

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1483
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27.12.2017**

AWARD OF CATERING CONTRACTS

†1483. SHRI RAJESH VERMA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Railway Catering Department awards catering contract to some selected firms to provide catering facility to the passengers in trains and at stations due to which small vendors providing these facilities, become unemployed;**
- (b) if so, the names of catering firms to which the Railway Department awards contracts;**
- (c) whether as per the report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, food supplied by these firms is not fit for consumption and if so, whether the Government proposes to blacklist these firms and award contract to new firms;**
- (d) if so, the time by which the Railway Catering Department is likely to start the process of awarding contract to new firms; and**
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?**

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

(SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN)

(a) : No, Madam.

(b): Does not arise.

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(c): Yes, Madam, The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India in its Report No.13 of 2017 dated 21.07.2017 on “Catering Services in Indian Railways” has highlighted deficiencies in catering services being provided to passengers on Indian Railways. In its endeavour to provide quality and hygienic food to the passengers, Indian Railways have developed and operationalized an institutionalized mechanism for monitoring of quality and hygiene of catering services through regular inspections at various levels to address catering complaints. Further, a policy of zero tolerance towards poor quality of food served to passengers and overcharging is being followed and during the current Financial Year (i.e. April to October 2017), 12 catering contracts have been terminated and 08 contractors have been blacklisted/debarred for complaint related to catering or other contractual deficiencies.

(d) and (e): To improve the standard of food being provided to passengers, new Catering Policy has been issued on 27th February 2017 which inter-alia stipulates that Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC) has been mandated to carry out the unbundling by creating a distinction primarily between food preparation and food distribution on trains. In order to upgrade quality of food preparation, IRCTC is to set up new kitchens and upgrade existing ones. Zonal Railways are to manage minor static units (catering stall /milk stalls/ trolleys etc.) except base kitchens and kitchen units. The policy mandates the zonal railways to hand over the kitchens managed by them to Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC).

Food Plaza, Fast Food Units and Food Court will continue to be managed by IRCTC. The procedure/guidelines/policy laid down for allotment or contracts for running various stall at railway platforms inter-alia include:- (i) Allotment of General Minor Units at all category of stations to be done through open, competitive, two-packet tendering system from the eligible bidders by railway divisions (ii) Allotment of Special Minor units (reserved category) at all category of stations to be done by divisions through open tendering system within the similar reserved category. The technical eligibility criteria has been simplified. (iii) For the purpose of allotment, a Refreshment Room (at B and below category of stations) or a stall or a trolley to be deemed as one unit. As such, a single unit is to be awarded through a single license. Allotment of catering contracts by IRCTC and Zonal Railways under the framework of Catering Policy 2017 is an on-going process, as per the need and requirement of catering services.
