

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

**RAJYA SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 3424**

TO BE ANSWERED ON 31.03.2023

**PRICE HIKE OF ESSENTIAL FOOD AND DOMESTIC COMMODITIES**

3424. DR. M. THAMBIDURAI

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

- (a) whether Government has taken a note of sky rocketing prices of essential food and domestic commodities in the last one year;
- (b) if so, the effective steps taken by Government to mitigate the price rise crisis and its impact on the common people; and
- (c) whether Government has allocated any additional foodgrains and essential commodities to States/UTs and if so, the appropriate steps taken by Government to mitigate the issues and problems faced by the poor and middle class people due to the steep rise in prices of essential commodities?

**ANSWER**

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

(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a) & (b): Department of Consumer Affairs monitors the daily retail and wholesale prices of 22 essential food commodities, including pulses, submitted by the 482 price monitoring centres that have been set up with Central assistance by the State Governments and UT Administrations across the country. The daily report of prices and indicative price trends are duly analysed for taking appropriate decisions such as release of stocks from the pulses buffer, stock disclosure by stockholding entities, imposition of stock limits, import policy etc.

In order to manage the overall food security of the country and control the increasing prices of foodgrains the Government amended the export policy of wheat from free to prohibited category on 13th May 2022 for restricting export of Indian Durum Wheat, and from 12th July, 2022 the export of atta (wheat) is subjected to the recommendation of Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on export of wheat. Further, the export of broken rice has been banned and export duty of 20% imposed on non-Basmati rice except for parboiled rice w.e.f. 9th September, 2022. The Government has also decided to offload 50 lakh metric tons of wheat under Open Market Disposal Scheme (OMSS) and sales to State Governments, Kendriya Bhandar, National Consumer Cooperative Federation (NCCF), National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED), State Cooperatives/ Federations etc. to cool down the prices of wheat and atta.

To augment domestic availability and moderate the prices of pulses, import of tur and urad have been kept under 'Free Category' till 31.03.2024 and import duty on masur has been reduced to zero till 31.03.2024. The import duty on tur has also been removed to facilitate smooth and seamless import. To prevent hoarding and restrictive trade practices in respect of tur and urad, the Government has issued a directive to all the States and UTs to enforce stock disclosure by stockholders of tur under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and to also monitor and verify the stocks. Stocks of chana and moong from the Price Support Scheme (PSS) and Price Stabilisation Fund (PSF) buffer are continuously released in the market to moderate the prices. Chana from PSS and PSF are also being supplied to the States for welfare schemes at Rs.15/kg discount over the issue price.

In order to stabilise the volatility in prices of onion, the Government procured a record 2.51 lakh metric tonnes from Rabi-2022 crop under Price Stabilisation Fund (PSF) and released in major consumption centres during September, 2022 and January, 2023.

To control the prices of edible oil, the Government reduced the basic import duty on crude palm oil, crude soyabean oil and crude sunflower oil to zero and Agri-cess on these oils has been brought down to 5%. The basic duty on refined soyabean oil and refined sunflower oil has been reduced to 17.5% from the previous rate of 32.5% and the basic duty on refined palm oils has been reduced from 17.5% to 12.5%. The Government has also kept the import of refined palm oils under 'Free' category.

(c): To ameliorate the hardships faced by the poor due to economic disruption caused by COVID-19 Pandemic, Govt. of India had launched the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY). Under the scheme, 5 kg of additional food grains per person per month was provided free of cost to around 80 Crore National Food Security Act (NSFA) beneficiaries. A total quantity of approx. 1118 LMT foodgrains had been allocated to States/UTs under PMGKAY (Phase I-VII) during the period April, 2020 to December, 2022. Further, from January1,2023 the Central Government is providing free of cost foodgrains to about 81.35 crore beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act (NSFA) for one year which were earlier distributed at Rs. 3 per kg for rice, Rs. 2 per kg for wheat and Rs. 1 per kg coarse grains to beneficiaries.

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