

## ODOP Facilitation Centres in Kerala

ODOP is a central government programme, which was initiated by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries on January 24, 2018. The success of the ODOP initiative in one state inspired the central government to grow it from a state-specific programme to a nationwide initiative. The concept, although simple, is powerful, focussing on selecting one product from each district considered to embody the local culture and capabilities therein. The chosen products then become the centrepiece for development through improved production techniques, value-chain integration and rigorous marketing. By focusing on distinctive products with high growth potential, the program seeks to:

- Strengthen local economies and generate employment,
- Preserve cultural heritage and traditional craftsmanship,
- Promote value addition and market competitiveness, and
- Facilitate access to national and international markets.

## ODOP in Kerala

Kerala has always been synonymous with unique, high-quality products ranging from spices and coir to handloom, handicrafts, and processed food items. In alignment with the national ODOP framework, the Government of Kerala has identified one product from each of the 14 districts, mapping the ecosystem of producers, processors, artisans, and entrepreneurs.

The Directorate of Industries and Commerce (DIC) has played a central role in institutionalizing the ODOP ecosystem in the State. District Industries Centres (DICs) and Business Facilitation Centres (BFCs) have been functioning as front-line support systems for entrepreneurs across districts and taluks. These Centres provide handholding support to enterprises in business planning, regulatory clearances, technology adoption, financial linkages, and capacity building.

## Expansion of Facilitation Centres into ODOP Centres

To strengthen ODOP implementation, the Government issued Circular No. DIC/6617/2024-CW1, dated 29-01-2025, expanding the scope of District Facilitation Centres into ODOP Facilitation Centres. These Centres function as dedicated support hubs for ODOP entrepreneurs, ensuring product-specific promotion, market linkages, and policy convergence.

The ODOP Facilitation Centres serve as integrated nodal agencies, guiding entrepreneurs through the entire business life cycle:

- From raw material sourcing, production, and value addition,
- To branding, packaging, domestic marketing, and international exports.

This expanded mandate reflects Kerala's commitment to leveraging its distinctive district products for both domestic prosperity and global competitiveness.

## Key Functions of ODOP Facilitation Centres

The ODOP Facilitation Centres provide holistic support to ODOP stakeholders through the following functions:

### 1. Business Cycle Support

- Raw material procurement through farmer-producer organizations, cooperatives, and MSMEs.
- Assistance in technology adoption, quality certification, and compliance management.
- Advisory on domestic and international marketing, logistics, and export procedures.

### 2. Promotion, Branding, and Packaging (PBP) for International Markets

- Facilitation of participation in domestic and international trade fairs, expos, and B2B meetings.
- Branding and storytelling of ODOP products, including support for GI tagging and global positioning.
- Technical guidance on packaging standards, eco-labelling, barcoding, and sustainability certifications.
- Market intelligence on global demand, trade regulations, and emerging opportunities.

### 3. Forward and Backward Linkages (ODOP-Specific)

- Backward Linkages: Collaboration with local farmers, artisans, research institutes, and input suppliers for reliable and cost-effective sourcing.
- Forward Linkages: Market access facilitation through export houses, retail chains, e-commerce platforms, and international buyers.

### 4. Capacity Building & Knowledge Dissemination

- Training programs for ODOP stakeholders on export readiness, digital commerce, packaging innovations, and financial literacy.
- Information dissemination on government schemes, credit support, and subsidy programs relevant to ODOP enterprises.

### 5. Sustainability and Inclusivity

- Encouraging eco-friendly practices in production and packaging.
- Mainstreaming women entrepreneurs, traditional artisans, and youth innovators into the ODOP ecosystem.