

A Big Boost for Chhattisgarh: Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Inaugurates Railway Line in the Maoist Heartland

Ministry of Railways

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Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi recently inaugurated a railway line and passenger train service in the insurgency-infested Kanker district in North Bastar, Chhattisgarh. The much-awaited railway line, which connects Dallirajhara in Balod district to Bhanupratappur in North Bastar was flagged off by the Prime Minister via video-conferencing on the birth anniversary of the architect of Constitution Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar at village Jangla in Bijapur district. The inaugural passenger train was run by all – women staff.

The railway track is part of the rail project linking Dallirajhara – Rowghat – Jagdalpur, which is 235 km long. With the inauguration of the new line, North Bastar (Kanker) is linked to Durg – Raipur directly. Dallirajhara-Rowghat – Jagdalpur line will reduce rail distance between Raipur to Jagdalpur by about 260 kms. This will boost socio-economic interaction between the capital of Chattisgarh and backward areas in and around Bastar region.

Apart from boosting people to people interaction, this railway line will contribute to exploration and development of iron ore-rich Rowghat. At present Bhilai Steel Plant gets its iron-ore supplies from Dallirajhara mines. Iron ore reserves of these mines are depleting day by day. In future, Rowghat mines will be the primary source of iron ore for Bhilai Steel Plant.

Dallirajhara – Rowghat – Jagdalpur project is being executed in two phases Dallirajhara to Rowghat (95 kms) and Rowghat to Jagdalpur(140kms). The first phase is being executed by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited, a PSU under the Ministry of Railways. It is being funded completely by Steel Authority of India Limited. Out of total 95 kms two sections, Dallirajhara – Rowghat and Rowghat – Bhanupratappur, 17 kms each has been completed and dedicated to the nation. Work on the remaining section of 60 kms is in progress. The second phase between Rowghat to Jagdalpur (140 Kms)is being executed by IRCON, , a PSU under the Ministry of Railways. Cost of this phase is being shared between IRCON(26%), NMDC(43%), SAIL(21%) and Govt. of Chhattisgarh(10%).

This project after completion will bring remote, densely forested areas over rail map of Chhattisgarh. Rowghat will develop as growth point with forward and backward linkages and will have the overall positive impact on economic development of surrounding region. As this line will connect people of this region to Capital City Raipur, it would help open new opportunities of higher education and tertiary medical care for the people of this region. This rail line can truly be said as “Pragati Ki Railgaadi” for people of this region.

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