

Drive to ensure supply of hygienic food at religious places

STAFF REPORTER

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Food served at religious places will now come under the scanner of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) with the Authority launching a new drive, Blissful Hygienic Offering to God (BHOG). This follows a series of food poisoning incidents in recent times at religious places where charity food is often served by catering units not registered with FSSAI.

“Rules have been in place for long, but food distributors in religious places and other similar locations have been ignoring it. We will enforce rules very strictly to expose violators as part of BHOG,” said Food Safety Assistant Commissioner P.K. Aleyamma. She said regional squads would be asked to carry out spot inspections to verify registration details of food suppliers.

Food suppliers who have not registered with FSSAI may have to pay a fine of up to ₹5 lakh and even face a six-month jail term in cases such as food poisoning incidents.

Ms. Aleyamma also pointed out that the State government wanted to implement the rules strictly in the wake of the recent food poisoning deaths at a temple in Karnataka.

Applicable to all

Residents associations that distribute food for their members during celebrations too have to comply with the new guidelines of FSSAI. Those who conduct food fests also have to follow the guidelines. The FSSAI registration number has to be displayed at the site of food distribution.

The registration for food supply can be obtained very easily by submitting an online application to the Food Safety Department, according to department officials. A registration fee of ₹100 will be collected from the applicant. A person who is responsible for the preparation and distribution of food at a particular religious place can approach the authority for getting the registration certificate using his identity proof, photograph and corporation licence details.