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Nellaiappar temple in Tirunelveli bags first FSSAI certification for offerings

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Madurai: The Nellaiappar temple in Tirunelveli is to be the first temple in the state to receive Blissful Hygiene Offering to God (BHOG), a quality certification given by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) for all food items offered in temples. The certification was introduced by the state food safety and drug administration (FSDA) to ensure that the prasadam distributed to devotees in temples after being offered to the deity and also that sold in the stalls conform to FSSAI standards.

The FSDA had asked the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR and CE) department to comply with the rules. A meeting to this effect presided by Tirunelveli district collector Shilpa Prabhakar Satish and officials of the administration was held recently.

It was informed that the prasadam provided by the Nellaiappar temple had been certified most hygienic and clean and that the certification would be given away at the Republic Day celebrations.

The Sankaranarayanar temple in Sankarankoil in the district has bagged the second spot among the major temples in the state in obtaining the certification. Temple executive officer N Yagna Narayanan said the certification had been implemented as a pilot project in the Nellaiappar and Sankaranarayanar temples.

As they had fulfilled the norms of the certification, they were also certified as BHOG quality standard temple.

The temple's prasadam is boiled rice, but they also offered pongal and puliyodarai if the devotees wanted to make the offering. The annadhanam offered in the temple was also certified under this process.