

# 'Essential commodity prices to be stable this festival season'

**Curbs imposed to check price rise will not be removed in the near future, says Food Secy**

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Prices of essential food items, including sugar and edible oils, will remain stable during the festival season, Union Food Secretary Sanjeev Chopra said on Thursday.

The secretary was briefing the media on the domestic supply and prices of key essential food items like wheat, rice, sugar and edible oils. "Prices are expected to remain stable during the festival season. We are not anticipating any manner of hike (in food item prices) in the festival season. Hopefully, prices should rule stable in the next couple of months," Chopra told reporters here.

The government has taken some decisions recently to ensure price stabilisation, the secretary said. The government has recently used all tools at its command, whether trade policy, customs duty or stock limit. These tools

have been used judiciously to ensure prices remain stable, he added.

He also clearly mentioned that the restrictions imposed on some commodities to keep prices under check will not be removed in the near future as the government continues to monitor the prices of essential commodities.

Several curbs imposed to check price rise include a ban on wheat export since May 22, an extension of export duty of 20 per cent on parboiled rice till March 2024, stock limits on pulses and an extension of sugar exports under the 'restricted' category beyond October 31. In the case of sugar, consumption of which usually rises during the festival, the secretary said the country has enough stock to meet the domestic requirement, and the arrival of fresh sugar from next month should further reduce the rates.