

State to expedite Angul-Sukinda railway corridor

PBD BUREAU

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CONSIDERING the upcoming mega steel projects with a vast population in Angul-Sukinda region, the State Government has decided to expedite the proposed Angul-Sukinda new broad gauge rail corridor.

Reviewing the progress of the project at a meeting in the state secretariat, Chief Secretary Bijay Kumar Patnaik called upon the officials, including those from East Coast Railways to work extra time to see the project through as this new line will serve as a link between coal-fields in Talcher-Banspani-Sukinda region and provide movement of coal and iron ore in both directions.

Senior railway officials present at the meeting tabled the present status of the project. It was revealed that the railway line has been envisaged in the light of a number of mega steel plants coming up in this region.

According to East Coast Railway sources, it will be a reliable, economic and faster alternative for passenger transport which

will benefit around one crore of people either directly or indirectly.

Besides, the project will generate nearly 14 lakh man-days of employment during the construction phase also. The estimated cost of the proposed 102-km railway line is pegged at Rs 1100 crore.

The new rail route will serve three districts namely, Angul, Dhenkanal and Jajpur. The total traffic projection of the project has been estimated at 70.28 million tonne.

The new railway line will cater to the needs of a number of industries, including Bhusan Steel, Uttam Galva Steel, Jindal Stainless Steel Ltd, Visa Industries, Tata Steel, Kalinganagar, Monnet Ispat & Energy, ArcelorMittal India and Rungta Mines. While the location survey has been completed, the alignment of railway line has been finalized.

This apart, construction of a bridge on river Brahmani is in full swing.

The Government has listed out the 1676 acres of land for acquisition of which 1205 acres are private land, 220 acres Government land and 251 acres forest land.

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The noticeable feature of the proposed project is that there is no displacement. The project is being implemented in PPP mode in partnership between Rail Vikash Nigam Ltd., Odisha Government, Jindal Steel & Power Ltd and Bhusan Steel & Power Ltd. It was decided at the meeting that the cost of the Government land will be rationalized with the cost of the private lands.

The Chief Secretary asked the Revenue Department to expedite the process of land acquisition with the rationalized and acceptable prices. He also asked the concerned district administrations to provide active support in getting physical possession of acquired land. The Committee has proposed Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC) to have equity participation in the project.