

(a) whether inspite of directions issued by the Supreme Court for checking ragging in various schools and colleges in the country, ragging has taken many lives during the month of March, 2009;

(b) if so, whether the University Grants Commission has taken a number of steps and has urged all schools and universities that violation of rules may result in penal action, stoppage of grants and even derecognition of institutions;

(c) if so, to what extent these warnings have helped;

(d) whether any Ordinance was issued by Government in this regard; and

(e) if so, the steps and measures taken by Government thereunder?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes Sir, a case involving death of a medical student was reported in the month of March, 2009, as a consequence of an incident of ragging at the Dr. Rajendra Prasad Medical College, Tanda in Himachal Pradesh.

(b) and (c) The University Grants Commission has notified its regulations on the Curbing of the Menace of Ragging in Higher Educational Institutions. These regulations are comprehensive and provide for a number of punitive and prohibitive measures including stopping of grants by UGC and also withdrawal of affiliation/recognition or other privileges conferred, if higher education institutions fail to comply with any of the provision of regulations or fail to curb ragging effectively. The regulations also require higher education institutions to take effective steps in order to sensitize students on the dehumanizing effects of ragging and generate awareness among all stakeholders regarding the penal laws applicable to incidents of ragging. An anti-ragging toll free "Helpline" has been made operational by UGC with Call Centre facilities in English, Hindi and some regional languages to begin with, for helping victims of ragging besides facilitating effective immediate coordinated action by all concerned. The above steps taken by UGC are likely to considerably curb the menace of ragging. The UGC Regulations however are not applicable to schools which impart education upto 12th standard.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Fall in Inflation Rate

*55. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Ministers of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that rate of inflation fell consistently during March-April this year but there was no corresponding reduction in prices of essential commodities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) The fall in year-on-year inflation measured by the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) in March-April 2009 was an extension of the

declining trend which set in from September 2008. The monthly average WPI inflation, which was 4.9 per cent in January 2009, declined to 1.2 - 1.3 per cent in March - April, 0.4 per cent (provisionally) in May and turned negative in June at (-) 1.5 per cent (provisionally), up to June 20, 2009.

The WPI is a weighted average of 435 commodities traded in the wholesale market, classified in three groups of primary articles (wt=22.02%), fuel, power & light (wt=14.23%) and manufactured products (63.75%). The fall in WPI inflation reflected the impact of the deceleration in global prices in items like fuels, metals and oilseeds. The negative inflation in June stemmed from a major decline in the fuel group and a lesser decline in the group of manufactured products, accruing from a high statistical base in the corresponding period in 2008. Despite the fall in overall inflation, inflation in essential commodities continues to remain high, on account of lower agricultural production in some crops, increase in the minimum support prices and growth in demand.

Details of overall inflation, as also in some major essential commodities are indicated in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1: Year-on-year inflation in terms of WPI

WPI inflation: Overall vs. Essential commodities (%)

Commodities	Over all	Rice	Wheat	Coarse cereals	Pulses	Potatoes	Onions	Edible Oils	Tea	Sugar	Salt
Wt. % ->	100.0	2.45	1.38	0.57	0.6	0.26	0.09	2.76	0.16	3.62	0.02
07-Mar-09	0.89	16.44	4.46	11.12	10.73	-13.76	90.59	-9.37	25.15	26.78	10.52
14-Mar-09	0.71	17.24	4.58	10.10	10.67	-13.01	51.95	-10.18	23.90	22.85	10.52
21-Mar-09	0.84	17.43	4.89	10.53	10.74	-12.66	73.09	-9.91	20.44	21.00	10.52
28-Mar-09	0.84	14.94	4.53	10.68	9.38	-5.30	59.18	-7.59	29.44	18.39	10.52
04-Apr-09	0.83	14.42	4.54	11.47	9.20	9.20	40.50	-8.46	18.21	24.18	5.71
11-Apr-09	0.96	13.62	4.18	13.96	12.75	13.01	35.42	-6.37	16.98	25.45	17.80
18-Apr-09	1.62	14.99	6.86	15.24	15.97	17.92	30.59	-5.51	16.79	29.30	17.09
25-Apr-09	1.75	15.74	7.39	15.46	16.83	23.40	52.04	-2.85	28.72	32.04	16.97
02-May-09 P	0.48	13.72	6.51	15.01	14.82	19.04	43.37	-2.83	15.65	28.14	12.35
09-May-09 P	0.61	14.58	6.56	16.36	14.87	25.81	41.77	-1.70	30.18	29.89	12.94
16-May-09 P	0.61	14.52	7.46	16.73	14.38	21.89	68.23	-3.48	42.57	29.97	12.94
23-May-09 P	0.48	14.66	7.57	18.27	15.35	20.26	60.01	-5.21	48.44	31.00	8.87
30-May-09 P	0.13	15.62	6.89	17.17	15.09	35.46	54.83	-7.24	47.42	31.27	8.87
06-Jun-09 P	-1.61	16.11	6.94	19.34	16.77	44.77	28.31	-7.62	46.08	32.91	20.08
13-Jun-09 P	-1.14	15.92	6.80	17.64	17.06	45.77	29.83	-9.72	42.34	33.33	20.08
20-Jun-09 P	-1.30	15.24	6.52	15.49	16.52	49.77	29.27	-11.84	34.56	34.59	19.82

P: provisional