

(c) the action Government has taken against those responsible for the crisis; and

(d) the steps Government has taken to protect the interests of the retail investors?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (d) The matter is under examination.

Items under PDS

2251. SHRI DEVENDER GOUD T.: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for increase in the price of essential commodities during the last few months;

(b) the steps Government has taken or proposes to take to contain rise in prices of essential commodities;

(c) whether there is any proposal to add a few more items to the basket of PDS;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Wholesale Price index (WPI), which is an indicator of general price trend of essential commodities, shows that the overall rate of inflation for Food Articles which was at 11.95% in February 2013, with fluctuations stood at 11.91% for the month of July, 2013.

Rise in the prices of essential commodities are due to several factors such as shortfall in domestic supply related to demand, transportation cost, adverse weather conditions, improvement in income and living standards with resultant changes in dietary habits etc.

Government has initiated several measures to contain price rise and improve the availability of essential commodities. The steps in operation include allowing

import of various items of mass consumption at zero or concessional import duties together with restrictions on exports, prescribing stockholding limits under Essential Commodities Act and allocation of foodgrains at affordable prices under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS).

(c) to (e) There is no such proposal under consideration of the Government at present.

Construction of Godown under PPP Scheme

†2252. SHRI NARESH AGRAWAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the objectives of Government while implementing Public Private Partnership (PPP) scheme for constructing godowns and whether its objectives have been fulfilled;

(b) whether it is a fact that the norms set by Government for the Public Private Partnership were not appropriate due to which hundred per cent target could not be achieved; and

(c) whether Government is considering to review the norms, and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) There were gaps in the storage capacity for foodgrains available in various States which were attempted to be met through PPP scheme for constructing godowns. The objective was to invite private sector investment in the storage sector. Against approved capacity of 203 lakh MT under Private Entrepreneurs Guarantee (PEG) Scheme 148 lakh MT has been sanctioned. The objectives have been broadly met.

(b) and (c) No. Sir. Issues relating to environmental clearances, complexity of land laws, land use changes, delays in approval of layout plans by concerned authorities, have hampered the progress under PEG scheme to achieve hundred percent target as scheduled.

In order to remove bottlenecks and elicit better response from the investors, the following changes have been made in the Model Tender Format (MTF) for the PEG scheme by FCI:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.