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Title : Need to withdraw new catering policy outsourcing the entire catering of Railways to private parties with a view to protect the interests of commission vendors.

SHRI SUNIL KHAN (DURGAPUR): I rise to draw the attention of the Minister for Railways to a matter of serious concern involving livelihood of hundreds of Commission Vendors. Following adoption of Catering Policy 2005, the Railway has decided to outsource the entire catering to private parties having a minimum annual turn over of Rs. 10 lakhs per annum to Rs. 5 Crores per annum with licensing fee of 12 per cent of estimated turnover. Aiming to this our sourcing, the Railways have already terminated some 30 vendors in Northern Railways, who are above 60 years of age. For others, the Railways have proposed to absorb the vendors in class IV posts. According to Railways, this is in accordance with a verdict from Apex Court, given in 1983. For non-compliance of the court's verdict in time, the vendors of the age group of 40 to 60 will be deprived of terminal benefits. Thus, majority of the vendors and their family members will virtually lose their daily bread. On the other hand the common passengers will have to pay a hefty amount for a cup of tea or Samosa to the Food –Plaza holders, since they will not run the plazas at no profit no loss basis. I demand withdrawal of Catering Policy forthwith and restoration of earlier policy.