

**Title:** Requested the Minister of Railways to re-introduce the Azad Express and to run it from Howrah to Haldia and also to introduce a new express train between Haldia and Asansol.

SHRI LAKSHMAN SETH (TAMLUK): Mr. Chairman, Sir, in the year 2000 one Inter-City Express styled as Azad Express was introduced by the then hon. Minister of Railways from Shalimar to Haldia. This train has been withdrawn, on the plea of lack of patronisation, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2001. There is no reason for this. This Inter-City Express was introduced to cater to the needs of Haldia which is emerging as one of the leading industrial hub. Not only this but in the last Budget it was announced by the hon. Minister of Railways of introduction of a new Express train between Haldia and Assansol from 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2001. It has also not been introduced.

Sir, the Shalimar station has no infrastructure facility. The Inter-City Express was introduced from this station and that is why the above train was not viable. There is a request to run this Inter-City Express from Howrah to Haldia instead of from Shalimar to Haldia.

I would, therefore, request the hon. Minister of Railways to kindly re-introduce the Azad Express which was cancelled and run it from Howrah to Haldia and also to introduce the new train announced in the last Budget from Haldia to Assansol. This is the long-pending demand of the people there.

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**12.54 hrs.**