

Profit margin on sale of vegetables

1426. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken cognizance of the fact that prices of vegetables get increased even upto five times when they reach retail markets from mandi/wholesale market;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the action taken/being taken by Government to tackle the problem;

(c) whether Government is contemplating on fixing the maximum profit margin by capping the price margin of vegetables; and

(d) if so, the details thereof along with the time by when the maximum profit margin of vegetables is likely to be fixed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) As per the study conducted by AGRIWATCH, the difference in wholesale and retail prices in metros for potato and onion were higher in Delhi and Mumbai as compared to Chennai and Kolkata. The difference between retail and wholesale prices may be due to various factors such as number of intermediaries in supply chain, transportation cost, loading/unloading expenses, grading/sorting, wholesaler's margin, wastages during movements/weighing, location of retail shop, fixed overhead expenses of retailers and margins of retailers etc. The Government has launched National Agricultural market (e-NAM) on 14th April, 2016 with the objective to reduce the difference between wholesale and retail prices, induce competition and transparency in sale transactions through integration of mandis to e-NAM portal. This would facilitate on-line trading of agricultural produce and help reduce the supply chain in the physical marketing of agricultural commodities in the Mandi system.

(c) and (d) No such proposal is under consideration at present.

Indian call centres perpetrating imposter frauds

1427. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether US authorities have charged Indian call centres of perpetrating various imposter frauds targeting Americans and duping them into sharing personal financial details;

(b) whether the Indian industry body, NASSCOM, has responded to the charges by Federal Trade Commission (FTC) of US and assured them of stern preventive action against the Indian call centre imposters;

(c) whether FTC and NASSCOM have jointly planned to hold law enforcement workshops in four major cities in India this summer; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY): (a) According to National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM), the US Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has reported that between January 2015 and August 2015, 23,709 complaints filed under the "tech support scams" category, with reported consumer loss of more than USD 5 million. FTC has further stated, "Our law enforcement experience indicates that many tech support scams originate from call centers located in India."

(b) NASSCOM has been working closely with US FTC over the last few years to address the growing threat of deceptive and unlawful telemarketing in India. NASSCOM-Data Security council of India (DSCI) and FTC have hosted two meetings in India with the relevant stakeholders from India, US and Canada. First meeting was held on July 30, 2014 in New Delhi and next meeting on September 9, 2015 in New Delhi. Indian industry led by NASSCOM-DSCI has also participated in the meeting organized by FTC in the US.

(c) According to NASSCOM, no joint workshop with FTC is planned this summer. However, NASSCOM-DSCI have been organising cyber and forensic training workshops for law enforcement officers across the country.

(d) Does not arise.

Villages without mobile connectivity

†1428. DR. SANJAY SINH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 55,000 villages in the country do not have mobile connectivity as yet;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise/district-wise; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.