

10% of bottled water samples fail test

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The common perception of packaged drinking water manufacturers flouting norms has come true. During 2010-11 and 2011-12, at least one in every 10 samples picked up for quality testing failed.

In a written reply in Lok Sabha last week, consumer affairs minister K V Thomas submitted details of samples collected from each state and Union territory.

During 2010-11, 6,648 samples of packaged drinking water were taken and 805 of them failed. Government agencies also issued 543 warning letters to manufacturers for flouting norms. The data shows that at least 30 li-



cences were cancelled.

In Delhi and Noida, 23 of the 190 samples failed and two licences were cancelled. In Maharashtra and Goa, 104 of 729 samples failed. Though state governments issue permission for setting up water bottling plants, Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) grants product licence. The agency has the mandate to ensure

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quality of both packaged drinking water and packaged mineral water.

According to government data, during 2011-12 out of 7,732 samples of packaged drinking water, 720 failed the test. In Delhi and Noida, around 20% of samples were found flouting norms. Similarly, in Maharashtra and Goa, 123 of 989 samples failed

the test. During the period, 547 warning letters were issued to manufacturers and 32 licences were cancelled or not renewed. However, there was some correction during the last financial year with 9% of samples failing tests. In fact, almost every state reported better results as the number of failed samples was only 607 out of 7,456. But the action taken for flouting norms was higher with 190 licences getting cancelled.

“We all feel that packaged drinking water is safe, which is not true. While picking samples, government must ensure that all companies having BIS certification are covered,” said Dilip Fouzdar, a water resource management professional.