

tion being pending from the co-operative societies. As for individuals, at present, about 6,000 applications are pending.

(b) In the current year's budget a sum of Rs. 20 crores has been provided for house building advance. Last year the original provision was only Rs. 10 crores; but later, this was revised to Rs. 15 crores. The increased provision is expected to be more than sufficient for the pending applications which will be disposed of, in due course, during the current year.

Inadequate houses for Government employees in the country

1954. SHRI K. SURYANARAYANA: Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING AND SUPPLY AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government's attention has been drawn to the inadequate number of houses for the Government employees in various parts of the country; and

(b) the steps taken by the Government to augment the housing facilities?

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING AND SUPPLY AND REHABILITATION (SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Efforts are being made to construct as many dwelling units as possible in the general pool within the resources available.

Drought in Marathwada, Maharashtra

1955. DR. BAPU KALDATE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether "Marathwada Janata Vikas Parishad" Aurangabad had sent a letter on 30th May, 1977 about the drought prone areas problem in Marathwada region of Maharashtra;

(b) the problems mentioned in the letter; and

(c) steps the Government have taken to solve these problems?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Non-inclusion of 19 talukas in three districts, namely, Aurangabad, Bhir and Osmanabad in the Marathwada region under Drought Prone Areas Programme.

(c) The whole question of bringing additional drought prone districts under Drought Prone Areas Programme was considered in 1973 by the Task Force in Integrated Rural Development appointed by the Planning Commission in connection with the formulation of the Fifth Five Year Plan. The Task Force felt that there were no compelling reasons for opening the list of drought prone areas as given in the Fourth Plan and recommended that the same areas/districts might continue to be so categorised during the Fifth Plan. The Government of India accepted this recommendation. The matter was, however, again considered by the Central Coordination Committee for Rural Development which is a high policy-making body in the Planning Commission in its meeting held on 27th May, 1976. The Central Coordination Committee decided not to open the question of admission of new districts under Drought Prone Areas Programme during the Fifth Plan.

Import of D.T. 14 Russian tractors

1956. SHRI P. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are importing D.T. 14 Russian tractors; and

(b) if so, their number and the reasons for import?