



## Mumbai: Alcoholic beverages to carry 'don't drink and drive' warning?

By Swapnil Mishra | May 30, 2018 08:48 am



Mumbai: In a bid to create awareness amongst citizens, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has directed all the states and Union Territories to print statutory warnings on all alcoholic beverages stating that alcohol is harmful to health and asking people not to drink and drive.

The move comes after a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by social activist Prince Singhal and this regulation will come into effect from April 2019. "We have directed all the food safety commissioners of

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the states and Union Territories to ensure that this directive is implemented uniformly from April 2019, in coordination with excise departments of states,” said an official.

Citing Food Safety and Standards (Alcoholic Beverages Standards) Regulations, 2018, which will come into effect from next year April 2019, FSSAI, in a recent order, declared that regulation 5.12 of these regulations stipulates the requirement of a statutory warning stating “Consumption of alcohol is injurious to health. Be safe — Don’t drink and drive.”

A senior official said the warning will be printed in English on labels of alcoholic beverages and the size of this statutory warning will not be less than 3 mm. “This warning can also be printed in the local or regional language if any state desires to do so,” added official. Singhal, an activist who runs a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), Community Against Drunken Driving (CADD) said, “As it is, drinking and driving is an intentional crime and it should be treated as a pre-meditated criminal act, since the person driving drunk knows or should know that he can cause potential harm while driving.

He cited the examples of several countries that have adopted such warnings, including USA, Kenya, South Africa, Thailand, Zimbabwe, Taiwan, Mexico and Turkey, and have been able to bring down the number of drunk driving tragedies. Statistics show that every year, more than one lakh people die in road accidents and Indian roads account for about 700,000 road accidents.