

Commission and population estimates of the Registrar General of India as on 1st March, 2000. This number is 6.52 crore. Based on 2004-05 poverty estimates and March, 2009 population estimates, this number is 5.91 crore.

However, as reported by 30.06.2009, the State and UT Governments have issued 10.86 crore BPL cards, which include 2.43 crore Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) cards.

(b) to (d) Government proposes to enact the National Food Security Act. Under the proposed law, every BPL family is to be entitled to receive 25 kg of food grains per month. Details of eligible BPL families to be covered, methodology for their identification, issue of targeted identification cards to them, reforms to be introduced in TPDS, etc. are yet to be worked out. Presently, examination of different aspects of the proposed law in consultation with various stake holders is in progress.

Rise in prices of essential commodities

2303. MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the prices of essential commodities continues to rise;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) what steps Government is taking in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Government is aware of rise in prices of certain essential commodities such as pulses, sugar and potato and has taken several steps to check the increase in prices by taking effective measures such as augmenting domestic supplies of foodgrains through imports at zero/reduced rates of duty and ban on exports. As a result of the various steps taken by Government, prices of certain essential commodities have generally declined or are steady.

(b) Rise in domestic prices is owing to the combined effect of different factors such as, growing demand on account of increase in population and income, hardening of international prices, changes in consumption pattern, diversion of food grains for fuel, adverse weather and climate change, increase in crude oil prices, hikes in MSP, improvement in income and living standards, increase in freight rates as well as seasonal factors.

(c) The Government has taken a number of steps to control the price rise and to soften the impact of price rise on consumers. The important steps taken are briefly listed in the Statement.

Statement

List of Government Measures

(A) Short Term Measures

1. Fiscal Measures

- (i) Reducing import duties to zero — for wheat, pulses, edible oils (crude) and maize (under TRQ of 5 lakh tonnes per annum, beyond which 15% duty will apply);

- (ii) Reducing import duties on refined and hydrogenated oils and vegetable oils to 7.5%;
- (iii) Reducing the import duty on Skimmed Milk Powder (SMP) from 15% to 5%.

2. Administrative Measures

- (i) The export of edible oils is permitted in branded consumer packs of up to 5 kgs, subject to a limit of 10,000 tonnes during the next one year up to 31st October, 2009.
- (ii) Export of wheat and wheat products (atta, maida and suji) was permitted after 15th May, 2009, with a cap of 2 million tonnes in 2009-10.
- (iii) Banning export of non-basmati rice, edible oils and pulses (except kabuli chana).
- (iv) Export not more than 20 lakh tonnes of rice, on diplomatic basis through the MEA to friendly countries in KMS 2008-09.
- (v) No changes in Tariff Rate Values of edible oils;
- (vi) Imposition of stock limit orders in the case of paddy, rice, pulses, edible oils and oilseeds;
- (vii) The periodic enhancements in MSP- currently Rs 1080 per quintal for wheat, Rs 850 per quintal for common rice and Rs 880 per quintal for Grade A rice, to maximize procurement of wheat and rice.
- (viii) Using Minimum Export Price (MEP) to regulate exports of onion (averaging at \$185 per tonne for June 2009) and basmati rice (\$1100 PMT) *w.e.f* 20.01.2009;
- (ix) Maintaining the Central Issue Price (CIP) for rice at Rs. 5.65 per kg for BPL and Rs. 3 per kg for AAY) and wheat at Rs. 4. 15 per kg for BPL and Rs. 2 per kg for AAY since July 2002.
- (x) Futures trading in Rice, Wheat, urad and Tur suspended by the Forward Market Commission in the year 2007-08 continued during the year 2008-09. Futures trading in sugar has been suspended *w.e.f* 27.5.2009 upto 31st December, 2009.
- (xi) Distribution of one million tons of imported edible oils to States/UTs at a subsidy @ Rs. 15/kg.
- (xii) To augment availability of pulses, the Public Sector Undertakings (namely, STC, MMTC, and PEC) and NAFED were permitted to import and sell pulses under a scheme and losses, if any, up to 15% are reimbursed by the Government.
- (xiii) Government allowed import of raw sugar under advance authorization Scheme and permitted sugar factories to sell processed raw sugar in the domestic market and fulfill export obligation on ton to ton basis.

- (xiv) Allowed import of raw sugar under Advance Authorization Scheme by sugar mills (at zero duty) upto 30.9.2009 (notified on 17.2.2009 and 2.3.2009).
- (xv) Allowed import of raw sugar at zero duty under O.G.L. upto 1.8.2009 by sugar mills (notified on 17.4.2009).
- (xvi) Allowed import of white/refined sugar by STC/MMTC/PEC and NAFED upto 1 million tonnes by 1.8.2009 under O.G.L. at zero duty (notified on 17.4.2009).
- (xvii) Levy obligation was removed in respect of all imported raw sugar and white/refined sugar.
- (xviii) Released 6 lakh tonnes of additional non levy sugar for April-June, 2009 Quarter taking the total release to 60 lakh tonnes against 50 lakh tonnes in corresponding Quarter in 2008 and 50 lakh tonnes in January-March, 2009.
- (xix) The availability of non-levy sugar for April'09 including the additional quota released stood at 22 lac tons against 17 lacs for March, 2009 and 17 lac tons for April, 2008. For the month of May, 2009, release of non-levy sugar including additional quota released stood at 21 lac tons as against 17.5 lac tons for May, 2008. For the month of June, 2009, the release of non-levy sugar stands at 16 lac tons as against release of 13.5 lac tons for June, 2008. Besides about 1 lac ton of raw sugar imported and reprocessed by sugar mills have been released during the month of June, 2009.

(B) Medium Term Measures:

In the medium term, Government has taken initiatives such as Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize (ISOPOM), National Food Security Mission (NFSM) and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) to improve production and productivity in agriculture.

Farm products suspended from futures trade

2304. SHRI R.C. SINGH:
SHRI NANDAMURI HARIKRISHNA:
SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY:

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

- (a) the details of farm products suspended from futures trade in 2006 and 2007;
- (b) the details of farm products suspended from futures trade since March, 2008;
- (c) whether it is a fact that the Forward Markets Commission is not in favour of suspending farm items like potato, soya oil, rubber and chana from futures trade; and
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor?