

Title: Need to reconsider the order making the manufacturing and selling of common salt a punishable offence. – Laid.

SHRI D. VENUGOPAL (TIRUPPATTUR): The Salt Satyagraha led by Mahatma Gandhi won for common man the right to produce and use common salt. Now in free India we find a move to take away that right. Common Salt does no harm and it is non-hazardous. From time immemorial common salt is produced in India especially in Tamil Nadu in small land holdings in the coastal areas. Salt importing countries want to have only non-iodized common salt. It is only for people living in hilly region, iodized salt is advised to avoid goiter. But Union Health Ministry, I am afraid, is stretching it bit too far. Under Food Adulteration Act, preparation and selling common salt has been made a punishable offence. This must be rescinded. Sublimable iodine to be mixed in common salt has to be imported. To avoid its evaporation iodized salt is packed in polythene sacks which all add to cost. This affects environment friendly bio-degradable jute cultivation also. With this it has been made easy only for big MNCs to prepare and sell salt in India. All has those who consume common salt are not affected by goiter. But overdose of iodine can result in kidney loading, heart attack and impotency. Of the total common salt manufactured, 40% is used for good and 60% goes for industrial use like tanning. Hence, I urge upon the Union Government to reconsider its order making the manufacture and selling of common salt a punishable offence.