

UP Govt Bans Sale Of Halal Certified Products : What Is The Controversy

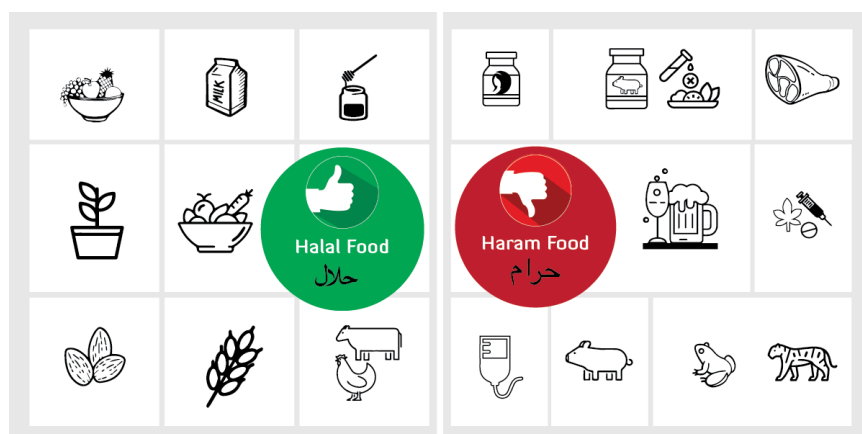
Why In News

- Indian state of **Uttar Pradesh** has issued a statewide prohibition on halal-certified products.
- This decision followed the registration of a case by Lucknow Police against certain organisations for allegedly providing counterfeit certificates to retailers.
- The official order declared an **immediate ban on the production**, storage, distribution, and sale of halal-certified edible items in the state.



What Is Halal

- Halal is an **Arabic word meaning "permissible"**. Within the sphere of the Islamic belief system, it is a **binary opposite to "haram"**, which means "forbidden".
- For Muslims, Halal mostly relates to **dietary habits**, especially the processing of meat.



- Several kinds of **cosmetics and medicines** are also considered prohibited because they contain by-products of animals Muslims are barred from consumption.
- Pork is the only meat specifically forbidden by the Quran. But for an animal meat to pass the halal check, it also needs to be **processed and stored in accordance with Islamic law**.
- The criteria for halal meat includes the manner of the animal's death. **Vegetarian dishes** are generally considered halal unless they contain alcohol. The prohibition extends to cosmetics and medicines, many of which contain animal by-products.

What Is The Case

- The **case registered by Lucknow Police** targeted Halal India Private Limited (Chennai), Jamiat Ullema Hind Halal Trust (New Delhi), Halal Council of India (Mumbai), and Jamiat Ullema (Mumbai).
- The complaint, **filed by one Shailendra Kumar Sharma**, alleged a potential large-scale conspiracy to diminish the sales of non-halal-certified products.



- The complainant also contended that halal certificates are being issued for **vegetarian products**, where such **certification is unnecessary**.
- It added that this indicated a criminal conspiracy targeting a specific community and its products.
- The UP government's order says halal certification of food products is a parallel system that creates confusion and is not tenable under Section 89 of Food Law **Food Safety and Standards Act**, the order said. **"The right to decide the quality of food items lies only with the authorities and institutions given in Section 29**

of the said Act, who check the relevant standards as per the provisions of the Act", it added.



- It said that certain medicines, medical devices, and cosmetic products are reported to feature the Halal certificate on their packaging or labelling when there are "no provisions for marking Halal certification on labels in the government rules related to drugs, medical devices, and cosmetics"



Halal Pharmaceuticals

- Furthermore, it is alleged that the **promotion of halal certification is being** used as a guise for propaganda within a specific section of society, discouraging the use of products lacking a halal certificate.
- Expressing worry about **disproportionate profits** being amassed by individuals involved in this scheme, the complaint by Kumar suggested the possibility of funds being channeled towards supporting terrorist organisations and anti-nationals.



What Is The Controversy

- The controversy is centered around two aspects — one is the legality of the certificate-issuing authority and the other is the allegation of targeting people of a particular community.

Halal Certified



- On one hand, several **Muslim groups** have been strongly endorsing that people from the community should only consume halal-certified products – even with medicines.
- On the other hand, **several Hindu groups** have been strongly boycotting halal-certified products.



- While a certain section of them has been asking **Hindus to not consume halal-certified products**, another section has been asking to do away with the certification process.

Reply By Halal Certification Bodies

- Terming the **complaint "baseless"**, **Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind Halal Trust** in a statement said that it will take appropriate legal measures.



- "We adhere to government regulations, as emphasised in the **Ministry of Commerce & Industry notification**, requiring all halal certification bodies to be registered by NABCB (National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies under Quality Council of India), a milestone that Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind Halal Trust has achieved,"

Halal Certification

- **Department of Halal Certification EU**, an **Irish certification body** working in Europe, says the animal must be alive at the time of slaughter to qualify as halal meat.



- India **does not have a mandatory halal certification system** and no specific labelling requirements for halal food products imported into India.
- In India, various halal-certifying agencies provide companies, products or food establishments halal certification. And, the **National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB)** provides accreditation to these “Halal Certification Bodies” under **Quality Council of India**.

