

Course in soap-making at Swadeshi Festival

Author: Express News Service

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The Swadeshi festival will be organised by Gandhi Centre for Rural Development (GCRD) at K P Madhavan Nair Memorial Auditorium at Gandhi Bhavan, Kacheripady, on Saturday. The festival is based on the Gandhian concept of eradicating poverty through self-empowerment and economic regeneration of the common people.

Excise Minister K Babu will inaugurate the function and and Dominic Presentation MLA will preside over it. The 13-day programme will host a set of training courses in making consumer products. The courses, spread over two to three days, will be held from 10 a.m to 5 p.m. Nominal fees will be charged for the materials required for the programme.

The programmes include courses in soap making, jewellery making and manufacture of products such as candles, shampoos and fairness oil. There will be training courses in food processing to enable the participants to make wine, pickles, jams, halwa and snacks.

On the October 29, V D Satheesan MLA will be present at the function held to promote the anti-plastic campaign in the city. This will coincide with the two-day bag-making course for making a variety of paper and cloth bags.

The Swadeshi movement is the direct outcome of the activities initiated by the Centre for Gandhian Studies of University of Kerala under the directorship of Dr Jacob Pulicken. The festival is open to all and is aimed at helping the weaker sections of society to rise above their hardships by equipping them with necessary skills.

"We give the participants a three-tier experience, first with the theoretical background of making the product, then the practical application of this knowledge to improve product quality and finally a chance to market and sell the product to help build their confidence."

The programme, a brainchild of Dr Jacob, is conducted in all the districts of Kerala, twice every year and aims to reach out to a heterogeneous group rather than a specific section of society. At least 30 per cent of the participants have gone on to make a livelihood with the knowledge and exposure gained from the programme and the remaining majority prefer to make the products for themselves.