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Title: Need to take up the construction work of Thiruvarur-Thiruthuraipoondi-Pattukottai rail line in Tamil Nadu on priority basis.

SHRI A.K.S. VIJAYAN (NAGAPATTINAM): I would like to draw the kind attention of the Hon'ble Minister of Railways about one of the most important pending proposal in respect of Nagapattinam, Tamil Nadu.

The gauge conversion of Thiruvarur-Thiruthuraipoondi-Pattukottai segment of Thiruvarur- Karaikudi has been left out in the budget, 2012-13. This segment ends at Thiruvarur which has already been converted into broadgauge. On Thiruvarur-Thiruthuraipoondi-Pattukottai line lies the very famous 800 years old Dargah at Muthupettai, which attracts pilgrims from all over the country. Moreover this area is one of the salt producing areas of the county. I have raised this issue in the Parliament on several occasions during the last 10 years. I have also written so many letters to different Railway Ministers in this regard but the demand still remains unaddressed.

The Railways are going to take up the work of Karaikudi-Pattukottai line first, which is gross injustice to the people of my Parliamentary Constituency. Starting first the Karaikudi-Pattukottai line is like laying steps on a hill from top to bottom whereas it is prudent to start the work from bottom to top from engineering point of view. I, therefore, request the Ministry of Railways to start first Thiruvarur-Thiruthuraipoondi- Pattukottai line instead of the present proposal of starting first the Karaikudi-Pattukottai gauge conversion work. This is relevant if Thiruvarur-Thiruthuraipoondi-Pattukottai line is completed, which is of approximately 70 kms. only.

Hence, I urge upon the Railway Minister to take up the work on Thiruvarur-Thiruthuraipoondi-Pattukottai line on top priority basis so that the people of these areas can be benefited to a great extent.