

Covid-19: Centre asks states to strengthen scrutiny over slaughter houses

06 Aug 2020 [Neetu Chandra Sharma](#)

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NEW DELHI : The centre on Thursday advised all states to strengthen scrutiny over slaughter houses and wildlife consumption, as a preventive measure against zoonotic diseases like coronavirus— that are transmitted from animals to humans.

The apex food regulator Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) also warned that non-compliance of the government rules will lead to cancellation of licences of the slaughterhouses since the laxity may heighten risk of such diseases.

"After covid-19 pandemic, the government is now more cautious about zoonotic diseases such as covid-19. We keep a strict vigil on slaughterhouses across states, but now have asked the states to further scrutinise these facilities which have immense intermingling of humans and animals," said Arun Singhal, chief executive officer, FSSAI.

According to public health experts, increasing human and animal interface has also increased the risk of zoonotic diseases.

Federation of Indian Animal Protection Organisations (FIAPO) in association with over 100 healthcare professionals earlier today filed a petition before the Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare Dr. Harsh Vardhan to enforce rules to prevent future recurrence covid-like of pandemics.

According to FIAPO, an estimated 2000-4000 illegal meat or wet shops are there in the country. The NGO claimed that less commonly eaten animals including porcupine, camels, turtles, yak, mithun, boars, duck, geese, squirrel are also sold in these wet markets. Monitor lizards are sold for their blood, cats and dogs in some parts of the country are sold for meat, the NDO added.

Singhal said that the health ministry received the petition and examining it adding that the government will take appropriate action in this regard.

"The reason why such markets can spread diseases is due to the confined spaces in which animals are stored," said Varda Mehrotra executive director, FIAPO. In wet markets, where multiple species are sold including wild animals, the risk of transmission while handling and slaughtering is higher, Mehrotra added.