

## Healthy millet menu in messes, MoD signs pact with food standards body

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NEW DELHI: Now, defence personnel will be served a millet-based menu in messes, canteens and other food outlets in a move to promote the use of millets and healthy eating practices among the armed forces.

With this in mind, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) on Thursday.

The idea is also to ensure the availability of safe and nutritious food for the defence forces.

Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya signed the MoU.

The two also unveiled a book titled 'Healthy Recipes for Defence' to promote the consumption of Shree Anna or millets and its health benefits.

It aims to create awareness about the nutritional benefits of diet diversity and millet-based food products among the personnel, according to a statement issued by the Union Health Ministry.

The MoU was signed by Lt. Gen. Preet Mohinder Singh, Director General (Supplies and Transport) from the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and Inoshi Sharma, Executive Director, FSSAI.

“This collaboration will also ensure training of food handlers and chefs of mess, canteens of the Armed Forces and other food outlets on food safety and hygiene as per the Food Safety and Standards Act 2006,” the statement said.

“It signifies a shared commitment to the health and well-being of the Armed Forces to enable them to remain strong and resilient in their service to the nation,” it added.

The MoU will also encourage the families of the Armed Forces and the community to adopt nutritious diets, make healthy food choices and maintain food safety.

The book, developed by FSSAI, includes a range of millet-based dishes. It will be a valuable resource for different canteens and food outlets under the MoD.

Given the challenging terrains and varied climatic conditions faced by the defence personnel, the significance of variety in diet assumes great importance. Millets are known for their nutritional value and can contribute to a well-balanced and diverse diet, the statement said.

Chief of Defence Staff and Secretary, Department of Military Affairs General Anil Chauhan, Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan, CEO FSSAI G Kamala Vardhana Rao and other senior officials of MoD and health ministry were also present on the occasion.