GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1434
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20th SEPTEMBER, 2020

FAKE METHANOL-BASED HAND SANITISERS

1434.   SHRI HIBI EDEN:

Will the Minister of **CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION** उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री be pleased to state:

(a)   whether the Government has received a warning against fake methanol-based hand sanitisers flooding the market from the CBI;

(b)   if so, the details thereof;

(c)   the steps taken by the Government after receiving the report of CBI along with the source from which CBI received relevant inputs; and

(d)   whether the Interpol has issued alert that they had found instances in some countries where cases of use of methanol in spurious hand sanitisers have been reported and if so, the details thereof?

A N S W E R
MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI DANVE RAOSAHEB DADARAO)

(a) to (d) It was informed by CBI on the basis of input received from INTERPOL that in Cambodia, in March 2020, an inter-agency team seized illicit methanol from a warehouse located at Phnom Penh. The methanol was used for counterfeiting hand sanitizers, due to the high demand caused by the COVID-19 outbreak.

In the Phillippines, in the areas of Quezon and Laguna, during 2018 and end of 2019, several persons counterfeited (preparing, mixing, blending, brewing, distributing to local stores) an indigenous traditional beverage called "Lambanog" (coconut wine), using methanol, which resulted in 34 deaths. In Iran, in several regions, during March 2020, based on the false perception that alcohol consumption would prevent and protect against COVID-19, more than 3000 persons were harmed by consuming counterfeit alcohol containing methanol, of which at least 320 lost their lives.

The input received has been brought to knowledge of all the State/UT DGPs/IGPs and all Interpol Liaison Officers on 05.06.2020 by the CBI.

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