

Govt. launches campaign to promote ‘eat right movement’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 05, 2019



Dr Harsh Vardhan. File. | Photo Credit: Sandeep Saxena

‘Crucial measure to trigger social and behavioural change’

“It’s time for India to eat right,” said Health Minister Harsh Vardhan on Thursday, kick-starting POSHAN Maah 2019 with a year-long social and mass media campaign on the Eat Right India movement.

Leading with a tweet-a-day focusing on a weekly theme of eating right for the next 365 days, Dr. Vardhan also launched the new Eat Right India logo that represents a healthy plate, an online eat right quiz and online course for frontline health workers.

Preventive health

Stating that the country is in need of a movement on preventive health for all in the backdrop of the increasing burden of non-communicable diseases including diabetes, hypertension and heart diseases, widespread deficiencies of vitamins and minerals and rampant food-borne illnesses, Dr. Vardhan said: “The Eat Right India movement is a crucial preventive healthcare measure to trigger social and behavioural change through a judicious mix of regulatory measures, combined with soft interventions for ensuring awareness and capacity building of food businesses and citizens alike.”

Aligned with plans

This movement is aligned with the government's flagship public health programmes such as POSHAN Abhiyaan, Anemia Mukht Bharat, Ayushman Bharat Yojana and Swachh Bharat Mission.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has also put in place robust regulatory measures under three major pillars: Eat Safe, Eat Health and Eat Sustainably for the programme.

FSSAI has prescribed a limit for Total Polar Compounds (TPC) at 25% in cooking oil to avoid the harmful effects of reused cooking oil.

The Minister said Eat Right India takes a holistic approach to food habits that promote health and sustainability. "Launching this movement on this platform with the support of stakeholders such as the World Health Organization (WHO), along with Ministers and delegates from South East Asian countries, is a landmark event," noted the Minister.

WHO's message

Poonam Khetrapal Singh, Regional Director, WHO, said: "The Eat Right India movement's message is close to the heart of what the WHO has been saying all along. There has been a shift in the cause of mortality from communicable diseases to non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and cancer, not only in India, but also across the world. The four main factors to prevent non-communicable diseases are healthy diet, physical exercise, avoidance of tobacco and alcohol. Therefore, the message of 'Eat Right' should be promoted everywhere. Citizens should choose healthy food and the food industry should manufacture healthy food."