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Press Release

PM lauds FSSAI's Eat Right India Movement in 'Man Ki Baat': Urges the Nation to Join 'Swasth Bharat Yatra'

New Delhi, 30th December 2018: In the final episode of 'Man Ki Baat' in 2018, PM Narendra Modi applauded FSSAI for spearheading the 'Eat Right India' movement and organizing the 'Swasth Bharat Yatra', a nationwide cycle relay to build awareness on eating right, as part of the 150th birth anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi. Addressing the nation on All India Radio, DD News and DD National through this popular programme, the PM commended FSSAI for stepping beyond its role as regulatory body towards generating public awareness on safe and healthy diets through its unique campaigns.

The '*Eat Right India*' movement was launched this year in July to engage, excite and enable citizens to improve their health and wellbeing by adopting safe and healthy diets. Given that 6 out of the 10 risk factors for the burden of disease in India are related to food, this was a timely intervention to address the alarming rise of obesity and non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and heart diseases, rampant food borne illnesses and widespread micronutrient deficiencies such as anemia in the country. The PM also acknowledged in his address that 'nutritious food is critical for good health' and congratulated FSSAI on this initiative.

Led by FSSAI under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the *Eat Right India* movement is a collective and holistic effort of all stakeholders on both the demand and supply-side and rests on two key pillars- '*Eating Safe*' and '*Eating Healthy*'. On the demand side, this movement focuses on empowering citizens to make the right food choices. On the supply side, it nudges food businesses to reformulate their products, provide better nutritional information to consumers and make investments in healthy food as responsible food businesses. It is focused on preventive healthcare as per the National Health Policy 2017 and is aligned with the Government's flagship programmes such as the Ayushman Bharat Yojana, POSHAN Abhiyaan, Anaemia Mukt Bharat and Swachh Bharat Mission.

The 'Swasth Bharat Yatra', a massive outreach initiative of the Eat Right India movement, was kicked-off on 16th October, World Food Day, as a humble tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary. Inspired by the Mahatma's countless *yatras* to unite the nation towards one goal- freedom from colonial rule- this '*cycle yatra*' is taking the message of 'eating right' to the grassroots level to free India from food-related diseases. The pan-India relay cyclothon was flagged off from six different locations in the country- Leh, Panaji, Thiruvananthapuram, Puducherry, Ranchi and Agartala. A total of 150 volunteer cyclists, along with a convoy of 'Eat Right Mobile Unit' and 'Food Safety on Wheels', a mobile food testing van, started cycling on six tracks towards New Delhi, stopping at various locations to take part in 'Prabhat Pheris' and 'activation events' to spread awareness and pass on the baton to the next batch of cyclists.

The yatra, in the past 75 days, has witnessed massive mobilization of over 1.5 crore people in 30 states and UTs. It has covered about 15000 kms thus far, with activations at about 1500 locations. More than 5500 'Eat Right Champions' have pledged to take the Eat Right movement forward as local community champions. At all these locations, more than 4.5 lakh people have participated directly in the events representing a wide cross section of society including government institutions,

Civil Society Organisations, Industry Associations, Professional Associations, Food Businesses, schoolchildren, teachers, doctors, professionals, NCC cadets, NSS volunteers, nuns and monks. Many public representatives including Chief Ministers of Tripura and Gujarat, Lt. Governor of Puducherry, Health Ministers of Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Manipur and Kerala and, Union Minister of State for Shipping have supported this movement with their presence at various locations. The yatra is currently at Kalka in Panchkula, Haryana after covering the North region, Kishangarh in Ajmer, Rajasthan, after covering the West region, Manpur in Indore, Madhya Pradesh after covering the South West region, Lalitpur, Fatehpur, Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh after covering the South Central, East and North East regions of the country. The Swasth Bharat Yatra will culminate in New Delhi on Republic Day with Grand Finale on 27th January 2019.

Before concluding his address, the PM urged the nation, particularly children, to join the Swasth Bharat Yatra and participate in the Eat Right India movement to learn about safe and healthy diets. He stressed that education regarding the importance of food is essential right from childhood. 'After all,' he remarked, 'A clean and healthy India will lead to a prosperous India'.

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