

Indian Railways Approves ₹755 Crore Champa-Korba Third Line Project to Enhance Capacity on Key Coal Corridor

High-Density Rail Corridor Upgrade to Support Growing Coal Movement, Additional Freight Traffic and Enhance Network Capacity

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In a major boost to railway capacity augmentation in the coal-rich regions of India, Indian Railways has approved the Champa-Korba Third Line Project (42 km) of South East Central Railway (SECR) at an estimated cost of ₹755 crore.

The project involves construction of a third railway line between Champa and Korba, excluding the already sanctioned Madwarani-Saragbundia section. The corridor has been identified under Indian Railways' Mission 3000 MT and High-Density Network (HDN) Corridor initiatives aimed at strengthening freight movement and supporting the country's growing energy requirements.

Korba, widely known as the "Power Capital of India," hosts a large number of thermal power plants and is one of the most important coal transportation hubs in the country. The Champa-Korba section serves as a critical rail link connecting the coalfields of South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL) and Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) with the national rail network and the Mumbai-Howrah High Density Corridor.

At present, the section carries around 10 pairs of passenger trains and approximately 55 pairs of freight trains daily. The region's combined coal production capacity of SECL and MCL is about 247 Million Tonnes Per Annum (MTPA) and is projected to rise to nearly 450 MTPA, adding around 200 MTPA of additional coal traffic in the coming years.

The third line project will significantly enhance carrying capacity, improve operational flexibility and ensure faster movement of both freight and passenger trains.

Upon completion, the project is expected to facilitate operation of two additional passenger trains in each direction every day and support additional freight movement of 5.95 MTPA. The project is also projected to generate additional annual net earnings of approximately ₹85 crore, including ₹82 crore from freight traffic and ₹3 crore from coaching services.

The third line will also reduce detention of freight trains, which currently face delays of around five minutes in each direction, resulting in operational savings estimated at ₹1.30 crore annually.

The Champa-Korba Third Line Project is another significant step in Indian Railways' ongoing efforts to expand network capacity, improve freight efficiency, enhance passenger services and support the nation's infrastructure and energy development goals.

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