

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2647
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11TH AUGUST, 2026**

UNSAFE AND ADULTERATED FOOD ITEMS

2647. SHRI PARTH AJIT PAWAR:

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

- (a) whether Government is aware of unsafe and adulterated food items, including paneer and cheese analogues sold without disclosure, being consumed by children, affecting their health and nutrition;
- (b) whether harmful and misbranded skincare and cosmetic products are being marketed to minors, including online, Whether the Union Government proposes to support States with more food safety inspectors, testing laboratories and surveillance capacity, in furtherance of the Eat Right India and Eat Right School programmes and Maharashtra FDA's enforcement drives; and
- (c) whether Government will commission an independent nationwide evaluation of these programmes?

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

(a) to (c): 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.

FSSAI vide Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011 has prescribed standards for various food products including dairy and dairy products. The sub-regulation 2.1.1 of the said regulations provides that "In respect of a product which is not milk, a milk product or a composite milk product, no label, commercial document, publicity material or any form of point of sale presentation shall be used which claims, implies or suggests that the product is milk, a milk product or a composite milk product, or which refers to one or more of these products."

Further, the labelling provision for pre-packaged foods w.r.t Dairy Analogue are already prescribed in FSS (Food Products Standards & Food Additives) Regulation, 2011, which clearly demarcates the dairy products from their analogues which enable consumers to identify the products and make informed choices.

Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has informed that in respect of skin care and cosmetic products, provisions related to import and manufacturing for sale and distribution of cosmetics are specified under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and the Cosmetics Rules, 2020. List of Raw Materials generally not recognized as safe for use in cosmetics is published by Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS). As per said provisions, no cosmetics shall be imported or manufactured unless it complies with prescribed specification.

To upgrade state food laboratories, set up microbiology facilities, and deploy mobile food testing vans, FSSAI implemented “Strengthening of Food Testing System in the Country including provision of Mobile Food Testing Laboratories” (SoFTeL) scheme. Under this scheme, 47 State Food Testing Laboratories have been structurally upgraded with advanced analytical equipment and establishing 34 specialized microbiology laboratories to detect chemical, heavy metal, and biological contaminants. The establishment and operation of food testing laboratories primarily falls within the domain of the respective State/UT Governments. Other than the SoFTeL scheme, FSSAI also provides financial and technical support to upgrade State Food Testing Laboratories based on proposals received from respective States/UTs.

For the quality and safety of the food and food products, FSSAI has notified 259 National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) for analysis of food samples and 24 Referral Food Laboratories for the analysis of appellate samples. Further, Mobile Food Testing Laboratories, also known as Food Safety on Wheels (FSWs), have been deployed for on-the-spot screening of food samples for common adulterants. As on date, 305 FSWs are operational across the country and are equipped with rapid food testing equipment, including the Milk-o-Screen system, for on-the-spot testing of milk and detection of common adulterants. These laboratories serve as an important tool for strengthening food safety surveillance, creating consumer awareness, and supporting efforts to combat food adulteration.

FSSAI also carries out a nation-wide campaign 'Eat Right India' with a focus on preventive and promotive healthcare through social and behavioural change through State Food Safety Authorities. Under the Eat Right India initiatives, FSSAI has awarded Eat Right School-3584, Eat Right Campus-6527, Eat Right Station-491, Eat Right Fruit and Vegetable Market-554, Eat Right Place of Worship-2252 and Eat Right Street Food Hub-494 certificates. Out of which Maharashtra has been awarded a total of 2,044 certificates.
