

## Union Health Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya releases fifth State Food Safety Index in New Delhi

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Union Health Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya released the fifth State Food Safety Index in New Delhi today. The Index is an annual assessment released by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). This index assesses states' performance in six food safety parameters.

On this occasion, Dr. Mandaviya awarded the winning states in different categories. Kerala, Punjab, and Tamil Nadu were awarded in the Large State category, and Goa, Manipur, and Sikkim in the Small States category. Jammu and Kashmir, Chandigarh, and Delhi got the awards in the Union Territories category.

Speaking on this occasion, Dr Mandaviya said, wellness can be achieved through healthy food. He said, 100 healthy food streets will be developed across the country sponsored by the government. He lauded the role played by the FSSAI in ensuring food safety in India. The Minister also highlighted the country's achievement in the economic sector saying that India has registered a growth of seven percent at a time when the major economies are sluggish in their growth.

Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Prof. SP Baghel asked the people to avoid junk food by giving priority to indigenous food in their diet.

AIR correspondent reports that started in 2018-19, the State Food Safety Index serves as a tool to propel States and Union Territories to enhance their performance and establish robust food safety ecosystems within their jurisdictions. The Index is a dynamic quantitative and qualitative benchmarking model that provides an objective framework for evaluating food safety across all States and UTs. It measures the performance of states on five significant parameters of Food Safety.

The parameters include Human Resources and Institutional Data, Compliance, Food Testing Infrastructure and Surveillance, Training and Capacity Building, and Consumer Empowerment. It aims to create a competitive and positive change in the food safety ecosystem. The index helps in providing safe and nutritious food to the citizens. Eat Right Challenge aims to promote and encourage healthy eating habits and enhancing the overall food safety and sustainability.