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Hygiene rating for eating joints on Punjab's platter

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State to rope in food delivery apps for the purpose



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Soon, when you order food from food delivery apps such as Zomato, Swiggy or Foodpanda in Punjab, you may be able to see ratings of all restaurants on their platform. Under the state government's initiative, these apps will conduct audit of restaurants and food joints to check on their cleanliness and hygiene. On the basis of feedback, these apps will award certification to the eating joints.

The state government plans to approach these food delivery apps to rate all restaurants in the first phase and later extend it to other food business operators in the second phase.

"During inspections, it has been observed that food business operators overlook hygiene norms laid down by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). Under 'Tandrust Punjab Mission', healthy and hygienic food is an area of primary focus. So we are approaching these apps for hygiene ratings which will ensure good health to customers," said KS Pannu, Commissioner, Food Safety, Punjab. These ratings and certifications will be visible on the app and website.

Pannu said the food delivery apps will be asked to deploy third party auditors who are experts in their field and registered by the FSSAI to undertake such exercise.

Currently, the department is imparting training to all big and small food business operators (FBOs) in Punjab. The training covers all aspects of providing healthy and hygienic food, dos and don'ts for processing and cooking food, hygiene of the work place and work force and prohibiting use of ingredients restricted by the FSSAI. There are around 25,000 FBOs registered in the state. Out of these, 20,000 operators have already been trained.

Pannu said training would also be imparted to all street vendors serving food and snacks to people on roadsides and markets. There are around 10,000 street vendors across the state.

Besides this, workers working in food streets across various cities of the state would be trained on hygiene standards. There are around 100 food streets in the state.

Pannu said 10 companies, registered with the FSSAI as training partners, have been roped in and each company has been entrusted the task of imparting training in two-three districts.