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New food safety law and its effective implementation can help prevent diet-related illnesses: Nadda

New Delhi: Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare Jagat Prakash Nadda on Tuesday stressed on the transparency in the implementation of food safety and regulations at a conclave organised by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) here.

In a series of tweets, the minister, who attended the ‘First Health Ministers Roundtable on Food Safety and Nutrition’ in New Delhi on January 9, 2018, said that new food law
and its effective implementation has potential to ensure citizens eat safe and eat right, adding that doing so will help prevent many diet-related illnesses.

In order to address micronutrient deficiencies (also referred to as hidden hunger), Nadda also said that FSSAI has formulated standards for fortifying edible oil and milk with Vitamin A and D, rice and wheat with iron, folic acid and vitamin B12 and salt with iron (in addition to iodine).

“FSSAI has created a completely new ecosystem for Food Safety Training and Certification (FoSTaC),” Nadda added.

“I am happy to note that in a very short period of time, over 10,000 people have been trained and 100 training partners have been empanelled,” he added.

Food safety is a global public health concern, with the majority of people experiencing a foodborne disease at some point in their lives. This indicates the importance of making sure the food we eat is not contaminated with potentially harmful bacteria, parasites, viruses, toxins and chemicals, thereby reducing the risk of individuals becoming sick from foodborne illnesses.

Earlier in December, India's food safety regulator CEO Pawan Agarwal had revealed that FSSAI is using technology to enforce its norms and has set up an IT platform to bring consistency and transparency in food safety systems.

The minister's concerns over the health of the nation with respect to food are not unfounded. Reuters reports that the number of obese men and women in India rose to about 30 million by 2014 from 1.2 million in 1975, according to a study by British medical journal The Lancet, although the comparative figure for China was around 90 million.