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Title:Regarding rise in the prices of pulses in the country.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: It is a good thing that you gave him a chance to reply. Otherwise, so many allegations can be made against so many people which I do not want to do.

Sir, there has been a tremendous rise in the price of pulses over the last one year affecting millions of common people for whom pulses are the major source of vegetable protein. Price of *arhar dal* has crossed Rs.200 per kilogram and is clearly beyond the capacity of the common people to buy pulses at this price. Compared to one year ago, prices of groundnut, *toor dal*, *urad dal*, *moong dal*, and *masoor dal* have risen by 53 per cent, 99 per cent, 86 per cent, 14.45 per cent and 26.77 per cent recently. So you can see that the highest rise is in the price of *toor dal*. Now again compared to six months ago, they have risen by 21.16 per cent, 61.87 per cent, 51.16 per cent, 6.16 per cent and 15.38 per cent respectively.

Sir, the targeted production for pulses this year was 20.05 million tonnes. The actual production in 2014-15 was 17.2 million tonnes. But there is a huge shortfall as demand has risen from 22.68 million metric tonnes to 23.62 million metric tonnes. So, there is a shortage of about 5-6 million metric tonnes of pulses.

Imports this year have not happened. It was only 1.9 million metric tonnes up to August. Now even after that, it is obvious that some businessmen have hoarded pulses in a big way. There have been some raids throughout the country. As compared to a demand of 22 million metric tonnes, the total quantity seized in raids throughout the country was only 1,33,000 metric tonnes. The Government needs to immediately step up raids and de-hoarding of hidden stocks of pulses to save the common man. They must take steps to import pulses to alleviate the sufferings of the common man who is not able to consume *dal*. There are allegations that some of these traders are getting protection from the ruling party.

I urge an immediate action in this matter and inquiry into why prices of pulses have risen to such skyrocketing levels. Thank you.

HON. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri P.K. Biju and Dr. A. Sampath are permitted to associate with the issue raised by Prof. Saugata Roy.