

Safal to step up sales of tomato puree to soften rising prices

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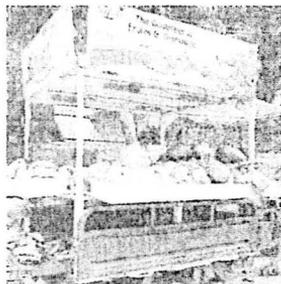
New Delhi, October 11

To soften the impact of rising tomato prices in Delhi and other parts of the country, the government has directed Mother Dairy's fruits and vegetable retail chain Safal to make tomato puree widely available. The prices of tomatoes have soared to ₹80 a kg in most retail markets in Delhi and surrounding areas in the last two days.

Making 200 gm packs of tomato puree priced at ₹25 available at all Safal retail outlets was among a slew of steps suggested at a meeting of an inter-ministerial committee chaired by the Department of Consumer Affairs Secretary AK Srivastava, according to an official statement issued here.

Supply disrupted

Officials attending the meeting conceded that rains in Ma-



harashtra and Karnataka, the two major tomato-producing States in the country, disrupted supply but it would normalise within the next 10 days.

The meeting was informed that Safal has agreed to increase the availability of tomato puree in all its outlets in the capital.

A 200 gm pack of tomato

puree is equivalent to 800 gm of tomatoes and this will be available for ₹25. It is also making available packs containing 825 gm of tomato puree at ₹85, the statement said. The stocks have already been moved to all the outlets and sales will begin on Friday," it said.

The meeting also requested tomato-producing States to augment supply to regions that are in short supply so that the prices can be moderated. Himachal Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh are the two States - other than the rain-hit Maharashtra and Karnataka - from where tomato supplies reach the market.

The representative of the Delhi government who attended the meeting said it would dispatch teams led by senior officials to check hoarding and black-marketing.