

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAOSAHEB DADARAO DANVE):

(a) An Informal Group of Union Ministers has deliberated about the prevailing situation regarding cane price arrears and related issues and has made its recommendations relating to Ethanol Blending Programme (EBP), Production and Export of Raw Sugar, Import Duty on Sugar and Excise Duty Loan to sugar mills.

(b) and (c) The said recommendations seek to provide benefit to all the stakeholders in the sugar sector by improving the financial health of the sugar mills so as to enable them to clear the cane price arrears of the farmers.

Price-hike of sugar and other essential commodities

†427. SHRIMATI KANAK LATA SINGH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether prices of sugar and several essential commodities have risen drastically in the country due to impractical policies of the current Government and consequently the common man has to directly face the price-hike;

(b) the inflation rate of sugar and different essential commodities during the last three years;

(c) the measures taken by Government to check the price-rise and whether these measures are proving effective; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAOSAHEB DADARAO DANVE):

(a) The prices of sugar in the domestic market are currently stable. The recent rise in prices of other essential food commodities are mainly due to factors such as anticipation of deficient rains with possible shortfall in production, transportation cost, supply constraints like storage facilities for fruits and vegetables and artificial shortages created through hoarding and black marketing.

(b) The inflation rate of sugar and different essential commodities during last three years are given in Statement-I (*See below*).

(c) and (d) The measures taken by the Government to control prices of essential commodities are given in Statement-II (*See below*).

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Statement-I

Commodity-wise rate of inflation based on whole-sale price index (base year 2004-05=100) during last three financial years

Sl. No.	Name of Commodity	% Variation (WPI Financial year)		
		Year 2011-12	Year 2012-13	Year 2013-14
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Rice	3.05	12.69	16.51
2.	Wheat	-1.84	15.51	9.20
3.	Atta	3.15	4.79	14.46
4.	Urad	-11.68	-5.14	2.92
5.	Moong	-12.84	6.16	14.03
6.	Arhar	-10.66	8.82	6.49
7.	Masur	-16.29	19.10	12.01
8.	Gram	29.21	37.43	-18.41
9.	Potato	-2.25	60.45	6.34
10.	Onion	-28.09	24.56	107.40
11.	Tomato	-3.15	-6.56	78.40
12.	Groundnut Oil	12.79	17.55	-5.71
13.	Mustard & Rapeseed Oil	16.84	13.49	-0.14
14.	Vanaspati	4.37	3.48	0.45
15.	Soyabean Oil	17.20	10.20	-1.86
16.	Sunflower Oil	9.64	4.48	-4.47
17.	Palm Oil	7.58	4.21	1.18

1	2	3	4	5
18.	Sugar	5.10	11.34	-2.42
19.	Gur	-0.03	10.14	1.34
20.	Salt	0.84	3.35	2.12
21.	Milk	10.31	7.24	6.05

Source: Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion

Statement-II

The measures taken by Government to control price rise of essential commodities:

A. The Steps in operation:

- Reduced import duties to zero - for wheat, onion and pulses.
- Banned export of edible oils (except coconut oil, forest based oil and edible oils in blended consumer packs up to 5 kg with a Minimum Export Price of USD 1500 per MT) and pulses (except Kabuli chana and organic pulses and lentils up to a maximum of 10000 tonnes per annum).
- Imposed stock limits from time to time in the case of select essential commodities such as pulses, edible oil, and edible oilseeds for a period up to 30.9.2014 and in respect of paddy and rice up to 30.11.2014.
- Maintained 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 2002.
- Suspended futures trading in rice, urad and tur.
- The Government is also implementing “The Essential Commodities Act 1955” and “The Prevention of Black Marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980” with the objective of preventing hoarding and black marketing of essential commodities.

B. Recent steps taken:

- Fixed Minimum Export Price (MEP) of USD 300 for onion *w.e.f.* 17.6.2014 and increased to USD 500 *w.e.f.* 2.7.2014.

- Fixed Minimum Export Price (MEP) of USD 450 for potato *w.e.f.* 26.6.2014.
 - Imposed stock holding limits on onions and potatoes under Essential Commodities Act and empowering State Governments to impose limits on stocking of these vegetables by traders *w.e.f.* 03.07.2014.
 - States advised to allow free movement of fruits and vegetables by delisting them from APMC Act.
 - Government has approved the release of additional five million tonnes of rice to BPL & APL families in states pending implementation of National Food Security Act (NFSA).
 - Issued advisory to State Governments to take effective action against hoarding and black marketing under the Essential Commodities Act 1955 and the PBMMSEC Act 1980.
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Lead based paints

428. SHRI C.M. RAMESH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether as per the study by National Referral Centre for Lead Poisoning in India, Bengaluru, 91 per cent of paints in India contain toxic lead;
- (b) if so, the details of the study made;
- (c) whether it is because of lenient BIS standard as compared to the Western standards;
- (d) the percentage of lead permissible as per BIS standards; and
- (e) whether there are any plans to ban lead-based paints in the country, and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAOSAHEB DADARAO DANVE):
(a) to (c) The Department of Consumer Affairs has not commissioned any such study and nor has it received any such report.

(d) Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has formulated 61 Indian standards on paints. Out of these, 37 Indian standards have been revised incorporating the maximum permissible limit for Lead. In remaining 24 Indian standards, lead content limit has not been prescribed.