

recently in New Delhi. In pursuance of its declared objective to eradicate destitution within a time frame of 10 years, Government will no doubt take into account all available information and suggestions for the achievement of this objective.

Rated Capacity of Salem Steel Plant

730. SHRI R. KOLANTHAIVELU: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the progress in respect of the Salem Steel Plant;

(b) the rated capacity of the plant and the expected time of commencement of production;

(c) whether the project is going according to schedule; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and the remedial action taken?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI BIJU PATNAIK): (a) In March, 1977, Government approved the first stage of Salem Steel Project involving an investment of Rs. 126.61 crores.

Necessary preparatory work and infra-structure facilities for the first stage of the project have been almost completed. Expenditure on the project so far amounts to Rs. 13.30 crores.

Offers have been received from international stainless steel makers for supply of production know-how.

(b) The rated capacity of the first stage of the plant is expected to be 3,000 tonnes of cold rolled stainless steel flat products per year. Production is expected to commence towards the end of 1981.

(c) All possible measures are being taken to complete the project according to schedule.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Techno-Economic Treaties with Foreign Countries for Economic Development

731. SHRI R. KOLANTHAIVELU: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the precise developments in respect of Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation following recent visit of Mr. Gromyko;

(b) whether arrangements and agreements made are conducive to increased techno-economic support from Soviet Union; and

(c) whether in view of the success of the Treaty, Government propose to have similar treaties with other Powers so as to ensure increased techno-economic support for our economic development?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE): (a) and (b). During the visit of Mr. A. A. Gromyko, Foreign Minister of USSR, to India from April 25 to 27, 1977, the two sides reiterated their desire not only to preserve the traditional friendship and cooperation between India and USSR, but to strengthen it further in the spirit of the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation. The following agreements on bilateral co-operation were concluded during the visit:

(i) Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation;

(ii) Agreement on cooperation in the establishment of Troposcatter Communication Link (for the establishment of reliable telegraph and telephone communication between the two countries);

(iii) Agreement on the mutual exchange of goods for the year 1977.

(c) Government of India will continue to develop relations of friendship and co-operation with all countries