

Press Release from Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)

FSSAI CEO Calls for Nationwide Crackdown on High-Risk Food Commodities at 49th CAC Meeting Gangtok, Sikkim; 2nd March 2026: The Chief Executive Officer of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), Shri Rajit Punhani, urged States and Union Territories to significantly strengthen on-ground enforcement mechanisms, with a sharp focus on high-risk food categories, during the 49th meeting of the Central Advisory Committee (CAC) held in Gangtok, Sikkim.

Addressing Commissioners of Food Safety (CFS) and senior officials, Shri Punhani emphasized the need for risk-based inspections and sustained surveillance drives in high-risk commodities such as milk and milk products, edible oils, spices, and honey. He called for strict and visible action against non-compliant Food Business Operators (FBOs), directing States/UTs to undertake special enforcement drives and regularly share updates on actions taken. He underlined that consistent enforcement and proactive public disclosure of outcomes are critical to deterring violations and reinforcing consumer confidence.

The CEO further stressed the importance of strengthening the food safety workforce at the State/UT level. He encouraged States/UTs to expedite recruitment to fill vacant posts of Food Safety Officers and other key technical personnel to ensure effective implementation of the Food Safety and Standards Act.

Adequate manpower, he noted, is essential for sustaining enforcement intensity and improving inspection coverage across districts.

Reiterating the importance of an effective consumer grievance redressal mechanism, Shri Punhani directed States/UTs to ensure time-bound resolution of food safety complaints and conduct periodic high-level reviews. He emphasized that prompt response to consumer concerns, coupled with transparent communication of enforcement actions, would enhance accountability and public trust.

The meeting also deliberated on strengthening centralized surveillance systems, leveraging data-driven decision-making, and improving coordination between FSSAI and State authorities to generate credible national-level insights on food safety trends. Discussions were held on streamlining licensing and registration processes to facilitate ease of compliance while maintaining robust regulatory oversight.

Shri U.S. Dhyani, Executive Director, FSSAI; Dr. Satyen Kumar Panda, Executive Director (CS) & Advisor, FSSAI and Shri Tshewang Gyachho, Health Secretary & Commissioner of Food Safety, Government of Sikkim, were also present on the occasion. Approximately 110 officials participated in the meeting, including Commissioners of Food Safety (CFS), representatives from States and UTs, senior FSSAI officers, and stakeholders from the food industry, agriculture sector, laboratories, and research institutions.

The 49th CAC meeting reaffirmed the collective resolve of FSSAI and State/UT authorities to build a stronger, enforcement-led, and consumer-centric food safety ecosystem to ensure the availability of safe and wholesome food across the country.