Rise In Price of Essential Commodities

84.   SHRI MOHANBHAI PATEL:
       SHRI   KAMLA   PRASAD
            SINGH:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a spurt in the prices of essential commodities during the last three months throughout the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken to bring down the prices and make the essential commodities available at reasonable prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES(SHRI SUKH RAM) (a) to (c). There has been a mixed trend in the prices of essential commodities during the last three months. The prices of some commodities have moved up, some have moved down and a few remained more or less steady.

The main reasons for increase in the prices of essential commodities during the past three months are the wide-spread drought of 1987, consequential fall in the production of essential commodities and after-effect of the drought in the year 1988 coupled with recent floods in Punjab, Haryana and some other parts of the country as well as seasonality factors.

Government has taken a number of steps to contain the rise in the prices of essential commodities and improve their availability. The main thrust of the Government policy has been to increase production of various essential commodities, particularly those which are in short supply. Other measures include import of some of the essential commodities such as rice, wheat, pulses, kerosene, to augment domestic supply, regulating export of some essential commodities strengthening and expanding the Public Distribution System and strict enforcement of provisions of Essential Commodities Act and similar other legislations against hoarders and black-marketeers.

To meet the situation, the Chief Ministers of States and Lt. Governors of Union Territory Administrations have been urged to strengthen the Public Distribution System, Press into operation mobile vans, review continuously the availability and prices of essential commodities through Control Room and Committees set up at the State and District level, intensify dehoarding operations and take strict actions against hoarders and black-marketeers in accordance with the provisions of Essential Commodities Act and similar other legislations.

[*Translation*]

Extension of Desert Land

85. DR. PRABHAT KUMAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been an extension of desert land in Rajasthan and in some other parts of the country; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken by Government to check this?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z.R. ANSARI): (a) National Commission of Agriculture had considered the problem of development of the Rajasthan desert in their Interim Report on Desert Development. There is, no data available regarding the extension of the Desert land. However, the sand laden winds do cause considerable damage to adjoining lands.

(b) The Government of India have initiated the Desert Development Programme (DDP) in the Central Sector for controlling desertification, restoration of ecological balance and raising the productivity of land and

livestock resources of these areas. In addition, massive afforestation, Soil & moisture conservation and pasture development programmes are being taken up under Social Forestry and Rural Employment Generation Schemes.

[*English*]

Violation of Bye Laws by High Rise Builders In Delhi

*88. SHRI PRAKASH CHANDRA:
SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI:

Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the press report appearing in the "Patriot" dated 22nd October, 1988 wherein it has been stated that a dangerous trend is being followed by many high rise builders and promoters in the capital these days, blatantly violating the Unified Building Bye-laws 1983;

(b) if so, the nature of violations that have come to the notice of Government;

(c) whether any steps have been taken to check these violations and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken against the builders and promoters for violation of the bye-laws in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT(SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI):(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The report in the Patriot in its Issue of 22nd October, 1988 had referred to illegal occupation of three buildings 24, Barakhamba Road, 28, Barakhamba Road and Nehru Place Hotel. New Delhi Municipal Committee has reported that in respect of 22, Barakhamba Road (and not 24, Barakhamba Road as reported in the newspaper) and 28, Barakhamba Road, a part of the building had been occupied without obtaining the prescribed occupancy certificate. Action has been initiated for criminal prosecution of the offenders.

As for the Nehru Place Hotel, the Delhi Development Authority has reported that the hotel continues to be under construction and it is not correct that it has been illegally occupied.

(c) and (d). The relevant statutes empower all the Local Bodies of Delhi to launch prosecution against such offences. Action is taken from time to time when offences come to notice. Besides, power or water connections to a building is not given till the prescribed completion/occupation certificate has been issued by the competent authority.

Consultative Machinery for Jute Industry

*89. SHRI PRAKASH V. PATIL:
SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJU:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have suggested formation of a consultative machinery for the jute industry and the end users in the country;

(b) if so, the response of the industry to this suggestion;

(c) the progress made so far 'ı this direction; and

(d) the different items which will come within the purview of this consultative machinery?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES(SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA): (a) to (d). There is at present no proposal under consideration of the Government for the formation of such a consultative machinery. However, Government have encouraged the jute industry and the representatives of end user sectors like cement and fertilizers to have