

- (c) the extent to which the country has been benefited by the said conference; and
- (d) the details of the decisions of the said conference so far implemented?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) to (d) As per information provided by Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), the University and TERI have organised the International Conference on Digital Libraries during 23rd - 26th February, 2010 with the objective to provide a platform for interaction among experts, researchers, academics and students on the issue of bridging the digital divide through knowledge sharing. The Conference provided vision to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) enabled education, including web-based methodologies, etc. for furtherance of the objectives of Distance Learning. One of the major recommendations of the Conference was to strengthen ICT infrastructure. The Government has provided the broadband connectivity to 8500 colleges.

Refusal to renew student visas

*450. SHRI B.S. GNANADESIKAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Indian students are unable to return to Australia because of the collapse of several colleges, refusal to renew student visas and the violence against Indian community there; and
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government to help those students?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) As per the information furnished by High Commission of India in Australia, the reply is in the negative.

- (b) Does not arise.

Encroachment of railway land

*451. SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that a huge chunk of railway land in the country is under encroachment;
- (b) if so, the details of railway land illegally encroached by unauthorized persons, State-wise and district-wise;
- (c) the steps taken by Government to reclaim the land from such unauthorized encroachers, State-wise and district-wise during the last two years; and
- (d) the valuation of such land under unauthorized possession?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE): (a) Indian Railways have approximately 10.65 lakh acre of land, out of which 2460 acres of land, which constitutes 0.23% of total land holding, is under encroachment.

(b) to (d) Indian Railways' network is spread across the country. The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

MSP for pulses

*452. MS. MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken a bold initiative to promote production of pulses by raising their Minimum Support Price (MSP) between 14 and 30 per cent;

(b) whether the Prime Minister went beyond recommendations of the Committee for Agriculture Costs and Prices (CACP) in raising the MSP for pulses, particularly arhar;

(c) whether CACP has recommended MSP of Rs. 2800/- a quintal for arhar against Rs. 2300/- last year;

(d) if so, whether Government decided to fix it higher at Rs. 3,000/- an increase of roughly 30 per cent; and

(e) if so, to what extent this support price increase has given us dividends?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (e) The Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) of Kharif Pulses for 2010-11 season have been increased over the respective MSPs for 2009-10 season. The MSPs of Kharif pulses for 2009-10 and 2010-11 season are given below:

	(Rs. in quintal)	
Pulse	2009-10	2010-11
Arhar (Tur)	2300	3000
Moong	2760	3170
Urad	2520	2900

In case of Arhar (Tur), the MSP fixed by the Government is Rs. 3000 per quintal against Rs. 2800 per quintal recommended by the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP). In addition, for kharif pulses of 2010-11 season, an additional incentive is available to the farmers at the rate of Rs. 5 per kg. for tur, urad and moong sold to procurement agencies during the harvest/arrival period of two months.

The MSP fixed by the Government for Arhar (Tur) for 2010-11 is 30.4 percent higher compared to 2009-10. In case of moong and urad the increase has been 14.9 and 15.1 percent respectively.

The substantial increase in the MSPs of pulses is expected to incentivise farmers to increase their production.

Implementation of Right to Education Act

†*453. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.