

the 17th January, 1973 to consider the drought situation in that State and to review the relief measures taken by the Central and State Government in this regard; and whether any resume of the proceeding of that meeting has since been received by Government and

(b) if so, the main observations and suggestions made thereat; and Government's response reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE):
(a) Yes, Sir. The meeting referred to was a party meeting of the M.L.A.'s of the Congress Party. No resume of the proceedings of the meeting has been received either by the State Government or the Central Government.

(b) Does not arise

Enhancement of Freight rate by American shipping lines

2906 **DR H. P. SHARMA:**
SHRI GADADHAR SAHA:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state.

(a) whether several American shipping lines have lately decided to enhance freight rates on goods moving between India and that country; if so, details of the freight hikes by each and Government's reaction thereto; and

(b) whether Government propose to send or have sent any deputation to the USA for talks over the matter; if so, when and what precise subjects proposals are to be discussed there?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR): (a) Yes, Sir. The Shipping Conferences/Agreements covering trade from India to U.S.A. have lately

announced the increases in freight rates as follows:—

Name of Conference/Agreement.	From	To	Quantum of increase and date effective
Pacific/India Rate Agreement	(i) East Coast of India.	US (Pacific) Ports.	12.5% from 20-2-73
	(ii) West Coast of India.	Do.	14.25% from 1-1-73.
	(iii) US Pacific	East & West Coast of India	13% from 1-1-73

The Pacific India Rate Agreement have simultaneously effected an increase in Pacific Coast handling charges to US Dollars 3.35 per freight ton and reduction in bunker surcharge by 50 per cent

Protests have been lodged with the Rate Agreement Secretariat The Agreement Secretariat have been asked to send their representative to India for discussions and their reactions are awaited.

(b) There is no proposal at present to send any deputation to U.S.A.

Suggestion for plantation of tropical Pines in Bastar, M.P.

2907. **SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY:** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Food and Agriculture Organisation has suggested plantations of tropical pines in Bastar; and

(b) if so, the broad features of the suggestion and the decision thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. SHER SINGH): (a) and (b)