(d) Safety is accorded the highest priority by Indian Railways and all possible steps are undertaken on a continual basis to prevent accidents and to enhance safety. These include timely replacement of over-aged assets, adoption of suitable technologies for upgradation and inaintenance of track, rolling stock, signaling and interlocking systems, safety drives, greater emphasis on training of officials and inspections at regular intervals to monitor and educate staff for observance of safetyyprovision of Block Proving Axle Counters (BPAC), Auxiliary Warning System (AWS), Light Emitting Diode (LED) Signals, Vigilance Control Device (VCD), Train Protection and WaJiiing System (TPWS), Anti Collision Device (ACD), etc.

(e) Budgetary allocations are made under different Demands which represent various activities on the Railways. Expenditure is made on these activities which comprises of various aspects of Railway working including safety. Since most activities are composite in nature, separate share of expenditure on all items of safety is not maintained. However, during the last three years approximately Rs. 15,767 crores have been spent on some of the identified safety related works.

Telecommunication system of railways

4009. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways still require its own telecom system which has become old and obsolete;

(b) whether in view of advancement in telecommunications, Railways intend to modernize its telecommunication system; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI): (a) Railways' need for their own captive telecom system is inescapable for meeting operational, safety and administrative communication requirements. In recent past, Railways have already upgraded most of their communication network by providing Optic Fibre Communication.

(b) and (c) Up-gradation of telecom infrastructure is a continuous process. As of March, 2012, Railways have laid optic fibre cables on 40,558 route kilometers. Railways have also provided Mobile Train Radio Communication on 1705 route kilometers and setup their own satellite hub for extending communication to remote and inaccessible areas.