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title: Need to set up a new Railway Zone in Vishakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh.

SHRI MUTHAMSETTI SRINIVASA RAO (AVANTHI) (ANAKAPALLI): The Government of India had assured, in the A.P. Reorganization Bill, 2014, that a new Railway Zone will be set up in Andhra Pradesh comprising three Divisions, namely, Vijayawada, Guntur and Guntakal and the Waltair Division of the East Coast Railway.

For almost a decade, there has been a demand for setting up a new Railway Zone with Visakhapatnam as its Headquarters. At present Waltair Division is the highest Revenue earner in the East Coast Railway Zone and the total earnings of the Waltair Division is about Rs. 6,280 crores in 2013-14 i.e., about 50% of the total annual revenue of the East Coast Railway Zone.

Visakhapatnam has natural advantage of having two Major Ports, abundant land bank is readily available near Visakhapatnam Railway Station. Waltair Division has the biggest Loco Shed and has an excellent Coach Maintenance Depot.

Visakhapatnam is the fastest growing city in Asia having several reputed organizations like Eastern Naval Command, NSTL, BHEL, BARC, HPCL Refinery, Hinduja Power Project, etc. and the present Waltair Railway Division has all facilities like Medical, Educational, Sports, Infrastructure, etc. to meet the requirements of the 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 Telangana State. It is obvious to integrate Waltair Division of the East Coast Railway with three Divisions of South Central Railway and give Andhra Pradesh a new Railway Zone, and Visakhapatnam is the ideal choice for locating the Headquarters of the proposed New Railway Zone.

In view of the natural advantages, I urge upon the Government to announce the creation of a New Railway Zone with Headquarters at Visakhapatnam without any further delay.