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FSSAI makes enforcement mandatory to ensure compliance by pkgd water cos

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E-Paper

The Food Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has directed the state food safety departments to carry out regular enforcement and surveillance activities to check compliance by manufacturers of packaged drinking water or mineral water.

According to the country's apex food regulator, several complaints were received by the authority about non-compliance by packaged drinking water companies with respect to the its licence and the BIS Mark.

A senior FSSAI official stated, "It has been reported that a number of manufacturers of packaged drinking water/mineral water are in operation with an FSSAI licence but without a BIS mark. Also, some manufacturers have obtained BIS licence only and are operating without an FSSAI licence."

"Therefore, the decision to carry out surveillance in this regard was taken," the official added.

As per Section 31 of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, all FBOs (food business operators) have to obtain a licence or registration before commencement of any food business from FSSAI.

Also, Regulation 2.3.14 (17) and (18) of Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restriction on Sales) Regulations, 2011 states that no person shall manufacture, sell or exhibit for sale, packaged drinking water and mineral water except under the Bureau of Indian Standards Certification Mark.

FSSAI stated that it was, therefore, clarified that while a licence, issued by the regulator, was a must for the commencement of a food business, a BIS certification mark was not a pre-condition for the FSSAI licence. However, to manufacture/sell/exhibit for sale packaged drinking water/mineral water, BIS certification shall be obtained.

Further, the nomenclature of the product must be packaged drinking water or natural mineral water as prescribed under the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging and Labelling) Regulations, and a fancy name or abbreviation of such food products shall not be used as proscribed under the Food Safety and Standards (Advertising and Claims) Regulations, 2018.