

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2076
TO BE ANSWERED ON 31th JULY, 2026**

QUALITY AND PURITY OF FOOD ITEMS

†2076. SMT. SANDHYA RAY:

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware that accessible facilities for testing the quality and purity of food items are not available to many consumers in rural and semi-urban areas, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government proposes to set up easily accessible testing centres in each district for the quick testing of food items, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether there is a proposal to include the Bhind and Datia districts of Madhya Pradesh under such a scheme; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

**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.

For the safety of the food and food products through testing, 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 appeal samples.

SoFTeL scheme i.e. Strengthening of Food Testing System in the Country including provision of Mobile Food Testing Laboratory (MFTL) is an initiative implemented by

the FSSAI to upgrade state food laboratories, set up microbiology facilities and deploys mobile food testing vans. 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. MFTL or "Food Safety on Wheels" (FSW) provides the widest outreach for food testing, training and awareness programme, especially in the villages, towns and remote areas. Currently, 305 FSWs are deployed across 35 States/UTs.

The "Magic Box" is a compact and user-friendly kit containing simple, rapid test methods to detect common food adulterants in seven different food commodities. It aims to identify adulteration in everyday food items such as milk, spices, oils, and grains.

Detect Adulteration with Rapid Test (DART) book covers 44 tests that can be performed easily at household level with the help of water and simple solutions like tincture of iodine for food products like Milk & Milk Products, Oils & Fats, Sugar & Confectionary, Food Grains & its products, Spices & Condiments etc. These tests also include sensory evaluation tests for establishing authentication of food products. DART book depicts the differences between pure and adulterated food product through pictorial representation.

Also, Rapid Analytical Food Testing (RAPID) Kits are advanced, easy to use, portable and handheld devices and don't require any sophisticated equipment or conventional reagents to conduct the tests. So far, 88 RAFT kits have been approved. These kits help to reduce the screening time of the food products at the field level and thereby accelerate surveillance as well as monitoring activities.

Further, the State of Madhya Pradesh has ten (10) FSSAI's notified food testing laboratories, of which one (01) is a State Food Testing Laboratory and nine (09) are private food testing laboratories. 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. The State also owns 15 MFTLs.
