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Title: Need to extend gauge conversion of railway line from Naupada (Andhra Pradesh) to Gunupur (Odisha) upto Therubali.

DR. SIDHANT MOHAPATRA (BERHAMPUR): The gauge conversion of Naupada (Andhra Pradesh) to Gunupur (Odisha) has been completed but the extension of 60 Km up to Therubali is yet to be taken up. Hence, the purpose and benefit of gauge conversion has not brought about the desired benefits to Railways and the society.

The gauge conversion of rail line from Naupada to Gunupur, if extended up to Therubali, will connect two major thorough lines (Chennai-Howrah & Visakhapatnam-Raipur). This line will have port connectivity with Gopalpur Port to the hinterlands of South Odisha, Chattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh.

Industrial units like NALCO, Vedanta, Utkal Alumina etc. will be the major users for transportation of their minerals. Railway will be equally benefited through its freight revenue. This line will bring a remarkable change in the socio-economic condition of tribal people living in KBK & Gajapati districts of Odisha, Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh and part of Chhattisgarh.

This line will also help contain the Maoist activities of three states of Andhra Pradesh, Odisha & Chhattisgarh. Hence, I urge upon the minister of Railways to take the necessary step in this regard at the earliest.