

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS**

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.844  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.12.2017**

**SCARCITY OF SAFE DRINKING WATER**

**†844. SHRI RAMDAS C. TADAS:  
SHRI Y.S. AVINASH REDDY:**

**Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether there is scarcity of safe drinking water and quality food in trains;**
- (b) if so, the steps being taken by the Railways to resolve such type of problems being faced by passengers;**
- (c) whether the license of such contractors who are not providing quality food in the trains are being cancelled; and**
- (d) if so, the details of the action taken in this regard?**

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS**

**(SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN)**

**(a): No, Madam.**

**(b): In its endeavour to provide quality and hygienic food and drinking water to the passengers through pantry cars, train side vending, e-catering & static catering unit at stations, 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, to improve the standard of food being provided to passengers in trains, new Catering Policy has been issued on**

**Contd..2/-**

**27<sup>th</sup> February, 2017 wherein inter-alia 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. In order to upgrade quality of food preparation, IRCTC is to set up new kitchens and upgrade existing ones. Further, instructions have been issued to provide optional catering service, as a pilot project, on 32 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. Further steps being taken to ensure that good quality and hygienic food is served to the passengers are:- (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.**

**(c) & (d): 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 for complaint related to catering or other contractual deficiencies.**

