

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION & LITERACY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 216
ANSWERED ON 25.11.2024

Nutritional Standards in Mid-Day Meal Scheme

216 Shri Sribharat Mathukumilli:

Will the Minister of Education be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government ensures adherence to the nutritional standards specified in Schedule II of the National Food Security Act, 2013, for the Mid-day Meal Scheme, and if so, the measures taken by the Government to monitor compliance with these standards;
- (b) the details of the revised minimum budget allocated for Mid-Day Meal in primary and upper primary school students, including the date of revision and the factors considered in determining the budget allocation;
- (c) whether the Government is undertaking periodic revisions and indexes for the Mid-Day Meal budget allocation to account average food inflation, if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to index the budget for Mid-Day Meals to inflation in order to ensure consistent nutritional standards and if so, the plans of the Government in this regard; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(SHRI JAYANT CHAUDHARY)

- (a) to (e): PM POSHAN is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme implemented in partnership with States/ UTs. The overall responsibility for smooth functioning of the scheme including providing hot cooked and nutritious meal to the eligible children lies with the State Governments and UT Administrations. Detailed guidelines have been issued regarding nutritional standards specified in Schedule II of the National Food Security Act, 2013 and States/ UTs have been advised to adhere to these Guidelines. In order to improve efficiency and effectiveness, the scheme inter-alia provides elaborate monitoring mechanism i.e. Empowered Committee under the Chairpersonship of Hon'ble Union Education Minister, Programme Approval Board (PAB) under the Chairpersonship of Secretary (DoSE&L), State Steering-cum-Monitoring Committee under the Chairpersonship of Chief Secretary, a District level Committee under the

Chairpersonship of senior-most MP of Lok Sabha, District level Steering-cum-Monitoring Committee under the Chairpersonship of District Collector. In addition States and UTs are advised to do testing of meals through NABL accredited laboratories and do training of all Cook-cum-Helpers (CCHs). The States/UTs are advised to conduct social audits every year in all the districts. In addition, Joint Review Missions (JRM)s consisting of nutritional experts review the scheme through field visits and assess the actual implementation of the Scheme at the ground level from time to time. The Budget Estimates under the PM POSHAN Scheme is Rs. 12,467.39 crore during the 2024-25. Though PM POSHAN is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, the Central Government provides 100% assistance for cost of foodgrains including transportation cost. To account average food inflation, the material cost is revised on the basis of Consumer Price Index-Rural Labour (CPI-RL) under the scheme. The material cost was revised on 01.10.2022. The National Food Security Act, 2013, Rules, Guidelines and Instructions issued under the PM POSHAN Scheme from time to time, provides that every child attending an eligible institution is to be covered under the Scheme and shall be served hot cooked nutritious meals or provided with Food Security Allowance, as applicable, on all school days. Accordingly, the State Governments and UT Administrations prepare comprehensive Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWP&B), inter-alia, with detailed district-wise vital information on coverage of children, working days and schools; enrolment in schools; utilisation of foodgrains, utilisation of cooking cost, transportation cost, Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (MME), payment of honorarium to Cook-cum-Helper, construction of kitchen-cum-stores, procurement of kitchen devices etc. The funds are released as Central Assistance to cover children attending the school on all working days.
