

Title: Need to allocate adequate funds for gauge conversion work between Gadag and Bijapur in Karnataka-laid.

SHRI R.S. PATIL (BAGALKOT): It is during 1993 that the conversion of metre gauge into broad gauge between Gadag and Bijapur was taken up. But till today *i.e.* after 7 years, there is no progress in this regard. This railway line links Hubli-Dharwar on one side and Sholapur on the other. Hence it is a very important line not only for North Karnataka but also for the whole of South India. Lime Stone, Iron Ore have to be transported to various industries daily and at present trucks are the only mode of transportation, which is very costly. In addition to this, the above gauge conversion reduces the distances of Bangalore-New Delhi route by more than 150 kms. Hence there is urgency to complete this long awaited conversion work. But, so far, only a meagre amount has been allocated for this work.

Therefore, I urge upon the hon. Railway Minister to immediately allocate at least 100 crores of rupees for this gauge conversion work between Gadag and Bijapur at the earliest.