

Increase in the prices of essential commodities

315. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what were the price indices of essential commodities in November, 1989 and as on the 30th June, 1991 and the extent of fluctuations in them during the above period together with the reasons for such fluctuations; and

(b) what steps are proposed to be taken by Government for improvement in the distribution of food items through rationing system and to eradicate corruption therein?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) A statement showing the Wholesale Price indices of selected essential commodities as in November, 1989 and June, 1991 is enclosed. (See below). The major factors which may be responsible for the price rise of these essential commodities are: (i) shortfall in domes-

tic production, (ii) difficulties in distribution and offtake and inability of the Government to import some of the items due to persistent pressure on Balance of Payments, (iii) increase in procurement prices and adjustment in issue prices of cereals like rice and wheat, (iv) increase in transportation cost due to hike in the prices of petroleum products and imposition of Gulf surcharge of 25 per cent on domestic prices of petroleum products, and (v) increase in aggregate monetary resources and non-food credit.

(b) Strengthening and streamlining of the PDS is a continual process. The Central Government has advised the State Governments/U.T. Administrations, among other things, to open new Fair Price Shops in uncovered and undercovered areas, increase the commodity coverage by adding, on their own, additional items of mass consumption, supply ration cards to all families in urban and rural areas and to strictly enforce the provisions of the Essential Commodities Act and similar other legislations to curb diversion, black-marketing and other malpractices.

Statement

Wholesale price indices of essential commodities during Nov., 89 and June, 91 and their percentage variation between the periods.

Commodity	Nov., 89	June, 91	% Variation June, 91 Nov. 89
Rice	170.7	194.7	+14.1
Wheat	151.8	173.1	+14.0
Jowar	142.6	161.0	+12.9
Bajra	124.7	178.8	+43.4
Gram	213.4	197.9	-7.3
Arhar	197.5	290.7	+47.2
Moong	201.8	218.4	+8.2
Masur	195.7	218.1	+11.4

Commodity	Nov. 89	June. 91	% Variation June, 91 Nov. 89
Urad	256.0	294.8	+15.2
Potatoes	174.0	271.3	+55.9
Onions	185.1	188.5	+1.8
Milk	201.7	229.2	+13.6
Fish	171.2	234.8	+37.1
Meat	204.4	243.2	+19.0
Chillies	152.7	203.8	+33.5
Tea	298.7	241.1	-19.3
Coke	162.2	162.2	Steady
Kerosene	129.9	161.4	+24.2
Atta	175.2	209.5	+19.6
Sugar	145.9	147.3	+1.0
Gur	167.1	177.6	+6.3
Salt	154.3	183.5	+18.9
Vanaspati	198.4	268.8	+35.5
Mustard Oil	141.1	210.3	+49.0
Coconut Oil	172.3	273.3	+58.6
Groundnut Oil	166.7	261.2	+56.7
Cotton Cloth (Mills)	151.7	175.0	+15.4
Safety Matches	134.4	134.4	Steady
Laundry Soap	153.0	158.2	+3.4
All Commodities	167.5	195.3	+16.6

Source : Office of the Economic Adviser, Ministry of Industry.

Import of edible Oils

316. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to import edible oils during the current year; and

(b) if so, the quantity and value thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) and (b) No decision has been taken by the Government in this regard, as yet.

Families assisted under Integrated Rural Development Programme

317. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be