

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION AND LITERACY  
**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-1248**  
ANSWERED ON- 11.12.2023

**Assessment Over Free Meal Scheme for Children**

1248. SHRI M. BADRUDDIN AJMAL:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has made any assessment about the free meal scheme for school children to modify it and to add some items such as milk, fruits etc.;
- (b) whether the Government is aware of the fact that various reports claim that the quality of meal provided in schools and Aganwadi etc., is very poor due to corruption;
- (c) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this connection; and
- (d) if not, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
(SMT. ANNPURNA DEVI)

- (a) One hot cooked meal is provided to eligible children on all working school days under PM POSHAN Scheme. PM POSHAN 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 following nutritional content as prescribed in the scheme Guidelines.

Components	Primary	Upper Primary
Calories	450	700
Proteins	12 gms	20 gms

The nutritional norms are met by providing the following food items are prescribed to the children of primary and upper primary classes under the scheme all over the country:

S. No.	Items	Primary Stage	Upper Primary Stage
		Food norms (in gms)	Food norms (in gms)
1.	Foodgrains (Rice / Wheat)	100	150
2.	Pulses	20	30
3.	Vegetables (Leafy & Others)	50	75
4.	Oil & Fat	5	7.5
5.	Salt & Condiments	As per need	As per need

However, some States and UTs also provide additional items such as milk, egg, fruits etc. to students from their own resources.

(b) to (d): The overall responsibility for providing nutritious hot cooked meal to the eligible children under PM POSHAN Scheme lies with State Governments and UTs Administrations. Accordingly, the respective State Governments and UT Administrations have been requested to take necessary action in a timely manner and to furnish Action Taken Report regarding quality of food.

The Government of India issued guidelines on quality, safety and hygiene in school level kitchens to all the States and UTs to address the quality issue. These guidelines inter-alia provide for instructions to schools to procure Agmark quality and branded items for preparation of hot cooked meal, 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. The Government has also adopted an elaborate monitoring mechanism at Central, State and District levels to ensure quality food is served to children.

The Ministry of Women & Child Development approves proposals from the States/UTs for allocation of food grains under the Anganwadi services in coordination with the D/o Food & Public Distribution through Food Corporation of India (FCI). This Ministry has issued Streamlining Guidelines on Quality Assurance, Roles and Responsibilities of Duty Holders, procedure for procurement, integrating AYUSH concepts and Data Management and monitoring through 'Poshan Tracker' for transparency, efficiency and accountability in delivery of Supplementary Nutrition. As per the above guidelines, States/UTs need to ensure the quality of supplementary Nutrition being provided with reference to the norms of food safety as well as nutrient composition.

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