

(d) the steps being taken by Government to make catering services passenger friendly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K.J. SURYA PRAKASH REDDY): (a) and (b) The rates of meals for premium trains like Rajdhani/Shatabdi/Duronto have been revised after nearly fifteen years in October, 2013. Some complaints of poor quality and reduced quantity have been received. During the period 17.10.2013 to 15.02.2014, 142 number of complaints have been received on national toll free number 1800-111-321 in Catering Services Monitoring Cell (CSMC). Punitive action like imposition of fine, warning etc. has been taken by the railways depending upon the gravity of complaints. A fine to the tune of ₹ 1.38 lakhs has been imposed.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. It is a continuous endeavour by the Indian Railways to provide good quality hygienic food to Railway passengers. In order to improve the quality and hygiene of catering services, the management of catering services has been transferred from Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) to zonal railways as per Catering Policy 2010. Supervision and monitoring of quality of catering services are being done by zonal railways. To improve the quality of catering services in the trains, a mechanism for monitoring and supervision has been put in place by deploying railway personnel, who check quality and hygiene through regular, surprise and periodical inspections and take corrective action. In addition, regular passenger satisfaction surveys are also conducted. Catering Services Monitoring Cell with a toll free number at national level has been set up for real time redressal of complaints. On the same pattern, Catering Monitoring Cells have been set up at Zonal and Divisional level for daily monitoring of the catering activities. Third Party Audit has been made a part of the Standard Bid Document (SBD) to strengthen the monitoring of catering services.

#### **Introduction of trains**

3089. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state whether the Ministry would consider introduction of Superfast Express from Visakhapatnam to Allahabad *via* Titlagarh, Express train from Keonjhar to Howrah, Superfast Express between Rourkela and New Delhi, Second Intercity train between Bhubaneswar-Rourkela, Intercity Express between Puri-Tata *via* Keonjhar and Bhubaneswar/Puri-Manmad (Shirdi) Express train in Odisha?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K.J. SURYA PRAKASH REDDY): Introduction of train services including superfast and intercity express trains on Indian Railways is an on-going process subject to operational feasibility, traffic justification, availability of resources, etc. However, three pairs of express trains *viz.* (i) 22805/22806 Bhubaneswar-Hazrat Nizamuddin Superfast (weekly)

via Rourkela, (ii) 18516/18515 Visakhapatnam-Tatanagar (weekly) via Jajpur-Keonjhar Road and (iii) 18407/18408 Puri-Sai Nagar Shirdi Express (weekly) via Manmad announced in Parliament and Railway Budget 2013-14 have been introduced.

#### **Introduction of Duronto Express trains**

3090. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state whether the Ministry would consider the proposal of State Government of Odisha for introduction of Duronto Express trains between Puri-Mumbai, Puri-Jaipur/Jodhpur, Bhubaneswar-Puri, Bhubaneswar-Bengaluru and Puri-Surat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K.J. SURYA PRAKASH REDDY): Introduction of new train service including Duronto Express trains is an ongoing process subject to traffic justification, operational feasibility, availability of resources, etc. However, at present, there is no proposal for introduction of Duronto Express between Puri-Mumbai, Puri-Jaipur/Jodhpur, Bhubaneswar-Puri, Bhubaneswar-Bengaluru and Puri-Surat.

#### **Rail Tariff Authority**

†3091. SHRIMATI KANAK LATA SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has approved setting up of Rail Tariff Authority which will give suggestion on train fare, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether suggestions of this Authority would be binding on Railway Board or it will depend on the Railway Board what to accept and what not;
- (c) if so, whether it would be a suggestive regulator instead of an empowered one; and
- (d) if so, the justification of its establishment and whether it would not further increase the expenditure, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K.J. SURYA PRAKASH REDDY): (a) Yes, Sir. Government has approved setting up of Rail Tariff Authority as an interim body who will advise the Ministry of Railways on all matters related to fixation of tariffs. A Government resolution to this effect has been issued on 27.01.2014.

(b) The recommendation shall ordinarily be accepted by the Central Government (Ministry of Railways). However, if at any time the Central Government is of the opinion that circumstances exist, which render it necessary to revise the tariff proposed

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.