

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.3195
TO BE ANSWERED ON 14.03.2018**

QUALITY OF FOOD

3195. SHRIMATI KIRRON KHER:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the essential features of the new catering policy;**
- (b) the steps taken by the Government to upgrade the quality of food served on trains;**
- (c) the number of stations which have successfully implemented the new catering policy;**
- (d) whether the Government plans to take action against stations serving expired food or food unfit for human consumption; and**
- (e) if so, the details of action taken/ proposed to be taken in this regard?**

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

(SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN)

(a): New Catering Policy was notified on 27 February 2017, with the objective of providing quality food to rail passengers, by unbundling catering services on trains, and creating a primary distinction between food preparation and food distribution in trains. The essential features of the New Catering Policy 2017, inter-alia includes:- (i) Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC) shall manage catering service on all mobile units and meals will be picked from nominated kitchens. (ii) The setting up/ development/ refurbishment of new or existing Base Kitchens/Kitchen units will be undertaken by IRCTC.

These modern, state of the art kitchens will be owned, operated and managed by IRCTC. (iii) IRCTC shall engage service providers from hospitality industry for service of food in trains. (iv) IRCTC to involve/empanel Self Help groups for providing catering related services. (v) Zonal railways shall manage minor static unit (catering stall /milk stalls/ trolleys etc). (vi) Allotments of General Minor Units at all category stations will be done through competitive open tendering system by divisions. (vii) 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. (viii) 33 % sub quota for women in allotment of each category of minor catering units at all category of station to be provided.

(b): Steps taken/ being taken to ensure that good quality and hygienic food is served to the passengers inter-alia include (i) Optional Catering Service has been introduced as a pilot project, on 32 Rajdhani/Shatabdi/Duronto trains under the management of IRCTC. (ii) Introduction of station based E-catering for widening the range of options available to passengers for ordering food of their choice. (iii) Pilot for introduction of precooked food ('ready to eat' meals) in the range of options available to passengers. (iv) 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. (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): 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. At present IRCTC is managing 334 pairs of Duronto, Rajdhani, Shatabdi and Mail/Express trains and 223 static units.

(d) & (e): Providing quality and hygienic food under both mobile and static catering units is the aim of the Railways. Checking of quality and quantity of food is an integral part of its inspection, which is being done regularly by Railway officials. All complaints are dealt strictly and action including monetary penalty, debarring and termination of contract is taken as per the gravity of the complaint and decisions are taken on case to case basis.
