

by the Committee *interalia* include that (i) Ministry of Railways should not micro manage catering policy guidelines. IRCTC should be given adequate freedom to create a new Menu suitable for train journey within certain outer boundaries rather than the existing large and elaborate menu, which is difficult to manage on trains, (ii) Sale of a-la-carte items on trains should be minimised and these meals should be available through E-Catering to check rampant overcharging and ensure availability of standard meals during travel, (iii) Zonal Railways and IRCTC to promote sale of Ready to Eat (RTE) items in place of a-la-carte items to passengers. The RTE meals shall be sold on MRP so that passengers get quality food without overcharging, (iv) Since the present fixation of prices of coffee/tea with tea bag at ₹ 7 has led to overcharging due to non-availability of change, an upward reconsideration of the present price may be compensated by provision of Coffee/Tea kit consisting of milk sachet and sugar sachet, as given on Rajdhani/Shatabdi trains, thereby creating upgraded options for passengers, (v) While the charges for Catering services should be included in the total fare as default in Rajdhani/Shatabdi/Duronto trains, passengers should have a choice to opt out of these services thereby reducing their total fare.

New regulatory framework for revision of fares

776. DR. CHANDAN MITRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government intends to bring in a new regulatory framework to decide on revision of fares;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the time by which such a framework is likely to be put in place?

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.