

KERALA

Janakeeya hotel may reduce hunger rush



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30,000 people now availing themselves of food daily at community kitchens

The first janakeeya restaurant in the city, for providing affordable food for the public, will be opened near Overbridge on Tuesday. A joint initiative of the city Corporation and the Kudumbashree mission, the restaurants are also aimed at cutting down the number of meal packets from community kitchens, which have become a financial burden for the civic body.

In the State Budget earlier this year, Finance Minister T.M. Thomas Isaac had proposed the opening of 1,000 such restaurants across the State by Onam, following the model first implemented in Alappuzha. In the past few days, 215 such restaurants have been opened across the State, with meal parcels priced at ₹25.

Noon meals

Initially, only noon meals will be available through the restaurant. The meal parcels will be priced at ₹20, while for home delivery the cost is ₹25.

The community kitchens have been a major financial burden for the Corporation, as the number of people calling up for food has been increasing with every passing day. By Monday, the total number of food packets per day had increased to 90,000. Though quite a few individuals and institutions have been donating in cash and kind, much of the ₹1.75 crore advanced by the Corporation till now for COVID-19 related activities have been used up. Up to 80% of this is estimated to be for community kitchens.

“We certainly have to cut down on the number of people depending on the community kitchens. Out of the around 30,000 people now ordering food three times a day, only around 10,000 are the ones with real need of it. These are the indigent, those in relief camps or the bed-ridden. We are also providing food for security staff in apartments, which could be provided by the families living there. Except those in real need of it, the rest of them will be asked to shift to Janakeeya restaurants, as the food is very affordable. We will be holding a meeting of ward-level volunteers, ASHA workers and people’s representatives to weed out the undeserving from the community kitchen list,” says a Corporation health official.

Janakeeya restaurant numbers for placing food order 7034001843, 7012285498.

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