



CM Naveen Patnaik said Odisha to protest Centre's move to cede Waltair Railway division from jurisdiction of ECoR

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Bhubaneswar: The State Government has taken seriously of the Centre's move to cede the Waltair Railway division from the jurisdiction of the East Coast Railway (ECoR) headquartered in Odisha and annex it in the South-Central Zone.

"The interest of the State would be protected at any cost and, if necessary, we will draw the attention of the Railway Minister to stall the move," Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said while replying to a Media query. Notably, Patnaik had met Union Railway Minister DV Sadananda Gowda and discussed with him about various Railway projects taken up in Odisha while presenting States budgetary demand of Rs 3,160 crore on Wednesday. He seemed not to have an inkling of such a move. Commerce and Transport Minister Ramesh Chandra Majhi also reacted in the same vein. "There was no question of allowing the Waltair division to cede from the ECoR," Majhi said.

He said the State would fight to retain Waltair division under the ECoR jurisdiction since the Railways was collecting huge revenue to the tune of Rs 1,400 crore annually. Besides, Odisha has already moved the Union Government to bring more Railway divisions under the ECoR, he said. The head office of the Waltair division under ECoR is now at Visakhapatnam.

The demand for creation of a railway zone at Vishakhapatnam was raised during the agitation for formation of the Telangana State.

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