

## **Food safety chit given to government-run temples in Tamil Nadu for 'prasadam'**

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Temples in Tamil Nadu that are run by the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department will get Food Safety and Standards Authority of India certification for their 'prasadam'. Prasadam, a material substance of food, is a religious offering and is normally consumed by devotees after offering prayers.



Madurai Meenakshi Amman temple, Rameswaram Sri Ramanathaswamy temple, Srirangam Ranganathaswamy temple and Tiruvannamalai Arunachaleswara temple are among the major shrines of Tamil Nadu | Photo: Image for representation | Photo Credit: BCCL

**Chennai:** As many as 47 major temples in Tamil Nadu run by the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department will get Food Safety and Standards Authority of India certification for their 'prasadam,' an official said today. Prasadam, a material substance of food, is a religious offering and is normally consumed by devotees after offering prayers. The exercise, aimed at ensuring quality and bringing in standardisation, began with the prasadam of the

famous Sri Palani Murugan temple's (Dhandayuthapaniswamy temple) 'Panchamirtham' (a mix of banana, ghee, honey, sugar and dates).

"Palani Murugan temple was our pilot project. We have initiated the process of (getting) FSSAI certification in other 46 temples as well," the official said. The Murugan temple's panchamirtham prasadam now features FSSAI licence number, price, weight and best before date. On the reason for the initiative, the official told PTI "quality assurance is our priority... incidents of people taking ill after consuming prasadam in some private temples drew our attention and we decided to go in for licensing."

In April this year, two women died and over 30 people took ill after consuming prasadam provided by a privately administered temple at Mettupalayam near Coimbatore. Madurai Meenakshi Amman temple, Rameswaram Sri Ramanathaswamy temple, Srirangam Ranganathaswamy temple and Tiruvannamalai Arunachaleswara temple are among the major shrines of Tamil Nadu.