

the cost of production in comparison with international prices of similar products and avoid setting up uneconomic high-cost capacities in non-strategic areas.

These guidelines are still in operation.

Prospective Tea Market in the World for Indian Tea

10191. SHRI MUKUNDA MANDAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a prospective tea market is expected in the world for the Indian Tea.

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI ARIF BEG): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Growing demand for Indian tea has been noticed in areas like West Asian and North African Countries, Japan and South East Asia Region, Pakistan and Chile. With the reopening of trade with Pakistan, Indian Tea export to this region has started and during 1976-77 tea valued at Rs. 5.74 crores was exported to Pakistan.

There is also a rapid growth in the marketing of value-added products like packet tea, tea bags in some of these regions as also in other conventional markets.

(c) Does not arise.

Price Index of Edible Oil

10192. SHRI HITENDRA DESAI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the price index of edible oil during the last five years; and

(b) has Government any scheme for selling edible oil at cheaper rates in the public distribution system by Fair Price Shops?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR GOYAL): (a) The annual average wholesale price index number during the last five years are given in the attached statement.

(b) For more than a year, imported refined rapeseed oil is being sold through public distribution system. To start with it was being sold at a retail price of Rs. 8.50 a kg. to consumers. The retail price was reduced to Rs. 7.50 a kg. with effect from August 25, 1977 and further reduced to Rs. 7.00 a kg. with effect from May 1, 1978.

Statement

Annual Average Wholesale Price Index Numbers

(Base : 1970-71=100)

	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78
<i>Edible Oils</i>	147.9	172.4	134.9	142.8	175.7
Vanaspati	131.8	171.5	160.0	148.0	167.5
Groundnut oil	154.4	173.5	133.7	134.2	170.7
Mustard oil	148.1	176.4	110.2	144.9	209.0
Coconut oil	146.0	162.4	121.1	153.7	157.9
Gingelly oil	157.2	174.3	153.6	162.2	179.4
Cottonseed oil	145.1	164.3	128.7	131.7	149.9