Finally, Tirupati Laddu gets FSSAI clearance, TTD gets food safety licence

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD), the governing body of the Sri Venkateswara temple atop Tirumala, has at last obtained a license from the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

According to reports, the FSSAI license has been obtained for its famous laddu prasadam, and the food that it distributes under the Annaprasadam scheme.

The FSSAI had also asked the Central Licensing Authority in Chennai to inspect the 'pottu' used in preparing the temple's famous laddus.

This order came after an RTI application by a Bengaluru-based RTI activist in December last year.

This would mean that the TTD will now follow regulations of the Food Safety Standards Act.

The Hindu reported that the TTD, which initially objected to the directive that would allow non-Srivaishnavites into the kitchen (for inspection), changed its mind and applied for the licence last month, following which it was granted.
In his compliant, the RTI activist reportedly wrote, “The cooks who are in preparation of these laddus in large quantity are found wearing no proper dress. They are working in half naked dress and found sweating due to heavy heat at the kitchen. These cooks are not wearing any hand glove, apron and other safety norms.”

The laddu is a major source of the TTD's revenue and adds several crore rupees to its annual budget. It is made with flour, sugar, ghee, oil, cardamom and dry fruits.

However, objects like iron pins, key chains and even gutka packets have been previously found in the laddus.

In 2016, a total of 10.46 crore laddus, were sold as 'prasadam'. In its 2017 budget, the TTD stated that the sale of laddus was expected to fetch Rs 165 crore.

In 2015, the laddu entered its 300th year.

Temple officials say the sacred offering was introduced on August 2, 1715.

The laddu is in great demand on special occasions. The authorities sell the prasad round the clock during Brahmotsavam.

In 2014, about 1.8 million laddus were sold in the first seven days of Brahmotsavam, breaking all previous records.

In 2014, the Office of the Registrar of Patents, Trademarks and Geographical Indications also awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) status to the Tirupati laddu.