



Mattuthavani to be Madurai's 'Clean Street Food Hub'

Dated: - 07th October 2019 (Monday)

E-Paper

Food safety officials have identified Mattuthavani to be developed into a 'Clean Street Food Hub' as it would help those who transit at the MGR bus terminal find quality food. It is one among the 15 hubs identified across the state under the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India's national level programme.

Mattuthavani was shortlisted because it is a major transit point. "If food served in and around Mattuthavani was not good, it would bring bad reputation to the city," designated officer for food safety, Madurai district, Dr M Somasundaram told TOI.

Though Mattuthavani was shortlisted only recently, the work to streamline eateries in the area was started in January. The standard of hotels and road side eateries and the quality of food supplied in and around MGR Bus terminal are being enhanced. Registration of eateries, quality of food, personnel hygiene of employees, quality of ingredients, prevention of excessive artificial colours, clean drinking water, hygienic environment and proper waste disposal would be ensured, Somasundaram said.

"A team of officials are making regular visits to inspect the kitchens of eateries in the area for cleanliness and to ensure that the eateries are following hygiene. Many changes have taken place in the eateries and bakeries there in the last few months," he said.

Officials of the food safety department said that the process involves various steps including pre-audit and post-audit. The FSSAI will issue the 'Clean Street Food Hub' certificate only after inspection. The validity of the certificate is one year.

Most of the eateries outside the terminal are idly shops, fast foods and fried chicken shops apart from a large number of hotels, while most of the shops inside the terminal are snacks stalls. There are tea shops and vada shops functioning on the platforms. Food is available round-the-clock at the terminal, the officials said.

Sensitization programs will be conducted to educate the eatery owners on hygiene. Food handlers will be taught on the importance of following hygienic practices such as cutting nails, covering mouth and nose and wearing cap. Frequent checks will be conducted to ensure hygiene, another official said.

"Madurai is known for tasty food. Soon the shops around the bus terminal will also be known for its quality and hygiene. Although everyone likes street food, many hesitate to eat from road side eateries because of poor hygiene. The program will build trust among people," he said.