

(c) the steps taken by Government to provide ticket reservation facilities for the differently-abled persons and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE): (a) Specially designed Second class Luggage cum Guard coaches, known as SLRD coaches, have been declared as unreserved coaches, fully earmarked for physically handicapped persons in all Mail/Express trains (except fully reserved trains). Further, in all Mail/Express trains a reservation quota of 2 Sleeper Class berths per train (lower berth for handicapped person and middle berth for the escort), which was withdrawn after introduction of SLRD coaches, has also been restored.

(b) At present, about 680 pairs of Mail/Express trains except special type trains (Rajdhani, Shatabdi, Jan Shatabdi, AC Special & Duronto) have been provided with one SLRD coach. Further, all Garib Rath trains have been provided with coach having accommodation for physically handicapped persons.

(c) In addition to attachment of SLRD coaches & earmarking of reservation quota of 2 Sleeper class berths for differently abled persons, separate reservation ticket counters are also earmarked for them at major reservation centers.

Allotment of telephone booths to disabled persons

†*155. SHRI UPENDRA KUSHWAHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Railways have allotted STD, PCO booths to disabled persons at major stations;

(b) whether it is also a fact that previously, extension in tenure to these booths was being given for a period of two years;

(c) whether it is a fact that this time, extension to these booths has been given for a period of two months only which will expire on 31st December, 2010 after which the young disabled booth operators will be rendered unemployed; and

(d) if so, whether Government proposes to provide permanent employment to these disabled persons?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) Previously extensions were given as under :

S.No.	Extension given From	Extension given Upto
(i)	After expiry from date beyond 20.05.2002	27.04.2005
(ii)	27.04.2005	27.04.2007
(iii)	27.04.2007	27.07.2007
(iv)	27.07.2007	27.10.2007
(v)	27.10.2007	27.10.2009
(vi)	27.10.2009	27.10.2010

(c) Extension has now been given upto 27.10.2011.

(d) No, Sir.

Essential Commodities Act

†*156.SHRI NARESH CHANDRA AGRAWAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) when was the Essential Commodities (EC) Act implemented in the country and what were the circumstances at the time of implementation which necessitated enactment of this law;

(b) whether it is a fact that those circumstances are not prevailing at present and as a result traders are opposing this black law;

(c) if so, whether Government will consider to roll back this law; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) At the time of Independence, certain powers to regulate essential commodities were available with the Government of India. The rules were given the form of an Act in 1946 by the Essential Supplies (Temporary Powers) Act. In 1955, the above Act was adopted and suitably modified and became the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. The Act provides for control of production, supply and distribution of, and trade & commerce in certain commodities in the public interest.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.