

Now, dial a priest for the pooja at home

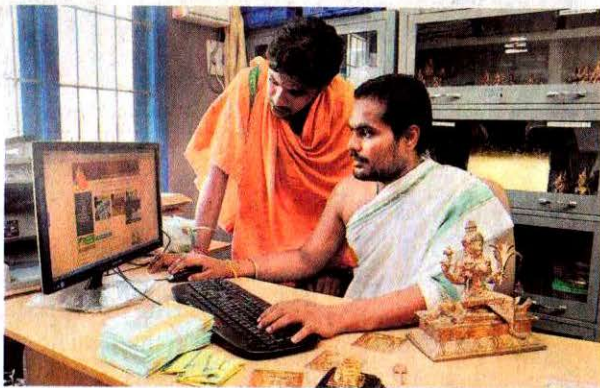
Astro Ved also offers the service through a website, at Rs. 500 - Rs. 22,000

Vivek Narayanan

CHENNAI: Pizzas and call taxis aren't the only things that you can order over the phone and get delivered at your doorstep now — priests too are just a call away.

Gone are the days when one had to scout temples or consult friends for getting a priest to perform rituals at home. An organisation called Astro Ved offers the services of a priest through the website www.priestservices.com. People can also dial a priest by calling their customer care numbers: 9500095649/9600007573/9677299388.

"We started the service two years ago. There are six priests with us as of now and



OFFERINGS ONLINE: *The organisation also conducts poojas in other States through their priest network*

— PHOTO: K. PICHUMANI

we receive at least ten calls a day asking for a priest to perform rituals such as housewarming, birth ceremony

and ancestral rituals, among others," says Ramu Karnan, assistant general manager of the organisation.

Astrology teams also offer the service of preparing horoscopes once a customer provides their birth details, and suggest rituals to solve their problems. "People can also customise their poojas according to their need. But we do not compromise on the schedule or the products that are needed," S. Prema Raja, the chief priest, explains.

The service is priced from Rs. 500 to Rs. 22,000 and above. "The cost varies according to the venue of the pooja. Everything, right from bricks to *prasadam*, is arranged by us. We also click pictures of the function for the customer. We take feedback from them a couple of days after the function," says

Mr. Ramu Karnan.

Thw Organisation also conducts poojas in other States through their priest network. "There is a huge demand in Andhra Pradesh and Bangalore. We also train priests who left their occupation due to lack of income. There were few in kumbakonam who became drivers. Now they are employed with us," says Mr. Prema Raja.

We recruit people who have good knowledge. We ensure that the customer is satisfied. There are also plans to come out with a mobile application," says Mr. Ramu Karnan.