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## **Nitish Kumar says no immediate plan to ban khaini in Bihar**



Days after speculations about Bihar government banning khaini surfaced, Bihar CM Nitish Kumar has announced that there is no immediate proposal to ban khaini in Bihar. Speaking to the media, Nitish said, "Nothing is happening immediately but we want khaini farmers to look for alternative production options as khaini production isn't going good."

Earlier it was announced that the Bihar government has asked the Central government to notify khaini as a food product. Once it has been notified as a food product by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), the government will have the power to impose a ban on it on health grounds.

## FSSAI IN NEWS

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Bihar's Principal Secretary (Health) Sanjay Kumar had confirmed that he has written a letter to the Central government.

"Every fifth person in Bihar consumes raw tobacco. We have rules that govern tobacco use in the form of cigarettes, but consumption of khaini is a grey area that needs attention," he said.

Explaining the rationale for the government's decision, Kumar said the FSSAI Act calls to ban any food product which has a presence of tobacco and nicotine in it.

"However, khaini is not included in the list of food products by FSSAI," Kumar said adding that once it is included, it will be easier for the government to impose a ban on it. He also claimed that there has been an overall dip in consumption of tobacco in Bihar.

It has been found that khaini is one of the major causes of mouth cancer in Bihar.