The New York Times praises Tukaram Mundhe

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News

Tukaram Mundhe, IAS, Commissioner of Maharashtra's **Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**, appeared on the **front page of The New York Times** under the headline **'In India, a Food Inspector Is a Rock Star'**, with the line 'Diners revere him and owners fear him' (Oct 2026).

Key facts

Who	**Tukaram Mundhe**, **2005-batch IAS** (Maharashtra cadre), nicknamed 'IAS Singham'
Born	3 June 1975, **Beed district, Marathwada**
Action	Surprise raids on restaurants, warehouses and quick-commerce **dark stores**; temporary closures and licence suspensions
His reply	'Good governance is not about making headlines but about making a difference'
Known for	**25 transfers in 21 years** for his strict approach; Solapur Collector, Navi Mumbai and Nagpur Municipal Commissioner

Background

- **Food Safety and Standards Act 2006:** merged eight laws including the **Prevention of Food Adulteration Act 1954**; in force from **5 August 2011**.

- **FSSAI:** set up in **2008** under the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**, New Delhi. **State Food Safety Commissioners** enforce the law. **World Food Safety Day is 7 June**; FSSAI publishes the **State Food Safety Index (SFSI)**.
- **Constitution: Art. 47** (Directive Principle): raising nutrition, living standards and public health is a primary duty of the State; courts have read safe food into the **right to life (Art. 21)**.
- **Marathwada's history:** ruled by the **Nizam of Hyderabad** until 1948; joined India through **Operation Polo (September 1948)**; **17 September is Marathwada Liberation Day**.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu's Food Safety Department promotes **hygiene ratings** for restaurants and **'Eat Right' campus** certification in Chennai and elsewhere. Tamil Nadu leads in nutrition: the **Nutritious Meal Scheme (1982)** and the **Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme in schools (15 September 2022)**.

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