

year are 50 percent higher than those prevailing during the corresponding period of the last year;

(b) whether it is a fact that the prices of pulses sold by the Super Bazar and also the prices of wheat and rice in the wholesale market are substantially higher than those in the corresponding period of the last year; and

(c) if so, what remedial measures have been taken by Government in this regard ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI MOHAMMED USMAN ARIF) : (a) During the past few months the retail prices of potatoes in Delhi have been generally lower than that of last year.

(b) The retail prices of pulses sold by Super Bazar Delhi, during the past few months, with the exception of Arhar and Urad, have been generally lower than the same months last year. The prices of Arhar and Urad are higher than that of last year. The wholesale prices of rice and wheat this year in the Delhi Market are higher than that of last year.

(c) Government is keeping a continuous watch on the movement of prices and availability of essential commodities. The main thrust of the Government policy is to increase the production of essential commodities particularly those in short supply. Special efforts are being made to increase the production of pulses and oilseeds. The other measures being adopted by the Government include augmentation of domestic production by imports, improvement of infrastructural facilities and expansion of the public distribution system. The import of pulses is allowed under the open general licence. The State Governments are implementing the various provisions of the Essential Commodi-

ties Act and similar other legislations in the interest of the consumers.

Fair price shops in Government premises

1261. SHRIMATI PREMILABAI DAJISAHEB CHAVAN : Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES be please to state :

(a) whether Government have any plan to house the fair price shops in its own premises to avoid hardship to the cardholders in case the licensee is penalised for any breach of terms and conditions governing the fair price shops; and

(b) if so, what are the measures so far taken and the probable time by which the fair price shops will be housed in Government premises ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI MOHAMMED USMAN ARIF) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) does not arise.

Cell for the Welfare and recruitment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

1262. SHRI PANDURANG DHARMAJI JADHAV : Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether his Ministry has set up a Cell for the welfare and recruitment of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes ; and

(b) if not, by when a separate Cell for the purpose is likely to be set up ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI MOHAMMED USMAN ARIF) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Ministry of Civil