

Sixteenth Loksabha

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Title: Regarding setting up of a new Railway Zone in Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

SHRI MUTHAMSETTI SRINIVASA RAO (AVANTHI) (ANAKAPALLI): The Government of India has assured in the A. P. Reorganisation Bill, 2014, that a new railway zone will be set up in Andhra Pradesh comprising three divisions, namely, Vijayawada, Guntur, Guntakal and the Waltair Division of the East Coast Railway.

For almost a decade, there has been a demand for a new railway zone for Visakhapatnam as its headquarters as the present Waltair Division is the source of highest revenue in the East Coast Railway Zone. The total revenue from the Waltair Division is about Rs. 6,280 crore in 2013-14 i.e. about 50 per cent of the total annual revenue of the East Coast Railway Zone.

Respected Madam Speaker, Visakhapatnam has a natural advantage of having two major ports and an abundant land bank is readily available near the Visakhapatnam Railway Station. The Waltair Division has the biggest loco-shed and an excellent Coach Maintenance Depot.

Visakhapatnam is the fastest growing city in Asia having several reputed organisations like Eastern Naval Command, NSTI, BHEL, BARC, HPCL refinery, Hinduja Power Project etc. and the present Waltair Railway Division has all medical, educational, sports infrastructure etc. to meet the requirements of a new railway zone.

After the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh, the formation of a new railway zone in Andhra Pradesh has become a necessity as the headquarters of the South-Central Railway is located at Secunderabad of Telangana State. It is obvious to integrate Waltair Division of the East Coast Railway with three divisions of South-Central Railway and give Andhra

Pradesh a new railway zone. Visakhapatnam is the ideal choice for locating the headquarters of the proposed new railway zone.

In view of the natural advantages, I urge upon the Government to announce the creation of a new railway zone with headquarters at Visakhapatnam without any further delay. This will assuage the feelings to some extent on separation of Andhra Pradesh.