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Indore: That's sweet! Khajrana Temple prasad passes BHOG test

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INDORE: You don't have to worry about the quality of laddoos and other prasad being sold at the famed Khajrana Temple in Indore. It received BHOG (Blissful Hygienic Offering to God) certification on Wednesday for matching standards set by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). A team of five officials had conducted an inspection on August 12-13 and gave around 92% marks to the temple, say sources. The minimum cut-off for this tag is 80%.

Khajrana Ganesh Mandir is the second temple in the state after Mahakaleshwar Temple in Ujjain to be given this certification. Prasad at the Ujjain temple got 83% marks in the external audit and was given BHOG tag on June 7, World Food Safety Day. Meenakshi Temple in Tamil Nadu and Somnath Temple in Gujarat are among those BHOG-certified.

Khajrana Ganesh Mandir is the second temple in Madhya Pradesh to get this certification. "FSSAI has sent the certificate by mail. Senior food safety officer Arvind Pathroad will visit New Delhi within a week to receive the physical copy," food safety officer Manish Swami told TOI.

The main objective of the certification is to ensure that prasad - which is offered to the deity and then distributed among devotees - is prepared under hygienic conditions while maintaining quality. Workers and food handlers of the 30 shops on the temple premises were trained in hygiene and all these shops were registered under FSSAI.

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Ensure hygiene and quality of prasad, FSSAI tells states

Ahead of the audit, the required changes at the 'Annakshetra' were also made to get the coveted tag. We issued strict instructions not to use unbranded ghee, milk and other raw materials, received as donations at the temple, in preparing langar, and that they must use only purified water and fresh vegetables," Swami said.

FSSAI data says that a whopping 30 crore devotees visit places of worship — temple, mosque, church or Gurdwara — across the country every year and receive prasad, which may be a small morsel or a complete meal.

The food safety regulator has asked states to ensure hygiene and quality of prasad.

The local administration has written to FSSAI to conduct an audit of Ranjeet Hanuman Mandir for BHOG certification. Indore's famous food street — 56 Dukan — was given the coveted tag in January this year, and local officials now want Sarafa night food market and Rajat Jayanti Complex to be awarded the title of 'Clean Street Food Hub'.