

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 837
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.02.2025

ADDRESSING THE ISSUE OF RISING FOOD INFLATION

837 SHRI JOSE K. MANI

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

- (a) the manner in which Government is addressing the issue of rising food inflation;
- (b) the interventions being made to stabilize the prices of essential commodities like pulses, edible oil and sugar; and
- (c) whether there are plans to increase market availability of these commodities through imports or other mechanisms?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE, CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI B. L. VERMA)

(a) to (c) Department of Consumer Affairs monitors the daily retail and wholesale prices of selected essential food commodities, submitted by the 555 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 buffer, stock disclosure by stockholding entities, imposition of stock limits, changes in trade policy instruments like rationalisation of import duty, changes in import quota, restrictions on exports of the commodity etc.

Government keeps a close watch on the production and availability of essential 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.

In order to tackle the volatility in prices, government maintains buffer stocks of pulses and onion 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. The government restricts the export of sugar to ensure domestic availability and is closely monitoring the prices of edible oils and take necessary measures to make these commodities affordable to the consumers.