

(b) whether any plan has been taken in regard to uniformity of prices in big cities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE) : (a) Market prices of various food articles differ from place to place owing to various factors, viz. (i) distance between the source of supply and the consuming centre and the transport costs involved, (ii) difference in variety, (iii) variations in the cost of marketing and processing and profits of intermediaries in different parts of the country and (iv) difference in local taxes, etc

(b) The Government are issuing essential foodgrains through public distribution system at uniform issue prices throughout the country including big cities

High Labour Wages in Bombay and Madras

4936. **SHRI PRIYA RAN JAN DAS MUNSI :** Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the labour wages in Bombay and Madras are higher than in Calcutta or West Bengal as a whole, and

(b) if so, the reasons behind it ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR) : (a) and (b). A comparison may be feasible if any particular industry and the category of workers (e.g. unskilled, semi-skilled etc.) is specified.

Purchase of Tarpaulins for Evacuees from Bangla Desh

4937. **SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSI :** Will the Minister of SUPPLY be pleased to state :

(a) whether tarpaulins have been purchased for evacuees from Bangla Desh by Government at the same price all over the country;

(b) the total expenditure on such purchases so far; and

(c) the value of tarpaulin bought in West Bengal ?

THE MINISTER OF SUPPLY (SHRI D. R. CHAVAN) : (a) No, Sir. The price of tarpaulins purchased by the Directorate General of Supplies & Disposals varied according to quality of material and the delivery offered by different firms.

(b) Rs. 89.33 lakhs approximately.

(c) The value of tarpaulins ordered on firms located in West Bengal is Rs. 54,97,619.

Retrenchment of Workers in Donimalai Iron Ore Project, Mysore

4938 **SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA :** Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether he is aware that since January, 1971, about 537 workmen have been retrenched at the Donimalai Iron Ore Project, Mysore;

(b) whether he is also aware that 14 important office bearers and functionaries of the Employees' Association have been either dismissed or suspended for their trade union activities;

(c) whether the workers have serious allegations against the repressive anti-labour policy of the Project management; and

(d) whether any steps will be taken to normalise employer-employee relations ?