

LOK SABHA DEBATES

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STATEMENT

Places where salt Production units are functioning

 Tuesday, May 8, 1990/ Vaisakha 18, 1912
 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at four minutes past
 Eleven of the Clock

[MR SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[*English*]

Salt Production Units

*739. SHRI N. DANNIS: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the places where self production units are functioning, State-wise; and

(b) the details of industries in which chemical use of salt is made on a major scale?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) and (b). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

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| I | GUJARAT |
| 1. | Jamnagar |
| 2. | Bhavnagar |
| 3. | Porbandar |
| 4. | Mithapur |
| 5. | Singach |
| 6. | Salaya |
| 7. | Rajula |
| 8. | Kachchh (Ghandhidham,
Mundra Jakhavu) |
| 9. | Dahej — Cambay |
| 10. | Dharasana |
| 11. | Maliya — Lavanpur |
| 12. | Santalpur |
| 13. | Namak Nagar |
| 14. | Patdi |
| 15. | Kharaghoda; and |
| 16. | Dharngadhra |

- II **RAJASTHAN**
1. Sambhar
 2. Pachpadra
 3. Didwana
 4. Phalodi
 5. Jabadinagar — Nawa
 6. Kuchaman — Sargot Mithri
 7. Sujangarh; and
 8. Pokaran
- III **TAMIL NADU**
1. Tuticorin
 2. Arumuganeri
 3. Valinokkam
 4. Ramnad
 5. Cuddalore
 6. Vedaranyam
 7. Thambikotai
 8. Madras
 9. Covelon; and
 10. Nagercoil
- IV **ANDHRA PRADESH**
1. Kakinada
 2. Pennuguduru
 3. Gurujanapalli
 4. Chinnaganjam
 5. Iskapalli

6. Machilipatnam; and

7. Krishnapatnam

V **WEST BENGAL**

1. Contai

VI **ORISSA**

1. Ganjam

2. Sumadl

3. Surla

4. Goka

5. Astrang; and

6. Bolong

VII **MAHARASHTRA**

1. Bhayandar

2. Bhandup; and

3. Uran

VIII **KARNATAKA**

1. Sannikatta.

IX **DAMAN & DIU**

X **PONDICHERRY**

1. Karaikal

XI **HIMACHAL PRADESH**

1. Mandi.

In Industry, salt is mainly used as raw material in the manufacture of caustic soda, chlorine and soda ash.

SHRI N. DENNIS: Salt industry in India is facing the worst crisis since independence. Paradoxically, it is due to over-production, crisis of plenty. The production of salt in

our country has crossed one crore tonnes and our domestic consumption is about 75 lakh tonnes. There is no prospect for increasing the quantity within a few years. So, setting up of salt-based industries in the over-producing areas of South and also exporting salt to other countries would reduce the crisis in the salt industry. Therefore, in order to avert crisis in the salt industry, I would like to know whether Government would take steps for setting up of salt-based industry in the areas of over-production and also for evolving export possibilities of salt to other countries.

SHRI AJIT SINGH: Sir, about half of the salt production is used for the industry. Basically such industries are caustic soda, chlorine and soda ash industries. Those units are already operating in the States where salt is produced. As for the consumption of salt and the export, there is not that much of a gap. Regarding export of salt, some units are already exporting. But to say that the price of salt would come down if we export more, I do not see how that would help.

SHRI N. DENNIS: The crisis in the salt industry has already affected employment prospects of a large number of productionists depending on it. Gujarat and Tamil Nadu are the major salt-producing States in the country. Except Rajasthan, salt production in other States is very nominal and low. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government would consider setting up of salt-based industries and marine-based industries in the salt-producing States of Tamil Nadu and Gujarat to accommodate the large number of persons affected by the crisis in the salt industry. There is one more connected matter. In Kanyakumari District there are several areas... (*Interruptions*) Several areas of salt-production are now kept unused and idle because salt manufacturing is not going on there. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether such areas would be utilised by setting up of industries—either salt-based industries or other type of industries in such unused and idly kept areas.

SHRI AJIT SINGH: Sir, the hon. Member is correct in saying that it employs a lot of people. Currently, there are more than 9000 units producing salt and many of them are cooperatives. He has rightly mentioned that about 60 per cent of the salt is produced in the State of Gujarat. As I have already mentioned, the industries which used salt are naturally raw-material industries. Many of these units already exist there.

[*Translation*]

SHRI PRAKASH KOKO BRAHMBHATT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has just stated that Gujarat is the largest producer of salt in the country. The people of Gujarat generally believe that the Government in Delhi irrespective of party it belongs remains hostile to Gujarat. Which state had made more contribution in the national freedom struggle than Gujarat State? Had Gandhiji not been there, the country would have not got independence. Had Sardar Patel been not there unification of all the Indian States would have not taken place. Gujarat is the largest salt producing state in the country whereas its head office is at Jaipur. Will the hon. Minister shift this head office from Jaipur to Gujarat?

SHRI AJIT SINGH: Should the office be located at the place where much of the salt is produced or where it has maximum consumption? (*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRAKASH KOKO BRAHMBHATT: Are there more consumers in Rajasthan? (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI SUDHIR GIRI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there are small salt factories in the Contai district of Midnapore, West Bengal. They cannot mix up their salt produced with iodine. Because of this, these small factories have to approach the single factory which has monopolised in iodine mixing. In view of this, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government will pro-

vide iodine mixing technology and machinery to these small salt producers at Contai.

SHRI AJIT SINGH: Currently, about half of the edible salt is iodised. And anyone can set up a unit to iodise the salt. There is no restriction on that.

PROF. SAVITHRI LAKSHMANAN: I come to understand from the answer of the hon. Minister that there is no such unit in my State, Kerala. My humble request is, will the Government be pleased to establish some units in Kerala where unemployment problem is at its peak?

SHRI AJIT SINGH: She is right in saying that there are no salt producing units in Kerala. Government has not plan to set up any unit producing salt.

SHRI LOKANATH CHOUDHURY: Orissa having 480 kilometres of coast line has enough potential of producing salt. But there is one salt based unit at Chattarpur which is going to be closed down. I ask the hon. Minister that since this has not been exploited in Orissa, will the Government help Orissa to exploit these salt units? And secondly, will the Government have some new industries in Orissa Coast in view of the industry which has gone out of order?

SHRI AJIT SINGH: In Orissa, there are six places where salt is being produced.

SHRI LOKANATH CHOUDHURY: But it is not fully exploited.

SHRI AJIT SINGH: The salt production in Orissa has been going up continuously since 1984.

SHRI LOKANATH CHOUDHURY: But it can still go up if the Central Government help the Orissa Government.

[*Translation*]

PROF. PREM KUMAR DHUMAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as per the reply laid on the Table of the House by the hon. Minister, salt

is also found in Mandi in Himachal Pradesh but the extraction is not done by scientific methods. Is there any proposal to introduce modern techniques in that salt unit jointly by the Central and the State Government or has the State Government sent such a proposal to the Central Government or is there any correspondence going on in this regard?

SHRI AJIT SINGH: At present no such talk or correspondence is going on with the State Government.

[*English*]

SHRI KHEMCHANDBHAI SOMABHAI CHAVDA: In Gujarat, production of salt is more and consumption of salt is also more. But the thing which has been agitating the minds of Gujaratis is that when the production as well as the consumption of salt is more, still the headquarter of its is at Jaipur. I would like to know whether the Government wants to rethink of this matter.

[*Translation*]

SHRI AJIT SINGH: As I have just stated that there is no such proposal under the consideration of the Government to shift the head office from Jaipur.

SHRI JAYAWANTI NAVINCHANDRA MEHTA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as per the statement given by the hon. Minister, salt is produced in large quantity in Bhayandar, Bhandup and Uran in Maharashtra. Now-a-days the farmers engaged in salt production are in trouble because Tata has started salt production there by chemical process. As a result of it many farmers are not getting remunerative price for their salt. Has there been any decline in the salt production for last 4-5 years due to this reason? Will the hon. Minister state whether the Government will take care of the interests of the big industrialists or the interests of the farmers? Taking into consideration the decline in the salt production, will the Government formulate any plan to increase the production.

SHRI AJIT SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir,

there are three big companies who are producing iodised salt. The total salt production as per the licenced capacity is less than one and half lakh tonnes whereas more than 95 lakh tonnes salt is produced in the country. So as per the facts, it is not correct to say only big companies are producing salt.

[*English*]

SHRI GOPINATH GAJAPATHI: We all know that common salt is mainly used for the production of caustic soda and soda ash. But apart from that, the remnant mother-liquor usually discarded after salt production can be utilised for the recovery of very valuable by-products of the Halogen Family viz., Fluorine, Chlorine and particularly Bromine and Iodine. Is there any proposed by the Government to set up units in this regard as well?

[*Translation*]

SHRI AJIT SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have said that it is used in industries whether it is for production of caustic soda or caustic. Chlorine is also being produced there. Units are already producing gas.

SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it was shown in a T.V. serial that after the death of employees working in salt production units, their feet do not burn in the funeral pyre. So, will the hon. Minister state whether the Government have such information about these employees because they scrape salt with their feet? Has the Government taken any step to prevent such diseases?

SHRI AJIT SINGH: Sir, I do not have any information about what the hon. Member is saying. There are laws meant for all industries to provide protection to their mine workers and all other such workers. The Government will think over the matter raised by the Member.

SHRI GUMAN MAL LODHA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it is correct that the best quality of salt is produced in salt units at Sambhar, Didwana and Pachpadra in

Rajasthan and supplied outside the State? Is it also true that lakhs of tonnes of salt is produced at Kharwal and Deswal in Rajasthan and lakhs of people are getting employment there? The hon. Minister may please reply these two questions.

SHRI AJIT SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, what the hon. Member has said is true. His information is correct.

[*English*]

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: Now use of iodised salt is the policy of the Government. While this is beneficial and perhaps a must in the tarai region, the question that arises is whether this is beneficial in the coastal region and whether or not iodised salt is harmful in certain regions of the country. If so, in such areas should the use of iodised salt not be banned?

SHRI AJIT SINGH: I understand the hon. Member wants to know whether iodised salt is harmful to health in certain areas. In such cases we will go by the advice of the Health Ministry. As far as we know, they have advised that iodised salt should be used all over the country by the year 1992. Right now, it is for the tarai region where goitre is there. But we go by the advice of the Health Ministry.

[*Translation*]

Small Hydro-Power Projects in Bihar

*741. **SHRI SURYA NARAYAN YADAV:** Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Union Government have received a request from Government of Bihar for assistance to set up small hydel power plants in Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the response of Union Government to the request of Bihar Government?