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Centre to support states in setting up food testing labs: Nadda

Addressing a conference of food regulator FSSAI, the minister said the adoption of global safety standards would boost domestic demand and exports of agro-based products, thereby generating huge employment opportunities.

The Centre will support the state governments in capacity building and setting up of high quality labs for proper enforcement of food safety standards, Health Minister J P Nadda said. Addressing a conference of food regulator FSSAI, the minister said the adoption of global safety standards would boost domestic demand and exports of agro-based products, thereby generating huge employment opportunities.

"The safety and standard of food products is not only a health issue but its related to economic issue. If we have good safety standards and transparent system and if that is nationally and internationally recognised certainly the economic activity is going to go ahead," Nadda said. The minister said that a decade has passed since the Food Safety and Standards Act 2006 was enacted and it is the right time to take stock of the situation and chalk out future strategies. "We are all for capacity building not only at the national level...We are working to have high quality labs. We are working on to support states (in setting up) high quality laboratories," Nadda said.

Stating that the Foods Safety and Standards Authority of India has transformed into a facilitator from a regulator, Nadda said the government will fine tune the standards to make it more meaningful. "It is (fine tuning) a continuous process.

We will be doing it," the Minister said. He emphasised on more awareness programmes to promote safe food at home, schools, offices and eateries. In an apparent reference to Maggie controversy, the Minister said there were certain issues last year, some confrontation, some communication gap, but "we have

streamlined those issues".