

of clearing agents have been strengthened to ensure appointment of reliable clearing agents. STC's port officers responsible for clearance of import consignments have been advised to ensure speedier clearance to minimise the period during which the consignments have to be kept in the docks area.

Rise in the prices of essential commodities

653. SHRI JHARKANDE RAI:
 SHRI HARINATH MISRA:
 SHRI PIUS TIRKEY:
 DR. FAROOQ ABDULLAH:
 SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN:
 SHRI ARJUN SETHI:
 SHRI R. P. YADAV:
 SHRI D. P. JADEJA:
 SHRI C. CHINNASAMY:
 SHRI S. R. A; SAPPALANAIDU:

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the prices of the essential commodities in the markets have been increasing unabatedly during the last few months; and

(b) if so, the facts thereof and what measures are being taken by Government to arrest the situation?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI V. C. SHUKLA): (a) and (b). During the last few months the whole price indices of some essential commodities have gone up, whilst that of others have remained steady or have declined. The wholesale price indices of selected commodities for the weeks ending 12-1-1980 and 24-5-1980 are given in statement.

A number of measures have been taken by Government in last six months to improve the situation. The monthly releases of cereals from the Central pool, free-sale sugar and imported edible oils for sale through

the public distribution system have been stepped up substantially. Import of edible oils is being continued and it has been decided to import a limited quantity of sugar. Forward trading in gur has been suspended and margins on bank advances against gur and khandsari have been raised. There has been a significant increase in the number of fair price shops, particularly in the drought affected States. The export of goat and sheep meat has been banned. The supply of kerosene to States has been raised. Several measures have been taken to improve the movement of essential commodities by Railways.

The provisions of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and the orders issued thereunder as well as the Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980 are being enforced by the States.

Statement

Wholesale Price Indices of selected Essential Commodities.

(Base : 1970-71-100)

Commodity	Index Numbers	
	12-1-1980	24-5-1980
1.	2	3
Rice	191.9	197.6
Wheat	170.0	163.8
Jowar	179.9	177.7
Bajara	188.5	195.6
Maize	193.8	208.4
Ragi	154.8	155.2
Gram	239.9	278.3
Arhar	236.7	224.9
Moong	307.9	334.2
Masoor	227.1	291.1
Urad	226.4	235.8

1	2	3
Potatoes	88.7	195.9
Onions	621.5	136.5
Milk	163.7	178.4
Eggs	181.0	120.2
Fish	259.3	271.5
Meat	293.2	311.8
Chillies	121.2	114.0
Turmeric	132.5	96.0
Tea	245.0	236.9
Coffee	132.0	123.7
Kerosene	272.8	272.8
Biscuits	174.2	183.3
Bread	160.0	169.3
Sugar	199.8	209.9
Gur	276.0	382.9
Khandsari	251.4	334.0
Vanaspati	198.8	206.6
Groundnut Oil	189.5	200.9
Mustard Oil	209.4	226.3
Coconut oil	188.4	201.5
Gingelly oil	108.5	203.1
Kardi oil	212.3	206.1
Cotton seed oil	167.7	185.9
Cotton Cloth (Mills)	199.3	202.5
Khadi cloth	160.0	150.2
Paper	240.7	240.7
Footwear	235.3	253.7
Tyres	225.8	227.3
Tubes	251.0	254.2
Rubber and Plastic shoes	150.2	158.4
Caustic Soda	330.4	362.0
Soda Ash	296.8	296.8

1	2	3
Soap	213.5	229.4
Synthetic Detergent	252.2	252.2
Drugs and Medicines	195.8	195.7
Tooth Powder	222.2	222.2
Tooth Paste	171.8	171.8
Matches	125.8	122.6
Cement	234.1	223.4
Dry Cells	184.4	188.6
Razor Blades	119.9	119.9
Salt	267.4	223.7
Hurricane Lanters	101.6	101.6
Bidi	195.8	191.4
Cigarettes	211.9	215.0
Cycles	182.5	184.5

Import of Aircraft for Private Parties

654. SHRI AJIT KUMAR MEHTA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether plans are under preparation by his Ministry to allow import of aircraft for private parties to run third level air services, executive aircraft for use by big business houses and small 6 seater for private air-taxi services;

(b) if so, what advantages Government expect to have by introducing this; and

(c) whether Air India and Indian Airlines will lose heavily in their earnings, and if so, considerations for introducing private air-taxi services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR): (a) These issues are under consideration of