

**Regarding need to provide dedicated senior citizen friendly rail coaches at both ends of Mumbai Suburban Rail Network-Laid**

**SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE (BARAMATI):** Maharashtra has an elderly population share of 11.7%, higher than the national average of 10%. This proportion will rise to nearly 15% by 2031. Hence, our public infrastructure must support senior citizens to ensure their safety, comfort, mobility, and dignity. Mumbai's suburban rail network carries nearly 7 to 8 million commuters every day, which includes over 50,000 senior citizens. Despite this heavy reliance, each train currently provides only 14 reserved seats for elderly passengers. This makes the Mumbai Local inaccessible, especially during peak hours, forcing many elderly commuters to travel under hazardous conditions. Following a Public Interest Litigation, the Central and Western Railways have decided to convert the luggage compartments in non-AC EMUs into dedicated senior citizen compartments. The conversion will require a year and significant funding. However, the repurposed compartment will still have only 13 seats and standing space for 91. The current reserved seats will go to general passengers. As a result, there will be no net increase in dedicated seating or improvement in overcrowding and accessibility issues. Hence, I urge the Government to provide an additional senior-citizen coach at both ends of the train, equipped with features inspired by the Silver Train initiative, to ensure age-friendly travel.