

it provides for substantially high coverage of 75% of the rural and 50% of the urban population. Corresponding to the above coverage at the all India level, State/Union Territory-wise coverage was determined by the then Planning Commission (now NITI Aayog) based on the 2011-12 NSSO Household Consumption Expenditure Survey data using uniform methodology for all the States/UTs. The percentage coverage so determined for the State of Odisha is 82.17% for rural area and 55.77% for urban area, which is higher than the all India average. Under the Act, it is the responsibility of the State Government to ensure that within the coverage determined for the State, all the eligible households, as per the criteria for identification determined by them, are covered and no genuine beneficiary is left out.

Rise in prices of vegetables

1687. SHRI RAM KUMAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that prices of most vegetables have recently shot up sharply making it difficult even for the middle class families to manage their household budget in the National Capital;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government is also aware that prices of vegetables in the wholesale market are not so high but the retailers, who are also trading in the same market, are selling them at a very high rate; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto and the steps taken to curb the abnormal rise of prices by the retailers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) All India annual inflation rate for vegetables, as per Sub-Group level Consumer Price Index (CPI) data released by M/o Statistics and Programme Implementation, is given in the table below:—

Inflation rate (%) Base 2012=100				
Years	October	November	December	January
2016-17	-5.74	-10.42	-14.59	-15.62
2017-18	7.54	22.48	29.05	26.97(P)

P-Provisional

The relatively higher inflation rate during the recent months of 2017-18 is partially

due to lower base on account of decrease in prices of vegetables in previous year as reflected in the table.

(c) and (d) The difference between the prices of essential commodities including vegetables in retail and wholesale market is due to various factors such as transportation cost, loading/unloading expenses, grading/sorting, wholesaler's margin, wastages during movement/weighing, location of retail shops, fixed overhead expenses of retailers and margin of retailers etc.

Government of India has made enabling provision allowing States to impose stock limit on onions. Letters were written to States to take necessary and corrective measures by way of licensing, imposition of stock limits and movement restrictions. They were also requested to hold periodical meetings with traders, farmers, retailers and consumer associations at State and District levels to impress upon them the need to desist from unfair and illegal trade practices and profiteering. Government has also requested States to initiate action against unscrupulous traders and hoarders of onion under Essential Commodities Act. In addition, Government is implementing Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), for holistic growth of the horticulture sector covering fruits, vegetables, etc. Besides, Government is also implementing Price Stabilization Fund (PSF) scheme to help moderate the volatility in prices of agri-horticultural commodities like onion, potato and pulses.

Investment for increasing storage capacity

†1688. SHRI OM PRAKASH MATHUR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of total agriculture produces stored annually in the country and the percentage of agriculture produces that perish due to lack of storage facility;

(b) whether the storage capacity of agriculture produces has increased substantially during the last three years as compared to earlier capacity;

(c) whether agriculture production is expected to increase manifold in the coming three years; and

(d) whether adequate investment is being made to enhance the storage capacity in view of expected increase in agriculture production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) As far as foodgrains (wheat and rice) are concerned, about 33% of the annual production is procured and stored in the Central Pool. No damage of foodgrains can be attributed to lack of proper storage facilities.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.