

UP's all-veg One District, One Cuisine menu makes a sweet cut

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Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh govt's One District One Cuisine makes a sweet initiative, literally.

Over 45% of the delicacies on the all-vegetarian ODOC list prepared by govt are sweets of some kind. The list was approved by the state cabinet earlier this week.

Among the pride of place are Agra's *petha*, Mathura's *peda*, Meerut's *gajak*, Lucknow's *rewari* and *makhan malai*, Varanasi's *tiranga barfi*, and regionally popular Ayodhya's *khurchan peda* and *jalebi*, Barabanki's *chandrakala*, Banda's *sohan halwa*, Shravasti's *imarti* and Jalaun's *gujhiya*.

Sought-after sweets in small towns such as Baghpat's *ghewar*, Lalitpur's *do-dh ka halwa*, and Kushinagar's *lal khurma* also figure in the list. Jaggery made in different districts of western UP, too, also make the cut.

While some sweets such as *peda* appear to be repeated, officials who finalised the list said each entry represents a different variety. Household desserts like *gul-gula* and *thekua* have been assigned to Azamgarh and Ballia, respectively.

Street snacks form the next big chunk on the list, including *samosa* from several districts and *chaat*.

The *samosa* districts are Prayagraj, Kanpur Nagar, Gorakhpur, Varanasi and Jhansi, whereas districts famous for mouth-watering *chaat* include Lucknow, Varanasi, Prayagraj, Kanpur Nagar, Kasganj (*moth ki chaat* variant) and Gorakhpur.

Some unique snack entries include *dal bafla* of Jhansi, Hardoi's *aloo puri*, Ghaziabad's *soya chaap*, Bu-

TASTE OF UP

AGRA *Petha, namkeen, gajak, paratha*

MATHURA *Peda, chhappan bhog, makhan mishri, rabri*

AYODHYA *Kachori, tikkiya, peda, kulhad dahi-jalebi*

BAREILLY *Sevaiyan, barfi, chhole-bhature, chaat*

GORAKHPUR *Litti-chokha, garlic chhole samosa, barfi*

JHANSI *Dal bafla, balushahi*

KANPUR *Samosa, laddu, malai makhan (malaiyo)*



LUCKNOW *Rewari, mango products, chaat, malai makhan*

RAE BARELI *Spices*

MEERUT *Rewari, gajak, nankhatai*

landshahr's *kachori*, Bha-dohi's *dal peetha*, Fatehpur's *bedmi puri* and Kasganj's *moong dalma*.

Joint commissioner, Directorate of Industries and Enterprises Promotion, Sunil Kumar, said a lot of hard work has gone into developing the list.

"Entries were largely sent by our district udyog kendras with the idea of scalability and economic potential in mind. In some cases, district magistrates sent the entries after consultation with local universities and stakeholders. We have tried to keep the popularity of the food, its business potential and history in mind," he said.

He cited the example of *tiranga barfi*, which was made by sweet makers of Varanasi to celebrate India's Independence in 1947. The list also contains *habs-hi halwa*, a sweet loved and patronised by Rampur nawabs. Made of wheat flour, this rich *halwa* is associated with the Nawab's visit to an African country where he was served this delicacy.

Asked why the list has only vegetarian delicacies when some cities, including

Lucknow, are famous for their non-vegetarian food Kumar said, "This is the beginning of an effort to create jobs and empower local businesses. This is an enabling list, which means it can be updated as and when a need is felt."

The ODOC scheme was launched on UP Diwas (Jan 24) this year. Officials said the mapping is expected to serve as a reference for future policy interventions, including skill development, food processing and cluster-based support for local producers, and added that govt is working on integrating ODOC with existing schemes on micro-enterprises and rural livelihoods, with focus on improving supply chains and market access.

Plans include developing packaging standards, encouraging value addition and linking producers with organised retail and e-commerce platforms. By formalising these food traditions into identifiable products, the state aims to enhance consistency, ensure quality control and create scalable opportunities for small vendors and self-help groups across districts.