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Living's costly: Wholesale prices up by 126% in 3 years

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Delhi government's statistical handbook released on Wednesday puts figures to the relentless onslaught on the household budget that Delhiites have been suffering. Wholesale price of rice has gone up by 126% from Rs 3,031 per quintal in 2006 to Rs 6,859 per quintal in 2009, onions have gone up by 96% during the same period and meat is up by 44%.

While this has naturally resulted in a hike in the consumer price index for food items — it stands at about 30% for the entire country — the overall index in the country has remained at about half that figure for food articles. Officials say this is actually just the tip of the price-rise iceberg as in most cases there is massive profiteering at the retail level to make the effective assault on the middle class pocket far more acute than these figures show.

"We do not have any mechanism to monitor the retail prices as they vary from area to area depending on factors like distance from the mandi, overall affluence of the neighbourhood and whether it is a mobile hawker selling it or one at the market. The latter obviously charges less. A large number of factors have contributed to the rise in the wholesale rates and they usually vary from year to year," explained a senior official.

In figures though, Delhi's consumer price index remains the lowest among all major cities — at 147 — even though it is way higher than the national average of 123. It has undergone the least change since 2006 when it stood at 122. In Mumbai, it has risen from 126 to 159 during the same phase, in Kolkata from 121 to 156 and in Chennai from 118 to 149.

The handbook has been released by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics of the government of Delhi on the occasion of World Statistics Day.

Burning A Hole In Pocket				
Avg wholesale prices of essential commodities in Delhi (per kg)	2006	2007	2008	2009
Wheat	9.55	10.36	10.93	12.09
Rice (basmati)	30.31	40.95	67.95	68.59
Arhar dal	28.07	34.02	39.67	50.73
Moong dal	40.70	34.91	34.83	45.97
Urd dal	42.76	34.46	32.37	46.47
Mustard oil	45.73	56.60	68.96	72.81
Milk	17.70	18.33	20.45	21.93
Ghee	152.56	159.09	180.22	215.78
Meat	127.60	132.10	158.00	183.90
Eggs	13.2	17.4	18.0	22.9
Onions	17.5	38.1	27.4	34

(Source: Delhi govt's statistical handbook)