

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2412

ANSWERED ON:04.08.2015

Rise in Prices

Ahlawat Smt. Santosh;Chandumajra Shri Prem Singh;Gaikwad Prof. Ravindra Vishwanath;Karunakaran Shri P.;Kharge Shri Mallikarjun ;Kumar Shri Kaushalendra;Mohan Shri P. C.;Nete Shri Ashok Mahadeorao;Pathak Smt. Riti;Patle Smt. Kamla Devi;Ram Mohan Naidu Shri Kinjarapu;Ranjan (Pappu Yadav) Shri Rajesh;Rao (Avnithi) Shri Muthamsetti Srinivasa;Senthilnathan Shri PR.;Singh Shri Bharat;Singh Shri Pashupati Nath;Tadas Shri Ramdas Chandrabhanji;Venkatesh Babu Shri T.G.

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

(a) whether shortage and price rise of essential commodities including various types of pulses have been reported irrespective of their production, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor along with the steps taken to ensure adequate supply of these commodities at affordable rate;

(b) whether the Government proposes to import these commodities and ban their import to improve domestic availability and if so, the details thereof indicating the proposed imports commodity-wise;

(c) the steps taken/proposed to check hoarding and blackmarketing of essential commodities along with the success achieved therein;

(d) whether a conference of State Chief Ministers/Food Minister was convened recently to discuss price rise and suggest measures to mitigate the suffering of poor who are most affected as indicated by CRISIL study, if so, the details and the outcome thereof indicating the issues discussed and suggestions made therein;

(e) whether the Government has conveyed its concerns and directed the States to put in place their action plan for controlling prices, if so, the details thereof and the response of the States thereto; and

(f) whether the Government proposes to put in place a foodgrid to check price rise and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER FOR
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN)

(a) : Shortages and rise in the prices of essential food items including pulses may be caused by several factors such as adverse weather conditions, rise in transportation costs, supply constraints and artificial shortages due to hoarding and black-marketing.

Recent steps taken by Government to ensure adequate supply of essential food items at affordable prices are at Annexure-I.

(b) : In order to augment domestic availability and stabilise prices of pulses Government has taken a decision to import 5000 metric tonnes of Arhar/Tur. Export of all pulses is banned except kabulichanna and up to 10,000 MTs in organic pulses and lentils. Zero import duty on pulses has been extended till 30th September, 2015.

(c) : To protect the consumers from exploitation by unscrupulous traders, the Government has enacted the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and the Prevention of Black-Marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980. As these Acts are implemented by the State Governments/UTs, they have been regularly advised to ensure effective implementation of both.

Action Taken under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 during 2015 as reported by the States/UTs are as follows:-

S. No. Particulars No.

1. No. of raids conducted 25432
2. No. of persons arrested 678
3. No. of persons prosecuted 220
4. No. of persons convicted 11
5. Value of goods confiscated Rs.950.76 lakhs

(d) & (e): A National Consultation Meeting of Ministers of States and UTs in-charge of Food and Consumer Affairs was held on 7th July 2015 at Delhi wherein a six month Joint Action Plan(July-December 2015) for improving the availability and containing the prices of essential commodities was adopted for implementation. Details of the Joint Action Plan are at Annexure- II.

(f) : There is no proposal under consideration to set up a National Foodgrid to check price-rise.
