

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:70
ANSWERED ON:24.11.2009
RISE IN PRICES OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES
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Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the prices of essential commodities including foodgrains, pulses, edible oil, vegetables, milk etc., are on the rise despite the remedial steps taken by the Government;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government has formulated any fresh action plan to improve availability and control the prices of essential commodities;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon including punitive action against black-marketeers, hoarders and speculators;
- (e) whether steps are being taken to strengthen the Price Monitoring Cell and vest it with more powers to control price rise; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a) to (f): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED IN REPLY TO PART (a) TO (F) OF LOKSABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.70 FOR 24-11-2009 REGARDING RISE IN PRICES OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES.

(a) & (b) Government is aware of increasing trend in prices of essential commodities and has taken series of steps to check the increase in prices by taking effective measures such as augmenting domestic supplies of rice, wheat, pulses and edible oils through imports at zero/reduced rates of duty and ban on exports. All these measures have had a moderating influence on the rise in prices of essential commodities.

Over the year, rise in price of pulses, sugar, are witnessed mainly due to inadequate supplies in relation to demand. Vegetable prices tend to fluctuate depending on the availability and seasonal factors. Rice, wheat, milk prices have remained more or less stable. Prices of edible oils monitored by this Department such as groundnut oil, mustard oil have declined over the past one year. Retail Prices of essential commodities at Delhi during the last one year is given in table below:-

Commodity Price as on 1 Week Back 1 Month Back 3 Months Back 6 Months Back 1 Year Back

19-11-09 12-11-09 19-10-09 19-08-09 19-05-09 19-11-08

Rice 22 22 23 20 20 22

Wheat 15 15 13 13 14 13

Atta 17 18 15 14.5 15 14

Gram Dal 40 40 38 39 34 38

TurDal 90 90 82 85 60 50

Urad Dal 77 77 63 60.5 56 47

Moong Dal 82 81 67 60.5 57 47

Masoor Dal 70 72 71 69 58 60

Sugar 38 38 32 30 27 20

milk @ 22 22 21 21 21 21

Groundnut Oil 111 101 101 110 109 111

Mustard Oil 66 63 61 70 71 78

Vanaspati 56 51 51 59 56 60

Tea Loose 155 155 154 145 146 140

Salt Pack I 12 12 12 12 12 11

Potato 21 23 24.5 17.5 11 11.5

Onion 23 24 26 14 11 18

Note: - refined @ per litre Source: State Civil Supplies Department

(c) and (d) The Government has taken a number of steps to control the price rise and to soften the impact of price rise on consumers. Government measures are given in Annexure I.

(e) Price Monitoring Cell (PMC) set up under Department of Consumer Affairs is not mandated control/check the rise in prices of essential commodities. The Price Monitoring Cell (PMC) is entrusted, inter-alia, with the task of monitoring of the prices and availability position of 17 essential commodities in the country viz., rice, wheat, atta, gram dal, tur/arhar dal, moong dal, urad dal, masoor dal, tea, milk, sugar, vanaspati, mustard oil, groundnut oil, potato, onion and salt, and other matters concerning price scenario

based on the information received from the State Food and Civil Supplies Departments. Information on Retail Prices is received on daily basis from 27 centres of the country. Similarly, information on Wholesale Prices is received from 37 centres of the country on weekly basis. Besides, the situation of prices of essential commodities is regularly monitored at High Level Meetings in the Government. The decisions taken in these meetings are implemented by the concerned Ministries/Department which are charged with the responsibility of the subject matter of the decision. PMC monitors the action taken on those decisions and give feed back to the Government. No need is felt to vest PMC with more direct power in this regard.

(f) Does not arise.