

BETEL LEAF

7816. **Shri Vijay Kumar Yadav** : Will the Minister of Agriculture be pleased to state :

(a) whether good quality of Betel is grown in Nalanda and other Districts of Bihar;

(b) whether the Farmers are incurring heavy losses for the last so many years because of the insects damaging the crop; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to overcome this problem and to give financial assistance to such Farmers?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture (Shri Arvind Netam) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No report from any district of Bihar is received.

(c) The Central Government is providing assistance for plant protection equipments under betelvine development programme at 50% subsidy to a maximum limit of Rs. 500 each.

[English]

UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE

7817. **Shri R. Anbarasu** : Will the Minister of Human Resource Development be pleased to state :

(a) whether a two-day Open Universities Conference took place in Delhi and was attended by education experts from Fourteen countries;

(b) if so, the aims of the conference and consensus reached at it; and

(c) the criteria for finding funds for the purpose?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Education and Department of Culture) (Kumari Selja) : (a) According to the information furnished by the Indra Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), VIII Annual conference of Asian Association of Open Universities was held in New Delhi from 20-22 February, 1995. This was attended by Education experts from 17 countries.

(b) The Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU) has been conducting international conferences on different aspects of Open and Distance Learning to promote Distance Education in Asia. The theme of this conference was "Structure and Management of Open Learning Systems" and around 80 papers were presented in the Conference.

(c) As per the information given by IGNOU, for organising the Conference Registration Fee of US \$ 130 for AAOU members and US \$ 150 for non-AAOU members was prescribed. The UNESCO office for Asia & Pacific Region and the AAOU provided financial Assistance of US

\$ 3000 and US \$ 1000 respectively. The IGNOU also sanctioned Rs. 4.75 lakhs for the conference, but the actual expenditure of IGNOU was much less.

[Translation]

INSURANCE SCHEME

7818. **Dr. Amrit Lal Kalidas Patel** : Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state :

(a) the number of persons covered under the Railway Passengers' Insurance Scheme as on January 31, 1995, State-Wise; and

(b) the amount given to each person?

The Minister of Railways (Shri C.K. Jaffer Sharief) : (a) As on 31-1-95, 631 passengers who were killed or injured in train accidents or in untoward incidents as defined under Sections 124 and 124 A of the Railways Act, 1989 were covered under the Railway Passengers' Insurance Scheme which was launched w.e.f. 1-8-1994. Indian Railways do not maintain statistics State-Wise. However, railway-wise break up of the passengers covered under this scheme is as under :

Name of Railway	No. of Passengers
Central	83
Eastern	5
Northern	29
North Eastern	126
North-east Frontier	43
Southern	175
South Central	69
South Eastern	51
Western	50
Total	631

(b) The claimant, who may be the next of kin of the dead or injured or the authorised agent, is required to file the claim under Section 125 of the Indian Railways Act, 1989, with the Railway Claims Tribunal for claiming the compensation within one year from the date of accident. Compensation is paid to the claimant by the railway administration as and when cases are decreed by the Tribunal based on the evidence and facts.

Out of the 631 cases from 1-8-94 to 31-1-95, payment in seven cases amounting to Rs. 14,00,000/- @ Rs. 2 lakh per person and Rs. 40,938/- in two injury cases has been made. The rest are under adjudication with different Benches of Railway Claims Tribunal. Compensation will be