

Ahead of Diwali, govt to step up surveillance on food adulteration

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E-Paper

While the festival of Diwali is round the corner, union health ministry has asked the state governments to step up the surveillance regarding food adulteration. Along with holding periodic drives with the help of police authorities to keep the food adulteration in check, the government is also looking at strengthening the manpower.

State government were also asked to ensure effective implementation of the Food Safety and Standard Act, 2006. "Counterfeit food items, being totally illegal, bypass all mandatory quality checks and pose a grave danger to the health of our citizens. It is absolutely imperative that the problem is dealt with effectively," said Preeti Sudan, Secretary Ministry of health and family welfare.



"There is a need to ensure requisite availability of manpower for all activities of food safety, "States and union territories need to clearly identify the number of Designated officers (DO) and Food Safety officers (FSO) posts required for food safety administration and take steps to create the posts and fill them. Similarly, technical posts in laboratories need to be filled up, besides upgrading of the laboratories," she said.

While the government has directed the authorities to scale up consumer awareness, it has urged the consumers to insist on bills while purchasing food products etc. High Court of Delhi in its order dated 19.08.2019 had directed the Secretary of Health and Family Welfare to hold a meeting of the Food Safety Departments of the State Governments along with Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and submit a report on the manner in which counterfeiting of food products can be tracked, recorded and curbed in an effective manner.