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Title: Need to create a new Railway Zone with headquarters at Visakhapatnam.

SHRI MUTHAMSETTI SRINIVASA RAO (AVANTHI) (ANAKAPALLI): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to raise this matter of an urgent public importance during 'Zero Hour'.

For almost a decade, there has been a demand for a new Railway Zone with Headquarters at Visakhapatnam. The Government of India assured in the Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Bill, 2014 that a new Railway Zone would be set up in Andhra Pradesh comprising three Divisions, namely, Vijayawada, Guntur, Guntakal and the Waltair Division of the East Coast Railway.

The total earnings of the Waltair Division is about Rs.6,280 crore in 2013-14, which is about 50 per cent of the total annual revenue of the East Coast Railway Zone.

Visakhapatnam has a natural advantage of having two Major Ports. Abundant Land Bank is readily available near the Visakhapatnam Railway Station. The Waltair Division has the biggest loco shed and an excellent Coach Maintenance Depot.

Visakhapatnam is the fastest growing city in Asia having several reputed organizations like the Eastern Naval Command, NSTL, BHEL, BARC, HPCL Refinery, Hinduja Power Project, etc. The present Waltair Railway Division has all the medical, educational and sports infrastructure facilities to meet the requirements of a new Railway Zone.

After the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh, the formation of a new Railway Zone in Andhra Pradesh has become a necessity as the Headquarters of the South Central Railway is located at Secunderabad of the Telangana State. It is obvious to join three Divisions of the South Central Railway with the Waltair Division of the East Coast Railway and give Andhra Pradesh a new Railway Zone. Visakhapatnam is the ideal choice for locating the Headquarters of the proposed new Railway Zone.

Sir, today our Andhra Pradesh people expected a lot from the Railway Budget but they are a little bit disappointed. So, I would urge upon the Government of India, through you, Sir, to announce the creation of a new Railway Zone with Headquarters at Visakhapatnam without any further delay.

Thank you.