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Title: Need to develop old Godavari Bridge, known as Havaloc Bridge, as a tourist spot linking Rajahmundry and Kovvur in Andhra Pradesh.

SHRI ARUNA KUMAR VUNDAVALLI (RAJAHMUNDARY): I would like to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister of Railways regarding development of Old Godavari Bridge, known as Havelock Bridge, as Tourist Spot and Development of an Integrated Tourism Development Project at Rajahmundry & Kovvur in Andhra Pradesh.

The historical Old Godavari Bridge is Asia's largest rail-cum-road bridge on the river Godavari linking kovvur and Rajahmundry which is considered to be an engineering feat. Since this first rail Bridge outlived its purpose by serving for more than 100 years, train services on this bridge were suspended from the year 1997 with the commissioning of Third Godavari Bridge. Today, the First Godavari Bridge still stands as a monument of human endeavor and skill. The bridge spans a length of 2.74 Kms. Since the bridge has been abandoned, it has been decided by the Government of Andhra Pradesh to explore the possibility of converting the same as Tourism Spot on Build, Operate and Transfer basis in Public Private partnership mode through the Tourism Department for which, the Ministry of Railways consented to hand over the bridge to the Tourism Department along with the surrounding properties belonging to Railways towards Rajahmundry and Kovvur. But, no concrete action has been initiated on this issue.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh is ready to bear some incidental expenses like the entire cost of the development and maintenance of the bridge and its associated structure, the entire responsibility for ensuring the safety of the structure and proper maintenance and repairs. Moreover, the State Tourism Department has agreed to pay the lease rent of Rs. 1.00 lakh per annum payable to the Railways towards utilization of the bridge and the associated land.

I urge upon the Government to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Department of Tourism, Government of Andhra Pradesh and hand over the bridge to them for development of the area as a tourist place.