

- National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Programme (NAAQMP) is in operation.
- Implementation of Air Pollution Control (APC) system in industrial units through consent management and environmental clearance system.
- Introduction of clean technologies in industries and mass awareness programmes.
- Prescribing the environmental safeguards and conditions for specified categories of developmental activities under Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006.

Impact of food inflation on weaker sections of society

†*272. SHRI RAMCHANDRA PRASAD SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that rise in inflation is inherent in a developing economy;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that the rise in food inflation, impacts the weaker section of the society, to a greater extent;
- (c) if so, the reaction of Government thereto; and
- (d) whether curbing the food inflation is not required?

THE FINANCE MINISTER (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (d) Inflation in the short and medium term is determined by several factors including supply side constraints and demand pressures in the economy. In a developing economy with increasing income levels if supply is not able to keep pace with rising demand there is risk of inflationary expectations.

A rise in food prices does affect the poorer sections of society relatively more adversely as they spend a larger fraction of their income on food. Government monitors the price situation regularly as price stability remains high on its agenda. In order to mitigate the effects of inflation on common man, the Government has taken several measures such as selective ban on exports and futures trading in food grains, zero import duty on select food items, permitting import of pulses and sugar by public sector undertakings, distribution of imported pulses and edible oils through the Public Distribution System (PDS) and release of higher quota of non-levy sugar. The WPI based food inflation has declined to 6.5 per cent in February, 2011 from its peak of 20.2 per cent in February, 2010.

Testing and labelling facilities for GM foods

*273. SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that under the Food Safety and Standards (FSS) Act, it is mandatory to get the Genetically Modified (GM) Food labelled in the country;