

Indian Railways Announces 20% Rebate on Return Tickets for Festival Rush



Indian Railways has introduced a new Round Trip Package for Festival Rush, offering passengers a 20% rebate on the return journey's base fare when both onward and return tickets are booked together in advance. The scheme, announced via a Railway Board circular on August 8, 2025, aims to manage the heavy passenger demand during the Diwali and Chhath festival seasons while also encouraging passengers to plan their journeys ahead.

Under the initiative, bookings will open on August 14, 2025, for onward travel scheduled between October 13 and October 26. Passengers must book their return travel for dates between November 17 and December 1, using the "connecting journey" feature at the time of booking. The discount applies only when both legs of the journey are reserved together, for the same passengers, in the same class, and along the same route.

The rebate is applicable on the base fare only and excludes taxes, reservation charges, superfast surcharges, and other fees. Waitlisted tickets do not qualify for the discount. Once booked, these tickets are non-refundable and cannot be modified. They also cannot be combined with any other concessions, passes, or promotional offers.

The scheme covers most classes of travel, including air-conditioned and sleeper coaches, and is valid on special trains. However, it excludes flexi-fare trains such as the Rajdhani, Shatabdi, and Duronto Express services.

According to the Railway Board, the purpose of the Round Trip Package is twofold: to provide financial relief to passengers during a peak travel period and to help the Railways better

manage scheduling and congestion by spreading demand evenly. By securing return travel in advance, the Railways can reduce last-minute booking pressure, optimise coach utilisation, and minimise overcrowding.

To ensure wide awareness, zonal railways have been instructed to publicise the scheme through media campaigns, station announcements, and ticketing counters. The Indian Railways hopes this initiative will particularly benefit families and festival travellers, who often face steep ticket prices and limited availability closer to departure dates.

With the festival season being one of the busiest times for Indian Railways, this scheme marks a proactive step towards balancing passenger convenience with operational efficiency, while allowing travellers to save on fares.