ORIGINAL IN HINDI

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1507 (OIH)
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29.07.2022

IMPACT OF PRICE RISE ON COMMON PEOPLE

1507. SHRI RAM NATH THAKUR:
(OIH)

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

(a) the steps taken by Government to contain price rise of essential food items, item-wise;
(b) the factors responsible for the increase in inflation, whether any study been conducted by Government in this regard;
(c) the extent to which inflation is affecting daily life of the common people;
(d) whether Government would consider relaxing or amending the norms for making ration cards to shield the common man from price rise; and
(e) the time line of the changes carried out in the norms for making ration cards?

ANSWER

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

(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a) to (c) : The Department of Consumer Affairs monitors the daily retail and wholesale prices of 22 essential food commodities submitted by the 184 price monitoring centres that have been set up with Central assistance by State Governments and UT Administrations across the country. Taking into account price trends, the Government takes various measures from time to time to augment domestic availability and stabilize prices of essential food commodities and make them accessible to all the consumers across India at affordable prices. These steps, *inter alia*, include releases from the buffer to cool down prices, imposition of stock limits, monitoring of stocks declared by entities to prevent hoarding and also requisite changes in trade policy instruments like rationalization of import duty, changes in import quota, restrictions on exports of the commodity etc.

Buffer stocks of pulses and onion are maintained for price stabilization. Pulses from the buffer are released in the market for cooling down prices and also supplied on ongoing basis to the States/UTs for distribution under welfare and nutrition schemes. Onions from the buffer are released in a targeted and calibrated manner during lean season (Aug - Dec) to contain price rise.
In order to ensure smooth and seamless import of pulses to augment domestic availability, import of Tur and Urad has been kept under 'Free Category' till 31.03.2023. In respect of Masur, the basic import duty has been reduced to zero. Further, the Agriculture Infrastructure and Development Cess has also been brought down zero till 31.03.2023.

In order to improve the domestic availability and to keep prices of edible oils under control, the basic duty on Crude Palm Oil, Crude Soyabean Oil and Crude Sunflower Oil has been reduced from 2.5% to Nil, and the AIDC on these Oils has been brought to 5%. The basic duty on Refined Soyabean oil and Refined Sunflower Oil has been reduced from 32.5 % to 17.5% and on Refined Palm Oil reduced from 17.5% to 12.5%. The Government has extended the import of Refined Palm Oils under Free Category for a period upto 31.12.2022. Further, futures trading in mustard seed on NCDEX has been suspended. In order to ensure the smooth availability of edible oils and oil-seeds in the country, the Government has imposed stock limits on Edible Oils and Oilseeds for a period up to 31st December 2022. In its latest initiative to ease the prices of Edible Oils and provide relief to the consumers, the Government has issued Notification for allocation of Tariff Rate Quota (TRQ) for import of 20 LMT of Crude Soyabean Oil and 20 LMT of Crude Sunflower Oil for the financial year 2022-23 and 2023-24 at zero import duty and zero AIDC.

(d) & (e) : Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State/UT Governments. Central Government is responsible only for procurement, allocation as per NFSA and transportation of such foodgrains upto the designated depots of the Food Corporation of India in the State/UT. The operational responsibilities for lifting and distribution of foodgrains within the States/UTs, identification of eligible beneficiaries, issuance of ration cards to them, redressal of grievances and supervision over and monitoring of functioning of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) etc. rest with the concerned State/UT Governments. Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is governed as per the provisions of the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA). NFSA provides for coverage of upto 75% of the rural population and upto 50% of the urban population for receiving foodgrains under TPDS. Coverage under the Act is under two categories-households covered under Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) and the priority households (PHH) to be identified by the State Governments/ Union Territories (UT) Administrations as per criteria evolved by them, within the coverage limit determined for the State/UT. The Antyodaya Anna Yojana Households are entitled to receive 35 kg of foodgrains per household per month and households belonging to priority category are entitled to receive 5 kg of foodgrains per person per month at highly subsidized prices of Rs.3/2/1 per kg for rice/ wheat/ coarse grains respectively.

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