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# **NOURISHING HOPE: OPERATION SULAIMANI'S MISSION TO FEED THE HUNGRY**

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## ***ABSTRACT:***

*Sulaimani" is a transformative initiative in Kozhikode, embodying the ethos of compassionate administration. Rooted in the principle of "Food with Dignity," it navigates the delicate intersection of charity and respect, ensuring the less fortunate access food while preserving their privacy. Named after the famed Malabar drink, Sulaimani operates as a crowdsourced system, enabling contributions to a centralized fund that is then distributed through reimbursed coupons, intricately tying entitlement to hunger.*

*Implemented by the District Administration and the Kerala Hotel and Restaurants Association, led by District Collector Prasanth Nair IAS, Sulaimani engages diverse contributors, including students from institutions like IIM and NI. The collaborative effort encompasses over 125 city restaurants and key community stakeholders. Food coupons, available at strategic locations, are redeemed at participating establishments, with around 1000 individuals daily benefiting during the introductory stage.*

*Financial sustainability is achieved through capped meal costs sponsored by donation box contributions, collected anonymously throughout the city. Inspired by the movie "Ustaad Hotel," the program has provided over 10,000 meals, feeding 9000+ people in a year. Sulaimani ensures the right to food for every resident of Kozhikode, reflecting the community's commitment to eradicating hunger. The 100% volunteer-driven initiative extends its impact through the "Compassionate Kozhikode" website, fostering broader public participation and solidarity.*

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Before delving into this food distribution project, it is important to understand the history of food distribution, which has deep roots in humanitarian efforts. In ancient times, communities and rulers would organize food distribution to assist those affected by natural disasters, wars, and famines. After the Second World War, international organizations like the United Nations were established, which played a crucial role in coordinating food distribution efforts.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was created to address global food challenges and promote sustainable agriculture. In the mid-20th century, the Green Revolution introduced technological advancements in agriculture, leading to increased food production.

In the latter half of the 20th century, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) became increasingly involved in food distribution and humanitarian efforts. Organizations like Oxfam, CARE, and Médecins Sans Frontières played pivotal roles in responding to global crises.

In the 21st century, food distribution programs face new challenges such as climate change, population growth, and geopolitical issues. Innovations in technology, logistics, and data analysis are being employed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of these programs.

## **OPERATION SULAIMANI-THE HUNGER RELIEF**

### **INITIATIVE:**

Operation Sulaimani is a free food program in the city of Kozhikode, India. The program was introduced by the district administration and the Kerala Hotel and Restaurants Association. The goal of the program is to provide food to those who cannot afford it, and to avoid food waste. The program ensures that no one in Kozhikode is denied food because they are empty-handed or have lost their wallet. There are over 25 "Sulaimani" distribution centers in 14 zones of the Kozhikode district.

The program was introduced by Prasanth Nair, the District Collector of Kozhikode. Nair envisioned the program as a community-owned and community-driven initiative.

The program has fed over 9,000 people in the last year. And it has over 40,000 beneficiaries.

## **ROOTS OF THE HUNGER:**

A project has been established with a focus on compassionate administration and day-to-day life, aiming to share fortune with those less fortunate. The guiding principle is "Food with Dignity," emphasizing the importance of preserving dignity and ensuring privacy while providing individuals with access to food.

## **MISSION OBJECTIVES:**

The primary goal of the program is to bridge the gap between those willing to contribute and the less fortunate who rely on others for meals. The project is named "Sulaimani," after the popular Malabar drink known for its blend of black tea and cardamom. It operates as a crowdsourcing system, allowing anyone to contribute to a centralized accounting system. Money is then distributed through reimbursed coupons from various outlets to individuals facing hunger, grounded in the principle that entitlement is tied to hunger.

## **IMPLEMENTATION:**

Implemented in the city of Kozhikode (Calicut) by the District Administration and the Kerala Hotel and Restaurants Association, under the leadership of Prasanth Nair IAS, the District Collector of Kozhikode, the project involves students from various institutions such as IIM, NI, and engineering and medical students in Calicut, all contributing to its establishment.

## **DELEGATION:**

The collaborative effort involves the Collector's office, the Kerala State Hotel and Restaurants Association, over 125 city restaurants, and the people of Kozhikode. The district administration provides food coupons, which can be redeemed at registered member hotels of "Operation Sulaimani." Coupons are available at specific locations, including bus and railway stations, the collectorate, press club, newspapers, local villages, and taluk offices.

## **PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION:**

These coupons can be exchanged for meals at partner restaurants, with around 1000 people receiving free food daily during the introductory stage, involving more than 25 volunteer hotels in 14 zones of Kozhikode district. The cost of the meals is capped through sponsorship. The whereabouts of the people who seize the coupons shall be maintained in a register book so as to

avoid the repetitive approach in spite of poor economic conditions as the poor people in the district are targeted, said Prasanth Nair. The district collector regularly updates the list of participating hotels

## **FUNDING AND INSPIRATION:**

Funds for the program are collected through donation boxes placed throughout the city, allowing people to make anonymous contributions. This money is used to reimburse the meal coupons collected at restaurants, with none of it allocated to administrative costs. The program draws inspiration from the Anjali Menon movie "Ustaad Hotel."

The program ensures that no one in Kozhikode is denied food, providing a right to food without any questioning or delays. Introduced to address poverty in the district, it reflects the commitment of the people of Kozhikode to ensure no one goes hungry in their city. The program has already donated over 10,000 meals, feeding more than 9000 people in the past year. Additionally, a website called "Compassionate Kozhikode" has been launched, allowing the general public to participate in a 100% volunteer-driven initiative. and it is a larger umbrella project.

Operation Sulaimani was listed for a global award. The award ceremony was hosted by World Travel Market during World Responsible Tourism Day. The program is in its second phase and is inviting applications from Senior Project Leads to support the strategy.

## **CHALLENGES FACED BY OPERATION SULAIMANI:**

“Despite the success of this program in helping people, it has encountered some obstacles. Such as,

- Limited number of beneficiaries
- No government funding
- No big kitchens to feed the hungry
- No massive funds sought in the name of hunger eradication
- Food provided to those only who have the coupons.

There were solutions to this program, which include

- Utilizing existing systems,
- Avoiding overhead expenses,

- Minimizing food waste, and
- Ensuring food safety.

### **SIMILAR PROGRAMS:**

- Akshaya patram: A program in Malappuram municipality where people can place cooked food for the needy in a public refrigerator.
- This operation was modelled on a system existing in western countries such as “Food-on-the-wall and coffee-on-the-wall”, where you pay for an extra meal or coffee.

### **RELATING IT TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE LAW:**

- The delegation moves from the collector’s office to over 125 city restaurants through the Kerala State Hotel and Restaurants Association.
- This project is based on the principle of a welfare state, which aims to provide basic resources and assistance programs to individuals and families in need.

### **OTHER PROGRAMS OF PRASANTH NAIR IAS:**

- He has also been a part of major World Bank projects namely, Jalandhini and KSTP.
- Other programs initiated by Prasanth Nair IAS also include ‘Tere Mere Beech Mei’ to handle the management of waste, and ‘Yo Appooppa’ for the improvement of living standards of elderly men and women. Prasanth’s directorial ‘Daivakanam’ bagged a prize in the 71st Cannes Film Festival and he also starred in the film ‘Who’.

### **CRITICISMS:**

- Some critics say that it is not clear how long these donations will continue and whether it is sustainable in the long term and there is some concern about the lack of accountability in the program. It is not clear how the program is monitored, or evaluated and there is no way to ensure that all of the donated money is used to provide for the needy.
- And this program is questioned about its effectiveness whether this operation is reaching enough people and there have been some specific concerns raised about the program like, it provides food only to those having food coupons.

## **NEED FOR THESE PROGRAMS:**

These food distribution programmes play a crucial role by providing immediate relief to the individuals and communities facing food insecurity. By distributing these food it helps people to alleviate hunger and prevent malnutrition.

These food programs serve as emergency response in times of natural disasters, conflicts, or other emergencies, food distribution programs act as a rapid mechanism. They ensure that affected populations receive timely and essential food supplies, addressing the immediate needs of those facing crisis situations.

And such access to nutritious food is fundamental to public health. These programs contribute to improved health outcomes by supplying essential nutrients, reducing the risk of diseases related to malnutrition, and supporting overall well-being.

These Food distribution programs can have positive economic effects by stabilizing communities. When people have access to sufficient and nutritious food, they can participate in the workforce, contribute to economic development, and break the cycle of poverty.

These Programs can maintain environment sustainability. Some food distribution programs focus on promoting sustainable agricultural practices and reducing food waste. By supporting local and sustainable food production, these programs contribute to environmental conservation and long-term food security.

Internationally, food distribution programs often involve collaboration between countries and organizations. Through these efforts, nations can demonstrate solidarity, foster positive diplomatic relations, and address global challenges collectively. So through these programs global cooperation and diplomacy can be maintained.

## **SUGGESTIONS:**

- It is working to secure sustainable funding sources and this program is also developing mechanisms to improve accountability and transparency.
- It is committed to working with other organisations to address the root causes of poverty and hunger.

- And According to me these reimbursed coupons can be used only for having food and no money can be made out of it, so whoever gets it can satisfy their hunger and there would be no chance of misuse of coupons as it is used only for satisfying the stomach.
- And the ways to support this program is by donating money, volunteering your time and spreading the word about the program.
- The program guarantees a right to food without answering any questions or long delays.

## CONCLUSION:

Understanding the historical context of food distribution programs is essential for appreciating the progress made and identifying areas where further improvements are needed. As the world continues to evolve, these programs will play a vital role in addressing the dynamic challenges of food security on a global scale. In conclusion, a comprehensive food distribution programme is not merely about providing sustenance; it is a powerful instrument for social change and community development. As we move forward, it is imperative that societies around the world prioritize and invest in such programmes to build a more resilient, compassionate, and equitable future for all.

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