

Food stalls under Central Railway's lens after video highlights lack of hygiene

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The stall at Kurla station that was sealed after the video of a man washing his hands and using the same water to make lemon juice (right) went viral.(Sourced)

Central Railway (CR) on Tuesday, ordered an inspection of all food stalls at stations under its jurisdiction from Wednesday onwards.

The decision comes a day after a video of a man making lemon juice in unhygienic conditions at Kurla railway station was widely circulated on social media.

“We will send our teams for inspections of all food stalls at the stations. If they notice any alterations in maintaining hygiene standards in eatables or drinks, the stalls would be sealed and an inquiry will be initiated against the contractor,” said a senior CR official.

The drive will be conducted by the commercial and medical department of CR's catering unit. During the drive, the inspectors would check if the stalls have a valid certificate issued by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), adequate hygiene within the premises, good quality raw materials and clean storage of potable water for cooking.

Apart from the stall's hygiene, inspectors will also check if the stall owners and their staff maintain personal hygiene, have medical certificates, follow waste disposal arrangements and pest control measures.

On Monday evening, commuters were outraged to see the man working at a stall on platform number 7 of Kurla station washing his hands from water in a bucket and using the same water to make lemon juice for passengers.

After the video went viral, the stall was sealed. The contractor who runs the stall, owns three more stalls at Kurla station, which are now placed under investigation.

"There are three stalls of this licensee at Kurla. Other stalls at the station are not closed yet because the inquiry is underway," said Sunil Udasi, chief public relations officer, Central Railway. The zonal railway on Monday evening acted swiftly and sealed the stall after sending the lemon juice for lab testing.

If found guilty, the license of the stall owner would be terminated and charged with a hefty fine.