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**Title:** Need to provide better facilities to railway hawkers in West Bengal.

SHRI AMITAVA NANDY (DUMDUM): Sir, I draw the attention of the Government towards the plight of more than eighty thousand railway hawkers, who are somehow leading their livelihood in West Bengal. Most of them are either refugees uprooted due to partition during Independence or jobless workers of closed down factories and unemployed youths. The present socio-economic conditions have forced thousands of workers to join this profession for sheer survival. A substantive portion of this workforce and porters are from Bihar and Orissa. For years, these poor people are demanding licence for all hawkers and porters, and benefits of treatment in Railway Hospital for the Railway contractors' labourers. On 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2004 a joint memorandum has already been submitted to the Minister for Railways and General Manager, Eastern Railway.

While congratulating the Minister for Railways for his proposal to bring this section under social security net, I also request the Government to consider their other legitimate demands.