

(Area in lakhs ha.) % of Alkali

State/U.Ts.	Net Area sown	Area affected by alkali only	Area to total Net area sown
6 Madhya Pradesh . . . . .	193.11	1.64	0.85
7 Maharashtra . . . . .	180.19	0.59	0.33
8 Punjab . . . . .	42.15	7.18	17.03
9 Tamil Nadu . . . . .	55.47	0.04	0.07
10 Uttar Pradesh . . . . .	172.09	11.00	6.39
TOTAL :	1063.84	35.81	3.37

\*\*Includes the area of arid Rajasthan and Gujarat.

**High prices of Text-books**

\*260. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that high prices of books act as a disincentive for poor and middle class families to allow their children to pursue their studies;

(b) whether Government have taken any steps to make books available at cheap rates for students in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) In pursuance of the resolve expressed in the National Policy on Education, 1986 to make available quality books at low prices, several measures are continuing at Government level. The Central Government initiative for school students of classes I-XII is implemented through the National Council of Educational Research and Training, (NCERT). The pricing of NCERT text books

is done on a no-profit no-loss basis. The Council does not price its text books for classes I to VIII beyond Rs. 15/- and absorbs the losses, if any. The National Book Trust operates a scheme of subsidised publication of university level text/reference books and technical books of diploma level. The University Grants Commission also provides development grants to universities and colleges, *inter-alia*, for purchase of books by the institutions.

Till 31st March, 1990, the Central Government supplied white printing paper at subsidised rates to States and Union Territories for the production of school text books and exercise books to make them available to the students at reasonable prices.

(d) Does not arise.

2498. [Transferred to the 26th March, 1992].

**Removal of restrictions on imports**

2499. SHRI RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that free market access and removal of restrictions on imports in favour of the multinational and monopoly