

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:726
ANSWERED ON:16.08.2007
QUALITY OF CATERING SERVICE IN TRAINS
More Shri Vasantao J.

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Railways have administrative control over catering services provided during rail journey ;
- (b) if so, whether the Railways are also aware about sub-standard quality of food served by the catering service in trains ;
- (c) whether the Railways are also aware that prices of tea, breakfast and food items served by catering service are charged at exorbitant rates leading to resentment among passengers ;
- (d) if so, the number of complaints received in this regard during 2006-07 and 2007-08 and the action taken thereon ; and
- (e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Railways to improve catering service in trains ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU)

(a) : Catering services provided through private licensees at D, E and F category stations, are directly administered by Zonal Railways. Catering services at A, B and C category stations and in trains are provided by private licensees and departmental staff of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC), a wholly owned company of Indian Railways.

(b) and (c) : Railways provide hygienic food to the passengers at stations and in trains. Regular inspections are conducted by Railways as well as IRCTC officials to ensure the quality of services. Appropriate action is taken against staff/licensees found overcharging the passengers.

(d) : During 2006-07, a total of 2656 number of complaints were received. Position for the period 2007-08 cannot be furnished at this point of time. Appropriate actions like warning, fine, termination, counseling etc. have been taken on the complaints found substantiated.

(e) : As an ongoing process, catering services of Indian Railways receive constant attention of the Zonal Railways and IRCTC. IRCTC is setting up multi-cuisine state-of-the-art Food Plazas, Automatic Vending Machines to dispense hot and cold beverages, and modernizing railways' existing base kitchens. Regular monitoring of catering services is done by Railways and IRCTC officials. IRCTC has engaged independent food audit agencies to ensure quality of food being supplied to the passengers of Indian Railways. All good practices like, progressive ISO (International Organization for Standardization) and HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) certification of catering units are being followed by Railways through IRCTC. In addition, dedicated quality inspectors have also been engaged for constant monitoring of quality of food.