

- (a) whether Railways plan to introduce high-tech automatic ticket checking and fare collection systems across its vast network;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and its aims and objectives;
- (c) the details of benefits that are likely to accrue to Railways and the passengers; and
- (d) when the systems are likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) to (d) Automatic Fare Collection system has already been introduced on Metro Railway Kolkata since 2011. Under this system, the Automatic Gates check and control passenger entry and exit without manual intervention and also ensures fare collection. By introducing this system manual checking of tickets has been done away with, resulting in faster and orderly entry and exit of commuters. This facility has however, not been introduced on other stations of Indian Railways.

For automation of on-board ticket checking system on Indian Railways, Hand Held Terminals were initially provided to ticket checking staff in 12 pairs of trains. Expansion of Hand Held Terminal usage has been sanctioned for 73 more pair of trains on Indian Railways. Hand Held Terminals enable the ticket checking staff to download the chart of the coach allotted to them and to allot vacant berths/seats available due to non turning up of passengers to Reservation Against Cancellation (RAC) passengers. It brings transparency in the working of TTEs as well as generates additional railway revenue due to utilization of vacant seats/berths on trains. Introduction of such projects on automation and their proliferation is a continuous and ongoing process.

Basic facilities at Railway Stations

†1516. SHRI ASHK ALI TAK: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that basic facilities like drinking water and dustbins are not available at many railway stations; and
- (b) if so, whether Government would issue guidelines with regard to providing basic amenities at railway stations, if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) No, Sir. However, improvement/augmentation of amenities including drinking water and dustbins at the railway stations is a continuous process.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) Guidelines for provision of passenger amenities including drinking water and dustbins at the railway stations already exist.

Quality of services provided by Railways

1517. DR. PRABHAKAR KORE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the quality in services is a major challenge for railways; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to improve the quality of services, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Indian Railways take various measures to improve the quality of its services. This is a continuous process.

(i) Ticketing facilities/services have been expanded, upgraded, diversified and made more user-friendly. This is a dynamic process.

(ii) Improvement in the standard of sanitation/hygiene is a continuous process. With a view to maintain proper standard of cleanliness, steps like mechanized cleaning process, award of rag picking/garbage disposal contracts, introduction of 'pay and use' toilet scheme, etc. have been taken. Inspections by various officials at the railway stations are also conducted to monitor cleanliness. and take remedial measures. Rules have been notified to penalize persons affecting cleanliness and hygiene at railway premises. Instructions have been issued to Zonal Railways to use Close Circuit Televisions (CCTVs) to monitor cleanliness at railway premises.

(iii) It is the continuous endeavour of Indian Railways to provide good quality hygienic food to railway passengers. Zonal Railways have a detailed institutionalized mechanism for monitoring of quality and hygiene of catering services through regular, surprise and periodical inspections. If any deficiency is found, corrective actions are taken including penal actions like imposition of fines, termination of contract according to the gravity of the offence. Catering Services Monitoring Cell (CSMC) with a toll free number 1800-111-321 at national level has been set up for real time redressal of complaints. Similar monitoring cell are also functioning on zonal railways. Further, to improve