

(ख) यदि हां, तो उसमें कितने व्यक्ति ग्राहक हुए; और

(ग) क्या इस विमान को बचाने के लिए कोई उपाय किये गये थे?

पर्यटन और नागर विमानन मंत्री  
(श्री पुष्पोत्तम कोशिक) : (क) जी हां।

(ख) भूमि पर खड़े स्टाफ के एक सदस्य को मामूली चोट आयी थी।

(ग) जी, हां। विमान को उचित स्थान पर ठहराने आदि जैसी जरूरी एहतियात बरती गयी थी।

#### Rise in Prices of Essential Commodities

\*91. SHRI P. K. KODIYAN;  
SHRI V. M. SUDHEERAN:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the prices of essential commodities are again on the rise;

(b) if so, what is the actual rise in prices in the last two months;

(c) what are the reasons for the rise in prices; and

(d) what steps Government have taken to control the prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND CO-OPERATION (SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR GOYAL): (a) and (b). During May and June, 1978, there has been a firming up tendency in the prices of some essential commodities. The all commodities wholesale price index between April 1978 and June 1978 went up by 1.6%. During the corresponding period in 1977 and 1976 the index had moved up by 2.3% and 3.2% respectively.

(c) The increase in the prices of some commodities in the past two months is due to the fact that the period May to October is the lean period during which there is a tendency for the prices of some essential commodities, particularly in respect of Kharif crops, to increase. The increase in the prices of some manu-

factured mass consumption goods may partly be attributed to the increase in excise duties, increase in the price of steel, shortage of power and disruption of coal and wagon movement.

(d) Government is keeping a constant watch on the movement of prices and availability of essential commodities. Several measures have been taken during the past 15 months, and additional measures will be taken as and when the situation demands. Government has taken certain basic policy decisions with a view to improving the position of availability of essential commodities and making them available at reasonable prices.

Very high priority has been given to increasing the production of essential articles—both agricultural commodities and manufactured goods. This is particularly in respect of commodities like pulses, oilseeds, steel and cement for which the supplies are not keeping in line with the growing demand in the country. The endeavour would be to create an intensive integrated production base, to plan for adequate production of the articles of mass consumption and to have adequate availability at reasonable prices all over the country. This is the bedrock of the production-cum-distribution system which is currently under consideration.

The import and export policy has been restructured to take care of the basic requirements of the common man. For commodities like edible oils, large scale imports are being continued as the domestic production is not sufficient to meet the local requirements. Similarly, ban/restrictions have been imposed on the exports of certain agricultural items like HPS groundnuts, pulses, fresh vegetables, potatoes, turmeric, onions and living cattle so as to make these commodities available to the domestic consumer. National level cooperatives like NAFED and NCCF are enlarging their role in procuring essential commodities at fair prices from growers and making arrangements for their supply to consumers at reasonable prices. Similarly, the bottlenecks in respect of rail movement, supply of coal and electricity are being tackled so that production and availability of essential commodities is not adversely affected. State Governments, from time to time, have been asked to enforce the provisions of the essential commodities and to see that the hoarders, black-marketeers and anti-social elements do not indulge in malpractices regarding pricing and marketing of essential commodities.

Building up a composite production base, evolving an effective public distribution system, reorientation of foreign and internal trade policies, and greater involvement of public agencies in procurement and distribution are components of an integrated policy to improve the availability of essential commodities and to make them available at stable, reasonable rates to the consumers in all parts of the country.

#### **Escape of Dr. Dharma Teja to Foreign Country**

\*92. **SHRI KESHAVRAO DHONDGE:** Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Dr. Dharma Teja has escaped from India to some foreign country by an Air India plane;

(b) if so, action taken by Government in this regard; and

(c) the stringent action taken against the Employees who helped him escape from India?

**THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION: (SHRI PURUSHOTTAM KAUSHIK):** (a) to (c). Dr. Dharma Teja did not leave by an air India plane but by a PANAM flight on 22nd July, 1977 for Frankfurt. The Government of India in the Ministry of Finance have already initiated action under the provisions of the Income-Tax Act against the carrier.

#### **Rise in Cost of Living Index and Dearness Allowance to Central Government Employees**

\*93. **SHRI KIRIT BIKRAM DER BURMAN:**  
**SHRI V. G. HANDE:**

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite all efforts by Government to curb the prices, the cost of living index continued to rise during the past three months;

(b) if so, what was the cost of living index during these months and what was the 12-monthly average during each of these months;

(c) whether any further instalment of D.A. has become due to Central Government employees under the existing formula; and

(d) if so, what decision has been taken in this regard?

**THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI H. M. PATEL):** (a) and (b). Index figures are so far available only for the period upto the end of May, 1978. Index figures for March, April and May, 1978 and the 12-monthly index average for these months are as follows:

Month	Index	12-monthly average of the index
March 78 . . .	321	324.17
April 78 . . .	322	324.92
May 78 . . .	323	325.33

These figures show that there has only been a marginal rise in the Consumer Price Index.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

#### **Notice Served by Income-tax Department for Recovery of Arrears from Shri Dharma Teja**

\*94. **DR. BALDEV PRAKASH:** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Income-tax Department has served notice to Air India and Pan American Airlines for recovery of income tax arrears outstanding against Shri Dharma Teja who has escaped abroad illegally; and

(b) whether any preventive measures were taken to prevent his escape by the Income-tax Department?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ZULFIQARULLAH):** (a) and (b): As considerable arrears of tax were due from Dr. Teja, a number of steps were taken to protect the interest of revenue. The steps taken, *inter alia*, included (i) letters issued on 27-2-1975 by the Income-tax Officer assessing Dr. Teja to Income-tax Officers, Foreign Sections, in the country requesting them not to issue income-tax clearance certificate u/s 230 of the Income-tax Act to Dr. Teja without getting a clearance from him and (ii) letters issued on 3-3-75 to various airlines alerting them against booking passage for Dr. Teja.