

### Carry FSSAI certificate to send fish to Goa

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**E-paper**

The fish traders should carry a certificate from Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) on the fish being transported to Goa from Karnataka, said Joint Director of Fisheries (Marine) Ramacharya. Allaying fears on the Goa's ban on the sale of fish from the state, he said, "The fish transporters without these certificates were sent back." He was responding to the queries during phone-in programme in Balmatta, Mangaluru.

Ramacharya said the Goa authorities believed that fish transported from Karnataka was adulterated with formalin. "Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy has taken the issue seriously and has decided to hold talks with his Goa counterpart," he said while answering a call from Maravanthe Gram Panchayat president Anitha. "We are in touch with Goa officials and our chief secretary has sent a letter to the Goa government, seeking time to comply with the Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) regulations. The letter has also emphasised on the need to allow transportation and trading activities of fish between the two states and to keep the ban order on hold," the officer said. Fish transporters from coastal districts have been instructed to collect the certificates from Food Safety Department and transport licences for their vehicles before transporting fish. The licence should also clearly mention whether the fish are being transported for consumption or for fish meal industries at Rathnagiri in Maharashtra, he said. There are conditions that the vehicles ferrying fish should be properly insulated for refrigeration to deliver quality fish. "We have asked Goa authorities to give us some time to implement all these conditions, and instructed the designated officer for Food Safety and Drug Administration to provide certificates without delay."



For a long-term solution, a dialogue between both the governments will be held and the state government is committed to solve the issue, Ramacharya added. Fisheries director has also written a letter to Secretary, Department of Animal Husbandry and Fisheries, promising to ensure that the fish traders comply with the FDA regulations and obtain certification after meeting the required standards. "The process is already initiated in the three Coastal districts," Joint Director said. The fish traders have to pay a fee of Rs 2,000 to get the certificate. The FSSAI certification is to ensure that hygiene is maintained, Ramacharya said. When Aboobakkar, Anila Katte, Vinaya and Sanjiv Kharvi sought to know whether the fishes were adulterated with formalin, Fisheries Department Deputy Director Chikkaveera Nayak said, "The department had checked samples for the presence of formalin at regular intervals and till today the samples of fish had reported negative to formalin or formaldehyde." Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT), Kochi had developed a kit which helps a common man detect the presence of formalin in the fish. The kit costs Rs 250. "If the colour of the sample turns blue, then it indicates the presence of formalin in fishes." Vikas of Santhekatte and Trawl Boat Association Treasurer Ibrahim Bengre sought details about the financial assistance released by government for the purchase of boats.

The joint director said the government had decided to reduce the number of trawlers venturing into deep sea for fishing. "If the estimated unit cost of the new tuna longliner-cum-gill netter for deep sea fishing boat is Rs 80 lakh per boat, then the government will provide subsidy amount to the fishermen. The government has also introduced another scheme with unit cost of Rs 30 lakh and subsidy of Rs 15 lakh as well."