

Indian Railways to start an optional food facility on 10 trains

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A rail official reported to a news source that if the plan is implemented, the Delhi-Mumbai Rajdhani fare, for example, would come down by at least Rs. 300 a ticket. On this train, a passenger gets snacks, dinner and breakfast for which a traveler pays while booking a ticket.

The facility will start on an experimental basis on 10 trains within a month. This will enable the passengers to order food of their choice rather than get the regular railway stuff.

Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC), in order to boost e-catering services, plans to take on food-delivery companies such as Foodpanda, Zomato and Swiggy for door-delivery services. The aim is to expand its e-catering facility to serve 100,000 meals a day within a year, from 5,000 now, through its ordering platform Food On Track.

IRCTC provides catering on 103 trains. For its online catering service, IRCTC has collaborated with players such as Sagar Ratna, Saravana Bhavan, Bikanervala, Nirula's, KFC, McDonald's, Haldiram's, Domino's and Pizza Hut.

However, sector experts are skeptical about IRCTC's food ordering plan. The Station-based e-catering services were introduced in 45 stations since September 2016. The scheme was extended to 408 trains later, giving passengers more food options.