

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION AND LITERACY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- 2552
ANSWERED ON- 17.03.2025

PM-POSHAN Scheme in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal

2552. Dr. Jayanta Kumar Roy:
Shri Malaiyarasan D:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) the features of the PM-POSHAN Scheme;
- (b) the number of schools and students covered under the scheme within Tamil Nadu and in Jalpaiguri in West Bengal;
- (c) the funds allocated for the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (erstwhile Mid-day-Meal scheme) (PM-POSHAN) within Tamil Nadu so far;
- (d) the impact of the scheme on the health, enrollment and attendance rates of students, especially in rural and disadvantaged regions; and
- (e) the steps being taken to improve the implementation of the scheme in remote areas, where logistical challenges might affect timely delivery?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(SHRI JAYANT CHAUDHARY)

(a) & (b): PM POSHAN Scheme is a centrally sponsored scheme implemented in partnership with the States and UTs. This Scheme is implemented across the country including in rural and backward regions and covers all children of Balvatika (just before class I) and Classes I-VIII studying in Government and Government-Aided Schools. The objectives of the Scheme are to address two of the pressing problems for majority of children in India, viz. hunger and education by:

- i) Improving the nutritional status of children studying in Bal Vatika (just before class I) and classes I–VIII in Government and Government-Aided Schools without any discrimination.
- 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 / disaster affected areas during summer vacation and disaster times.

The Salient features of the Scheme are as under:

- (i) Inclusion of Balvatika: The provision of hot cooked meal to children of pre-schools or Balvatika (before class I) in primary schools also, in addition to children of classes I to VIII studying in Government and Government-aided schools.
- (ii) Tithi Bhojan: Tithi Bhojan is a community participation programme in which people provide special food to children on special occasions/festivals in addition to regular meal.
- (iii) School Nutrition Gardens: Under the Scheme, development of School Nutrition Gardens in schools is being promoted, to give children first hand experience with nature and gardening.
- (iv) Social Audit: Social Audit in all districts is made mandatory under the Scheme. Social Audit is collective monitoring of a scheme by people's active involvement covering issues of equity, equality and expenditure management.
- (v) Vocal for local: Under 'Vocal for local' States and Union Territory Administrations are encouraged to decide menu suitable to the local conditions within the prescribed nutrition and food norms and to procure locally grown food items like millets, vegetables, condiments etc. from Farmers' Producers Organizations, Federation of Women's Self-Help Groups etc. so as to promote local employment generation and economic development while simultaneously improving the nutrition standards.
- (vi) Special Focus: Adequate provision for supplementary nutrition in aspirational districts / tribal districts / districts with identified high cases of malnutrition etc.
- (vii) Disaster Management: Provision of hot cooked meal or Food Security Allowance to children when schools are closed due to a disaster impacting the State/Union Territory, part of State/Union Territory, some States/Union Territory or whole country as maybe declared by the State/Central Government under its powers as Disaster Management Authority.

The Scheme is providing one hot cooked and nutritious meal to all children studying in Balvatika (just before class-I) and classes I to VIII of Government and Government-aided schools across the country including Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. The number of schools and students covered under the scheme within Tamil Nadu and in Jalpaiguri in West Bengal is as under: -

State /District	Schools	Students
Tamil Nadu	43,038	33,86,770
Jalpaiguri(West Bengal)	2218	2,50,073

(c): Programme Approval Board (PAB) has allocated a total amount of Rs. 702.12 crore for the State of Tamil Nadu, of which Rs. 443.03 crore is the Central share and Rs. 259.09 crore is the minimum mandatory State share for the Year 2024-25. The funds allocated for the implementation of the PM-POSHAN to the State of Tamil Nadu for the last ten years is as under :-

Year	Central Assistance Released (Rs in lakh)
2014-15	63991.10
2015-16	44253.83
2016-17	42846.05
2017-18	42506.34
2018-19	42054.58
2019-20	43121.49
2020-21	49221.67
2021-22	23264.94
2022-23	47700.10
2023-24	39852.49

(d) & (e): The State Government of Tamil Nadu has reported that the impact of the scheme on health, enrolment and attendance rates of students, especially in rural and disadvantaged regions is very significant. In rural areas upto 8th std 7,41,812 and 9th & 10th std 1,80,252 no. of children are getting benefited under this scheme. The daily attendance is being maintained at the school level and the percentage is around 95% at an average. As per the sample evaluation study conducted by the Department of Evaluation and Applied Research, Tamil Nadu in selected districts the findings are as follows:

- Overall, the majority of the respondents, both boys and girls, have a normal BMI.
- Among boys, 59% fall into the normal BMI category.
- For girls, 63% have a normal BMI.
- 65% of rural students have a normal BMI. In urban areas, 60% of sample students have a normal BMI.

PM POSHAN Scheme, being Centrally Sponsored Scheme, 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. The Government of India has issued detailed guidelines on improve the implementation of the scheme to all the States/UTs. These guidelines are available on official website <https://pmposhan.education.gov.in> . In order to improve the implementation of the scheme in remote areas, the Central Government provides 100% assistance for cost of foodgrains including transportation cost, 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 (JRM)s 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 making available food grains of best available quality, meeting the parameters 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.
