

- Setting up of special courts
 - Definition of 'Foodstuffs'
- II. The Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980:
- Increase in the limit of detention period
 - Increase in time limit for approval by State Government and
 - Reporting to the Central Government.

(c) The vigilance, monitoring and market intelligence to prevent hoarding is to be ensured by the State Governments and UTs as enforcement authorities.

(d) The deterrence against the offences under the Essential Commodities Act, will strengthen.

(e) and (f) There is no decision of mass campaign as on date. NGOs, States and Local bodies may awaken the people against hoarding and black-marketing. Both the Acts do not bar any person, organization, association, authority or public representative from campaigning against hoarding and black-marketing.

(g) The States and UTs have been empowered enough to deal with the cases of hoarding and black-marketing as they are the enforcing authorities.

Price-rise of essential commodities

1915. SHRIMATI SASIKALA PUSHPA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that prices of essential commodities continue to rise;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) the percentage of increase in some of the commodities like rice, wheat, pulses, edible oil, milk, etc. during the last four quarters, quarter-wise, commodity-wise; and
- (d) the steps taken by Government to control prices and to insulate the common man?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAOSAHEB DADARAO DANVE):
(a) to (c) The rise in prices of essential commodities is due to several factors such as rise in transportation costs, anticipation of deficit rains, supply constraints and artificial shortage due to hoarding and black-marketing. Details are given in the Statement-I (*See below*).

- (d) Details are given in the Statement-II.

Statement-I*All India Average Retail Prices and Quarterly Variation (%)*

All India Average Retail Price (Rs. per kg.)

Commodity	As on 21.7.2014	I Quarter	II Quarter	III Quarter	IV Quarter	% Variation Over			
		As on	As on	As on	As on	I quarter	II Quarter	III Quarter	IV Quarter
		21.04.2014	21.01.2014	21.10.2013	22.7.2013				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Rice	28	27	26	27	26	3	5	4	6
Wheat	21	21	22	21	20	2	-2	3	5
Gram Dal	46	49	49	51	53	-5	-6	-10	-12
Tur/Arhar Dal	70	70	69	69	69	0	1	1	2
Urad Dal	72	66	64	61	58	9	12	18	24
Moong Dal	87	88	79	74	74	-2	9	17	17
Masoor Dal	66	62	59	59	58	6	12	12	13
Sugar	36	36	34	36	36	1	5	1	0
Milk (Ltr.)	37	37	35	34	34	0	5	8	8

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Groundnut Oil (Pkd.)	123	123	121	126	130	0	2	-2	-6
Mustard Oil (Pkd.)	96	97	98	95	98	-1	-2	0	-2
Vanaspati (Pkd.)	77	77	75	74	71	-1	3	4	9
Soya Oil (Pkd.)	85	86	83	84	84	-1	2	1	1
Sunflower Oil (Pkd.)	95	95	95	98	98	-1	-1	-3	-3
Palm Oil (Pkd.)	70	72	71	69	67	-3	-1	1	4
Potato	25	18	18	18	18	33	39	37	36
Onion	29	18	21	56	31	65	37	-48	-7
Tomato	39	18	19	32	41	121	104	23	-3

Source: State Civil Supplies Departments

196 *Written Answers to*

[RAJYA SABHA]

Unstarred Questions

Statement-II*Recent steps taken by the Government*

The recent steps taken by the Government to improve the availability and to contain prices of essential food items include the following:

- Minimum Export Price (MEP) fixed for potatoes at USD 450 per M.T. *w.e.f.* 26.06.2014 and of onions at USD 500 per M.T. *w.e.f.* 2.07.2014 respectively.
 - States have been advised to allow free movement of fruits and vegetables by delisting them from the APMC Act.
 - Government has approved the release of additional five million tonnes of Rice to BPL and APL families in states pending implementation of National Food Security Act (NFSA).
 - Advisory to State Governments issued to take action against hoarding and black marketing and effectively enforce the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and the Prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980.
 - Imposed stock limits in respect of onion and potato for a period of one year with effect from 3rd July, 2014 under the Essential Commodities Act.
 - Based on interaction with the State Governments/UTs on 4th July, 2014, a decision has been taken to amend the Essential Commodities Act to make hoarding and black marketing a non bailable offence and increase the period of detention to one year from existing six months.
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Corruption in PDS system

†1916. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Central Government's plan to completely computerise the public distribution system is under process;
- (b) if so, the details of the achievements made in this direction so far and by when this task will be completed;
- (c) whether massive corruption is prevalent in the public distribution system of many States in the country and the stored foodgrains for public distribution are black marketed on large-scale; and
- (d) if so, the short-term as well as the long term plan of Government for putting an end to corruption and black-marketing altogether?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.