

into and a new ACD version- II after successful validation and certification will undergo extensive conformity trials once again before implementation.

ACD works have been sanctioned on 5160 RKms on Eastern, South Eastern, East Central and East Coast Railways during last three years and will be taken up for implementation with new ACD version-II.

Enhancing safety standards

3227. SHRI D. BANDYOPADHYAY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether an expert group on modernisation of Railways was set up under the chairmanship of Dr. Sam Pitroda;
- (b) if so, whether it has submitted its report; and
- (c) the main recommendations of the group, particularly relating to safety in the railway system and the action initiated to enhance the safety standards of Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI) : (a) and (b) The Ministry of Railways constituted an Expert Group for Modernization of Indian Railways on 21.09.2011 under the Chairmanship of Shri Sam Pitroda. The Group has submitted its report on 27.02.2012.

(c) The Group has made 113 specific recommendations pertaining to modernization of tracks and bridges, signaling systems, rolling stock, stations and terminals, Public-Private Partnership initiatives, utilization of land and airspace, construction of Dedicated Freight Corridors, High-Speed Passenger Corridors, expeditious implementation of 'priority' projects, harnessing Information & Communication Technology and Safety. The recommendations on 'Safety' include: (i) Deploy latest track machines for mechanized maintenance of track, (ii) Install wheel impact load detectors, (iii) Modernize and renovate railway workshops, (iv) Equip trains and Train Protection Warning Systems (TPWS), (v) Install vehicle borne digitized and recordable ultrasonic flaw detectors to cover the entire railway system, (vi) Eliminate unmanned level crossings by manning, closure, merger, construction of over bridges and underpasses, (vii) Upgrade coaching depots, (viii) Upgrade disaster management facilities & related Services, (ix) Upgrade Network Management Centers and (x) Use Social networks/cameras/Videos and other new tools and technologies extensively for safety & security.

All possible steps are undertaken on a continuous basis to prevent accidents and to enhance safety. These include timely replacement of over-aged assets, adoption of suitable technologies for upgradation and maintenance of track, rolling stock, signaling and interlocking systems, etc. to ensure reliability of assets.