

name of the line is Delhi Avoiding Line (DAL) which is used primarily for movement of freight trains. Commuter Services running on DAL are not well patronised at present.

Provision of branded food items to passengers

1515. SHRI K.N. BALAGOPAL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has taken any decision to provide branded food items to train passengers;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether this scheme has already been implemented; and
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA) : (a) to (d) E-catering service has been started by Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) on pilot basis exclusively for passengers travelling in trains without pantry where passenger can book preferred meal of reputed brands through e-catering website as well as through phone and SMS. The website address is www.ecatering.irctc.co.in and phone numbers are 1800-1034-139 (Toll-free), 0120-4383892-99 (Toll) and SMS MEAL to 139. Further, Railways have also conducted trials for service of pre-cooked (ready-to-eat) meals of reputed brands on some trains. A policy guideline on "Ready to Eat Meals" has been issued to zonal railways on 30.01.2015. North Western Railway has been nominated for shortlisting/empanelment of branded and reputed Ready-to-eat Companies/vendors.

Recommendation to set up Railway Regulatory Authority of India

1516. SHRI A. W. RABI BERNARD : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the High Power Committee headed by Dr. Bibek Debroy, set up to suggest ways to re-structure Railways, has recommended drastic reforms including allowing private players to run trains, producing coaches and wagons;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Committee has also suggested setting up a regulator - Railway Regulatory Authority of India (RRAI) for fixing tariff, determining cost of services, setting technical standards among others; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken on this report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA) : (a) to (d) The Interim Report of the Committee on Mobilisation of Resources for major Railway Projects and Restructuring of Railway Ministry and Railway Board headed by Dr. Bibek Debroy, (submitted in March, 2015) contains, various recommendations on reforms. These include, *inter-alia* the following:

- Allow Private entry into running both freight and passenger trains in competition with Indian Railways (IR) and private participation in various Railway infrastructure services and Non-core activities like Production and Construction.
- Allow Private entry in the proposed Rolling Stock Units in Rae Bareilly, Bhilwara, Sonapat, Chhapra, Jalpaiguri, Kacharapara & Palakkad in addition to Madhepura and Marhowra.
- Setup a Railway Regulatory Authority of India (RRAI) statutorily, with an independent budget, so that it is truly independent of the Ministry of Railways. The RRAI should have powers and objectives of economic regulation, including, wherever necessary, tariff regulation, safety regulation, fair access regulation, including access to the railway infrastructure for private operators, service standard regulation; licensing and enhancing competition and setting technical standards.

No decision has been taken on the Interim recommendations of the Committee, which is at the stage of feedback/comments from stakeholders.

Projects in Maharashtra on cost sharing basis

1517. SHRI HUSAIN DALWAI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of projects taken up in Maharashtra on cost sharing basis;
- (b) whether these projects have been accorded priority over other on-going projects in Maharashtra;
- (c) if so, whether any blue print has been drawn up for their early completion;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?