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Title: Reported presence of high concentration of trans fats in the edible oil.

SHRI B. MAHTAB (CUTTACK): Recently, a study was conducted by the Centre for Science and Environment has dropped a bombshell when it reported that most of the edible oil available in the market contains more trans-fats than permissible. Higher level of trans-fats, 5-12 times higher than the internationally accepted standards, were found in seven vanaspati brands.

The fact remains that Indian consumers remain oblivious to the health hazards of the majority of the food products. Today, India which is threatening to become the diabetic capital of the world is not eating right food and as many as 50 percent of the women are malnourished and 51 per cent of the children are stunted because they are not eating the right food.

According to the Centre for Chronic Diseases Control, New Delhi, trans-fats, not only raise bad cholesterol and cause heart ailments, but also can lead to many diseases like cancer and diabetes. Though the Health Ministry's Oils and Fats Sub-Committee forwarded the recommendation to the Central Committee of Food for Standards, it has no clear guidelines on trans-fats.

Therefore, I urge upon the Government to impress upon the Health Ministry to make nutritional labeling compulsory for all processed foods at the earliest; and secondly, awareness is only one part of healthy eating. Health awareness campaign must complement healthy food choices. Harmful food products need to be taken off the shelf. Food standards and permissible limits must be clearly defined, disseminated to the public and implemented rigourously.