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Title: Need to upgrade the railway stations between Naupada and Parlakimedi in Behrampur Parliamentary Constituency, Odisha.

**SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU (BEHRAMPUR):** Sir, the Parlakimedi Light Railway was a two-foot six-inch gauge Railway. The Raja of Parlakimedi decided to connect his capital with Naupada, which was only 40 kms. away. With the Government giving its sanction in 1898, its work began fully. The line was opened to traffic in 1900. In the starting years, the Parlakimedi Railway had incurred losses, but after 1910 it started making marginal profits and after 1924-1925 the profits increased. This motivated the Raja to extend the line to Gunupur in two phases in 1929 and 1931.

After India's Independence, it was merged with the North Eastern Railways. Surveys were undertaken for broad-gauge conversion. With effect from 1 April, 2003, it became a part of the newly formed East Coast Railways. The line was finally closed for gauge conversion on 9 June, 2004. Services were restarted on 22 August, 2011 with the introduction of Puri-Gunupur Passenger.

The stations between Naupada and Parlakimedi are not upgraded so far and are still in old pattern, which Raja of Parlakimedi had developed. Parlakimedi is the main railway station of Gajapati District and people are demanding for the development of the railway station.

Therefore, through you, I would request the hon. Minister of Railways to upgrade the railway stations in this route, particularly, Parlakimedi. Our hon. Chief Minister, Shri Naveen Patnaik, has also

written a letter to the hon. Railway Minister for development of all these stations. Thank you.