

# Mansukh Mandaviya releases FSSAI's 3rd State Food Safety Index

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According to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare statement, this year, among the larger states, Gujarat, Kerala and Tamil Nadu were the top-ranking state. Among the smaller states,

Goa, Meghalaya and Manipur stood first. Among UTs, Jammu and Kashmir, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and New Delhi secured top ranks.

He also flagged off 19 Mobile Food Testing Vans (Food Safety on Wheels) to supplement the food safety ecosystem across the country taking the total number of such mobile testing vans to 109, read the press statement.

Mandaviya observed that food is an essential component of health in a holistic sense. "Balanced nutrition is an integral part of Health," he stated.

He expressed hope that the mobile food testing laboratories will not only help functionaries in the States/UTs to enhance their outreach and conduct surveillance activities even in the far-flung areas but will also be utilized as an effective tool for training and awareness generation activities amongst citizens.

He emphasized that the citizens are a stakeholder for food safety along with Government and Industry.

According to the press statement, the Union Minister released the results of the PAN-India survey for identifying the presence of industrially produced trans fatty acid content in the selected foods. Samples of various packaged food items under six pre-defined food categories were collected from 419 cities/districts across 34 States/UTs.

Only 84 samples, for example, 1.34 per cent have more than 3 per cent industrially-produced trans fats from the total of 6245 samples; India is on the right track of becoming industrial trans fats-free in the 75th year of India's independence.

Mandaviya also launched various innovative initiatives by FSSAI including the Eat Right Research Awards and Grants to encourage and recognize high-quality research in the area of food safety and nutrition in India; a logo for Vegan Foods for easy identification and distinction from non-vegan foods for empowering consumers to make informed food choices.

The Minister also released various e-books that advocate and captures recipes around local seasonal food items, indigenous millets and plant-based sources of protein.

As part of the ongoing efforts to engage industry on the issue of plastic in food packaging, 24 food businesses signed a pledge on becoming "Plastic Waste Neutral" by collecting, processing and recycling 100 per cent post-consumer plastic waste from across the sources.

21 companies have committed themselves to reduce the levels of virgin plastic in the food and beverage sector.