



संघ प्रदेश दादरा और नगर हवेली और दमण एवम् दीव प्रशासन/
UT ADMINISTRATION OF
DADRA AND NAGAR HAVELI AND DAMAN & DIU,
सचिव (स्वास्थ्य) का कार्यालय,
सचिवालय, दमण / OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY (HEALTH),
VIDHYUT BHAVAN (SECRETARIAT), KACHIGAM 396 215, DAMAN



No. DO/FSO/DMN/MISC/2026-27/42

Date: 17.08.2026

NOTIFICATION

WHEREAS, the availability of safe and wholesome food is an integral facet of the right to life guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution of India, and Article 47 of the Constitution enjoins upon the State, as a primary duty, the raising of the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health; and the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India has held that there is a paramount duty cast upon the State and its authorities to ensure an appropriate level of protection of human life and health, the same being a fundamental right under Article 21 read with Article 47 of the Constitution;

AND WHEREAS, Section 18(1) of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 (hereinafter referred to as "the Act") sets out the general principles to be followed in the administration thereof, including (a) the achievement of an appropriate level of protection of human life and health and the protection of consumers' interests, including fair practices in all kinds of food trade; (b) risk management taking into account the results of risk assessment; (c) the precautionary principle, permitting provisional risk-management measures where, on an assessment of available information, the possibility of harmful effects on health is identified though scientific uncertainty may persist; and (d) the requirement that such measures be proportionate and no more restrictive of trade than is required to achieve the appropriate level of health protection;

AND WHEREAS, Section 30(2)(a) of the Act empowers the Food Safety Commissioner of the Union Territory, in the interest of public health and for reasons to be recorded in writing, by notification in the Official Gazette, to prohibit the manufacture, storage, distribution or sale of any article of food in the whole of the Union Territory or any area thereof for such period not exceeding one year as may be specified, where there exist reasonable grounds for believing that such article of food is likely to be unsafe or injurious to health;

AND WHEREAS, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, in Swami Achyutanand Tirth & Ors. v. Union of India & Ors., Writ Petition (Civil) No. 159 of 2012, decided on 5th August 2016 [(2016) 9 SCC 699], taking note of the large-scale adulteration of milk and milk products — including the use of refined/vegetable oil as a substitute for milk



fat — directed the Union of India and the State/UT Governments to implement the Act in a more effective manner, including by identifying high-risk areas and high-risk periods, intensifying sampling, ensuring adequate NABL-accredited testing infrastructure, constituting review committees, and creating public awareness under Section 18(1)(f) of the Act; and the said directions cast a continuing obligation upon this authority to take effective preventive measures against the adulteration of milk and milk products in this Union Territory;

AND WHEREAS, the Central Advisory Committee constituted under the Act, in its 48th meeting held on 14th October 2025, while deliberating upon the provisions relating to “Analogue in Dairy Context”, recorded that no quality parameters stand defined for analogue in the dairy context; that in the absence of such standards, analogue paneer is difficult to enforce at field level and is essentially a sub-standard product of its dairy counterpart which only increases deliberate adulteration; that even when packed it is opened and sold in loose form rendering enforcement infeasible; that it provides no nutritional benefit, particularly to vegetarian consumers who depend on paneer as a source of protein; and that the choice between analogue and genuine paneer cannot be left to the discretion of the consumer given the prevailing level of awareness; and the said Committee accordingly opined and recommended that non-standardised and nutritionally non-beneficial dairy analogues such as analogue paneer should not be permitted, and invited the Food Safety Commissioners of all States/UTs to concur and furnish their views thereon;

AND WHEREAS, the State of Maharashtra, vide Order No. COMM/FOOD/ORDER/PANEER/986-2026/7 dated 30th July 2026, issued by the Commissioner, Food and Drug Administration, Maharashtra State, has, on the basis of extensive sampling revealing large-scale non-conformity of paneer sold in that State with the prescribed standards, prohibited the manufacture, storage, distribution and sale of analogue/non-dairy paneer throughout that State for a period of one year, in exercise of powers under Section 30(2)(a) of the Act;

AND WHEREAS, this being a small Union Territory, a substantial proportion of the paneer and dairy-analogue products marketed within its limits are sourced from outside the Union Territory, including from the neighbouring states of Gujarat and Maharashtra, and the Union Territory has a large floating/migrant workforce and seasonal tourist inflow; this Union Territory is, therefore, particularly susceptible to the inflow and sale of non-standardised and potentially adulterated analogue/non-dairy paneer, irrespective of local production volumes, and cannot, consistently with its obligations under the Act, await the accumulation of local sampling data before taking preventive action;



AND WHEREAS, surveillance and enforcement action carried out by the Food Safety Department in this Union Territory has revealed instances of paneer sold in the local market, and used by hotels, restaurants, caterers and sweetmeat sellers, being prepared wholly or partly from vegetable oil/vegetable fat in place of milk fat, without disclosure to consumers, and being sold, offered or served in the guise of genuine paneer;

AND WHEREAS, the legal position of paneer is well-settled: paneer is a standardised food under Regulation 2.1.16 of the Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011, defined as the product obtained from milk (of any variant), with or without added milk solids, by precipitation with permitted acidulants (lactic acid, citric acid, malic acid, vinegar, glucono delta lactone or sour whey) and heating; milk fat is an essential constituent of paneer, and the substitution or addition of vegetable oil, vegetable fat or any non-milk fat is not permitted; and accordingly a product resembling paneer in which milk fat or milk solids are replaced wholly or partly by non-milk constituents is, in law, an “analogue in dairy context” governed by Regulations 2.1.1(3)(f) and 2.1.1(5)(b), which is not paneer and cannot be named, sold or served as “Paneer”; and which is required to declare, in close proximity to the name of the product, the substitution of milk constituents by non-milk constituents — for example, “Contains Vegetable Fat” and “Contains no milk fat” — in the manner prescribed under Regulation 2.1.1(5)(b); and any analogue/non-dairy product offered, sold or served as paneer is misbranded, and where prepared from non-food-grade ingredients or otherwise non-conforming, is unsafe within the meaning of the Act;

AND WHEREAS, the Standard for Chhana and Paneer under Regulation 2.1.16, as amended by the Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Fifth Amendment Regulations, 2019, prescribes three categories of paneer according to milk-fat content — namely Paneer (regular/full-fat), Medium Fat Paneer and Low Fat Paneer — together with their compositional standards and packaging-and-labelling requirements, as set out in the Table below; and in terms of the said Standard, Low Fat and Medium Fat Paneer/Chhana shall be sold in sealed packages only and shall bear the prescribed label declarations, whereas regular (full-fat) Paneer may be sold loose subject to the Act and the Regulations; and no product not conforming to the said Standard — and in particular no analogue/non-dairy paneer — may be named, sold or served as “Paneer”:



STANDARDS, PACKAGING & LABELLING OF PANEER / CHHANA UNDER REGULATION 2.1.16

[FSS (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011, as amended by the Fifth Amendment Regulations, 2019]

Category	Moisture (max.)	Milk Fat (on dry-matter basis)	Sale / Packaging	Naming & Label
Paneer / Chhana (regular / full-fat)	65% (Chhana) / 60% (Paneer)	Not less than 50%	May be sold loose or pre-packed	"Paneer" / "Chhana"; general label declarations if pre-packed
Medium Fat Paneer / Chhana	65% (Chhana) / 60% (Paneer)	More than 20% and less than 50%	Sealed package ONLY	"Medium Fat Paneer / Chhana" + prescribed declaration
Low Fat Paneer / Chhana	70% (Chhana and Paneer)	Not more than 20%	Sealed package ONLY	"Low Fat Paneer / Chhana" + prescribed declaration

AND WHEREAS, it has further been observed that hotels, restaurants, caterers, eateries and other food service establishments in this Union Territory are, in a number of instances, using analogue/non-dairy paneer in place of genuine paneer in dishes and preparations served to consumers, without disclosing the same on menu cards, invoices or display boards, thereby causing such preparations to be understood as containing genuine dairy paneer and misleading consumers and depriving them of an informed choice, in contravention of the Act and the Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations, 2020; and that such loose paneer is frequently transported, stored and sold without original packaging, mandatory label declarations, invoices, batch identification details or adequate traceability documents, thereby frustrating effective source identification and posing a significant risk to public health;

AND WHEREAS, upon consideration of the material placed before me — including the reports of the Central Advisory Committee, the Order of the State of Maharashtra dated 30th July 2026, the Order of the State of Gujarat dated 5th August 2026, the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, the local enforcement observations referred to above, the absence of any prescribed quality standards for analogue paneer and the consequent infeasibility of field-level enforcement — I am satisfied that analogue/non-dairy paneer, as a class, being non-standardised, nutritionally non-beneficial, organoleptically indistinguishable from genuine paneer and inherently prone to deliberate adulteration and to being passed off as genuine paneer, presents a risk to human health and to the interests of consumers in this Union Territory; and that this Order is directed only at such non-standardised dairy analogues, for which no quality parameters stand prescribed by the Food Authority, and does not extend to



standardised products such as frozen dessert, processed cheese and mixed fat spread, for which standards stand duly notified; and that, in the interest of public health, a prohibition of the said article of food throughout the Union Territory for a period not exceeding one year, in exercise of the powers under Section 30(2)(a) of the Act, is necessary and proportionate.

NOW, THEREFORE, in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 30(2)(a) read with Sections 18 and 29 of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and all other powers enabling me in this behalf, I, S Asker Ali, Commissioner, Food Safety, Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, hereby issue this Order, which shall have immediate effect and be binding upon all Food Business Operators engaged in the manufacture, storage, distribution (including transport) and sale of paneer and analogue/non-dairy paneer throughout the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, as follows:—

- I. **DEFINITIONS** — For the purpose of this Order, “analogue/non-dairy paneer” shall mean any product resembling paneer in which milk fat or milk solids are replaced wholly or partly by vegetable oil, vegetable fat or other non-milk-derived constituents.
- II. **PROHIBITION OF ANALOGUE / NON-DAIRY PANEER** — The manufacture, processing, preparation, packing, storage, distribution (including transportation), wholesale sale, retail sale, offering or exposing for sale, and sale by any means whatsoever, within the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, of analogue/non-dairy paneer (by whatever name called or described), is hereby prohibited throughout the Union Territory for a period of one year from the date of publication of this Order in the Official Gazette.
- III. **FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS (HOTELS, RESTAURANTS, CATERERS, ETC.)** — No hotel, restaurant, caterer, eatery, cloud kitchen or other food service establishment shall use, prepare, serve, store, stock, sell or keep analogue/non-dairy paneer in any dish, preparation or article of food whatsoever; and the use or service of analogue/non-dairy paneer, including in the guise of genuine paneer, being misleading to consumers and an unfair trade practice within the meaning of Section 24 of the Act, and a contravention of the responsibilities cast upon Food Business Operators under Section 26 of the Act, is hereby prohibited.
- IV. **PANEER — LABELLING COMPLIANCE** — Every Food Business Operator manufacturing, packing, storing, distributing or selling paneer/chhana shall ensure that every package thereof bears all the declarations prescribed under the Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations, 2020, failing which the article shall be liable to be dealt with as misbranded under Section 52 of the Act.



- V. **PENALTIES AND CONSEQUENCES** — Any contravention of this Order shall be punishable under the applicable penal provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 — including Sections 50, 51, 52, 55 and 59 — and shall render the offending article liable to seizure and destruction in accordance with law.

This Order is issued in the interest of protecting public health and ensuring the availability of safe food to consumers of the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu.



[Handwritten Signature]
17.08.2026

**Secretary (Health)
/Commissioner,
Food Safety Department,
UT of DNH and DD**

To,
All the concerned for necessary actions.

Copy to:

- (i) The Director, Medical & Health Services / Nodal Officer, Food Safety Department, UT of DNH & DD
- (ii) District Collectors – Daman, Diu & DNH districts
- (iii) PA to the Hon'ble Administrator, UT of DNH & DD
- (iv) PA to the Advisor to the Administrator, UT of DNH & DD