

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Over 60kg adulterated tea dust seized in 3 days

TNN | Jun 16, 2018, 00:30 IST

Coimbatore: Sale of adulterated tea is rampant in the city, taunting food safety department officials and ignoring awareness drives. In the last three days alone, officials of the department found 15 small shops selling adulterated tea and destroyed 66.5kg tea bags.

The department has been conducting a mass raid since Wednesday mainly focusing on the retail sector and checking if shops were selling products following the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) guidelines. “While we usually raid only godowns and wholesalers, we decided to raid shops because they have to stop stocking products that do not conform to the guidelines,” designated food safety officer Vijayalalithambigai told TOI.

“At least 15 of the 152 shops we raided were selling adulterated tea. They were mainly small shops spread across the city,” the official said.

Adulterated tea contains colouring agents and its use may increase the risk of cancer. While tea dust change colour only in hot water, adulterated tea dust change colour in cold water.

According to the officials, small shopkeepers, who buy adulterated tea from wholesalers, are attracted to it because of the low cost. “Adulterated tea dust, which is referred to as low grade tea, is often cost Rs 20 lesser than the normal tea. Many petty shops sell adulterated tea for Rs 6 to Rs 7 per cup compared to Rs 10 charged by bakeries,” a food safety officer said.

Meanwhile, the officials also seized 42kg pan masala and 30litres of packaged water and soft drinks stocked beyond the expiration date.