

Misleading labelling by junk food companies

2698. SHRIMATI NAZNIN FARUQUE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that junk food companies are misleading consumers by labelling at least 16 major food brands as healthy food;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that most junk foods contain very high levels of trans fats, salts and sugar, leading to obesity and diabetes; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto against those companies?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (c) Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) monitors labels on various food items by different companies in media as well as on the product labels. Such complaints received from the public are analysed in FSSAI and show-cause notices issued to the manufactures. Their replies are examined at FSSAI by a 3 member committee constituted for this purpose. As per recommendations of this Committee, actions including prosecution are initiated by Designated Officers at their regional levels. So far, 38 food items have been identified with misleading claims. Prosecutions have been launched in case of 19 such cases by Designated Officers at their regional levels.

Although the term "Junk Food" has not been defined under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and Rules/Regulations made thereunder, foods which have high fat, salt and sugar, with little or no protein, minerals and vitamins are considered as "unhealthy foods" and belong to the category of fast foods. Consumption of unhealthy foods is one of the risk factors but not a sole factor for development of obesity and diabetes. Consumption of food having trans fat is a risk factor for cardiovascular disease.

Upgradation of district hospitals into medical colleges

2699. SHRI DHIRAJ PRASAD SAHU: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government proposes to upgrade district hospitals to medical colleges across the country;