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E-commerce food firms to come under FSSAI regime

The regulation, if confirmed, will require online food delivery companies like Swiggy, Zomato and Foodpanda to procure licences from FSSAI

The screenshot shows the official website of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). At the top, there is the FSSAI logo and the text 'भारतीय खाद्य संरक्षा एवं मानक प्राधिकरण Food Safety and Standards Authority of India'. Below this, there is a navigation menu with options like 'About FSSAI', 'Legislation', 'Outreach', 'Media Center', 'RTI', 'IPR', and 'States Food Safety'. A central banner features the text 'सुरक्षित आहार, स्वास्थ्य का आधार' and 'Apply Online for Food Analyst Exam 2016' with a large '10@10' graphic celebrating the '10TH ANNIVERSARY 10 NEW INITIATIVES'. A sidebar on the left lists various services like 'Advisories / Orders', 'Notifications', 'WTO - SPS Notifications', 'WTO - TBT Notifications', 'Draft Notifications', 'Notice for Comments', 'Regulatory Compliance', 'Import', 'Product Approval', 'Laboratories', 'Training', and 'Standards'. A right sidebar lists 'FSS Act / Rules / Regulation' with links to various acts and amendments.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has sought comments and suggestions on the draft guidelines from companies operating in the sector.

New Delhi: Any e-commerce company selling food products, or dealing in the food business, will need licences from the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), if the draft guidelines notified on Tuesday are confirmed.

“E-commerce FBOs (food business operators) will have to obtain licence from the Central Licensing Authority for the entire supply chain, i.e. head office/registered office, transportation, storage, distribution, etc,” the food safety regulator said on Tuesday.

The regulation, if confirmed, will require online food delivery companies like Swiggy, Zomato and Foodpanda to procure licences from FSSAI. Swiggy, Zomato and Foodpanda did not immediately respond to *Mint*'s requests for comment on the proposed regulation.

E-commerce entities providing listing or directory services to sellers, restaurants, vendors, importers or manufacturers of food products may not be required to obtain licences.

FSSAI has sought comments and suggestions on the draft guidelines from companies operating in the sector. Final regulations will be notified after FSSAI studies the feedback. The draft guidelines notified on Tuesday are based on a discussion that the regulator held on 18 March.

According to the draft guidelines, all companies in the entire supply chain will have to comply with the Food Safety and Standards Act 2006 to ensure food safety, and all sellers selling food products through online marketplaces will need licences from FSSAI. The regulator also detailed guidelines on consumer complaint redressal and product recalls.
