

KMC's mobile food testing lab marks debut in city hotspots

Team MP12 Oct 2018 11:52 PM

Kolkata: The mobile food testing laboratory of Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) started its maiden operation on Friday with officials of the civic body's food safety wing conducting food drive at Park Circus and in Park Street area. The food safety officers not only checked the hygiene and sanitation condition inside the kitchens of these restaurants but also examined the food quality on spot after picking up random samples from a number of restaurants.

"This is a milestone in our sustained efforts to ensure food safety and will surely go a long way in strengthening our infrastructure in drive against adulterated food. We instantly checked the food quality," said Member Mayor-in-Council (Health), KMC Atin Ghosh.

According to a senior food official, all the restaurants that underwent the checking was found to be serving food maintaining set standards of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). "A metallic yellow container was seized from one restaurant, though they claimed that they are currently using a saffron colour for biriyani. We have seized samples from the restaurant and will check it at our central laboratory," a food safety officer involved in the drive said.

According to a senior official, citizens can get suspicious food samples tested at a nominal cost at the mobile food laboratory. "We have already started a website through which people can lodge complaints about inferior quality food. We will soon come up with a toll free number for people so that they can check any suspicious food samples tested at these mobile labs," Ghosh added.

Food samples could include a range of edible items, including both cooked and uncooked. One can get milk, spices, meat and other edible ingredients instantly tested in order to remove any doubt regarding the concerned item.

The mobile laboratory will be placed into service in North Kolkata on Monday. In the days to come, we will use this vehicle more in food safety drives. "After the Pujas, we will put special emphasis on drives during weekends as people have a tendency to dine in the restaurants during this time," the official added.

The civic body has already sent e-mails and messages to registered food vendors alerting them not to compromise with the food quality during the festival days and serve food maintaining proper hygiene.

"We have 55,000 registered vendors among which we had already issued alerts to more than half of them. In the next two days, we will cover the rest," Ghosh said.