

THE  NEW  
**INDIAN EXPRESS**

## Third party food safety audits of prasad prepared at temples likely

Dated: 11.01.2018 (Thursday)

E-Paper



NEW DELHI: Some of the most popular temples in Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Gujarat, for the first time, have signalled that they might allow third party food safety audits of "Prasad" prepared in their premises distributed to lakhs of devotees every day.

Sources in the Food Safety Standards Authority of India, India's top food safety regulator, said that the discussion on third party food safety at temples took place

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during the second workshop on food safety and hygiene implementation in temples under project BHOG (Blissful Hygienic Offering to God) in Delhi on Thursday.

Representatives from Meenakshi, Siddhi Vinayak, Somnath, ISKON temples and Chintapurni Shakti Peeth and many other places of worship participated in the workshop.

“Many of the temples in the past have resisted the bid to open up for any kind of food safety audits and do not let even FSSAI’s regional offices to conduct any inspections as this is a highly sensitive issue. So some willingness on their part to allow third party audit is a major achievement,” a source in FSSAI said.

The food regulator has been carrying out practical training of food handlers for developing and implementing food safety management system in temples in several states since the project was launched last year.

Sources said that last month 15 food safety agencies were empanelled by the regulator to carry out audits in the canteens of Indian Institute of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institute of Management (IIMs) and the same agencies are likely to do the audits in temples following their approval.