

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.837  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 26TH JULY, 2024**

**CANCER-CAUSING PACKAGED SPICES**

**837. DR. T SUMATHY ALIAS THAMIZHACHI THANGAPANDIAN:**

Will the Minister of **HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the countries that have banned the sale of cancer-causing Packaged spices like MDH & Everest;
- (b) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to inspect these spices and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has reported any cancer-related deaths caused by the same spices during the last five years; and
- (d) if so, the details of the action taken by the Government against these spices companies and if not, the reasons therefor?

**ANSWER  
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY  
WELFARE  
(SMT. ANUPRIYA PATEL)**

(a) to (d): Department of Commerce has informed that no such information about cancer-causing packaged spices is available with them. However, in May 2024, the Government of Nepal prohibited importers from import, sale and distribution of four specific lots of spice mixture pertaining to the two brands on account of media news and reports of higher levels of Ethylene Oxide (ETO) than specified levels and also advised recall of these items from the market. Pursuant to this, Spices Board took up the matter with the Indian Mission in Nepal for intimating to the Department of Food Technology & Quality (DFTQC), Government of Nepal about the steps taken by Spices Board which include mandatory testing of Spices being exported to various destinations and issuance of comprehensive guidelines to be followed by exporters for monitoring of ETO in raw materials procured by exporters as well as finished goods exported by them, to meet the varying ETO limits of the importing country.

Further, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has informed that following the media reports on Ethylene Oxide (ETO) in exported spice products of M/s Mahashian Di Hatti Pvt Ltd. (MDH) and M/s Everest Food Products Pvt Ltd. (Everest), FSSAI has carried out inspections & sampling of spice manufacturing facilities of MDH & Everest. During this drive, 25 samples of MDH and 9 samples of Everest have been lifted from their manufacturing facilities. No traces of ETO were found in these 34 samples.

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