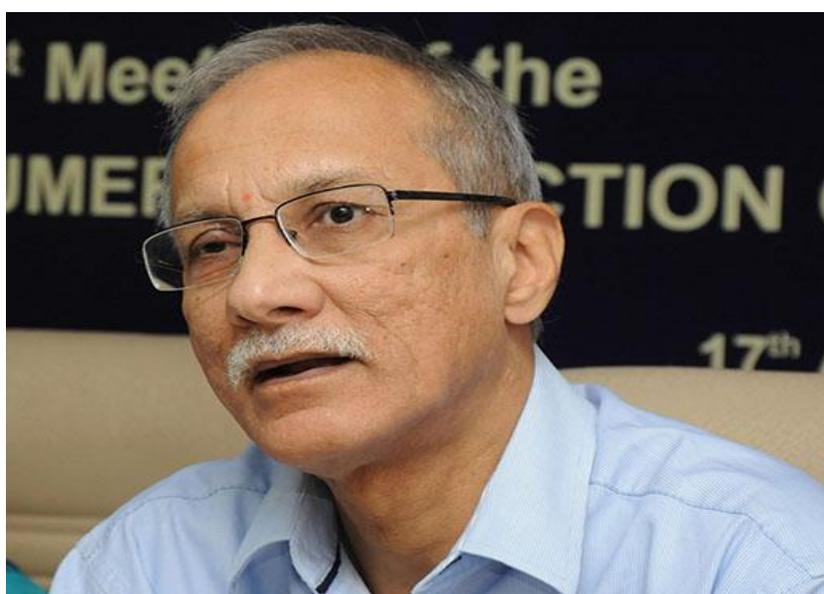


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‘Milk adulteration more in North India’



Adulteration of milk is more in North India compared with the South, food safety regulator FSSAI said on Monday adding that a strip testing kit to check milk has been developed.

The FSSAI, which is focussing on milk and edible oil, said testing machines to check edible oil has also been developed, though not all adulterants have been captured.

“We are distinguishing between safety and sub-standard. We are in the process of talks with investors and entrepreneurs to mass market these testing products, at least in metropolitan cities,” Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) Chairman Ashish Bahuguna told the media, after a meeting of the Central Consumer Protection Council (CCPC) here.

The issue of adulteration was discussed in the CCPC meeting, in which Consumer Affairs Minister Ram Vilas Paswan asked the FSSAI to come up with testing kit priced at ₹15-20. Citing a survey conducted three months ago, Bahuguna said roughly 2,500 samples were collected from source, covering ordinary milkmen and local dairies, and not from the retail end. The survey showed that milk adulteration was comparatively low in the South and more in the North. The survey threw up “some surprising” results, as some

States reported no adulteration at all, which “I personally cannot believe”, he said, adding that another summer season survey will be done to get an “accurate picture to decide a strategy and focus on hotspots.”

The regulator said while checking samples, it would focus more on the safety aspect rather than sub-standard products. “Additives to increase the shelf life of milk, such as sugar, glucose are not unsafe but make the product sub-standard,” he added.

Edible oil vending machines

To check loose edible oil sales, a new project by a company was approved last week to install edible oil vending machines in West Bengal, Bahuguna said. “If this project catches, it will be expanded,” he said without naming the company. He said the FSSAI was also in talks with edible oil manufacturers to reduce the package size and was seeking a differential duty on smaller packs, especially aimed at rural areas. Earlier, Paswan announced that regional consumer helplines would be started soon in six more zones, adding that a total of 35,000 complaints had been received so far, of which 22 per cent pertained to e-commerce.
