

Govt. hubs to deliver safe street food

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

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Clusters of eateries run by licensed, medically fit street vendors

Promising clean and safe food to tourists and motorists, the **Kerala** government is setting up Clean Street-Food Hubs in popular destinations in the State.

The first of the hubs will come on the Alappuzha beach. Similar facilities are planned at Shanghumughom in Thiruvananthapuram district, Fort Kochi, Naalumanikkattu in Kottayam district, Kozhikode beach, and Munnar, according to the State Food Safety Commissionerate.

Planned as clusters of eateries run by licensed, medically fit street vendors trained in hygienic preparation of food, the hubs are being established as suggested by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), officials says.

Proper waste disposal

Clean Street-Food Hubs are essentially more hygienic versions of the 'thattukada', as roadside eateries are popularly known across Kerala. The motto is clean and safe food. Food handlers will undergo medical fitness tests and the eateries will be issued licence. The water used for preparation of food will be tested at regular intervals. There will also be proper facilities for waste disposal.

"Roadside eateries on wheel carts and vendor stalls are common across Kerala. But hygiene and food safety are recurring issues with these food business operators (FBO). For instance, the source of the water used by them is largely unknown. Clean Street-

Food Hubs are model facilities that will encourage others to follow suit,” an official of the Food Safety Commissionerate said.

Proposal cleared

The State-level advisory committee of the Department of Food Safety had cleared the proposal for establishing Clean Street-Food Hubs in the State. The committee has also proposed a Model Street Food Hub for Varkala, a popular destination in Thiruvananthapuram district, which would serve as a “potential implementation model” for vendors.