

effect from 1973-74 and is intended to meet expenditure on food and incidental expenses of the campers.

Drought affected Area in Maharashtra

1326. SHRI P. S. PATIL : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the drought-affected area in Maharashtra;

(b) the quantity of wheat asked for by the Maharashtra Government and the wheat actually sent to the State; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to bring down the prices of essential commodities in that State particularly in Bombay ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE) :
(a) The acutely drought affected districts were Nasik, Ahmednagar, Poona, Satara, Sangli, Sholapur, Aurangabad, Bhair and Osmanabad.

(b) For the months of January to July, 1973, the Maharashtra Government had demanded a quantity of 18,68,000 tonnes of wheat and coarse grains against which they were supplied 13,00,700 tonnes approximately.

(c) The Maharashtra Government have taken steps to distribute cereals, sugar, cotton seed oil, Kerosene oil and cloth at controlled rates. The State Government have appointed panels for fixing reasonable prices of essential commodities in Bombay. The Collectors have been requested by the State Government to set up such panels at district level. The prices so fixed by the panels are enforced under the Defence of India Rules in the Bombay rationing area. In so far as Food articles are concerned the Maharashtra Government have promulgated the Maharashtra Scheduled Articles (Price Control) Order, 1973, which extends to the

Bombay rationing area, fixing the whole-sale and retail prices for 22 items of Food articles.

Construction of National Highways for Maharashtra State

1327. SHRI P. S. PATIL : Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) the amount earmarked for the current year and during the next Five Year Plan period for the construction of new Highways and also of conversion of existing roads into highways in the Maharashtra State; and

(b) the length of the road proposed to be converted/constructed as highways during the current year ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI M. B. RANA) :

(a) and (b) Presumably the member has National Highways in mind. A total provision of Rs. 1050 lakhs has been made in the budget estimates for 1973-74 for the construction and development of National Highways in Maharashtra State. As regards the Fifth Plan, no decision has been taken so far as that Plan is still in the preparatory stages. At present no road in Maharashtra is proposed to be converted as National Highway during the current year. However, against the aforesaid budget provision of Rs. 1050 lakhs for the current year, development (including new construction, where necessary) of the already existing National Highways and those converted as National Highways during the 4th Plan will continue to be pursued.

Allotment of Imported Tractors

1328. SHRI JAMNALAL BERWA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that three imported tractors were allotted by his Ministry to M/s. National Agro-Industrial Co-operation, Delhi and Palwal