

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No.2317

TO BE ANSWERED ON 05.08.2022

RISE IN PRICES OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

2317. SHRI RAGHAV CHADHA

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

- (a) whether prices of vegetables and fruits have registered a sharp increase in the country during the last six months despite increased availability of vegetables and fruits;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether it is a fact that hoarding of vegetables and fruits is taking place on a large scale in the country;
- (d) if so, the action taken by Government against these hoarders and middlemen; and
- (e) the other steps taken by Government to check spiralling prices of vegetables and fruits and to increase its production?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a) to (e) The Department of Consumer Affairs monitors the daily retail and wholesale prices of 22 essential food commodities including the prices of three vegetables, namely onion, tomato and potato, submitted by the 184 price monitoring centres that have been set up with Central assistance by State Governments and UT Administrations across the country. The all-India average monthly retail prices of onion has declined during the last six months while the prices of potato and tomato has fluctuated during the same period. While the daily prices of fruits are not monitored, the monthly CPI inflation rate for fruits showed a decline from 4.99% in April 2022 to 3.10% in June, 2022. No report of hoarding of vegetables and fruits has been received in this Department.

Taking into account price trends in essential food commodities, 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. The procurements for the buffer gives support to farmers and releases from the buffer augment availability in the market and cools down the prices for consumers. A buffer stock of 2.50 Lakh Metric Tons (LMT) onion has been built in 2022-23 by procuring rabi-2022 harvest from farmers/FPOs to be released in a targeted and calibrated manner during the lean season (Aug - Dec) to contain price rise.
