

creased recently by Re. 30,000 or more;

(d) if so, what are the reasons for increasing price particularly when the flats were constructed before two years at lower cost; and

(e) what steps Government propose to prevent D.D.A. from profiteering and exploiting prospective purchasers of flats?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI BHISHMA NARAIN SINGH): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Purchase of Flats from DDA by the Persons Belonging to Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes

249. SHRI B. D. KHOBRA: Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that the Scheduled Castes allottees of D.D.A. flats were required to pay in cash 30 per cent of the cost of flats at the time of allotment and balance in 15 years in monthly instalments;

(b) whether this policy has been recently changed and the Scheduled Castes allottees are required to pay in cash 50 per cent cost of the flats at the time of allotment and balance in seven years in monthly instalments;

(c) whether Government are aware that this change of policy is causing hardship to Scheduled castes and preventing them from buying the flats; and

(d) if so, what steps Government propose to take so as to relax the conditions and enable the Scheduled Castes persons to purchase the flats?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI BHISHMA NARAIN SINGH): (a) Yes. Sir.

(b) The DDA has reported that as regards M.I.G. and L.I.G. flats, Sche-

duled Castes allottees are required to pay in cash 50 per cent of the cost of flat at the time of allotment and balance in seven years, in the case of MIG, and 10 years, in case of LIG flats in monthly instalments. There is no change in so far as allotment of Janta flats is concerned.

(c) and (d) This is being looked into.

Stability in prices of essential commodities

250. SHRI SHIVA CHANDRA JHA: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the stability in prices of essential commodities has been achieved;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(c) if the reply to part (a) above be in the negative, what are the reasons therefor and what steps have been taken by Government for maintaining price stability of the essential commodities?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI BRAJ MOHAN MOHANTY): (a) and (b) There has been a mixed trend in the prices of various essential commodities in as much as the wholesale price indices of some commodities have increased, some have declined and some others have remained steady.

(c) The rise in prices of some essential commodities, apart from the general inflationary pressures in the economy, may be attributed to aftereffects of the unprecedented drought of 1979, fall in production of some essential commodities, increase in the prices of petro-products, increase in the support/procurement prices, increase in the administered prices of steel and coal and the seasonality factor.

The main thrust of the Government policy to curb the rising trend in the prices of essential commodities is to increase production. The public distribution is being expanded. Arrangements for import of edible oils for the current oil year have been made to ensure supplies through the public distribution system. The export of essential commodities is being regulated and some essential commodities in short supply are being imported. The credit policy continues to be restrictive. The provisions of the Essential Commodities Act and Orders issued under it as well as the Prevention of Black marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980 are being enforced vigorously by the States.

Setting up of an Institute of Forest Development

251. SHRIMATI USHA MALHOTRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up an Institute of Forest Development which would incorporate in its curricula a new idea of forest management; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the steps to be taken by Government and to what extent it will help rural inhabitants?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (MISS KAMLA KUMARI): (a) It is proposed to set up an Institute of Forest Management as an autonomous Institute.

(b) The site for setting up of the Institute has been selected at Bhopal. The Articles of Association and Rules for the Society are being finalised. Since this Institute will teach to the Forestry personnel, among other subjects, social aspects of forest management it will help the rural people.

Rural Fuel Wood Plantation Scheme

252. SHRIMATI USHA MALHOTRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a programme of rural fuel wood plantation had been launched by the Central Government in order to provide for greater need of fuel wood in the country;

(b) whether any amount has been allocated towards the fuel wood plantation in the hill districts of U.P. and Himachal Pradesh; and

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (MISS KAMLA KUMARI): (a) Yes, Madam.

(b) Yes, Madam.

(c) A Centrally sponsored scheme 'Social Forestry including Rural Fuel Wood Plantations' has been included in the Sixth Five Year Plan and is under implementation since 1980-81. It is to be implemented in about 100 selected districts of the country which have chronic shortage of fuelwood.

The hill districts in Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh in which the scheme is to be implemented are as under:

Himachal Pradesh—Kangra, Sirmur, Mandi.

Uttar Pradesh—Tehri, Almora, Garhwal.

During 1980-81 an amount of Rs. 4.74 lakhs was released for each district as central grant. Total Central grant of approximately Rs. 50 lakhs is proposed to be provided for each district during the Sixth Plan period for raising of fuelwood and fodder plantations of fast growing species for free supply of seedlings to farmers and to the children planting by them. The State Governments will also provide an equal amount as their share.

Telephone Connections for Special Category for Publicmen

253. SHRIMATI AMARJIT KAUR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state: