



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**.