

## Not just cigarettes, alcohol bottles in India will have a loud and clear warning soon



- **The FSSAI has directed companies to carry a statutory warning of 3 mm for alcoholic beverage bottles of more than 200 ml.**
- **India ranks 5th in the world for the most pictorial warnings on cigarette packets.**
- **Indian government had introduced regulations for alcoholic beverages in 2018.**

Next time you pick up a bottle of alcohol, it's going to be difficult to miss the cautionary message on the bottle.

Following a directive from 2018, FSSAI has revised the statutory warning to be placed on alcohol bottles. After accommodating industry feedback with industry representatives, the FSSAI has directed that for alcoholic beverage bottles upto 200 ml should not be less than 1.5 mm whereas bottles above 200 ml in size, will have to carry the warning message in a font size of 3mm. All companies have to follow the guidelines and transition to the same by April 1, 2019.

In 2018, India's food regulator, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, had directed alcohol companies to carry a statutory warning saying "Consumption of Alcohol is injurious to health" and "Be safe - Don't drink and drive." It also said the font size should be be less than three millimetres.

India already ranks 5th in the world for the most pictorial warnings on cigarette packets.

The Indian government had introduced regulations for alcoholic beverage bottles for the first time in 2018 to control drunk driving incidents in the country. According to reports, fines from drunk driving in India in 2018 was around ₹6 crore.

Earlier an NGO called Community Against Drunken Driving had filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) requesting the Delhi high court to include a pictorial warning on all alcohol bottles to spread awareness against drunk driving. However, the court had refused the same then, while also directing the FSSAI to look into the matter.

Since 1995, the government has banned advertising of tobacco and liquor to ensure that the wrong message is not sent out the adverse health effects are known to people – which has also led to surrogate advertising in India.