

## Three hurdles in rail project path

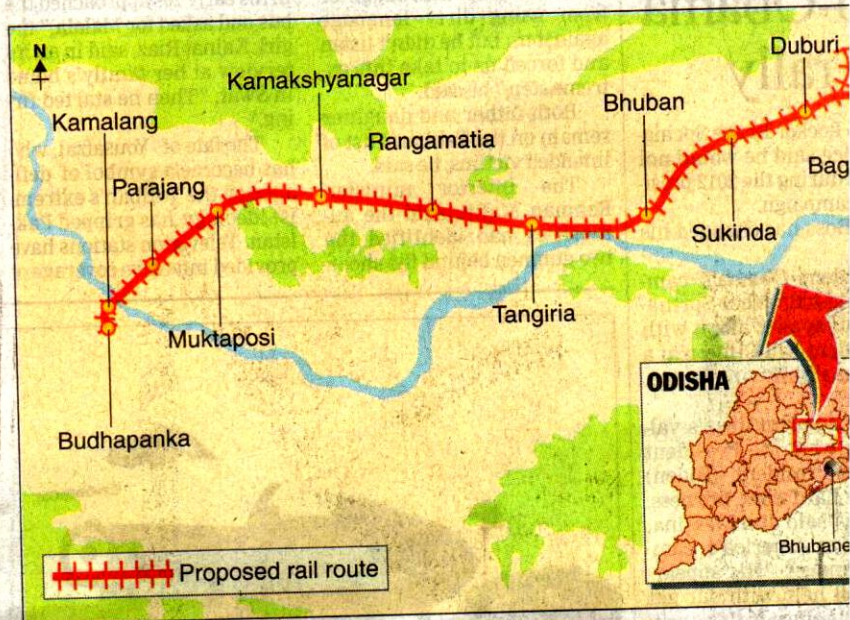
SUBRAT DAS

**Bhubaneswar, Oct. 13:** Early land acquisition and equity support from the state government and private user industries hold the key to execution of the Rs 1,100-crore Angul-Duburi-Sukinda railway line project.

The 102-km railway line project, being executed in public-private-partnership, is expected to serve as the lifeline for the Angul-Sukinda mining belt and the upcoming Kalinga Nagar industrial complex. It will also provide rail connectivity to Kamakhya Nagar and Bhuban in Dhenkanal district.

The new line will connect Talcher coalfields with the iron ore mines in Banspani. The new track is projected to ferry 70 million tonnes of cargo a year.

When the project was conceived, the partners were to contribute Rs 420 crore towards equity participation, while the remaining Rs 680 crore was to come from the market. For the execution of the project, Angul-Sukinda Railway Limited was set up. According to the agreement, Rail Vikash Nigam Limited controls 45 per cent of the total equity, Jindal Steel & Power 25 per cent, Bhusan Steel & Power 20 per cent and



the state government undertakings 10 per cent.

However, the state government is miffed with Bhusan Steels & Power as it has so far contributed only Rs 10 crore against its share of Rs 84 crore. The Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation has already contributed 1 per cent. The remaining 9 per cent of the state government's equity will shortly come from the Odisha Mining Corporation.

Chief secretary Bijay Patnaik has asked Bhusan Steels

to pay the amount without any further delay. Official sources said the Odisha government would ask the mining corporation to meet the equity shortfall.

Land acquisition remains the other hurdle. Of the required 1,676 acres, private individuals own 1,205 acres, the government 220 acres and 251 acres is forestland.

"So far, only 50 acres belonging to private individuals have been acquired. Though not a single person will be displaced, people living in 49 vil-

lages in Dhenkanal, Angul and 13 in Jajpur districts will lose their rural land," said an official.

The project also faces a peculiar problem with eminent domain. Land being valued higher than private land has been decided by the government would reassemble value. "If land is available the earliest, we will start construction first and complete it within a few years," said managing director of Angul-Sukinda Railway Limited D.K. Samant