



FSSAI urges Centre to take action against AWBI member for 'scaring' milk consumers

Priyanka Sharma | Updated: Jul 21, 2019 22:28 IST

By Priyanka Sharma

New Delhi [India], July 21 (ANI): Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) wrote to the Centre, accusing Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) member Mohan Singh Ahluwalia of allegedly spreading unsubstantiated fear among the public regarding the adulteration of milk across the country.

The AWBI is a body of the central government under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying.

The central food regulator, FSSAI, in a letter dated July 19, has appealed to the Centre to take stringent action against Ahluwalia for allegedly spreading "lies" of milk adulteration in the country.

According to the FSSAI, Ahluwalia, who holds a public office as a member of AWBI, last year in September claimed that adulterants in milk are hazardous and "87 per cent of citizens would be suffering from serious diseases like cancer by the year 2025".

Quoting a claimed-to-be World Health Organisation (WHO) advisory to Government of India (GoI), Ahluwalia had said, "If adulteration of milk and its products is not checked immediately, 87 per cent of citizens would be suffering from serious diseases like cancer by year 2025."

However, the WHO, a specialised agency of the United Nations (UN) that is concerned with international public health, refuted the claims of issuing such an advisory to the Government of India that may create panic among the people in the country.

Looking into the seriousness of the claims, FSSAI Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Pawan Agarwal wrote to AWBI Chairman Dr OP Chaudhary that appropriate action as per the norms should be initiated against Ahluwalia for allegedly spreading such "unsubstantiated fear among the general public".

"Ahluwalia has made wrong claims on milk adulteration that milk in India is unsafe. When we reached out to substantiate his claims, he was totally blank... Even WHO has not issued any advisory to us. This has created fear among milk consumers. We have written the Chairman AWBI to take strict action against him," Agarwal told ANI.

A copy of the letter written by the FSSAI to the central government, which was accessed by ANI, reads, "This has created a panic among milk consumers in India. Since the FSSAI was not aware of any such advisory, the WHO country office in India upon our request confirmed that no such advisory has been issued by the organisation to the Government of India ever."

The FSSAI is an autonomous body of the Union Health Ministry which is responsible for protecting and promoting public health through the regulation and supervision of food safety. (ANI)