

Centre to decide on new freight corridors soon: Railway Board

DHRUVAKSH SAHA

New Delhi, 25 August

The Ministry of Railways will soon decide on taking up three proposed dedicated freight corridors (DFCs), worth at least ₹2.35 trillion, chairman and chief executive officer of the railway board, Anil Kumar Lahoti, said on Friday.

Lahoti was speaking during an internal review of the Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India (DFCCIL) when he informed the chief general managers of the public-sector undertaking (PSU) that the railway board had received detailed project reports (DPRs) for the new corridors.

The three proposed corridors — East-West Corridor, North-South Corridor,

and East Coast Corridor were conceptualised in 2020 in the wake of the Centre's aim to increase the modal share of railways to 45 per cent in national logistics by 2030 from the present 27 per cent.

A DPR is the foundational document for any infrastructure project to be undertaken. It contains geographical estimates, location surveys, compliance burdens, and financial assessments.

Planning for the corridors took a long time due to uncertainties over the future of the plan along with a change in approach by the railway board, where it sought an alternative approach to enhancing existing corridors over building new DFCs, this paper had reported in May 2022.

The proposed 1,115-kilometre (km)

East Coast Corridor starts from Kharagpur (near Hijli station of IR), passes through Rupsa, Jakhapura, Haridaspur, Rajatgarh, Khurda Road, Naupada, Viza Nagar, Visakhapatnam and ends near north of Vijayawada Station.

The proposed East-West DFC is planned between Kolkata (Andal/Dankuni) and Bhusawal in Maharashtra, with an approximate length of 1,868 kilometre. This was earlier expected to be integrated with the partly operational eastern DFC which was to be built up to Andal. However, the Union Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs recently decided to scrap the DFC and build regular rail tracks from Bihar to Andal.