

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-32
ANSWERED ON- 07/12/2022

CHILDREN GETTING FOOD UNDER THE MID-DAY MEAL SCHEME

32. SHRI NARESH BANSAL:

Will the Minister of *Education* be pleased to state:

- (a) whether children are getting food under the Mid-Day Meal Scheme and what impact it has shown on the physical development of children who are dependent on it across the country;
- (b) the steps taken to ensure the nutrition of children consuming Mid-Day Meal, State-wise and action taken where low quality food is being provided;
- (c) whether such families have been identified, district wise in different States whose children study in schools and get food and whether they were provided any additional food grains for nourishment of children; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(SMT. ANNPURNA DEVI)

(a) & (b): Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) Scheme is one of the foremost rights based Centrally Sponsored Schemes under which all children who attend school (categories enumerated in part c and d) are provided one hot cooked meal. NITI AAYOG has conducted an evaluation of the Scheme through independent third-party agency in 2019-20 and one of its findings is that nutritional level among students availing mid-day meal in schools is reported to have improved as attributed by Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey (2016-2018). As per an evaluation under the leadership of National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) conducted in 2017-18, 96% teachers mentioned that mid day meal improved the nutritional status of the school children.

The Government of India has issued guidelines on quality, safety and hygiene to ensure serving good quality of meal. These guidelines, inter-alia, provide for instructions to schools to procure Agmark quality and branded items for preparation of meals, tasting of meals by 2-3 adult members of School Management Committee including at least one teacher before serving to children and to put in place a system of testing of food samples by accredited laboratories. Further, the MDM Rules, 2015 provide for mandatory testing of food samples by Government recognized laboratories to ensure that the meals meet nutritional standards and quality.

(c) & (d): PM POSHAN Scheme is implemented uniformly across the country and covers all the eligible children studying in Bal Vatika and Classes I-VIII in Government and Government-Aided Schools. As per the provisions of National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013, children studying in classes I-VIII or within the age group of 6-14 years are entitled to one mid day meal free of charge, every day except on school holidays, in all schools run by local bodies, Government and Government aided schools so as to meet nutritional standards specified in the Act. Accordingly, one hot cooked meal is provided to eligible children on all working school days under the Scheme. The following nutritional content is prescribed in the Scheme.

Components	Primary	Upper Primary
Calories	450 Cal	700 Cal
Protein	12 gms.	20 gms.

The Scheme is a centrally sponsored scheme implemented in partnership with the States and UTs. The overall responsibilities for providing cooked and nutritious mid-day meal to the eligible children lies with the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations in accordance with the Guidelines laid down by the Central Government. The States and UTs fix their menu according to their local needs, in order to meet the nutritional contents prescribed under NFSA, 2013 Act. Some States and UTs also provide additional items such as milk, fruits etc. to children from their own resources.
