

(a) whether Government have recently increased coal cess in the North Eastern region of the country; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b) The Central Government does not levy any cess on coal.

According to available information Govt. of Meghalaya has been collecting Minerals Cess on coal at the following rates; —

1. Rs. 10.00 per tonne for the period from 1.10.1989 to 31.3.1993.

2 Rs. 35.00 per tonne for the period from 1.4.1993 to 31.1.1994.

3. Rs. 30.00 per tonne for the period w.e.f. 1.2.1994.

Govt. of Assam was levying a land tax of Rs. 100 per tonne of coal produced which has been withdrawn by them w.e.f. 1.2.1994. Consequently, royalty on coal produced in the State of Assam has been enhanced w.e.f. 25.3.1994 as follows:

Type of coal	Previous rates	Enhanced rates
Hand picked coal produced in the State of Assam	7.00	150.00
Ungraded Run of Mine coal produced in the State of Assam	6.50	120.00

Foreign collaboration to meet the demand of coal

775. SHRI V. RAJAN CHELLAPPA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have entered into foreign collaboration to meet the demand of coal in the country during 1993-94;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the category of coal which is not available in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b) Government have been taken securing foreign assistance from Countries like U.K., France, Germany, Canada, Australia with a view to increase coal production by way of getting technical and financial assistance, procuring larger capacity machinery and equipment which are not indigenously available. However, no

new contract was signed during 1993-94 to meet demand of coal in the country.

(c) Existing supply of low ash coking coal is not adequate to meet the demand of Steel Plants. This is being supplemented by import of low ash coking coal. In the year 1993-94, 6.80 m.t. of coking coal was imported for blending with indigenously available coking coal.

Demand of washed coal in this country

776. SHRI CHIMANBHAI HARI BHAI SHUKLA: Will the Minister of COAL, be pleased to state:

(a) whether the demand for washed coal is higher than its production;

(b) if so the average annual production of washed coal in the country in each plant;

(c) whether Government have received any proposal for setting up coal washeries in the country;