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Title: Need to set up a railway zone in Vishakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh.

SHRI RAM MOHAN NAIDU KINJARAPU (SRIKAKULAM): Under the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014 the Government of India had assured the people of Andhra Pradesh a new railway zone comprising three divisions, viz., Guntur, Guntakal and Viiayawada, with its headquarters at Visakhapatnam. Under the current arrangement, these areas fall under the Waltair Division of the East Coast Railways and contribute about 50% of the revenue of the Waltair division.

Visakhapatnam is one of the fastest growing cities today and hosts several reputed organisations like Eastern Naval Command, NSTL, BHEL, BARC, HPCL Refinery, Hinduja Power Project etc. The Visakhapatnam Port is the second largest port in the country in terms of cargo-handling. The steel plant at Visakhapatnam, a Navratna PSU, is the second-largest state-owned steel producing unit in the country. Moreover, there is also an upcoming IIM in Visakhapatnam, which foresees a definite rise in passenger traffic to Visakhapatnam. Apart from all this, the historical, cultural and tourism-related significance of Visakhapatnam cannot be overstated.

In the background of the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh, formation of a new railway zone for us has become crucial because the headquarters of the South Central Railway is at Secunderabad which is now in the State of Telangana. The connectivity that the new zone will provide to less-developed regions of Andhra Pradesh will boost overall growth of the state, and help bridge any loss suffered by us due to the hasty bifurcation.

Taking cognizance of all these issues, along with the full co-operation of the State Government, I hereby request the Government to make the necessary announcements and arrangements regarding the same at the earliest.