

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2190
ANSWERED ON 13.12.2024

IMPROVEMENT OF ONBOARD CATERING SERVICES IN TRAINS

2190. **SHRI AJIT KUMAR BHUYAN:**

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that there have been many complaints about onboard catering services in trains;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether new initiatives have been taken for improvement of onboard catering services in trains;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether measures have been taken by Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) to curb overcharging in trains; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof ?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS, INFORMATION & BROADCASTING AND
ELECTRONICS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

(a) to (f): It is the continuous endeavour of Indian Railways (IR) to provide good quality and hygienic food to passengers as per the norms and standards of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). Prompt and appropriate punitive action, including imposition of fines, disciplinary action, counselling, warning etc., is taken in case of catering related complaints.

Following measures have been taken for improvement in catering services over Indian Railways:

- Supply of meals from designated Base Kitchens.
- Commissioning of modern Base Kitchens at identified locations.
- Installation of CCTV Cameras in Base Kitchens for better monitoring of food preparation.
- Shortlisting and use of popular and branded raw materials, like cooking oil, atta, rice, pulses, masala items, paneer, dairy products etc. for food production.

- Deployment of Food Safety Supervisors at Base Kitchens to monitor food safety and hygienic practices.
- Deployment of on-board IRCTC supervisors on trains.
- Introduction of QR codes on food packets, enabling display of details like name of kitchen, date of packaging etc.
- Regular deep cleaning and periodical pest control (every 15 days) in Base Kitchens and Pantry Cars.
- In order to ensure compliance with Food Safety Norms, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) certification from designated Food Safety Officers of each catering unit has been made mandatory.
- Regular food sampling as a part of the inspection and monitoring mechanism to ensure quality of food on trains.
- Third Party Audit is done to examine hygiene and quality of food in Pantry Cars and Base Kitchens. Customer satisfaction survey is also conducted.
- Regular and surprise inspections by Railway/ IRCTC officials, including Food Safety Officers.
- Implementation of rationalised menu in trains so as to introduce items of regional cuisines/preferences, seasonal delicacies, food items, as per the preferences of different groups of passengers, such as diabetic food, baby food, health food options including millet based local products, etc.

Following measures have been taken to curb overcharging in trains:

- SMS to passengers with link of menu and tariff has been started.
- Installation of Point Of Sale (POS) machines for billing and cashless payments.
- Rates stickers on Packaged Drinking Water (PDW) Buckets and Tea/Coffee urns.
- Conducting awareness campaigns to promote billing and curb overcharging.
- Distribution of pamphlets to create awareness regarding the rate of catering items and Rail Neer Packaged Drinking Water.
- Imposition of suitable penalty in cases of overcharging, if any.
- Special Inspection Drives to check overcharging and billing issues.
