

Ahmedabad's Kankaria Lake to become India's first Clean Street Food Hub

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Kankaria Lake, a renowned tourist hotspot in Ahmedabad, is all set to be declared as the country's first clean street food hub. In fact, Gujarat is in line to become the first state in the country to implement FSSAI's Clean Street Food project.

The state Food Drug and Control Administration (FDCA) confirmed that the project was in the final stage of implementation, and soon the place would be declared as a clean street food hub.

Law Garden, another popular place, is also in line to become the second place in Gujarat for the project.

Sharing the details, H G Koshia, food safety commissioner, Food Drug and Control Administration (FDCA) said, "Kankaria Lake and Law Garden, also known as Khau Galli in Ahmedabad, are the two places which are considered to be declared as clean street food hubs. We are now in the final stage of declaring Kankaria Lake as the country's first clean street food hubs."

And for the purpose, an auditor has already made visits to the place. Koshia stated, "The auditor has already visited the place and submitted his audit report to us. There were only a few minor areas on which we were told to rework."

"We have worked on them and invited the auditor to revisit the place for inspection. We are very positive that in the next two weeks, we will be declaring Kankaria Lake as India's first clean street food hub with the FSSAI logo," he added.

Gujarat FDCA has always been the benchmark for the implementation of the regulations and dealing with food safety. With the declaration, it will set another benchmark for the remaining states.

Koshia said, "Kankaria Lake is a very famous hangout for locals as well as tourists visiting Gujarat. There are about 66 approved street food vendors stall at the site. Since 2012, FDCA has worked to train those vendors to maintain the food hygiene and safety."

"With this tag of clean street food hub by FSSAI, it will get a value addition. All the vendors are following the necessary procedures, including wearing apparel, hand and head gloves, using packaged water, maintaining cleanliness around the stall, using carpets, etc." he added.

"Earlier, these vendors were using tanker water to prepare the food. In 2012-13, FDCA, through its continuous training and awareness drive, helped these vendors connect with packaged bottle companies to supply the water. But now, consumers can now be fully assured of the quality of food and hygiene," stated Koshia.

Maharashtra

Meanwhile, Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Maharashtra, along with the Association of Food Scientists and Technologists, India [AFST(I)], has also started the gap analysis for the launching this initiative in the state.

An official from the state FDA informed, "A meeting of AFST members and food safety officers (FSOs) will be held to discuss how to implement the plan and a document will be prepared."

"A number of factors need to be addressed, including corporation matters, water supply and ward approval. Training has already begun, keeping in view various factors, like hygiene, sanitation, waste disposal, etc.," he added.

During the pan India launch of the initiative, the state FDA had declared four places to cover under this initiative. Being in the initial stage, it was working with various related associations in four zones, namely Juhu Chowpatty and Girgaum Chowpatty in Mumbai, Saras Baug in Pune and Phutara Talaav in Nagpur.

Prabodh Halde, president, AFST(I), informed, "The assessment work is going on, and it will take seven to ten days more to complete. Accordingly, reassessment work will be carried out. This will include basic training, providing required facilities and helping in any other way."

"If everything falls into place, all the four places will be declared clean street food hubs in the state within a month," he added.

There are about 74 vendors at Juhu Chowpatty, 56 vendors at Girgaum Chowpatty, 70-80 vendors at Saras Baug and 50 vendors at Phutara Talaav.