

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION AND LITERACY

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-1062
ANSWERED ON- 29.07.2024

Increase in School Attendance and Employment by Mid-Day-Meal Scheme

†1062 **Shri Virendra Singh:**

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has implemented the Mid-Day-Meal Scheme (MDMS) to increase the attendance of children in the Primary Schools of the country and also provide them food enriched with vitamins, which increases opportunities of employment for cooks in every primary and junior level school;
- (b) whether the supply of meals under the MDMS has been entrusted to the big industrialists across the country including Chandauli and all the districts of Uttar Pradesh due to which there has been declined in the quality of food and lakhs of people have become jobless; and
- (c) whether the Government is likely to implement the MDMS in line with previous mechanism and if so, the time by which it is likely to be implemented and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(SHRI JAYANT CHAUDHARY)

(a) to (c): Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) is one of the foremost rights based Centrally Sponsored Schemes implemented in partnership with States and UTs for providing one hot cooked mid-day meal to students in Balvatika (just before Class I) and classes I to VIII studying in Government and Government aided schools on all school days. The primary objectives of the scheme include:

- i. Improving the nutritional status of children studying in Bal Vatika and classes I – VIII in Government and Government-aided schools and Special Training Centres (STCs).
- ii. Encouraging poor children, belonging to disadvantaged sections, to attend school more regularly and help them concentrate on classroom activities.
- iii. Providing nutritional support to children of elementary stage in drought affected areas during summer vacation and during disaster times.

The supply of meals under the PM POSHAN Scheme has not been entrusted to big industrialists anywhere in the country. As per PM POSHAN Guidelines, the responsibility for cooking/ supply of cooked meal should be, as far as possible, assigned to one of the following:

- Cook-Cum-Helpers
- Local women's/ mother's Self-Help Group (SHG)
- Local Youth Club affiliated to the Nehru Yuvak Kendras
- A voluntary organization (as specified in guidelines for engagement of CSO/ NGO)

A total of 24.85 lakh cook-cum-helpers have been engaged across the country, out of which more than 90% are women.

Out of a total of 141834 schools in the State of Uttar Pradesh, PM POSHAN is implemented in 134299 Schools through Gram Panchayat/ School Management Committee. In remaining 7535 Schools in 25 districts (including Chandauli), meals are provided by Civil Society/ NGOs.

The State Government of Uttar Pradesh has informed that in Chandauli district 1268 schools are covered under PM POSHAN Scheme, out of these only 13 schools located in urban areas are serving meals through centralized kitchen managed by an NGO namely the Rural Women Development and Welfare Institute. A total of 4450 cooks are engaged in Chandauli district. The quality of food is checked by the task force at the district and block level. The Cook-cum-Helpers are engaged in accordance with the instructions issued by the State Government in this regard. The State Government has informed that the process related to selection of cooks is done in accordance with the guidelines of the scheme.
