

Chapter 3

Introduction to the Present Reservation System of Kolhapur	36
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The Reservation System at Kolhapur consists of two sections which are separate from each other. These two sections are Advanced Booking Section and Current Booking Section. The Advanced Booking Section (which has been taken under this study) comprises four counters. Three of these counters sell and cancel already reserved tickets to customers. The fourth counter issues tokens to arriving customers for use at the other three selling counters.

A newly arrived customer has to fill in a form on which he or she mentions the following:-

1. Name(s) and age(s) of passenger(s).
2. Date of journey.
3. Train number.
4. Points of Departure and Destination.

This form is collected at the token counter and a token is issued against this form. This token refers the customer to a particular selling counter which will issue the ticket.

The token counter numbers all forms that are collected and these are sent to the respective selling counters. The token counter begins issuing tokens at 8:00 am and the selling counters begin sales at 8:30 am. There is a 30 minute time gap when customers have to wait till the selling counters open for service.

As soon as the selling counters open, customers are called for service on a FIFO method i.e. on token numbers in an ascending order. Customers purchase their tickets and depart from

the system. Both selling and token counters operate upto 12:30 pm when there is a lunch break for one hour. Customers have to wait for this period of time. The counters are reopened at 1:30 pm. Issuing of tokens and sales of tickets continues in the FIFO method.

The token counter closes at 3 pm and no further tokens are issued after this time. The selling counters issue tickets to all customers holding tokens upto 5:30 pm. In case there are no more customers holding tokens, the selling counters directly accept customers who do not have tokens. This continues until 5:30 pm when the selling counters are closed.

Token numbers are displayed on units fixed above each counter. Customers wait for their number to flash on the display, and then go to that particular counter to obtain their tickets. This system was introduced from 1st July, 1988 according to counter personnel. Prior to this date there was no token system and customers had to stand in queues for their turn to buy tickets. Under the present system, chairs are provided for waiting customers until their turn arrives.

There are two major trains departing from Kolhapur apart from some locals that run between Kolhapur and Miraj. The two important trains are the Mahalakshmi and the Sayadri.

The reservation of advanced booking is done in the Advance Booking Office for the above two trains whose destination is Bombay City. Since there is availability of quota tickets for other connecting trains from Miraj, reservations for these other trains are also done. The destinations for the other trains are Nagpur, Vasco (Goa), Ahmedabad, Delhi and various other cities in India.

The Mahalakshmi train reservations are done at Counter Number 3. This train leaves at 9:45 pm from Kolhapur for Bombay City via Miraj and Pune. Counter Number 3 only issues 2nd class reservation tickets for this train.

Counter Number 1 issues tickets for 2nd class reservation for the Sayadri train whose destination is also Bombay City via Miraj and Pune.

Counter Number 2 issues tickets for 1st class and A/C reservation for Mahalakshmi, Sayadri and their connecting trains for which quotas are available in this reservation office.

Customers needing reservations for all other trains whose quota is not available at Kolhapur must do so at Miraj. Return tickets can also be reserved from the Reservation Offices. The office sends requisition to the station where the return ticket is desired from, and on confirmation tickets are issued to customers.

This study only concentrates on the Reservation Office for advance bookings. Current booking is only for issue of unreserved tickets to local trains and is done elsewhere at this railway station.