

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1141
ANSWERED ON:02.03.2000
PRICES OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES
PUTTASWAMY GOWDA

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the prices of essential commodities like vegetables, dal, fruits, bread, milk, edible oils etc. have increased enormously; and

(b) if so, the concrete steps taken to check the prices of essential commodities ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREEI PRASAD)

(a): The prices of essential commodities like vegetable, pulses, fruits, bread, milk and edible oils during the last one year have not shown any abnormal increase. The trend in the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) numbers of these items over a period of one year ending 12.2.2000, as indicated below, shows that the prices either declined or moved up only marginally.

Commodity Percentage variation in WPI during the last one year
(12.2.2000/13.2.1999)

Vegetables	-9.6
Pulses	0.7
Fruits	-0.9
Bread	5.4
Milk	4.8
Edible Oils	-19.0

(b): The Government has taken a number of steps to control the prices and augment the availability of essential commodities in the country. Apart from certain long term measures to increase production of essential goods, imports of items which are in short supply, like pulses have been placed under OGL at zero per cent import duty. One lakh tonnes of different varieties of pulses have been imported on Government account to augment their availability in the country. Export of onion has been placed under quantitative restriction. Some of the essential commodities like rice, wheat, palmolein and kerosene are also supplied through the outlets of public distribution system at below market prices. Stringent actions are being taken against hoarders, black marketeers and others indulging in unfair trade practices under the Essential Commodities Act and Prevention of Black Marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act by the State/UT Governments.