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Manipur to ban import and sale of food packets from Myanmar

Business Line (The Hindu)

Imphal, 18 March 2013: The Manipur Health Minister Phugzathang Tonsing announced on Sunday that the government will soon ban import and sale of food packets from Myanmar since these items do not have manufacturing details, including the expiry date.

Undisclosed ingredients

Mr. Tonsing said the undisclosed ingredients may be harmful to the consumers. Following some instances of sickness among children, the authorities in Nagaland had banned sale of these food items. These food packets, including tinned fish, chicken and beef, have heavy demand in the North Eastern States.

Smuggled for distribution

Though the food packets are not included in the approved list of legalised border trade, Indian traders have been smuggling them to Manipur for distribution to other States. Various medicines are also illegally smuggled.

The Manipur government had already banned the sale and consumption of smokeless tobacco products.

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India, Myanmar set trade target of \$3 bn by 2015

PTI

Nay Pyi Taw, 7 June 2013: Setting a bilateral trade target of \$3 billion, India and Myanmar today discussed ways to enhance economic cooperation in sectors such as textiles, infrastructure, oil and gas.

Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma, who is here on a three-day visit, met Energy Minister U Than Htay and conveyed the interest of Indian banks in setting up their branches in Myanmar. "India will also be happy to assist in strengthening the banking system in Myanmar as we inherit common banking laws," Sharma said, adding both the sides "set a bilateral trade target of \$3 billion by 2015".

In 2012, trade between the countries stood at \$1.87 billion. The minister also met Aung San Suu Kyi, chairperson of the National League for Democracy. Expressing keen interest in building linkages with the Indian textiles sector, Suu Kyi said its handloom sector had immense potential for Myanmar. She sought India's help in developing a full value chain for silk production in Myanmar.

Sharma conveyed India's interest in deepening cooperation in procuring energy, oil and natural gas. "Our companies are interested in securing more exploratory oil and gas blocks both onshore and offshore."

Sharma and Htay also touched on the issue of reviving discussions on the gas pipeline connecting India and Myanmar through Bangladesh. He said India is ready to assist Myanmar in the development of infrastructural projects.

The need to improve air, road and water connectivity between India and Myanmar also came up for discussion between the two Ministers.

India is the fourth largest trading partner of Myanmar after Thailand, Singapore and China.

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