

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS**

LOK SABHA

**STARRED QUESTION NO. 304
TO BE ANSWERED ON 17.03.2021**

FARE OF SPECIAL TRAINS

***304 SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV :**

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether all the trains running at present are special trains and the fares are also higher than the previous ones;**
- (b) if so, the details thereof;**
- (c) whether there is any plan to restart all the trains and reduce the fares to pre COVID-19 pandemic level;**
- (d) if so, the details thereof;**
- (e) whether only ready-to-eat items are being sold in trains and if so, whether there is any plan to restart full catering services in trains; and**
- (f) if so, the details thereof?**

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF RAILWAYS, COMMERCE & INDUSTRY AND
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION**

(SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL)

(a) to (f) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF STARRED QUESTION NO. 304 BY SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV TO BE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 17.03.2021 REGARDING FARE OF SPECIAL TRAINS.

(a) to (d) To prevent the spread of COVID-19 pandemic, Indian Railways discontinued all regular passenger carrying trains w.e.f. 23rd March, 2020 and presently only special trains keeping in view the suggestions and concerns of the State Governments are being operated. The number of services are being increased in a phased manner and as on 12th March, 2021, Indian Railways has started operation of a total of 8474 train services which includes 2328 Mail/Express Trains and 784 Passenger Trains.

During Pre-COVID time, for long distance passengers, two types of train services were running over Indian Railways (i) Regular time tabled trains and (ii) Special trains during festivals / peak demand period/rush period etc. Further, Special trains were of three types (1) Second class unreserved specials on normal fare (2) Special trains on special charges on normal fare plus special charges (10% in second class reserved and 30% in other classes subject to prescribed maximum and minimum limit), and (3) Suvidha Specials on minimum tatkal fare and maximum three times of tatkal fare. For both special trains on special charges and Suvidha trains, fare for second class unreserved was normal second class Mail / Express superfast fare.

In view of health advisory due to COVID-19, regular train services are running as COVID specials on the fare as applicable for regular time Tabled trains. During COVID pandemic as passenger demands are not uniform over different sectors, some special trains on special charges have been introduced to meet the additional demands over different sectors as per already published fare for

special trains on special charges vide (2) above. Further, unreserved second class has been declared as reserved second class in view of pandemic situation, in long distance Mail/Express trains.

(e) and (f): In order to ensure safe and hygienic catering services to passengers during the pandemic situation, provision of only Ready to Eat Meals (RTE), Proprietary Article Depot (PAD) items, Packaged Drinking Water and Tea/ Coffee/ Beverages in the special trains has been made on payment basis.

Catering services in trains are provided through Pantry Cars and Train Side Vending. In addition, passengers travelling in the trains have the facility to order food of their choice through e-Catering services and also purchase food items from the Static Units which are available at en-route stations.
