

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2671
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.08.2023

DIVERSION OF FUNDS OF PM POSHAN SCHEME

2671 SHRI KOTHA PRABHAKAR REDDY:

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there are reports of diversion of funds from PM POSHAN scheme in the elections held in the State in the recent past and if so, the details of funds diverted therefrom so far, State-wise;
- (b) whether the Government has sought reports from several States with regard to the alleged diversion of PM POSHAN (mid day meal scheme) funds for State elections and if so, the details thereof and the response of States thereto;
- (c) whether it is contrary to the principles of financial management as distinct bank accounts are to be used for distinct purposes and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the corrective steps being taken to stop any kind of diversion of funds in future along with penal action taken thereon?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) to (d) PM POSHAN or the mid-day meal scheme is under the Ministry of Education (MoE). As per information received from MoE, single instance of diversion of funds from PM POSHAN Scheme for purposes distinct from the Scheme in the State of West Bengal was reported to Department of SE&L, Ministry of Education during the year 2023.

As distinct bank accounts are to be used for specified distinct purposes and diversion of funds from one account to another account is contrary to the principles of financial management, the case was referred to the concerned State Government for taking necessary action.

The State Government clarified the matter while denying that there has been any diversion from PM POSHAN funds. However, a detailed examination of the Public Financial Management System (PFMS) in respect of West Bengal for PM POSHAN Scheme has revealed that the balance in SNA account has increased from Rs. 1542.17 crore (on 31.03.2023) to Rs. 4178.28 crore (on 04.07.2023), even when the State Government had certified in January, 2022 that entire unspent amount available in the bank accounts of all the implementing agencies has been transferred to the Single Nodal Account. This needed explanation as the State Treasury had transferred only Rs. 387.35 crore to the SNA during 2023-24.

The same has been brought to the knowledge of State Government for reply. Further, since matter requires detailed examination, the matter has been referred to the Office of C&AG of India.
