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Title: Regarding providing permission from Environment Ministry for Hubli-Ankola railway project in Karnataka.

SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI (DHARWAD): Madam, you are quite aware that Railway is playing a pivotal role in overall development of the country. One of such projects is Hubli-Ankola railway line the foundation stone of which was laid by Shri Vajpayee in 2002. Subsequently, in 2004 the Ministry of Environment rejected the proposal saying that it destroys the prime forest land. We represented the Environment Ministry and it suggested the User Agency Railways to review the entire project. The Railway reviewed it and 920 hectare of the forest land was reduced to 700 hectares. It was once again presented to the Environment Ministry. In the meanwhile people went to the Green Bench. Recently, the Green Bench has rejected it.

My humble submission to the Ministry of Environment is, this is one of the important lines where the Karnataka Government is also ready to share 50 per cent of the cost of the project. It connects the hinterland to the West coast and also provides boost for the trade and commerce community from various parts of the country. I very humbly suggest the Environment Ministry to go for a review in the Green Bench and properly argue the case so as to provide permission for Hubli-Ankola railway project in Karnataka, which is a very important project connecting hinterland to the West coast.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Shivkumar Udasi is permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri Pralhad Joshi.