

lakh tonnes in 1990-91 in SAIL plants due to coking coal shortage, poor quality and blend fluctuations.

(d) Steps taken to improve coking coal supply include constant interaction with Coal India Limited, import of coking coal and its better management and constant monitoring of railway movement of coal.

The steps taken for increasing steel production include:

Modernisation of steel plants and improved maintenance of plant and equipment for achieving increased productivity.

Monitoring of supply of inputs, particularly coal and power, to the steel plants for ensuring uninterrupted production.

Increase in captive power generation.

Adoption of better technological and manpower discipline in SAIL plants.

Delicensing of the steel sector, with certain conditions where substantial foreign exchange is involved, so as to allow establishment of new plants in the private sector.

Security of Passengers on Trains in Punjab

1230. SHRI UDAYSING RAO GAIKWAD: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the mass killings of the railway passengers in Punjab during June, 1991, and

(b) if no, the steps being taken by the Union Government for the safety of passengers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

(SHRI M. M. JACOB): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Security has been provided to the running trains and at Railway stations and patrolling of railway-tracks has been intensified.

Expansion of Indian Telephone Industries Unit at Palakkad

1231. SHRI V. S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have plans to expand or modernise the Indian Telephone Industries Unit at Palakkad in Kerala; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The work for expansion of capacity from 1.5 lakh lines to 2.6 lakh lines is in progress. Also it is proposed to modernise the plant to produce E10B Electronic Switching Equipment to latest technology during the Eighth Five Year Plan.

Parity in the rates of Sales Tax

1232. SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to the statement implementing the assurance given to Unstarred Question No. 2389 on August 23, 1990 and state:

(a) the details of the progress made in the matter of bringing about parity in the rates of sales tax on vehicles such as cars, buses and trucks;

(b) whether the Delhi Administration propose to take up the matter of bringing about parity in the rates of sales tax in the North Zone as a whole in respect of all the items to check the evasion of sales tax; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?