



Office of the District Information & Public Relation Officer
Keonjhar (Odisha)

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PRESS RELEASE

Inclusion of Ragi Ladoo in SC/ST Development Department Hostels of District Keonjhar

- The project for '**Inclusion of Ragi Ladoo in SC/ST Development Department Hostels of District Keonjhar**' was inaugurated by Hon. Chief Guest Dr. Arabinda Kumar Padhee, Principal Secretary, Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment, Government of Odisha in the presence of Collector Keonjhar, CDO Zilla Parishad cum CEO DMF, PA ITDA Keonjhar, PA ITDA Champua and DWO Keonjhar in an event held at the Sanskruti Bhawan, Keonjhar.
- The event was also attended by all the Headmasters/Headmistress of the SSD Schools along with one student representative.
- The Principal Secretary while appreciating the unique initiative of the district Keonjhar explained the audience about different varieties of Millet and its health benefit. He also emphasized on the 'Availability, Accessibility and Affordability' of Millets to ensure its larger coverage and consumption among the larger public sphere.
- Collector Keonjhar informed that the Ragi Ladoo has been introduced with a core objective to improve the nutritional status of students residing in SC/ST Development (SSD) Hostels in the district Keonjhar.
- Ragi Ladoo will be provided as a morning snack to ensure a portion of daily recommended protein and calcium is provided to the children in such a growing age.
- This project will also provide livelihood opportunities to the SHGs engaged in Take Home Ration (THR) units supported by Mission Shakti.
- Under this project, One Ragi Laddu/day to be served to the residents of SSD hostels in addition to the existing Mid-Day Meal (MDM).
- Ragi Laddu Mix to be delivered from THR units to the SSD Hostels and Ladoo's to be prepared by existing cooks of the SSD Hostels.
- This project will start off with one-month pilot in 35 SSD hostels of Sadar block from 29th October 2022 and further it will be expanded to all 334 SSD hostels in the district from December 2022.
- The project will cover around 39,000 students residing in the SSD hostels.

- The project has been approved under DMF Keonjhar with an annual budget provision of INR 1.57 Cr.
- With the launch of this project, Keonjhar becomes the first district in the state to include millets in SSD Hostels.
- Five women progressive millet farmers were felicitated for their performance and provided with the smartphones.
- Along with this, 19 women SHGs engaged in THR units were provided with digital tablets to ensure digital bookkeeping and accounting.
- After inauguration of the event at Sankruti Bhawan, the Hon. Principal Secretary visited Naranpur SSD School where he formally launched Ragi Ladoo and had first ladoo with the students.
- He also interacted with the children and teachers to understand their aspirations and academic progress.
- Earlier, millet initiatives taken up in District Keonjhar under Odisha Millets Mission were appreciated by Niti Aayog and hailed as a unique model in the country with decentralized production, procurement, processing, supply and consumption of millets.

S. S. S.
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