

## **Allegations against Tata Salt debunked by FSSAI and IMA**

05th September 2019

Indians have now become quite familiar with fake news on social media concerning a variety of topics. Recently, one such sensational piece about Tata Salt has been doing the rounds. However, the allegations were promptly debunked by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and the Indian Medical Association.

As per the allegations widely circulated on social media, a US lab found toxic levels of a compound of cyanide in different varieties of salt available in India, including Tata Salt. However, that's not the case. The fact of the matter is that potassium ferrocyanide (PFC), a potassium salt, is used in common salt for its anti-caking properties. The use of this compound makes it possible to keep salt particles from lumping together and keeps the product fresh for a longer period of time. It is not toxic and can be consumed within permissible limits.

As per FSSAI, common salt can contain up to 10 mg of PFC per 1 kg. of salt. Salt brands like Tata Salt keep the PFC level at 3 mg per kilo, much within the permitted limit, making the salt safe for consumption.

The safe consumption of PFC has been backed by international bodies and several regulatory agencies as well. One can find that potassium ferrocyanide is a permitted food additive as per FSSAI. It has also been duly evaluated by a World Health Organization expert panel and was deemed to be safe. Potassium ferrocyanide is used as a salt ingredient in many parts of the world including the US, European Union, Australia and New Zealand. The fact that the allegation was a hoax has also been confirmed by several fake news debunking sites.

Government agencies, including the FSSAI, keep a check on the additives used in food items. The allegation set off panic among some consumers who have used Tata Salt for a long time. As the story unraveled, it was found that this was a ploy to create doubt in the minds of consumers regarding a salt brand that has been trusted in Indian households for a long time.

With this, the lesson for consumers is clear: Verify claims before they are shared and steer away from misinformation. With a simple fact check, one can clearly set apart truth from a hoax. And it definitely helps to be educated about the common ingredients used in food items to avoid falling for unsubstantiated claims.