

McDonald's franchisee Hardcastle plans to add 25-30 outlets this year

Will invest ₹100 cr for the launch

OUR BUREAU

Chennai, February 15

McDonald's West and South India's master franchisee Hardcastle Restaurants Pvt Ltd will add 25-30 outlets this year, which will be a combination of regular McDonald outlets and the high-end 'Experience of the Future' restaurant.

An investment of ₹100 crore will go into launching new outlets in the West and South and refurbishing existing ones. Seema Arora Nambiar, Senior Vice President - Strategy, Innovation & Capability, told *BusinessLine* that the company is evaluating more cities for opening 'Ex-

perience of the Future' outlets.

There are currently 10 'Experience of the Future' outlets, which are heavy on technology with service and looks of international standards - five each in Bengaluru and Mumbai. The ₹764-crore Westlife Enterprises, that owns Hardcastle Restaurants, has 271 outlets, with 109 in the South.

Nutritious products

The franchisee is also focusing on bringing out wholesome and nutritious products with local flavours and ingredients for the health-conscious consumers. The company's product development team works with its supply chain providers for innovative

products for the Indian market.

It launched 'Rice Fiesta', which combines ingredients like Basmati rice, Indian spices and vegetables with international flavours. Currently the product is available only in 16 McDonald's outlets in Chennai.

Rice meal

There are plans to launch it across the South and West in the coming years. Nambiar said: "We are still working on perfecting the flavour of the rice meal before rolling it out to other markets."

The rice meal was piloted in Bengaluru, Chennai, Pune and Mumbai for the past two years before it was launched officially in Chennai last month.