

THE HINDU

Shivaratri prasada comes under health officials' scanner

Special Correspondent

March 05, 2019



Inspection made mandatory in the wake of Sulwadi deaths

The 'prasada' or offerings distributed among devotees on the occasion of Shivaratri celebrations in different parts of the City on Monday came under the scanner of Health Department officials.

The inspection has been made mandatory by the government in the wake of the tragedy at Maramma Temple at Sulwadi in Chamarajanagar district, said Health Officer of Mysuru City Corporation (MCC) D.G. Nagaraj.

A total of 17 people had died and more than 100 hospitalised after consuming prasada allegedly laced with poison at the Maramma Temple in December last year.

The Muzrai Department has reportedly sent a circular to all temples under its jurisdiction to secure clearances from the Health officials before distributing prasada.

Dr. Nagaraju said they received requests from about five to six temples and organisations in the city for distribution of prasada. While giving permission, the Health officials had given them instructions on maintenance of hygiene in the preparation and use of quality raw materials, besides the cleanliness of cooks and utensils.

“We visited the places where the prasada was served for an inspection on Monday”, Dr. Nagaraj added. A team from the MCC inspected the preparation of prasada at Trinayaneshwara Temple on Mysuru Palace premises, near Kote Anjaneyaswamy Temple, where an NGO was serving prasada and a Shiva temple in TK Layout, among other places.

“We also collected samples of the prasada, which will be retained for about 24 hours. We dispose of the samples after ensuring that nobody falls sick after consuming the prasada”, he said.

Meanwhile, Chidambara, the officer in charge of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) in Mysuru urban area, said they had received requests from three to four temples and the officers have inspected the places where the prasada was served.

He, however, expressed the department’s inability to inspect each temple and place preparing and serving prasada.