

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2865
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05.08.2026**

**HYGIENE AND CATERING SERVICES IN LONG-DISTANCE TRAINS IN TAMIL
NADU**

**2865. DR. RANI SRIKUMAR:
SHRI C N ANNADURAI:
SHRI SELVAM G:**

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has undertaken any assessment of the quality, hygiene and catering services provided in long-distance trains serving Tamil Nadu during the last three years and if so, the details thereof, year-wise;**
- (b) the measures taken/to be taken by the Government to modernise base kitchens, strengthen quality control, introduce technology-enabled monitoring and improve food safety in trains originating from/passing through the said State;**
- (c) whether the Government proposes to expand the availability of hygienic, nutritious and authentic South Indian meal options in long-distance trains operating in the Southern Railway zone and if so, the details thereof;**
- (d) the details of inspections, passenger feedback mechanisms and corrective actions taken to improve onboard catering services; and**
- (e) the further steps proposed/to be proposed to ensure safe, high-quality and affordable food for passengers travelling on long-distance trains in the said State?**

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF RAILWAYS, INFORMATION & BROADCASTING AND
ELECTRONICS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

(SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW)

- (a) to (e): Indian Railways continuously endeavour to ensure provision of catering services and hygiene as per prescribed standards to the travelling passengers in trains including those running in the state of Tamil Nadu.**

Necessary steps are accordingly taken by Indian Railways from time to time to bring improvement in quality of food, services and hygiene. Measures taken to improve food quality, hygiene and food safety in trains:

- **Supply of meals from designated Base Kitchens.**
- **Commissioning of modern Base Kitchens at identified locations.**
- **Installation of CCTV Cameras in Base Kitchens for real time and better monitoring of food preparation.**
- **Shortlisting and use of popular and branded raw materials for food production.**
- **Deployment of Food Safety Supervisors at Base Kitchens to monitor food safety and hygienic practices.**
- **Deployment of on-board IRCTC supervisors on trains.**
- **Introduction of QR codes on meal packets supplied in trains to enhance food safety, transparency and passenger awareness. The QR code provides details regarding date of packing, name of the licensee and FSSAI license number, for information of passengers.**
- **Regular deep cleaning and periodical pest control in Base Kitchens and Pantry Cars.**
- **Mandatory Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) certification to ensure compliance with Food Safety Norms.**
- **Regular food sampling as a part of the monitoring mechanism to ensure quality of food on trains.**
- **Regular training is conducted by IRCTC to enhance the skills of catering staff, focusing on customer service areas, i.e., communication, courteous behaviour, service standards, personal grooming, and hygiene.**
- **Third Party Audit is conducted to examine hygiene and quality of food in Pantry Cars and Base Kitchens. Customer satisfaction survey is also conducted.**

Regular and surprise inspections are conducted by Railway/IRCTC officials, including Food Safety Officers, to ensure quality, hygiene, safety and regulatory compliance. These inspections cover key aspects such as food safety, staff deployment, equipment maintenance, cleanliness and adherence to prescribed standards while promoting best practices in food handling, storage and preparation.

Measures taken to improve hygiene and cleanliness in trains:

- **On Board Housekeeping Services (OBHS) is provided to maintain cleanliness and hygiene in long-distance trains during run of the train.**
- **All passenger coaches have been installed with bio-toilets.**
- **Regular Pest and Rodent control is done in all coaches.**
- **Dustbins have been provided in all passenger coaches and waste generated inside trains is collected and disposed at designated en-route stations identified for this purpose.**
- **Mechanized Coach Cleaning is ensured during primary and secondary maintenance for better cleaning of the coach including interior, exterior and toilets.**
- **Clean Train Station (CTS) Scheme is provided at identified stations to improve the cleanliness of trains en-route by undertaking mechanized cleaning.**

Passenger feedback and complaint management systems over Indian Railways have been strengthened and simplified through a single window RailMadad portal to enable passengers to share their feedback and grievances regarding passenger services.

IRCTC has been given flexibility to customize the menu in trains to include items of regional cuisines, seasonal delicacies, and health food options, including millet-based products. Accordingly, based on passenger feedback, IRCTC introduced several regional and local dishes from the

southern part of India which include items like Tomato Paruppu Kootu, Vathal, Paruppu Urundai Kozhambu, Vazhakkai Varuval and Beetroot / Koththavarai Kai Poriyal, Matta Rice, Banana Kalan, Allepey Veg Curry, Chicken Varzutharaicha Curry, Avial, Payasam, Nei Choru, Kerala / Malabar Parantha, Kadala Curry, Chettinad Potato & Patani Curry, Kerala Chicken Curry, Veg Mezhukkuparetti, Malabar Chicken Biryani, etc.
