

(c) the steps taken by Government to reduce the inflation; and

(d) whether Government has made some special provisions to reduce the inflation, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR): (a) and (b) The Consumer Price Index-Combined (CPI-C) inflation during 2019-20 (April-December) was recorded at 4.1 per cent and 7.4 per cent in December, 2019. The 'vegetables', a component of 'Food and Beverages', has contributed considerably in CPI-C inflation during 2019-20 (April-December).

(c) and (d) Government is implementing Price Stabilization Fund (PSF) to help moderate the volatility in prices of agri-horticultural commodities like pulses, onion, and potato. In order to contain the price rise in onion during 2019-20, buffer stock of 57,373 metric tonnes (MT) Rabi onion was created under Price Stabilization Fund (PSF) which was distributed to various State Governments, other agencies and also sold in various *mandis* through open auction. Minimum Export Price (MEP) of \$850/MT was imposed on onion on 13.09.2019, and subsequently its export was banned by Government on 29.09.20 in view of continued high prices. Government, on 29.09.2019, imposed stock limits on traders across the country -100 quintals on retail traders and 500 quintals on wholesale traders under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, which was subsequently, revised to 20 quintals (2 MT) for retailers and 250 quintals (25 MT) for wholesalers. Further, Government of India urged State Governments to hold regular meetings with the traders of onions at State and District level to prevent hoarding, speculative trading and profiteering, unfair and illegal trade practices like cartelling, etc. Private imports of onions were facilitated by relaxing its fumigation norms and exempting importers from stock limits. Government also imported onions through MMTC from countries like Egypt and Turkey and directed NAFED to procure surplus Kharif onion from producing States like Rajasthan, Maharashtra and undertake distribution in deficit States.

Incentivising population control measures

241. SHRI HARNATH SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is encouraging State and local Governments to control population in their respective territories by giving them incentives and financial support; and

(b) whether the population migrating from one territory to another is also being covered under such incentives/schemes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY): (a) The Government has undertaken several initiatives encouraging States/Union Territories to promote family planning by giving compensation and incentives.

(b) Government schemes cover all citizens irrespective of their migration from one territory to another within the country.

Respiratory diseases due to air pollution

242. SHRI VIJAY PAL SINGH TOMAR:

LT. GEN. (DR.) D.P. VATS (RETD.):

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is high prevalence of respiratory and other diseases due to air pollution and other factors across the country and, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the estimated number of people suffering from diseases due to exposure to polluted air and deaths occurred therefrom in the country in the last three years, State/UT-wise, year-wise; and

(c) the remedial measures taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY): (a) to (c) While air pollution is known to be one of the aggravating factors for many respiratory ailments, specific information on the number of cases and deaths exclusively due to air pollution is not available.

In January, 2019, Government launched National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) to tackle the problem of air pollution in a comprehensive manner with targets to achieve 20 to 30 % reduction in PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations by 2024, keeping 2017 as base year. The overall objective is to augment and evolve effective ambient air quality monitoring network across the country besides ensuring comprehensive management plan for prevention, control and abatement of air pollution and enhancing public awareness and capacity building measures.