

Regarding Railway Line between Kotipalli and Kakinada

SHRI G. M. HARISH BALAYOGI (AMALAPURAM): Madam, I am deeply grateful for this opportunity to raise an urgent and heartfelt matter on behalf of my constituency from Konaseema district regarding the completion of the Kotipalli-Narasapur railway line.

Today, I stand before you not only as an elected representative of about 20 lakh people from Konaseema but also as a devoted son striving to realize his father's cherished dream. I joined politics with one objective, that is, to fulfil the Balayogi *Sankalpam* which is to unlock the true potential of our Konaseema and bring a holistic development to the region.

I am sure that all the Members of this august House are aware that my father, Shri G. M. C. Balayogi, served as the Speaker of the Lok Sabha from 1998-2002 and was the youngest to ever hold this esteemed position. He was a dedicated three-term MP from Amalapuram. While his legacy includes remarkable contributions to education, the establishment of MPLADS, and even a courageous mission to meet Saddam Hussein to secure the release of fishermen, his heart always belonged to Amalapuram. His vision was to develop infrastructure, particularly railway lines, to uplift the lives of his beloved people.

A railway line between Kotipalli and Kakinada existed in pre-Independence India but was dismantled by the British during World War II. It was during my father's tenure as an MP that the dream of reviving a railway line in the Konaseema region gained traction. The NDA government at that time sanctioned the construction of a railway line connecting Magam, Amalapuram, Peruru, Pasarlupudi, Jaggannapeta, and Razole at an estimated cost of Rs. 2,120 crores.

However, the progress of this vital 57-km railway line has been stalled in the recent years due to the callous indifference and gross negligence of the YSRCP Government in Andhra Pradesh. Their failure to release 25 per cent share of the project's costs, contributing a mere amount of Rs. 22.69 crore, out of an outstanding amount of Rs. 358 crore, is a grave injustice. Furthermore, only 44 per cent of the necessary land acquisition has been completed as on February 2022.

Madam, I would like to tell you that this railway project also will bring in significant development in my district. It will help boost the tourism. It will also help the coconut processing industry. It will also enhance aquaculture profitability.

In conclusion, I would like to say that the State of Andhra Pradesh has endured severe financial distress due to the reckless and destructive financial policies of the YSRCP Government over the past five years. They have plundered our State and left it in utter financial ruin. Therefore, I would like to urge the hon. Railway Minister and the hon. Finance Minister to allocate the necessary funds for the completion of the railway line, increase the Central-State share and expedite the process. I am confident that unlike the previous Government, we will ensure full cooperation with the Centre to see this project through to completion.