

(b) Number of FCI's working employees (Staff and Officers) in last three years (as on 31st March) is given below:

Year	Employees
2011-2012	29434
2012-2013	26716
2013-2014	22480

At present the retired employees of FCI are entitled for the Pension on the basis of monthly contribution deposited in Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995.

Memorandum of settlement signed between the Management of FCI and its staff unions on 1.4.2010 provides for implementation of a liberalized Pension Scheme, however, Government has not approved any such scheme due to financial commitment involved in it.

(c) and (d) Question does not arise.

Rise in prices of essential commodities

3071.SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of factors responsible for increase in prices of essential commodities;

(b) the measures Government has taken to control the prices and by when we would be self sufficient in essential commodities; and

(c) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAOSAHEB DADARAO DANVE): (a) Rise in the prices of essential food items are normally due to factors such as adverse weather conditions, insufficient logistics and storage facilities, artificial shortages created through hoarding and black marketing.

(b) and (c) Government has initiated several measures on the prices front to improve availability of essential commodities such as import of various items of mass consumption at zero or concessional import duties together with restriction on export, prescribing stock holding limits under Essential Commodities Act, allocation of foodgrains at affordable prices under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) etc. The recent steps initiated

by the Government to contain the price rise of essential food items are given in Statement (See below).

India is already self sufficient in foodgrains such as rice and wheat. In the case of other major essential items such as pulses and oilseeds, a number of schemes/programmes are under implementation for increasing their production as well as availability.

Statement

*Steps taken by the Government to improve the availability
and to contain food items:*

- Minimum Export Price (MEP) fixed for potatoes at USD 450 per M.T. w.e.f. 26.06.2014 and of onions at USD 300 per M.T. w.e.f 21.08.2014 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 & APL families in states pending implementation of National Food Security Act (NFSA).
- Advisory to State Governments issued to take action against hoarding & black marketing and effectively enforce the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 & the Prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980.
- Authorised States/UTs to impose 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.
- Authorised States/UTs to impose 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 30.9.2015.
- 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.
- The Government has approved for the current year *i.e.* 2014-15 Open Market Sale of ten million tonnes of wheat in the domestic market.