/conductors to keep their luggage in the passage, blocking the entry and exit of other passengers and causing risk and inconvenience.

3.10.5 Eighteen *per cent* respondents stated that the conductor had not ensured a smoke free environment in the bus.

3.10.6 Complaint and suggestion book

As per the rules, the driver and conductor were required to carry a complaint book during journey period and make it available to passengers whenever demanded. It was, however, noticed that the complaint book was not available in 73 *per cent* of the selected buses. Further, the contact numbers of higher authorities of the Roadways were to be displayed in the buses. This was not done in 20 *per cent* of the selected buses. Thus, non availability of complaint book and contact number of authorities deprived the passengers of the opportunity to register their complaints.

In reply, the Government stated (July 2008) that instructions were issued to the depots from time to time for proper provision and maintenance of the amenities in the buses. The fact remained that the Roadways did not ensure a foolproof system of surprise checks to monitor the compliance of its instructions.

Passenger amenities at *dhabas*

3.11 For providing refreshment to passengers travelling in non stop buses (having no stoppage upto 100-125 kms.) the Roadways decided (February 2001) to approve Hotels/*Dhabas* en-route where buses could stop. The Hotels/*Dhabas* were to be approved by the depot concerned after inviting open tenders and considering, *inter alia*, the availability of:

- separate toilets for men and women
- free drinking water
- adequate seating arrangement for passengers
- telephone facility
- availability of eatables of reasonable quality at fair prices

The Roadways approved (15 February 2008) 16 *dhabas* on various routes. Joint inspection of 5 such *dhabas*[#] revealed that:

[#] Balaji Bhojanalaya, Balajimod; Vijay Laxmi Midway (*Dhaba*) & Rath Midway, Neemrana and Jagdamba Hotel & Ashoka Hotel, Behror.

- at one *dhaba*^{***} there was no toilet or urinal while toilet at another *dhaba*^{ss} was in an unusable condition because of choking and there was no water supply in urinals and toilets in any of the *dhabas*.
- the source of drinking water at all the *dhabas* was bore well which was not tested for assessment of potability of water; four *dhabas* did not provide drinking water from taps.
- all these *dhabas* were charging prices higher than the displayed prices. Despite a number of complaints, the Roadways, had not taken effective measures to check such malpractice.



Water tap at Balajimod Dhaba

The above findings were supported by 44 *per cent* passengers who were dissatisfied with the water and toilet facility at *dhabas* whereas 63 *per cent* respondents were not satisfied with the quality and price of food items at *dhabas*.

In reply the Government stated (July 2008) that the Roadways verified all the facilities available at the *dhaba* before entering into an agreement with any *dhaba*. It was further stated that action on passenger complaints was taken by the Roadways. However, reply of the Roadways was at a variance with the findings of the joint inspection conducted by the audit team and the authorities of the Roadways.

User awareness

3.12 Maintenance of a clean and hygienic environment at bus stands and inside buses on a sustainable basis requires active support and co-operation of passengers. Continuous interaction with the users with an effort to understand their needs and perspective as well as educating them is one of the most effective means of improving the standards of cleanliness and maintenance of amenities. During the inspection, it was revealed that measures adopted to create user awareness were inadequate and user perception was not being harnessed to bring about improvements in the system as brought out below:

3.12.1 Measures for creating user awareness

Generating suitable user awareness required, *inter alia*, that a list of facilities or amenities available at bus stands and inside buses be displayed and the users also be educated on their role in maintaining them well. The Roadways, however, exhibited a poor record in this regard since:

- a list of amenities provided was not displayed at any of the selected

*** Balaji Bhojanalaya
ss Vijay Laxmi Dhaba

17 bus stands. Suitable sign boards indicating the location of toilets, drinking water sources, dustbins *etc.* were not available at 53 *per cent* of the selected bus stands.

- availability of complaint/suggestion books was not displayed at 88 *per cent* of the selected bus stands.
- there was no provision of penalty for abuse of facilities on defaulting users or even a suitable system of keeping vigil over them.

3.12.2 Mechanism for obtaining user perception

For obtaining user feedback, the Roadways had prescribed maintenance of complaint/suggestion book at bus stands and in buses. The Roadways also prescribed displaying the telephone numbers of designated officers in the buses. Complaints/suggestions noted by the passengers in the book were to be handed over to the concerned depot for taking corrective action. Complaints/suggestions received by the head office were to be dealt by Executive Manager (Complaints).

Scrutiny of records of the selected bus stands revealed that complaint and suggestion book was not found available with the booking clerk or duty officer at two bus stands (Shahpura and Sirohi Road). At the remaining 15 selected bus stands, the fact of availability of complaint book with duty officer was not displayed, which deprived the passengers of the knowledge that such a facility existed for registration of their grievances.

No consolidated records of complaints received, nature of complaints, date of disposal *etc.* were maintained at depot level. Thus there was no system for monitoring of complaints made by passengers. Complaints received in head office were entered in a register and forwarded to the concerned depot for necessary action. Their disposal was, however, not monitored by obtaining the action taken report from the concerned depots. As a result, 610 complaints (out of 1,427) remained pending during 2003-07 of which 243 complaints were more than two years old. Thus the system of redressal of passengers' complaints was altogether ineffective.

There was no effective system for monitoring of complaints made by passengers.

The Government stated (July 2008) that effective action was being taken on complaints received by the Roadways and instructions were issued (June 2008) for disposal of pending complaints and maintenance of proper records of complaints.

Safety measures

3.13.1 Fitness test of drivers

The Accident Manual of the Roadways provided that eyes of all the drivers would be checked twice a year. Audit, however, observed that the Roadways was carrying out the medical fitness test and eye checkup of only those drivers

who were more than 50 years old. Further, the information of 48 depots for the period 2004-07 revealed that such tests were not conducted on a regular basis. As a result, in 5 depots no test was conducted during the review period, whereas in 8 depots it was conducted only once. In another 14 depots it was conducted only twice and in 14 depots thrice in four years. Absence of regular eye checkup and physical fitness test of the drivers as required indicates that the Roadways was not serious about the safety of passengers.

The Government stated (July 2008) that the Roadways had issued orders (February 2002, March 2005 and December 2007) for conducting medical examination of the drivers. Reply of the Government indicated that the orders were not followed in true spirit which resulted in failure in carrying out the periodical medical fitness test and eye checkup of the drivers, thus jeopardising the safety aspect of passengers.

3.13.2 First-aid box

As per rules, every public bus should carry a first-aid box with it (Rule 7.12 of RMVR 1990). First-aid box was, however, not found available in 87 *per cent* of the selected buses. Further, the fact of availability of first-aid box was displayed in 22 buses but the same was not found available in the buses. Thus the Roadways exposed the passengers to unwarranted risk in case of emergency.

3.13.3 Stepney and tool box

Stepney and tool box is required in every bus to ensure completion of journey in time (Rule 7.34 of RMVR 1990). Thirty one *per cent* of the selected buses, however, did not have the stepney and tool box during journey time.

Conclusion

The Roadways did not develop any qualitative/quantitative benchmarks either for cleanliness activities or for passenger amenities. Capital expenditure on development of passenger amenities was insignificant which resulted in inadequate and poorly maintained infrastructure. Deficient waste collection and disposal mechanism, inadequate provision of dustbins, water supply, drains and sewerage system were major handicaps in providing a clean and hygienic environment at the bus stands. Passenger amenities such as toilets and urinals, drinking water facilities, seating arrangements and waiting halls were not commensurate with the load of passengers using them and were poorly maintained. Cleanliness inside the buses was poor and the bus floors were littered with dirt/garbage. The amenities within buses such as comfortable seats, covered luggage carriers were deficient. Measures adopted to create user awareness were inadequate and user feedback was not being harnessed to bring about improvements in the system.

Recommendations

The Roadways need to:

- **evolve standards for each cleanliness related activity and passenger amenity and devise an action plan to achieve these standards**
- **reassess the financial requirements for cleanliness and passenger amenities and specifically provide for them in the budget**
- **frame a policy on waste management in compliance with existing regulations so that proper collection and disposal of garbage can be ensured**
- **provide and maintain adequate passenger amenities commensurate with the load of passenger traffic handled at the bus stands**
- **ensure cleanliness inside buses by monitoring user abuse and proper maintenance of seats, windows and doors, and**
- **understand user perception and utilise findings to improve the system.**

