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E-Paper

## Food safety commissioners directed to reduce backlog of cases

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The country's apex food regulator issued a letter for the fifth time in March this year, directing commissioners to reduce the backlog.



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The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has urged food safety commissioners across the country to dispose of pending cases under the erstwhile

## FSSAI IN NEWS

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Prevention of Food Adulteration Act (PFA), 1954. The country's apex food regulator issued a letter for the fifth time in March this year, directing commissioners to reduce the backlog.

The letter also directs states to share the results of special efforts taken to dispose pending cases. FSSAI also shares the "exemplary" work by Gujarat in this regard. Gujarat set up an expert committee to reduce the backlog by segregating cases in three categories – 'misbranding but not unsafe', 'substandard but not unsafe' and 'unsafe'. It identified 3,881 cases out of a total 4,239 which could be closed by imposing fines. Of these 3,881 cases, it has disposed 1,905 and realised Rs 1,29,70,000 in fine.

FSSAI CEO Pawan Kumar Agarwal said a circular had been sent to all states. According to FSSAI officials, the step would reduce the burden on the judiciary.

According to Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration officials, there were 5,265 pending cases under PFA Act and 308 have been resolved. Some cases are over 20 years old. In Pune division (comprising Pune, Satara, Sangli, Solapur and Kolhapur), 46 cases were resolved in a special hearing from February 1 till March this year. As much as Rs 7.36 lakh was also collected in fine.