

Government to set up panel to scrutinise ad claims

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By [Ratna Bhushan](#), ET Bureau | Dec 02, 2019,

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Last week, the FSSAI had issued show-cause notices to quick service restaurant chain McDonald's for its ads.

NEW DELHI: In a first such move, the Centre will set up a committee to scrutinise and regulate product-feature claims made in advertisements, seeking to fix accountability on manufacturers and help consumers choose food items objectively.

“The committee will scrutinise advertising claims, examine complaints, and subsequently take appropriate action,” national food regulator FSSAI’s chief executive [Pawan Agarwal](#) told ET. “A lot of businesses thrive on inducing fear in the

public mind, which is incorrect.”

Apart from large corporates and MNCs with a national sales footprint, Agarwal said the regulator is “equally concerned with small and medium businesses that make misguided advertising claims”.

This is the first time the Centre has planned to directly involve itself with advertising scrutiny, through the Food Safety & Standards Authority of India. While FSSAI guidelines for advertising regulations are in place, implementation by advertisers hasn’t been followed closely.

So far, advertising regulations have been overseen through an independent entity, the [Advertising Standards Council of India \(ASCI\)](#).

“We are taking up a massive drive for education of food labelling and claim requirements and trying to bring in transparency, preceded by public education,” Agarwal said.