

Coronavirus: Authorities lift 62 food samples for screening in Jammu and Kashmir



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Authorities in Jammu and Kashmir carried out nearly 1,000 surprise inspections and lifted 62 samples of different food items for screening since the beginning of this month, an official spokesperson said on Sunday.

The special drive by the Food Safety Wing of Food and Drugs Administration Department was necessitated amidst growing concern that some unscrupulous traders can take advantage of the lockdown imposed by the government due to the COVID-19 pandemic, he said.

"During the special drive, commenced on May 1, the enforcement staff carried out 996 inspections, lifted 62 samples of different food items like mustard oil, til oil, spices, milk and dates, and destroyed food items, which included vegetables, fruits, milk amounting to Rs 25,000," the spokesperson said.

He said four Food Business Operators (FBOs) were also fined for violating the Food Safety and Standards (FSS) Act.

The drive also led to seizure of 560 kg ghee and 91 kg of spices after lifting statutory samples that have been sent to the Food Testing Laboratory for ascertaining the quality of the items, the spokesperson said.

In April, the Food Testing Laboratory carried out analysis of 147 samples, out of which 46 have been declared substandard or misbranded, he said, adding that action against the concerned FBOs would be initiated as per the procedure laid down under the FSS Act.

He said the exercise was carried out to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food to the end user.

Commissioner, Food and Drugs Administration, Shakeel-Ur-Rehman, had issued instructions to the enforcement staff to conduct inspections of all FBOs in the supply chain to ensure strict compliance of the guidelines issued by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) practices during COVID-19.