



# FSSAI Promotes Healthier Diet Along Char Dham Yatra

## Why in News?

The **Uttarakhand government**, in collaboration with the [Food Safety and Standards Authority of India \(FSSAI\)](#), has launched a campaign to **sensitize food vendors and eateries** along the [Char Dham Yatra](#) route to **reduce the use of salt, sugar, and oil** in food.

- Training workshops **have been held in Uttarkashi, Chamoli, Rudraprayag, Rishikesh, Haridwar, Chamba, and Srinagar.**

## Char Dham Yatra

- **Yamunotri Dham:**
  - Location: Uttarkashi district.
  - Dedicated to: Goddess Yamuna.
  - River Yamuna is the second-most sacred river in India after River Ganga.
- **Gangotri Dham:**
  - Location: Uttarkashi district.
  - **Dedicated to:** Goddess Ganga.
  - Considered the most sacred of all Indian rivers.
- **Kedarnath Dham:**
  - **Location:** Rudraprayag district.
  - **Dedicated to:** Lord Shiva.
  - Situated on the bank of the Mandakini River.
  - **One of the 12 Jyotirlingas** (divine representations of Lord Shiva) in India.
- **Badrinath Dham:**
  - **Location:** Chamoli district.
  - Home to the sacred Badrinarayan Temple.
  - **Dedicated to:** Lord Vishnu.
  - One of the holy shrines for Vaishnavites.

## Key Points

- **Key Highlights of the Campaign:**
- **Objective:**
  - To **minimize health risks** (e.g., cardiac arrest, breathing issues) among pilgrims during the Char Dham Yatra by promoting **healthier cooking practices** and dietary habits.
    - It is a part of the [Fit India Movement](#) and **PM's appeal** for a 10% [reduction in salt](#), sugar, and oil consumption.
- **Implementation and Monitoring Agencies:**
  - [Food Safety and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#), Uttarakhand
  - District administration, Uttarakhand
- **Dietary Guidelines for Food Vendors:**

- **Reduce** the use of salt, sugar, and oil in food.
- **Avoid** papads, pickles, and **MSG (monosodium glutamate) - laden items**.
  - MSG, also known as **Ajinomoto**, is a widely used food additive that enhances flavor, particularly the umami taste.
    - It's a **sodium salt of glutamic acid**, an amino acid naturally present in many foods.
- **Use natural sweeteners** like dates and fruits.
- **Medical and Health Arrangements:**
  - **Mandatory health screening** for pilgrims above 50 years of age.
    - In **2024**, a health screening of **9.5 lakh people** was conducted.

## Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)

- **About:**
  - FSSAI is an **autonomous statutory body** established under the **Food Safety and Standards Act, of 2006**.
  - FSSAI is responsible for **protecting and promoting public health** by regulating and supervising food safety and quality in India, operating under the **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare**.
  - FSSAI has a **headquarters in New Delhi** and regional offices in eight zones across the country.
  - The Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer of FSSAI, appointed by central government. The Chairperson is in the **rank of Secretary to the Government of India**.
- **Functions and Powers:**
  - Framing of **regulations and standards** for food products and additives.
  - Granting of **licences and registration** to food businesses.
  - Enforcement of food safety laws and regulations.
  - **Monitoring and surveillance** of food safety and quality.
  - Conducting **risk assessment and scientific research** on food safety issues.
  - Providing **training and awareness** on food safety and hygiene.
  - Promoting **food fortification** and organic food.
  - Coordinating with other agencies and stakeholders on food safety matters.
- **Events and Index:**
  - **World Food Safety Day**
  - **State Food Safety Index**.