

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 825
ANSWERED ON 25.07.2023

FOOD TESTING INFRASTRUCTURE

825. SHRI PALLAB LOCHAN DAS:

Will the **Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES** be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of central assistance provided to Assam Government to set up food testing Infrastructure and improvement of manpower;
- (b) whether the Government has taken several initiatives regarding food safety and consumer empowerment;
- (c) If so; the details of initiatives undertaken by the Government for food safety?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES
(SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL)

(a) Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) under Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India is implementing a Central Sector Scheme named “Strengthening of Food Testing System in the Country including provision of Mobile Food Testing Labs (SOFTeL) under which an assistance of **Rs. 14.80 Crore** has been released to Assam from FY 2016-17 to 2022-23, towards up-gradation of State Public Health Laboratory, Baminimaidan, Guwahati, Assam.

- Further, FSSAI has provided assistance in the form of mobile food testing laboratories, Raptor Diagnostic Reader, Frying Oil Monitor, Compact Cabinets, Vehicle Mounted Mobile Freezer Units, portable chill boxes and backpack style box to the State of Assam. FSSAI has also imparted Capacity building of laboratory personnel.

- Ministry of Food Processing Industries has also supported one of the project of Govt. of Assam namely State Public Health Laboratory, Guwahati, under the Scheme of Setting up/Up gradation of Food Testing Laboratories with grant in aid of **Rs.1.72 Crore**. The project got completed on 26.02.2020.

(b) & (c). Yes, the Government has taken initiatives regarding Food Safety and Consumer Empowerment.

- Under Eat Right India, FSSAI has increased awareness of consumers towards healthy, safe and sustainable eating habits. Funds have been provided to States under MoU for various certification programmes and to conduct IEC activities through media for raising consumer awareness. FSSAI has provided assistance of **Rs 4.58 crore** for FY 21-22 & 22-23, under the annual Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the state of Assam for strengthening of State Public Health Laboratory, Guwahati.

- Further, FSSAI has also an online grievance portal on Food Safety Compliance System (FoSCoS) namely ‘Food Safety Connect’ where a consumer can register complaint relating to the food

articles. Further, Food Business Operators (FBOs) are required to mandatorily display License / Registration number on the invoices/ sale or cash receipts enabling consumers to make informed choices while making food purchase.

- Further, regarding empowerment of consumers, the **Consumer Protection Act, 2019** has been enacted, which provides for establishment of three-tier quasi-judicial machinery, called Consumer Commissions, at the District, State and National levels to provide simple and speedy redressal to consumer disputes; establishment of a Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA), Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Government of India to regulate misleading advertisements and unfair trade practices affecting consumers as a class; simplification of the adjudication process in the Consumer Commissions such as enhancing pecuniary jurisdiction of the Consumer Commissions, filing of complaint from the Consumer Commission having jurisdiction over the place of work/residence of the consumer irrespective of the place of transaction, e-filing and e-payment, videoconferencing for hearing, deemed admissibility of complaints if admissibility is not decided within 21 days of filing; court monitored mediation to facilitate early disposal of cases; provision of product liability; penal provisions for manufacture/sale of adulterated products/spurious goods; provision for making rules for prevention of unfair trade practice in e-commerce and direct selling.
- Under the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has been established w.e.f 24.07.2020 to regulate matters, inter alia, relating to false or misleading advertisements which are prejudicial to the interests of public and consumers as a class.
- Provision for filing cases online through e-Daakhil has been introduced in Consumer Commissions at the district, state and national level for speedy and hassle-free resolution of cases.
- The National Consumer Helpline (NCH), as a pre-litigation mechanism, has been set up to receive grievances of consumers through telephone (short code 1915), web portal, letters, SMS, emails etc. and Mobile App. These grievances are taken up with the concerned entities for resolution.
- Department of Consumer Affairs has launched the “Jago Grahak Jago” campaign through electronic and print media for consumer awareness and joint awareness campaigns on consumer rights and responsibilities. Department of Consumer Affairs has also launched “Jagriti”, a mascot for empowering consumers and making them aware of their rights. By bringing the Jagriti Mascot, DoCA aims to strengthen its consumer awareness campaign presence in digital and multimedia and reinforce a young empowered and informed consumer as a top-of-mind consumer rights awareness recall brand.
