



## **GOVT BEGINS DRIVE TO CURB FOOD ADULTERATION BEGINS BEFORE HOLI** BY PRAGYA PALLAVI, Ranchi

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In a bid to curb food adulteration here in Capital City, the Food Safety Officers (FSOs) have begun the task of food samples collection under the Food Safety and Standard Authority of India (FSSAI) norms. With significant increase in the sale of adulterated edible items (milk and milk products) during the festive seasons Holi and Diwali primarily, the FSOs have been ordered to conduct a massive drive to keep a tab on the defaulters ahead of Holi festival.

“Two teams have been formed to crack the whip on the defaulters. Under each team, three members are there to assist the team leader during the sample collection work and inspection task. The teams which was formed on February 24, through random inspection and survey are enquiring about the condition of edible items,” said, FSO, KP Singh who along with his team are conducting inspection as per the Department’s order here in State Capital.

The team-1 personnel are inspecting and collecting edible product samples from all such confectionery shops falling under the jurisdiction of wards (1 to 35 wards) while another team has been given the responsibility of collecting samples from the shops in wards 36 to 55. As per the FSSAI guidelines, food items sold out in open by the street vendors are supposed to be covered and checked on regular basis as well. However, Singh said that due to lack of trained human resources, they are unable to collect food samples from street vendors.

“In a short notice, we are just able to collect food samples from sweets and confectionary shops only. Besides milk and milk products, the teams are also enquiring about the condition of edible oils being sold ahead of Holi. By far, we have collected six samples from different shops; the checking drive is going on. Street vendors are not being covered.” added Singh. Meanwhile, State Food Analyst, Chatturbhuj Meena said, “All collected food samples are being assessed. At least, 14 days is required for the detailed report preparation. On the basis of the report prepared by lab technicians, actions will be taken accordingly.” Furthermore, the State Food Analyst added that the food safety division is gearing up to launch the first State-of-the-art mobile lab to curb adulteration by facilitating on-the-spot testing of samples at a reasonable price while ensuring timeliness in food samples collection and its assessment.

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“The well-equipped mobile van will felicitate the need of public in a broad way. The mobile van lab will serve all basic purposes like collecting survey samples, on the spot products verification etc. Soon, it will be formally launched by the State government’s personnel,” Meena further added.