

**Special Railway Zone at Visakhapatnam**

\*282. SHRI T. G. VENKATESH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has decided to announce a Special Railway Zone at Visakhapatnam, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government of Andhra Pradesh has once again requested the Central Government for establishment of Railway Zone at Visakhapatnam as promised by the Centre;

(c) the bottlenecks being faced by Government in this regard; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government for early establishment of the same in view of the long pendency thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) to (d) As per Item 8 of Schedule 13 (Infrastructure) of Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act, 2014, Ministry of Railways constituted a Committee of senior officers to, *inter alia*, examine the feasibility of establishing a new Railway zone in the successor State of Andhra Pradesh. The Committee has been asked to consult various stakeholders, including the Members of Parliament, State Governments, etc. before a final decision is taken.

Request for setting up a new Railway Zone at Visakhapatnam has been received from Chief Minister, Government of Andhra Pradesh *vide* his letter dated 17.5.2016.

**Constitution of Handloom Textiles Export Promotion Board**

\*283. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Handloom Textiles are quite popular in the international market; and

(b) whether the Ministry would consider constituting a Handloom Textiles Export Promotion Board to specifically focus on the promotion, development and export of handlooms and if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No Sir, as all the handloom export related concerns are being taken care of by the Handloom Export Promotion Council (HEPC) having about 1450 member exporters spread across the country.