FSSAI sanctions prosecution of Bisleri over an unsafe water sample

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News

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) announced in a social-media post on 22 November 2026 that it had sanctioned prosecution of Bisleri International Pvt Ltd after a sample of 'packaged drinking water (other than mineral water)' was found unsafe. A regulatory sample taken from the company's premises exceeded the prescribed bromate limit and was declared unsafe under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006. On the company's appeal, the sample went to a Referral Food Laboratory, which also declared it unsafe after detecting polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). This is only a sanction to prosecute; no offence has been proved in court. Bisleri was reported as saying that the matter concerns a single batch made at its Goa plant in September 2025, that five of six samples taken there complied and that its products are safe; it said one sample, taken on 30 September 2025, showed bromate of 12 µg/L against the 10 µg/L limit, and that it sent independent test results to FSSAI's Western Regional Office in February 2026. In the same round of action FSSAI also sanctioned prosecution of Vasant Masala, Tit-Bit Foods India, Mimansa Industries and Asha Confectionery, ordered Asha Confectionery to recall its chocolate-filled cookies, and suspended the licences of Urmi Lifesciences LLP and Gaur Ayurvedic Store.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Regulator	FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006)
Company	Bisleri International Pvt Ltd
Announced	22 Nov 2026 – sanction to prosecute
Product	Packaged drinking water (other than mineral water)
First test	Bromate above limit – 'unsafe'
Appeal test	Referral lab: PAHs detected
Company's side	One Sept 2025 batch, Goa plant; 5 of 6 samples complied; one had bromate of 12 µg/L (limit 10)
Status	Only sanction to prosecute; no verdict
Other action	Prosecution: Vasant Masala, Tit-Bit Foods, Mimansa, Asha; Asha cookie recall; 2 licences suspended

Background

- The Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 consolidated earlier food laws; FSSAI is the statutory body under it. To enforce it in the States, each State Government appoints a Commissioner of Food Safety, with Designated Officers and Food Safety Officers at district level.
- Bromate (BrO_3^-) forms mainly when bromide-containing water is disinfected with ozone (ozonation). WHO sets a provisional guideline value of 10 micrograms per litre in drinking water; potassium bromate is classed as 'possibly carcinogenic to humans' (IARC Group 2B).
- Polynuclear (polycyclic) aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) are chemicals formed by the incomplete burning of organic matter such as coal, oil, wood and tobacco; some PAHs, such as benzo(a)pyrene, cause cancer.
- In November 2024 FSSAI placed packaged drinking water and mineral water in the 'High-Risk Food Category', so centrally licensed makers must undergo an annual audit by an FSSAI-recognised third-party agency; this was linked to the removal of mandatory BIS certification for some products. The UN's World Food Safety Day is observed on 7 June (since 2019).

Tamil Nadu link: In Tamil Nadu the Food Safety and Standards Act is enforced by the Food Safety and Drug Administration Department, led by the Commissioner of Food Safety appointed by the State Government; district Designated Officers also inspect packaged-water plants. This story has no direct Tamil Nadu link (the company said the sample relates to its Goa plant).

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) announced in a social-media post on 22 November 2026 that it had sanctioned prosecution of Bisleri International Pvt Ltd after a sample of 'packaged drinking water (other than mineral water)' was found unsafe.

What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Regulator: FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006); Company: Bisleri International Pvt Ltd; Announced: 22 Nov 2026 – sanction to prosecute; Product: Packaged drinking water (other than mineral water).

What is the background to this news?

The Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 consolidated earlier food laws; FSSAI is the statutory body under it. To enforce it in the States, each State Government appoints a Commissioner of Food Safety, with Designated Officers and Food Safety Officers at district level.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. The possibly carcinogenic 'bromate' in drinking water forms mainly during which disinfection method?

A) UV radiation

B) Reverse osmosis

C) Boiling

D) Ozonation

Answer: D – Explanation: Ozonation – bromide in the water reacts with ozone to form bromate. WHO guideline: 10 µg/L; IARC Group 2B.

2. How are 'PAHs' (polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons), detected in the appeal test, mainly formed?

A) Incomplete combustion

B) Nitrogen fixation

C) Photosynthesis

D) Radioactive decay

Answer: A – Explanation: PAHs form when organic matter such as coal, oil, wood or tobacco burns incompletely; some are carcinogenic.

3. In Nov 2024, FSSAI placed packaged drinking and mineral water in which category, making annual third-party audits compulsory?

A) Low-risk category

B) High-risk category

C) Fortified food

D) Proprietary food

Answer: B – Explanation: High-risk food category – annual audit by an FSSAI-recognised third party for central licensees; linked to removal of mandatory BIS certification for some items.

4. Under the FSS Act, 2006, who appoints the Commissioner of Food Safety for a State such as Tamil Nadu?

A) FSSAI Chairperson

B) State Government

C) Union Health Ministry

D) District Collector

Answer: B – Explanation: The State Government (Section 30). In Tamil Nadu the Food Safety and Drug Administration Department, with district Designated Officers, enforces it.

5. On which day is the UN-designated World Food Safety Day observed?

A) 5 June

B) 16 October

C) 7 June

D) 22 March

Answer: C – Explanation: 7 June – declared by the UNGA in 2018, observed since 2019. 5 June is Environment Day; 16 Oct World Food Day; 22 March World Water Day.