

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:328
ANSWERED ON:25.11.2014
MRP ON PACKAGED FOOD ITEMS
Ahmed Shri Sultan

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

- (a) whether the Maximum Retail Price (MRP) on most of the packaged food items is marked much above their actual cost in the country;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has taken any steps to ensure accurate declaration of MRP on packaged food items; and
- (c) if so, the details and the outcome thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAOSAHEB PATIL DANVE)

(a): No, Madam. However under the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011 certain mandatory declarations are required like name and address of the manufacturer/packer/importer, name of the commodity, net quantity, month and year of manufacturing, retail sale price in the form of Maximum Retail Price (MRP) Rs?.. inclusive of all taxes and consumer care details. Rules protect the consumers that commodities in packaged form cannot be sold at a price higher than MRP.

(b) & (c): No, however on the direction of Kerala High Court, the Government had constituted an Expert Committee in August, 2007 under the Chairmanship of Dr. M. Govinda Rao, the then Director, National Institute of Public Finance & Policy to examine the feasibility of declaring a normative price on a pre-packaged commodity, as applicable for the entire country, adequately reflecting the cost incurred by the producer in reaching the package to the end consumer. The Committee unanimously found that it is neither feasible nor desirable to declare a normative price for various customer goods. The committee also observed that the consumer's interest will be well served by the Government taking a pro-active role in creating and deepening the markets and empowering the institution such as the Competition Commission to monitor the market conditions to promote healthy competition.

The committee also examined the question of whether there should be declaration of any other price in addition to MRP. The majority view in the Committee was that it would be impossible to enforce accurate declaration of MRP by requiring the manufacturer to declare the First Point Price in addition to MRP. The Committee recommended that the solution to prevent exploitation of consumer lies in activating competition in the markets.

The committee also noted that for goods covered under Schedule 4 of the Central Excise Act, there is an automatic disincentive to inflate the MRP because higher MRP would attract higher taxes.

The Government has accepted these recommendations of the committee.