

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3433

ANSWERED ON:06.12.2016

Panic Sale of Salt

Chinnaraj Shri Gopalakrishnan;Gavit Dr. Heena Vijaykumar;Jayavardhan Dr. Jayakumar;Kher Smt. Kirron;Mahadik Shri Dhananjay Bhimrao;Patil Shri Vijaysinh Mohite;Satav Shri Rajeev Shankarrao;Singh Shri Bharatendra;Sule Smt. Supriya Sadanand

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

- (a) whether there were false reports/ rumours of a possible ban on the sale of salt triggering panic in parts of India recently and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has asked States to crack down on rumour mongers and if so, the details thereof along with the response of the State Governments thereto;
- (c) whether the Government has looked into the matter and determined the actual status of salt supply in the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the steps taken by the Government to have enough stock of salt available to meet everyone"s need; and
- (e) the details of the steps taken by the Government to prevent creation of artificial crisis/shortage of essential commodities including salt and chana dal across the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY)

- (a) On 11th November, 2016 reports appeared in the media regarding a sudden price escalation of edible salt in a few States viz. Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Andhra Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Bihar, West Bengal etc. due to rumours of shortage.
- (b) On the same day, this Ministry dispelled the rumours through the Print, Electronic and Social Media and also alerted the affected States to identify and crack down on people responsible for spreading such rumours on salt shortage, since the State Governments are empowered to take enforcement action to crack down on rumour mongers. Some State police departments including UP, Delhi and Mumbai issued advisories to public and warned against rumour mongering and requested public to complain to them in case of any such activity.
- (c) to (e) As per data collected by the Offices of Salt Commissionerate from the major salt producing regions in Mumbai, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Chennai, it was found that in these places common salt is freely available at source. Further, there was production surplus during 2015-16 as annual salt requirement of the country was 62.43 lakh tonnes, while the production was 64.54 lakh tonnes. Supply of iodised salt during the period from April to August this year is 27.68 lakh tonnes and as such there was no shortage.

Regarding Chana dal, the Central Government vide Order GSR 929 (E) dated 29.09.2016 has enabled the State Governments to impose stock limits on Pulses including Chana dal. The States are empowered to carry out de-hoarding operations and detain the blackmarketees to prevent artificial shortage of Chana dal across the country.
