

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) and (b) Policing on Railways being a State subject, prevention of crime viz. hate crimes etc. against passengers including the members of minority communities travelling in trains, registration of cases, their investigation and maintenance of law and order in Railway premises as well as on running trains are the statutory responsibility of the State Governments, which they discharge through Government Railway Police (GRP)/District Police. However, Railway Protection Force (RPF) supplements the efforts of GRP in providing better protection and security of passenger area and passengers and for matters connected therewith. In each and every case of crime including hate crimes reported to police, action is taken as per extant legal provisions by the GRP/District Police of the concerned State.

(c) There is no plan for giving legal assistance to the victim passengers by the Railways.

(d) Compensation liability of Railway administration for death/injury of railway passengers in violent attacks (Untoward Incidents) is laid down in Section 124A of the Railways Act, 1989 read with Section 123 of the Railways Act, 1989. Admissibility of such compensation is decided by Railways Claims Tribunal (RCT) on the basis of a claim application filed before them. Railway administration is liable to pay compensation to rail passengers only when a decree is awarded by Hon'ble RCT in favour of the claimant and Railways decide to implement the decree. At present, the scale of compensation as specified in Railway Accident and Untoward Incidents (Compensation) Amendment Rules, 2016 is ₹ 08 lakh for death and ₹ 64,000/- to ₹ 08 lakh for injury depending upon the gravity of injury.

#### **CAG report on working of Railways and its Catering**

†3001. SHRI RAM NATH THAKUR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether adverse remarks have been made in the recent report of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) on the working of Railways, especially its catering services, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the corrective steps Government proposes to take in the wake of remarks of the CAG?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN): (a) The points of deficiencies highlighted by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India in its Report No. 13 of 2017 laid in the House

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

on 21.07.2017, *inter alia*, include (i) Due to frequent policy changes, Indian Railway could not take effective steps to bridge the gap to provide necessary infrastructure in terms of base kitchens, Static Catering Units, Trains Side Vending arrangements and Automatic Vending Machines etc. (ii) Zonal Railways were required to prepare a Master Plan (Blue Print) of catering services to be provided at each station and onboard trains. Blue Print for provision of catering services was not prepared in seven Zonal Railways (East Central, Eastern, Northeast Frontier, North Western, South Eastern, South Western and East Coast Railway) (iii) Gas burners were to be progressively switched over to electric power Equipment in pantry cars in trains as per policy. However, ICF (Integral Coach Factory) manufactured 103 pantry cars during April 2011 to March 2016 with provision for centralized LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas) cylinders, which were distributed to Zonal Railways. (iv) Zonal Railways did not ensure provision of pantry cars in a number of long distance trains. During joint inspection, it was seen that in nine trains having a run of more than 24 hours, no pantry car was provided. No Train Side Vending Services were provided by North Central, South East Central and Southern Railway for the trains which run for more than 12 hours during the day time. (v) Base kitchens were to be set up in railway premises to monitor and control the quality and hygiene of food served in trains. However, only 16 base kitchens were located in railway premises. 115 base kitchens were located outside the railway premises and were not subjected to quality check. In respect of 128 trains of seven Zonal Railways, meals were picked up from outside base kitchens. (vi) Railway Board instructed (January 2012) Zonal Railways to make efforts to improve the sale/availability of Janta meals so as to provide good quality food at affordable price to railway passengers. However, out of 74 stations where joint inspections were conducted by Audit, Jan Ahaar units were not provided on 46 stations. Share of Janta meals sold to the overall meals sold in six Zonal Railways was declining in the last three years. (vii) During joint inspections of selected trains, audit observed a number of unauthorized vendors on platforms and trains. During 2013-14 to 2015-16, 2,39,096 cases were prosecuted by Railway Protection Force and fine imposed in eight Zonal Railways. (viii) Audit checked 124 contracts awarded by eight Zonal Railways and observed that a major portion of contract value was paid as license fee to Zonal Railways, leaving a small margin of the contract value for the licensee for providing catering services. It may not be workable for the licensees to cater to the needs of passengers within the available margin and may result in compromising the quality, quantity and prices etc. (ix) During the joint inspection of selected 74 stations and 80 trains over Zonal Railways, Audit noticed that Cleanliness and hygiene were not being maintained at catering units at stations and in trains. Unpurified water straight from tap was used in preparation of beverages, waste bins were not found covered, not emptied regularly and not washed, food stuff were not covered to protect them from flies, insects and dust,

rats and cockroaches were found in trains etc. Unfair practices were being followed in execution of catering services at stations and trains. Bills were not given for the food items served in mobile units in trains. Printed menu cards with tariff for the list of food items sold in the mobile units were not available with waiters and Catering Managers in trains. Food stuff served was less than the prescribed scheduled quantity, unapproved packaged drinking water was sold, Proprietary Article Depot (PAD) items were sold at the railway stations at Maximum Retail Price (MRP) with weight and prices different from the open market and per unit price of food articles sold in railway premises is significantly higher. Deficiencies in respect of quality of food served were noticed. Articles unsuitable for human consumption, contaminated foodstuff, recycled foodstuff, shelf life expired packaged and bottled items, unauthorized brands of water bottles, etc., were offered for sale on stations. (x) Though a complaint redressal system has been put in place, there is no reduction in the number of complaints over the years. It was also seen that the major share of complains pertained to overcharging and quality issues.

(b) Improvement of catering being an on-going process, a new Catering Policy has been notified on 27 February, 2017 wherein with the objective to provide quality food to rail passengers, Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC) has been mandated to unbundle catering services on trains by creating a distinction primarily between food preparation and food distribution. IRCTC shall set up new kitchens and upgrade existing ones. These kitchens will be owned, operated and managed by IRCTC. IRCTC shall retain the ownership and shall be fully accountable for all the issues pertaining to setting up and operation of the Base Kitchens and quality of food. All four Base Kitchens under departmental operation of Zonal Railways (Nagpur, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT), Mumbai Central (BCT) and Balharshah) and all kitchen units *i.e.* Refreshment Rooms at A1 and A category stations, Jan Ahaar, Cell Kitchens shall be handed over to IRCTC on 'as is where is' basis. In the first phase, unbundling of catering services is under implementation on Delhi-Mumbai Sector. Base kitchens and Jan Ahaars at CSMT and BCT have been taken over by IRCTC from Zonal Railways.

- Further steps being taken to ensure that good quality and hygienic food is served to the passengers:—
  - (i) Introduction of station based E-Catering for widening the range of options available to passengers for ordering food of their choice.
  - (ii) Introduction of precooked food ('ready to eat' meals) in the range of options available to passengers.
  - (iii) Operation of centralized Catering Service Monitoring Cell (CSMC) (toll free number 1800-111-321) for prompt redressal of passenger grievances relating to the catering activities

and real time assistance to travelling public. (iv) Imposition of penalties in case of deficiencies detected in services. (v) Operation of all India Helpline (No.138) for rail-users to lodge complaints/suggestions regarding food and catering services. (vi) A Twitter handle @ IRCATERING has also been made operational to cater to the complaints/suggestions with regard to catering services.

- To effectively check and control unfair practices of overcharging, issues of quality as well quantity, the following measures are planned:
  - In prepaid trains, optional catering is being introduced as a pilot project so that passenger has the option to 'not eat' if he does not want the food supplied onboard.
  - A policy of zero tolerance towards bad quality of food served to passengers and overcharging is being followed and in last six months, 16 catering contracts have been terminated for catering or other contractual deficiencies during the calendar year 2017. 16 contractors have been blacklisted for breach of contract term in last one year.
  - Third Party Audit of mobile units and base kitchen is to be undertaken by zonal railway periodically, by hiring an independent agency in accordance with Catering Policy 2017.
  - As announced in the Rail Budget 2016-17, Tejas Train has been introduced on 22.05.2017. Management of on-board catering services on Tejas Express is done by IRCTC. Service-wise Catering services on Tejas Express are optional and for the passengers who do not opt for catering services at the time of booking, catering charges will not be included in the ticket fare. However, if the passenger asks for catering services at a later stage, an extra amount of ₹ 50/- per service, in addition to the cost of catering charges will be charged.
  - Instructions have been issued stipulating that Humsafar trains may have the facility of Automatic Vending Machines (AVMs) for dispensation of beverages including Tea/Coffee/soup etc. On two such Humsafar Trains, such AVM's have already been installed and are fully functional.
- **Proliferation of e-catering**
  - E-catering service on IR is managed by IRCTC. Initially, e-catering service was train specific and made available in 1350 trains which did not have services of Pantry car or Train Side Vending. As a major initiative during September 2015, this scheme has been reoriented to make it 'Station Based E-Catering' in place of train specific e-catering. In the first phase,

a pilot project has been undertaken on 45 major stations and subsequently extended to all 'A-1' and 'A' category of stations which is presently under implementation. E-catering service is now available on 357 railway stations and the average supply of meals under this scheme is around 5000 meals per day (as on September' 2016) against 2000 orders per day which was around 400 meals per day during October' 2015.

- Passengers travelling from these stations are now able to access E-Catering facilities for all trains passing through these stations. IRCTC is facilitating booking of meals through a specified phone number/ website / SMS / Mobile Apps etc. Passengers having mobile number are able to book meals under this scheme. CoD facility to passengers under this scheme has also been made available.
- IRCTC has established a call centre and has also operationalized E-catering website [www.ecatering.irctc.co.in](http://www.ecatering.irctc.co.in) for this purpose. Passengers can pre-order the meal from the different options available as per the choice, for delivery at the opted stations through the e-catering (website and phone/SMS call centre). The mode of payment in e-catering shall be Pre-paid *i.e.* online payment as well as Cash on delivery (CoD) basis. The shortlisted vendor shall deliver the pre-ordered meal to customer on stationary train at the opted station. The opted meal is communicated to the Vendor through SMS as well as email at the time of booking and also again at about 2 hours in advance of delivery time (Delivery time is the train arrival time on a particular station). The Short-listing vendor can provide meals through his catering units on all India basis. Each unit/location, requested by vendor, to be included for e-catering project is required to have all statutory licences as required under the central/ state laws and should comply with the laws of the land. The shortlisted entity may request for addition of more locations/units during the currency of the Short-listing. The shortlisted entity may supply food items under e-catering project only from its approved (by IRCTC) locations/units to the stations in the reasonable vicinity of the said units.

- **Optional catering service**

- The trial of optional catering services to passengers was initially started on the following two train's w.e.f 09.06.2016 onwards for journeys to commence on the opening day of ARP (Advance Reservation period).
  - Train No. 12954-53 AG Kranti Rajdhani;
  - Train No. 12025-26, PUNE – SC Shatabdi Exp.

Passengers had to 'opt out' from the mandatory food option.

This scheme has been started from 09.06.2016 onwards for journeys to commence on the opening day of ARP *i.e.* 7.10.2016 to 20.11.2016 (for 45 days).

- Now instructions have been issued to provide optional catering service, as a pilot project, to passengers booking tickets w.e.f. 01.08.2017 onwards for the journeys to commence on 01.08.2017 and onwards. This scheme has been introduced on 31 Rajdhani/Shatabdi/Duronto trains under the management of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC) w.e.f. 01.08.2017 for an initial period of 180 days, subject to mid-term review after 3 months.

● **Water Vending Machines (WVMs)**

- With the objective to make available potable drinking water of prescribed standard to passengers at affordable price, Water Vending Machines Policy has been notified w.e.f. 16.06.2015.
- IRCTC to select the franchisee/agent for installation of machines through two-packet tender system. Bids can be invited for group of stations having similar type of WVMs. Group of platforms can be considered to form a composite offer.
- Pure water, conforming to BIS (Bureau of Indian Standard) specifications IS 10500:2012 and in compliance of the requirements of FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) and other regulations made by the government from time to time, will be dispensed through these WVMs for passengers in a much less price as compared to packaged drinking water.
- Provision of Microprocessors and interlocks to ensure correct quality and quantity with Reverse Osmosis (RO) technology or alternate superior technology, depending upon the level of contamination in the water.
- IRCTC has been mandated to select the franchisee/agent for installation of machines through two-packet tender system.
- As on 30.06.2017, 350 stations have been provided with the facility of Water Vending Machines by IRCTC and as on 31.07.2017, IRCTC has already awarded license for installation of 2900 WVMs over IR out of which 1300 WVMs have already been commissioned at 350 stations.
- Award of contracts for another 400 WVMs is to be finalized shortly.
- Further, 1100 more WVMs will be commissioned shortly at various stations.

- **Zero tolerance policy**

- A policy of zero tolerance towards bad quality of food served to passengers and overcharging is being followed and during last six months, 16 catering contracts have been terminated for catering or other contractual deficiencies during January to August 2017. 16 contractors have been blacklisted for breach of contract term in last one year
- A fine of ₹ 4.56 crore has been imposed during January to June'17 as compared to ₹ 4.05 crore imposed during 2016, ₹ 2.61 crore in 2015 and ₹ 1.73 crore in 2014.
- Disciplinary action has been taken against 21 railway officials in the last one year.
- More than 40,000 inspections done by railway officials to improve the catering services.

- **Third party audit**

- The third-party audit of the catering service to examine the quality of food, hygiene and cleanliness in the pantry car and base kitchen, which will be carried out alongside the in-house audit.
- Food safety and Hygiene audits are being conducted regularly in Base Kitchens, both Departmental and Licensee owned, Food Plaza/Fast Food Units and Pantry Cars of IRCTC managed Trains by Third Party Auditors.
- Third Party Audit of catering services are also to be conducted at periodic intervals by independent and reputed auditing agencies accredited by NABCB (National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies) as empanelled by the zonal railways.
- Empanelment of Food Audit Agencies has been completed on Western Railway.
- IRCTC has awarded Food safety, hygiene audit for 96 trains, 206 Food Plazas/Fast Food Units.

### **Rating of trains**

3002. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether emulating Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Railways will start rating its trains based on punctuality, cleanliness on board, toilets, coaches and interiors;

(b) whether the CAG, in its recent audit reports, has adversely commented on the cleanliness maintained, both at stations and on-board of trains; and