

Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan inaugurates national food laboratory in Ghaziabad



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The Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare, Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, Dr. Harsh Vardhan laying the foundation stone of FSSAI Tower, at Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh on August 23, 2019. The Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey and other dignitaries are also seen.

NEW DELHI/GHAZIABAD: Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan Friday stressed on strict implementation of laws to ensure food safety and said the government has increased the number of food testing laboratories to 261 from 138 in 2014.

The minister was addressing the media after inaugurating the first-ever National Food Laboratory-Delhi, NCR of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) in Ghaziabad, on the 13th anniversary of the food authority.

“We not only have to provide right food, but also ensure that there is strict implementation of laws and the compliance of standards to assure that citizens have safe and wholesome food,” Vardhan said.

The Union health minister also laid the foundation stone of the FSSAI Tower, released a report titled “Food Laboratories in India: A Meta Study” and awarded the Certificate of Recognition to 13 National Reference Laboratories.

Health has become one of the top priorities of this government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Vardhan said.

“This could be gauged from the fact that there is now a network of food testing laboratories established in the country and recognized by FSSAI. Such laboratories have increased to 261 as of now from 138 during the year 2014,” he said.

Vardhan said under the guidance of the prime minister, several pro-poor policies and schemes have been taken up and there are perceptible and measurable results in every sector.

He said the Ayushman Bharat Yojana is benefitting millions since its launch last year. “The scheme ensures that people don’t fall below poverty line due to catastrophic hospitalisation,” Vardhan added.

He said with 1,50,000 health and wellness centres coming up by 2022, quality healthcare will reach every doorstep in the country.

Similarly, the government is expanding quality tertiary healthcare facilities in all parts of the country, Vardhan said.

On this occasion, Vardhan also presented Uttar Pradesh with two “Food Safety on Wheels (FSW)” vans to cater to the food testing requirements in Ghaziabad and western UP.

These mobile food-testing vans would be utilised for training and awareness-building activities as well. He said in the near future, 500 such food safety and testing vans shall be available to support the states in ensuring food safety.

The National Food Laboratory (NFL) Delhi-NCR, formerly the Food Research & Standardized Laboratory (FRSL, Ghaziabad), is one of the two premier referral laboratories under the direct administrative control of the FSSAI. PTI