

To keep eye on prices, Food Ministry asks sugar mills for sales data of past 4 months

Prabhudatta Mishra
New Delhi

The Food Ministry has asked sugar mills to furnish by September 12, the monthly sales data (by quantity) for the May-August period to ensure no hoarding is happening by trade ahead of the festival season.

This is seen as part of the Centre's efforts to curb any rise in price of this essential commodity.

FORMAT FOR INFO

In a late Friday evening communication under Clause 5 of the Sugar Control Order, 1966, to all sugar mills and the three key industry associations, the Ministry directed them to submit by September 12, data of sugar sold to "traders/wholesalers, other than sugar mills". The government also



SLIGHT DIP. ISMA put sugar production for the 2022-23 season at 32.8 mt, down from 35.8 mt the previous season

ISTOCKPHOTO

gave out the format in which the information is to be shared.

"In order to have complete data of stocks with traders, dealers, wholesalers, big retail chains and processors to ensure sufficient availability of sugar at reasonable prices in the country, the government

has decided to collect the data," according to the Order. However, some sugar mills have expressed surprise at the Order as the deadline given is too short to comply.

"First of all, it is our business and the buyers' information should not be asked for with PAN details, etc.,

though sugar is an essential commodity. Whatever information the government wants can be shared within a reasonable time when past records are concerned," said a mill owner requesting not to be named. But several other mills said this is not a problem since all records/data are computerised.

As per the format shared, mills have to furnish the quantity bought by each buyer, month-wise from May to August along with PAN, GST and mobile numbers.

NO NEED FOR PANIC

"The government must not panic as the country has enough stock of sugar looking at domestic consumption of 27.5 million tonnes against a production of 32.8 mt. Both the carry-over stock and export was at same level of 6.1 mt, each," an industry official said.