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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.625
TO BE ANSWERED ON 26TH FEBRUARY, 2016

EFFECT OF VARK

625. DR. BHOLA SINGH:

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

(a) whether the Government has received complaints regarding harmful effects of vark used for garnishing sweets;

(b) if so, details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether Government has conducted any study to evaluate the effects of vark on human body; if so, details thereof and if not, reasons therefor; and

(d) whether there is a mechanism to regulate the quality of vark used in sweets, if so, details thereof and if not, reasons therefor?

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA)

(a) & (b):   No, such complaints have been received by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), the nodal agency for regulating manufacturing, storage, distribution, sale and import of food items. However, a reference was received suggesting that the unhygienic practices of making Vark (Silver Leaf) using intestine of cows need to be discontinued.

(c):   Neither the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) nor the Indian Council of Medical Research have conducted any study to evaluate the effect of vark on human body.

(d):   Regulation 2.11.4 of the Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011 prescribes that Silver Leaf (Chani-ka-warq): Food Grade – shall be in the form of sheets, free from creases and folds and shall contain not less than 99.9 per cent of silver.

The implementation and enforcement of Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and regulations thereunder primarily rest with the State/UT Governments.   Random inspections of premises, regular surveillance, monitoring and sampling of food products are undertaken by State/UT Governments to ensure compliance of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and Regulations thereunder.