

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2842
TO BE ANSWERED ON 17th MARCH, 2026**

ADULTERATION IN ESSENTIAL FOOD ITEMS

2842. SHRI SANJAY RAUT :

Will the **Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

- (a) the concrete steps taken by Government/FSSAI to curb widespread adulteration in essential food items such as milk, ghee, spices, honey, paneer and others, which pose a serious public health crisis;
- (b) whether Government has taken note of persistent enforcement weaknesses despite repeated concerns raised;
- (c) the manner in which these enforcement gaps are linked to erosion of trust among consumers in domestic food products and damage to the credibility of genuine farmers producing safe staples; and
- (d) the specific measures proposed to strengthen enforcement, such as increased manpower, harsher penalties, rapid testing infrastructure, better traceability to restore agricultural integrity and public confidence?

**ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY
WELFARE
(SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV)**

(a) to (d): Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is mandated to lay down science based standards for articles of food and to regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption. The implementation and enforcement of the Food Safety and Standards (FSS) Act, 2006 is a shared responsibility between the Central and State Governments.

While the FSSAI, is responsible for laying down science-based standards and ensuring overall coordination, the State Food Safety Authorities are primarily responsible for enforcement at the field level. Designated officers (DOs) and Food Safety Officers (FSOs) under the Commissioner of Food safety in the States/UTs are entrusted with the responsibility of enforcing the provisions of FSS Act, 2006.

Surveillance drives, monitoring, regulatory inspection and random sampling of various food products including milk, ghee, spices, honey, paneer and other foods conducted throughout the year by the officials of Food Safety Departments of the respective States/UTs and Regional Offices of FSSAI to check compliance with the quality and safety parameters and other requirements as laid down under Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and Regulations made thereunder. In last three years (2022-23 to 2024-25), a total number of 5,18,559 samples were analyzed, a total number of 88,192 cases decided with penalty, a total number of 3,614 cases convictions were done and a total number of 1,161 licenses were cancelled.

FSSAI has also developed Risk Based Inspection System (RBIS) where frequency of inspection is decided based on risk associated with Food businesses and issued guidelines. Annual inspections are to be conducted for all food categories identified as high risk. Total number of Risk Based Inspections done in last three years (2022-23 to 2024-25) are 56,259.

FSSAI extends financial and technical assistance to States/UTs for strengthening of food safety infrastructure in the country. The support includes the following:

- Strengthening Enforcement and Compliance such as Licensing and Registration
- Inspections and Audits, Sampling and Testing of Enforcement and Surveillance Samples
- Consumer Grievance Redressal
- Capacity Building for Officers.
- Strengthening of Food Testing Ecosystem such as High End/ Basic equipment for labs
- Promotion of FSSAI initiatives such as Eat Right Campus, Eat Right School
- Flexi Assistance such as Hiring of vehicles for undertaking inspection and sampling by FSOs and DOs

To strengthen the food regulatory ecosystem in the country, FSSAI has notified 252 food testing laboratories for analysis of food samples and 24 Referral Food Laboratories for the analysis of appellate samples. FSSAI has also provided funds for Mobile Food Testing Laboratory (MFTL) referred to as "Food Safety on wheels" (FSW) to States/UTs. It is an important means to combat adulteration as FSWs are equipped with basic infrastructure for on spot testing of adulteration in various food commodities. Currently, 305 FSWs are deployed across 35 States/UTs.
