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Title : Need to provide adequate funds for the ongoing railway gauge conversion projects in Tamil Nadu.

SHRI D. VENUGOPAL (TIRUVANNAMALAI): In order to have uni-gauge Railway System all over the country, several ambitious gauge conversion schemes were announced by the Railways in 1991. The southern Railway which has been efficiently functioning over the years got certain projects pertaining to gauge conversion. But many of the projects are yet to be completed. For instance, Tiruchi-Nagore gauge conversion announced in the early set of projects has not been completed fully as yet. It may be pointed out that many of the railway schemes in Tamil Nadu are pending for want of funds. The pending gauge conversion work between Katpadi and Villupuram via Tiruvannamalai is proceeding at a slow pace for many years now This has greatly affected the economic and industrial growth of the area as the metre gauge rail service has been suspended for long. Since people have to depend entirely on road transport, road traffic is often found clogged. This causes great inconvenience to the traveling public specially the students and the office goers. Road-over-bridge in Jolarpettai for which the foundation stone was already laid, has not taken off. The construction work has not been taken up for want of allocation of funds for the project. Hence, I urge upon the Railway Ministry to apportion adequate funds for the ongoing schemes in Tamil Nadu and complete them without any further delay.