

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Spurt in prices of pulses

*482. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the prices of pulses have shown a spurt in the recent months;

(b) if so, the extent of increase in prices of pulses over the last six months and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to ensure that pulses are made available, if possible, through Public Distribution System, to the people at reasonable prices?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) In Delhi, the wholesale prices of pulses as on 4.8.2009 had registered an increase over the last six months as follows: Gram (4.31%), Masoor (5.36%), Tur dal (47.54%), Moong dal (39.47%), Urad dal (31.08%). The domestic prices of pulses have risen mainly on account of demand supply mismatch. Availability of Tur, Moong and Urad reduced considerably during 2008-09 as compared to the previous year. As per 4th Advance Estimates, the domestic production of pulses declined to 14.66 million tonnes during 2008-09 as compared to 14.76 million tonnes during 2007-08. In addition, hardening of international prices affected imports of pulses, which declined from 2.95 million tonnes in 2007-08 to 2.57 million tonnes in 2008-09.

(c) Government has taken specific measures to improve the domestic availability and ease the price situation with respect to pulses. These measures include, extending import of pulses at zero duty up to 31.3.2010; extending ban on export of pulses (except kabuli chana) up to 31.3.2010 and extending the current dispensation for PSUs to import pulses against reimbursement up to 15% of losses and service charge of 1.2% of cif value up to 31.3.2010. In order to ensure the supply of pulses at reasonable rates to the vulnerable sections of society, Government has initiated a scheme to give subsidy to PSUs @ Rs. 10 per kg to supply imported pulses to state governments for distribution through PDS. This scheme is extended up to 30.9.2009.

Schemes launched in view of unemployment in rural areas

*485. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR:
SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA:

Will the Minister of MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of large-scale unemployment or under-employment of youth in rural areas, any specific schemes have been launched containing incentives like access to finance or giving preference to purchase of their products;