

(c) The then Hon'ble Minister of Railways during her Budget speech 2009-10 had announced "Medical colleges are planned to be established attached to existing railway hospitals through PPP, to give higher education facilities to new generation of railway children."

As per Medical Council of India rules, Public Private Partnership (PPP) with Government (Railway) hospital is not permitted. This Ministry have, therefore, dropped the proposal of setting up of Railway Medical Colleges.

#### **Improving facilities in general compartments**

†1723. SHRI NARESH AGRAWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in most of the trains, more passengers travel in the general compartments than in any other compartment and the Railways' income from these compartments is as much as from sleeper and 3rd AC compartments;

(b) if so, whether it should not be contemplated giving more facilities to the passengers travelling in the general compartments and increasing the number of general compartments; and

(c) if not, the ratio of the number of passengers travelling in the general compartment, 3rd AC and other classes and the income earned through them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) Yes, Sir. In most of the trains, more passengers travel in the general compartment than in any other compartment. However, Railways' average income from a general compartment is lesser than that from a sleeper and a 3rd AC Compartment.

(b) As a part of continual improvement in improving passenger amenities in trains, following actions have been taken by Indian Railways:

- (i) Provision of cushioned seats/berths in General Second class non-Airconditioned coaches.
- (ii) Besides making provision of dustbins, it has also been decided to provide stainless steel mugs with chain arrangements in non-Airconditioned coaches including General Second class coaches.

During the period 2015-16 (up to January, 2016), total 884 coaches have been attached in existing trains on permanent basis, out of which 370 coaches are General Class coaches which is about 40% of the total augmentation done during the period.

---

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) For the year 2014-15 (latest available), the ratio of the number of passengers travelling in the General Compartment, 3rd AC and other classes and the income earned through them are as under:-

Class	Ratio of no. of passengers	Ratio of Earnings
Second (General)	89.3	38.1
3rd AC	1.0	18.3
Others	9.7	43.6

#### **Independent authority for regulating Railways**

1724. SHRI BHUPENDER YADAV: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration for setting up of an independent authority for regulating the affairs of Railways, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the likely or proposed scope of activity of the said authority; and

(c) the time-frame contemplated for setting up the said authority and the present status of the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) to (c) In the Rail Budget 2015-16, setting up of a mechanism for making regulations, setting performance standards, determining tariffs and dispute resolution was announced. In December 2015, Ministry of Railways brought out for public consultation a concept paper on regulatory framework and setting up of Rail Development Authority of India. The concept paper envisages an Authority to undertake functions of tariff determination, ensuring fair play and level playing field for private investments, setting efficiency and performance standards and dissemination of information.

At present, no time-frame has been fixed for setting up the Authority.

#### **Railway projects in Himachal Pradesh**

1725. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of railway projects undergoing/proposed to be started soon in Himachal Pradesh;

(b) whether some of these projects have been delayed and if so, the details thereof;