

(b) The Government of India are aware of the food situation in Maharashtra. The distribution of both wheat and rice through the fair price shops has been stepped up there. During the 8 months January to August, 1964, the quantities of food-grains supplied to Maharashtra from Central reserve were 636,000 tonnes as against 256,000 tonnes supplied during the same period in 1963. Supplies of wheat to the roller flour mills in Maharashtra were in addition to these quantities.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: Is the Government aware that the present zonal system and the difference in prices existing in several parts of our country have caused great harm to the feelings of integration in the country?

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: That question I have already answered and that is why the matter is under review and the Government propose to take some decision with regard to rice fairly quickly and with regard to wheat before the next harvest season.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: May I know if it is not a fact that the price of wheat in Punjab is Rs. 40 to Rs. 50 per quintal while in Maharashtra it is Rs. 140 and may I know how the hon. Minister is going to remove or bring down this huge difference in prices?

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: It is not a proper comparison because wheat is not allowed to be taken from Punjab, U.P. or Madhya Pradesh into Maharashtra. What is available locally there is only imported wheat. Some quantities are however smuggled there and they are sold at these fancy prices. Certainly they cannot be taken as standards to make a comparison.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

MACHINERY FOR TACKLING FAMINE PROBLEM IN THE COUNTRY

***154. SHRI Y. A. REDDY:** Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any communication has been received by Government from the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh regarding the setting up of a machinery on an All India level for tackling chronic famine conditions in various parts of the country; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken or is proposed to be taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM): (a) and (b) No such letter has been received in the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. However, with a view to developing drought affected areas in the country, we are exploring in consultation with the concerned State Governments, including Andhra Pradesh, the possibility of taking up a pilot project for all round development of a compact block in some of the chronically drought affected areas. If the results of the pilot project are promising the activities can then be planned on a wider basis.

SCHEDULED AREAS AND SCHEDULED TRIBES COMMISSION

***156. SHRI B. K. GAIKWAD:** Will the Minister of SOCIAL SECURITY be pleased to state:

(a) the action taken by Government on the Report of the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission, which was appointed under the chairmanship of Shri Dhebar;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Ministry of Education has been asked to study the educational problems of the Scheduled Tribes; and if so, what is the progress made in this behalf; and