

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 833
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.02.2025

RECORD FOOD INFLATION IN DECEMBER 2024

833. SHRI RYAGA KRISHNAIAH

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) the reasons for the record food inflation in December 2024;
- (b) whether Government has taken any steps or plans to take steps to bring down food prices; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE, CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

(SHRI B. L. VERMA)

(a) : Food inflation measured by year-on-year percentage variation in Consumer Food Price Index (CFPI) as published by Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation for December, 2024 was 8.39% which was lower than that in October, 2024 of 10.87%. The prices of food commodities tend to be volatile as they are affected by several factors, such as seasonality in production, adverse weather conditions, supply chain disruptions, rise in international prices etc. Sometimes slight disruptions in the supply chain or crop damage due to adverse weather condition etc. lead to spike in the prices of agri-horticultural commodities. Conversely, bulk arrival and logistics problems have the potential of creating a situation of glut in the market and resultant dip in prices. Further, El Nino phenomenon observed during the past two consecutive years of 2022-23 and 2023-24 created adverse weather conditions which impacted the production of food commodities, especially, vegetables and pulses.

(b) to (c) : The Government keeps a close watch on the production and availability of essential food commodities through regular reviews by the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC). The Committee reviews, on regular basis, the situation of prices and price trends of essential agri-horticulture commodities and suggests measures to enhance availability through increased domestic production and through imports. Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (DAFW) is a major stakeholder in all these meetings and continues to undertake measures to increase production and productivity.

Buffer stocks of pulses and onion have been maintained for market interventions through calibrated and targeted release to moderate the prices in the market. Part of the stock of pulses from the buffer are converted to dals for retail sale to the consumers at affordable prices under the Bharat Dal brand. Similarly, atta and rice are distributed to retail consumers under Bharat brand at subsidized prices. Onion from the buffer had been released during September to December, 2024 in a calibrated and targeted manner to moderate prices in high price consuming centres at wholesale markets and through retail outlets. Onions from the buffer were distributed among retail consumers at Rs.35 per kg through stationary retail outlets and mobile vans in major consumption centres.

These measures have helped in making essential food commodities such as pulses, rice, atta and onion available to the general consumers at affordable prices and also in stabilising the prices.
