

Rise in prices of consumer goods

74. SHRI AKHTAR HASAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether rate of inflation went down by 1.1 per cent as on 1 December, 1985 as compared to the position on 1 December, 1984;

(b) whether it is a fact that the prices of consumer goods in the market kept on rising during this period affecting the common people adversely; and

(c) if so, Government's reaction in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) to (c). The annual rate of inflation on week ended 30th November, 1985 was 5.5 per cent, which is 0.9 per cent lower than the rate of 6.4 per cent on 1st December, 1984. Between 1st December, 1984 and 30th November, 1985, prices of certain consumer goods declined e.g. condiments and spices, tea, mustard oil, coconut oil, salt, soap etc.) while prices of rice, wheat, pulses, fruits and vegetables, eggs, fish and meat, sugar, khandsari and gur registered increases.

Government has been closely watching the price situation and has taken a number of steps for effective supply and demand management including strengthening of the public distribution system, enforcement of fiscal discipline and keeping the aggregate liquidity in the system under control.

Reduction in excise duty on Snuff

75. SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a large percentage of persons who consume snuff, are poorer sections of society;

(b) whether Government have received representation for abolition of differential slabs of excise duty and reduce the rate of excise duty on snuff for the benefit of poor consumers; and

(c) if so, the reaction of Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) and (b). In a representation received from the Madras State Snuff and Tobacco Merchants Association it has been stated that the incidence of central excise duty on snuff, which is used mostly by poor people, is very heavy. It has been requested that the differential slabs for the purpose of levy of central excise duty on snuff may be abolished and the rate of duty may be reduced.

(c) The matter is under examination.

Import of banned items by marine products exporters

76. SHRI V. S. KRISHNA IYER :
PROF. K. V. THOMAS :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that scores of marine products exporters are reported to be found indulging in importing banned items like ivory boards, etc. from Japan for the manufacture of cartons for packaging export cargo under cover of Duty Exemption Entitlement Certificate (DEEC); and

(b) if so, the measures Government have taken to stop import of banned items ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER) : (a) and (b). Under the current Import Policy for the grant of Duty Exemption Entitlement Certificates, import of 'ivory board' is not permitted as a packing material to the exporters of marine products.

Customs authorities are investigating into the allegation of violation of DEEC's conditions, by Marine product exporters. Action under the Import and Export (Control) and Customs Acts would follow if these violations are established.