

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-2297
ANSWERED ON - 09/12/2024

Audit of Mid-day Meal Scheme

2297. Mrs Ruchi Vira:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has carried out any audit to check the proper implementation of the Mid-day Meal Scheme in all the States and Union Territories of the country including Uttar Pradesh;
- (b) whether any irregularities have been found after such audits during the last three years, especially in Uttar Pradesh, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to constitute a comprehensive committee to review the performance, extent of implementation and audit of Mid-Day Meal Scheme in all the States of the country; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(SHRI JAYANT CHAUDHARY)

(a) & (b): Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman(PM POSHAN) is one of the foremost rights based Centrally Sponsored Schemes under the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA). Section 28 of National Food Security Act, 2013 inter alia envisages that every local authority, or any other authority or body, as may be authorised by the State Government, shall conduct or cause to be conducted, periodic social audits on the functioning of the scheme and cause to publicise its findings and take necessary action, in such manner as may be prescribed by the State Government. The States/UTs are required to conduct Social Audit in all districts in at least 20 schools or 2% of the schools, whichever is higher for each district. The responsibility for taking action and ensuring compliances on the Social Audit findings rests with the State/UT Nodal Department implementing the PM POSHAN Scheme. The State Government of Uttar Pradesh has reported that under PM POSHAN Scheme, Social Audit was conducted in 1500 schools for the years 2022-23 and in 1575 schools for the year 2023-24 in all the 75 districts as per the Guidelines laid by Central Government and the process continues for the current year 2024-25. The State reported that major findings of

the social audits were inadequacy in record maintenance in Districts Sitapur, Lakhimpur Khiri, Mau, Gonda, and Balrampur; and non-availability of gloves and aprons for CCH in Districts Lakhimpur and Hardoi. The State Government has further reported action is taken to remove the shortcomings found during the social audit.

(c) & (d): PM POSHAN is implemented in partnership with States/ UTs and the overall responsibility for smooth functioning of the scheme lies with the State Governments and UT Administrations. Detailed guidelines have been issued in this regard and all the States/ UTs were advised to adhere to these Guidelines. In order to improve performance and extent of implementation, 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. Further, Joint Review Missions (JRMs) consisting of nutritional experts review the scheme through field visits and assess the actual implementation of the Scheme at the ground level as & when required. These guidelines, inter-alia, provides for instructions to schools to procure Agmark quality and branded items for preparation of meals, training to Cook-cum-Helpers, tasting of meals by members of School Management Committee including at least one teacher before serving the hot meal to children. Further, the Mid-Day Meal Rules, 2015 provide for mandatory testing of food samples by Government Food Research Laboratory or any laboratory accredited or recognized by law to ensure that the meals meet nutritional standards and quality. The Food Corporation of India (FCI) is given responsibility for issue of food grains of best available quality, which will in any case be at least of Fair Average Quality (FAQ). The FCI appoints a Nodal Officer for each State to take care of various problems in supply of food grains under the PM POSHAN Scheme.
