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US senator alleges violation by Indian shrimp industry, urges trade body to take action

'Indian shrimp relies on forced labour and is pumped full of illegal antibiotics. The USTR needs to act to ensure American consumers are not put in harm's way,' the senator said.

PTI

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Representative image of shrimps. Credit: Reuters Photo

Washington: An American Senator has sought action from the US Trade Representative alleging that the shrimp imported from India relies on forced labour and is 'pumped full of illegal antibiotics'.

Senator Bill Cassidy's request on Wednesday followed the release of an Outlaw Ocean Project's whistleblower report on the safety of shrimp imported from India into the US.

"Indian shrimp relies on forced labour and is pumped full of illegal antibiotics. The USTR needs to act to ensure American consumers are not put in harm's way," the senator said.

"Today's report outlining the abuses at Choice Canning Company's shrimp processing factory in India makes clear why Indian shrimp does not belong on the shelf alongside Louisiana shrimp," said Cassidy, who represents Louisiana in the US Senate.

Last year, Cassidy had introduced two bills to protect Louisiana shrimp against India's shrimp and its export into US markets.

The Prioritising Offensive Agricultural Disputes and Enforcement Act and the India Shrimp Tariff Act are aimed at protecting the Louisiana agricultural industry.

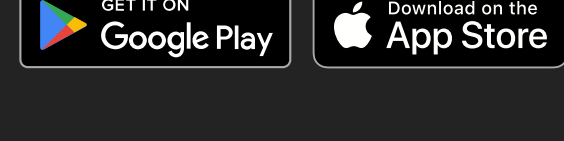
According to the report, Joshua Farinella, an American, returned to the US after quitting his job with a company in Andhra Pradesh's Amalapuram and filed whistleblower complaints to several federal agencies.

These written complaints allege a variety of food safety and labour violations, including that his company knowingly and illegally exported shrimp that had tested positive for antibiotics to major American brands in violation of federal law.

Choice Canning has also strongly denied that it has ever shipped shrimp containing antibiotics to the US, the report said.

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