

Failure to control price rise

†1372. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that the prices of consumer food items have been soaring instead of declining;
- (b) if not, the reaction of Government in this regard;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that Government has assured the country in and outside the House to bring down the price rise for last three years; and
- (d) if so, the reasons for failure to fulfil the assurance so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) On account of various fiscal and administrative steps taken by the Government over the last six months, retail prices of most of the essential commodities are either steady or declining.

(c) and (d) Rise in prices is due to the combined effect of 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, and increase in freight rates also have had an impact on the prices of essential commodities. Market expectations and sentiments play a major role in price rise. Weather apart from seasonable factors was responsible for the rise in the prices of fruits and vegetables. Government takes several proactive measures to moderate the price rise and to ensure that the vulnerable sections of the society is protected.

Wastage of wheat

†1373. SHRI RAGHUNANDAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of quantum of wheat spoiled since year 2007 till the current financial year, State-wise;
- (b) the reasons for wheat getting spoiled;
- (c) whether Government has taken any action against careless officials, if so, the details thereof;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.