

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:241
ANSWERED ON:24.07.2014
SERVING OF QUALITY FOOD ITEMS
Kushawaha Shri Ravindra

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether providing quality and hygienic food at affordable price, to the passengers, is a commitment of the Railways and if so, the salient feature of catering policy in vogue;
- (b) the mechanism in place to ensure that quality food items including drinking water is served, on-board and at Railway Stations;
- (c) whether the menu and tariff of various items including tea, coffee, Rail Neer, breakfast and standard meals, have been revised, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (d) the profit earned or loss incurred on Rail Neer and other food items served during each of the last three years and the current year; and
- (e) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Railways to serve quality and hygienic food items to passengers at reasonable and affordable rates?

Answer

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI D. V. SADANANDA GOWDA)

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

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF STARRED QUESTION NO. 241 BY SHRI RAVINDER KUSHAWAHA TO BE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 24.07.2014 REGARDING SERVING OF QUALITY FOOD ITEMS.

(a): Yes, Madam. A new Catering Policy has been introduced with effect from 21.07.2010 with the objectives/commitments as follows

- (i) To provide hygienic, good quality affordable food to the travelling public by adopting best trade and hospitality industry practices
- (ii) To provide catering services in a socially responsible manner from the least advantaged passenger to the relatively affluent
- (iii) To meet with all the social objectives of the Government, including provision of reservations as per Government Directives issued from time to time.

The salient features of the catering policy 2010, in vogue, are as under:-

Management and monitoring shifted from Indian Railways Catering & Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) to Zonal Railways so as to leverage Zonal Railways' vast elaborate all-India network to effect a thorough supervision and control over catering activities.

Emphasis to ensure availability of quality food for not-so-affluent classes of passengers by provision of Janta food, Jan Ahaar (economy combo-meals) and affordable regional cuisine.

Supervision and monitoring strengthened by the zonal railway by deploying railway personnel to check quality and hygiene and take corrective actions including imposition of stringent penalties.

Standard Bid Document for allotment of contracts has been designed with detailed parameters to ensure quality and hygienic food.

Quality Assurance Mechanism through Third Party Audits to ensure quality.

IRCTC to be responsible for managing the catering services at Food Plazas, Food Courts and Fast Food Units.

(b): Zonal Railways ensure that quality, hygienic and affordable food items including drinking water is served to passengers through static units at stations and through mobile units onboard the trains. The units are managed departmentally or through authorized licensees. A detailed mechanism for monitoring through regular, surprise and periodical inspections of the units has been put in place by the zonal railways. Catering Services Monitoring Cells have been set up for real time redressal of complaints on zonal railways. A defined Quality Assurance Programme with passenger opinion feedback scheme is a part of the mechanism to improve the quality of catering services on trains.

(c): Yes, Madam. The menu and tariff of Rajdhani/Shatabdi/Duronto express was revised after 14 years and implemented from 17.10.13. The tariff of standard meals/items like tea, coffee, Rail Neer, breakfast for Mail/Express trains was revised after 9 years and implemented from 21.12.12. The reasons behind the revision are

- (i) manifold increase in the cost of raw material like food grains, pulses, edible oils, milk/milk products, spices etc,
- (ii) increase of Wholesale Price Index (WPI)
- (iii) increase in overhead charges like staff cost, fuel cost, packaging, water and electricity charges, depreciation cost, printing & stationery, other miscellaneous expenses etc.
- (iv) increase in applicable statutory taxes.

(d): The total earnings (profits/losses) on Rail Neer and other food items served during each of the last three years and the current year by Railways is as under:-

(Rs. in Crores)

Year	Zonal Railway Earning / Loss	Railway Expenditure / Loss	IRCTC Profit / Loss	Zonal Railway Earning	Railway Expenditure	IRCTC Profit
2009-10	18.69	21.81	-3.12	510.33	518.58	-8.25
2010-11	20.93	27.22	-6.29	509.05	485.22	23.83
2011-12	60.49	89.74	-29.25	217.32	258.97	-41.65
2012-13	Figures not published			233.86	284.15	-50.29
2013-14	273.91#	330.07#				-56.16#

#unaudited figures

Year	Rail Neer Earning	Rail Neer Expenditure	Rail Neer Profit / Loss
2009-10	36.17	27.28	8.89
2010-11	43.31	40.59	2.72
2011-12	58.19	59.01	-0.82
2012-13	71.90	71.45	0.45
2013-14	88.16#	84.35#	3.81#

unaudited figures

- (e): Steps taken/proposed to be taken by the railways to serve quality and hygienic food at reasonable and affordable rates include
- (i) Fixation and notification of menu and tariff for janta meals/Jan-ahaar items/premium/mail/express trains and standard meals/items like tea, coffee, Rail Neer, breakfast etc. by railways to ensure quality and affordability of meals.
 - (ii) Setting up of Jan-ahaar outlets for sale of Janta Meals (economy combo-meals) and low cost affordable regional cuisine ranging from ₹5/- to ₹50/- to the travelling public
 - (iii) Mechanism for monitoring and supervision through regular, surprise and periodical inspections including setting up of a Catering Services Monitoring Cell with a toll free number 1800- 111- 321 at national level for real time redressal of complaints.
 - (iv) Imposition of stringent punitive action including heavy penalties in case of deficiencies in services
 - (v) Quality assurance programme by means of Third Party Audit
 - (vi) Introduction of Pre-cooked Food (ready to eat meals) to improve the quality, hygiene and to provide variety of options of meals to the passengers.
 - (vii) Introduction of E-Catering so that passengers can book the food of their choice while booking the ticket through internet.
 - (viii) Standardization of cooking and services of food through setting up of modern and mechanized state of the art base kitchens.
 - (ix) A pilot project for feedback of the passengers through Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) has been launched on five trains.