

(b) and (c) The Government has withdrawn exemption of customs duty on certain categories of Bulk Drugs/APIs which are also used in the manufacture of some of the Antibiotics, to provide a level playing field to the domestic manufacturers. Further, the Government is clearing bottlenecks like environment clearances etc., in order to give boost to domestic manufacturers of bulk drugs.

**Problems faced by persons with disabilities during
boarding/de-boarding of trains**

*218. SHRI A. V. SWAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have received a number of requests/complaints from the persons with disabilities about the problems they face during boarding/de-boarding of trains and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the East Coast Railway has signed an MoU with any agency/organisation in this regard under the corporate social responsibility, if so, the details thereof along with the terms and conditions thereof; and

(c) whether Government plans to augment various facilities at the railway stations for the convenience of disabled and elderly and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) Requests/complaints from Persons with Disabilities regarding boarding/de-boarding are received which are addressed by taking remedial action like provision of wheelchair, Battery Operated Car. Further, a new policy of Yatri Mitra Sewa has been introduced for taking service of a porter along with wheelchair.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Provision/augmentation of amenities at stations, including those for Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) and elderly passengers is a continuous process. In order to provide better accessibility to Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) and elderly passengers, short term facilities as detailed below have been planned at all stations:-

- Standard ramp for barrier free entry.
- Earmarking at least two parking lots.
- Non-slippery walk-way from parking lot to building.
- Signages of appropriate visibility.
- At least one toilet (on the ground floor).
- At least one drinking water tap suitable for use by Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan).
- 'May I help you' Booth.

In addition, long term facilities as detailed below have been planned at 'A-1', 'A' and 'B' category stations:-

- Provision of facility for inter-platform transfer.
- Engraving on edges of platform.

There are 709 'A-1', 'A' and 'B' category stations catering to the bulk of passenger traffic on Indian Railways, out of which 645 stations have been provided with all short-term facilities. Details of railway stations provided with facilities for Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) are as under:-

Sl. No.	Facilities for Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)	Approx. Number of stations
1	2	3
1.	Standard ramp for barrier free entry	2075
2.	Earmarking at least two parking lots	1195
3.	Non-slippery walk-way from parking lot to building	1295
4.	Signages of appropriate visibility.	1335
5.	At least one toilet (on the ground floor).	1655
6.	At least one drinking water tap suitable for use by differently-abled persons	1690
7.	'May I help you' Booth	1015
8.	Provision of facility for inter-platform transfer	1175
9.	Engraving on edges of platform	1725

Zonal Railways have also been authorised to introduce 'Battery Operated Vehicles' at major Railway Stations for Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Old Aged and sick Passengers on first come first served basis through sponsorship from individuals, NGOs, trusts, Charitable institutions, Corporates and PSUs/Corporate Houses under their Corporate Social Responsibility with no charge to passenger or to the Railway. Further, instructions have also been issued to Zonal Railways to invite Expression of Interest for providing the facility of Battery Operated Car service on payment basis initially at all A1 category stations keeping in view the financial sustainability of the service.

In order to facilitate passengers, especially senior citizens and Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), 394 numbers of escalators at 167 stations and 219 numbers of lifts at 100 stations have also been provided across Indian Railways.