

THE **MORNING** EXPRESS

Food Safety on Wheels makes second stopover in Dimapur

May 20, 2018



The mobile food testing laboratory – Food Safety on Wheels – revisited Dimapur’s New Market conducting yet another round of tests on May 19. Earlier on April 24 and 25, the mobile testing laboratory made the rounds in Dimapur collecting and conducting on spot tests of packaged food items, including bottled water, spices, fruits juices and other beverages sold in the market.

On May 19, samples of fish, fruits and dried fish sold at the New Market were collected and tested. This time, the Food Safety Commissioner of Nagaland, Himato Zhimomi was also on site along with the District Food Safety Officer (FSO), Chief Medical Officer, Dimapur and officials from the parent Health & Family Welfare department.

FSSAI IN NEWS

FSO, Dimapur Sendong Jamir informed that “preliminary tests” were conducted on the samples collected today, which will then be subjected to further comprehensive analysis at the State Public Health Laboratory, Kohima. He added that it will likely take a week for compiling the results of the tests.

“The testing conducted by the team of Food Safety on Wheels is a preliminary spot testing of food items for standard confirmation under the FSSAI Rules and Regulations,” further stated a press release issued by the FSO.

Besides, serving as a mobile testing vehicle, the FSSAI’s (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) Food Safety on Wheels seeks to generate consumer awareness on health concerns and hygiene. The vehicle has onboard testing facilities that could be used for “quick qualitative testing and for detection of common adulterants in foods.”

Commissioner Zhimomi speaking to The Morung Express regarded the tests as a continuing two-pronged exercise to keep in check contaminants in food as well as an awareness drive. Asked on the possibility of vendors (of perishable items) using banned chemical preservatives, he responded, “I don’t want to jump to conclusions. If we find any (contaminants), we will enforce appropriate penalties as per the Food Safety law.” He said that the details of the test findings can be known only after the reports are sent to him.

Stating that public health is paramount, he said that the sellers cannot be allowed to do things their own way at the cost of the consumers. “At the same time, the consumers must be aware of what they are buying.”

Meanwhile, the details or results of the first round of tests conducted as the mobile laboratory travelled across the districts could not be had. During the first stopover in Dimapur, certain spices sold in the markets here were reportedly found to contain traces of carcinogenic artificial colouring agents.