

1	2	3	4	5
02.11.1996	331.8		6.7	
09.11.1996	333.2		6.5	
16.11.1996	334.7		6.4	
23.11.1996	332.8		6.8	
30.11.1996	333.6	348	6.7	8.7
07.12.1996	333.7		7.2	
14.12.1996	333.3		7.1	
21.12.1996	334.5		7.6	
28.12.1996	333.1	na	7.7	8.7
04.01.1997	333.2		7.8	
11.01.1997	332.6		7.6	
18.01.1997	335.4		7.5	
25.01.1997	335.0	na	7.7	na
01.02.1997	335.2		7.7	na

(c) The long overdue adjustment by about 18 per cent in the administered price of petroleum products in July 1996 and sharp escalation in prices of cereals and food articles due to decline in foodgrains production in 1996-97 contributed to inflationary pressures.

(d) The important steps which Government has taken to check the prices of essential commodities and to contain the inflation are:

- (i) Continuation of FCI's open market sale of rice and wheat;
- (ii) Import of wheat to augment public stocks of foodgrains;
- (iii) Import of edible oils and pulses at reduced duty.
- (iv) Strengthening of Public Distribution System;
- (v) Maintaining a liberal import policy for essential commodities such as sugar, edible oils, skimmed milk powder and pulses;
- (vi) Reduction of fiscal deficit in the budget proposals for current financial year to 5 per cent of GDP;
- (vii) Containing monetary growth to around 16.0 per cent in 1996-97 through prudent monetary policies.

[Translation]

#### National Handloom Credit Fund

\*11. SHRI SOHAN BEER : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Meera Seth Committee, constituted for the development of Handloom Sector has recommended to create National Handloom Credit Fund for the promotion of handloom industry; and

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The recommendations of the Committee have been received very shortly and are under study.

[English]

#### Import of Coffee

\*12. SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have allowed import of coffee;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the total quantity of coffee imported with its value during the current financial year;

(c) whether the small and marginal coffee farmers are likely to be affected due to import of coffee; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government to safeguard their interest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) to (d) As a part of the gradual removal of restrictions on the import of consumer goods, the import of coffee roasted and decaffeinated or not decaffeinated in bulk packaging; and instant coffee including decaffeinated instant coffee in consumer packs or other than consumer packs is freely importable under the current Exim Policy. Import of green coffee is however restricted.

Details of import data related to coffee is published in the "Foreign Trade Statistics of India", a publication brought out by the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, Calcutta, copies of which are available in the Parliament Library. Since import of green coffee continues to be restricted, import of roasted and decaffeinated coffee in small quantities is not likely to affect the small and marginal farmers.