

# THE GANDHIDHAM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

(ESTD. 1953)

"CHAMBER BHAVAN", Plot No. 71, Sector 8, Post Box No. 58,  
GANDHIDHAM - Kachchh - 370 201.

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No. GCCI / 18

Date: 15.06.2017

Shri Narendrabhai Modi, Honourable Prime Minister of India, South Block, Raisina Hill, New Delhi-110001	Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman Hon'ble Minister of State Department of Commerce Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Room No. 45, Udyog Bhawan, New Delhi 110 107	Shri Ramesh Abhishek Secretary, Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion, Room No. 157, Udyog Bhawan, New Delhi 110107
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## Sub: Representation to re-consider to closed down the Salt Department

Respected Sir,

The Gandhidham Chamber of Commerce & Industry is a pioneer organisation of Kandla – Gandhidham complex in Kachchh-Gujarat since 1953 with the main objective to serve as a bridge between local trade and industry fraternity and State / Central Govt. for the resolution of problems and also to endeavour for the welfare of citizens and township in public interest.

We understand that the Government is initiating steps to close down the Salt Department which has been functioning under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion for several decades. Therefore, we would like to place the following objection for closing down the Salt Department.

- 1) There is immense importance of salt offices across India which caters services to nation and billion people. Salt production has increased by leaps and bounds after independence due to the close monitoring and guidance of the salt department. India is self-sufficient and the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest salt producing country after USA and China. From an era of shortfall and import at the time of independence, the country has made spectacular progress in the production of salt due to pragmatic policies of the Government and its implementation under the effective supervision of Salt Commissioner's Organisation. In a very period of time, self sufficiency was achieved (in 1953) and made a dent in the export market. Since then the country never resorted imports.



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- 2) Salt Department is the nodal agency for Iodine Deficiency Disorder (IDD) programme. Hence India still needs close monitoring of the programme through such nodal agency to wipe off Iodine Deficiency in India. Salt department has been the nodal agency for the implementation of the Goiter control programme and for which the salt department has played an important role in prevention of Iodine Deficiency Disorder (IDD) by implementation of the Universal Salt Iodization Programme. The salt department by improving access to adequate iodized salt has helped India to achieve millennium development goals like reduction in child mortality and improvement in maternal health.
- 3) Gujarat is producing more than 70% of Salt in India. Kachchh being a coastal and desert district of State of Gujarat produces 80% Salt of Gujarat State. The Gujarat state is having significant numbers of small 10 acres salt producing units. In Kachchh district, salt land is of Central Government, State Government and Kandla Port Trust. We afraid if the Salt Department is closed down the salt land would be converted to other purposes which may result in to huge loss of salt production. The land records created and experience gained over 70 years will go waste with disastrous consequences.
- 4) Gujarat is contributing major share in salt producing and also having a major share in exports. As on 31.03.2017, in Gujarat 680 salt works are above 10 acres, 1827 upto 10 acres, 239 salt iodising units, 61 salt refineries are under operation. These units have produced common salt 236.22 lakhs MT, iodised salt 14.00 lakhs MT, refined salt 34.93 lakhs MT in the financial year 2016-17. Similarly despatches took place for Edible salt 44.86 lakhs MT, Industrial Salt 90.09 lakhs MT & export 82.18 lakhs MT having value of Rs.832.37 cr. in the financial year 2016-17. This statistical data reveals positive role contributed by salt department in the state of Gujarat.
- 5) The salt department takes care about the welfare of the salt pan workers by conducting medical camps, labour welfare schemes, educational assistance etc. The salt department serves unique role of protecting both the manufacturer and labourers.
- 6) The salt department monitors and manages production and distribution of various types of salt through rail and road transport by playing proactive role. In absences of such nodal agency, there will be chaos and negative impacts in salt sector which will further create impacts in distribution of salt in each and every corner of India.



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- 7) The salt department contribute significantly in the maintenance of quality control of various salt products to meet growing needs of India and abroad. Recently fortified iodised salt is being developed under the direct supervision and guidance of salt department in India. The salt department maintains fully equipped laboratory at each offices all over India to maintain consistent quality and development of salt products. So, development and quality control aspect will be badly affected, if there is no existence of salt department in India.
- 8) Common salt and iodised salt are prime products under public distribution system in India where in salt department plays proactive and significant role to cater the needs of Indian people. Its role has made public distribution system successful.
- 9) The efforts of the salt department to increase salt production and its exports deserve high appreciation in motivating the small scale salt manufacturer in adaptation of new and modern production techniques, market identification and distribution of salt.

Therefore, in view of the reasons mentioned above, our chamber request the Government of India to drop its proposal to close down the salt department by taking note of its positive role in the larger interest of the nation.

Thanking you.

Yours faithfully,

  
Dinesh Gupta  
President

Copy to : Salt Commissioner,  
Jaipur