

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO – 97

ANSWERED ON 01/12/2025

Food Poisoning Incident in School Hostels in Andhra Pradesh

97. Shri Maddila Gurumoorthy:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken cognizance of repeated food poisoning incidents in Andhra Pradesh Government schools/hostels reportedly caused by unclean RO plants, stagnant water tanks and unhygienic kitchen conditions, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether any preventive audits, inspections, or corrective measures have been initiated by the Government or in coordination with State Education Departments to ensure food and water safety in such institutions, and if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons for the inaction; and

(d) whether the Government proposes to introduce a mandatory quarterly inspection and digital reporting system for all government and welfare hostels to ensure compliance with food safety and hygiene standards and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(SHRI JAYANT CHAUDHARY)

(a) to (d): Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) Scheme is implemented in partnership with States/ UTs for providing one hot cooked and nutritious meal to children studying in Balvatika (just before class I) and the classes I to VIII of Government and Government-aided schools on all school working days. The overall responsibility for smooth functioning of the scheme including providing hot

cooked and nutritious meal to the eligible children and day-to-day administration lies with the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations.

Government of India has issued detailed guidelines on quality, safety and hygiene to ensure serving of good quality nutritious meal under the Scheme. All the States/ UTs are advised to adhere to these Guidelines. These guidelines are available on official website <https://pmposhan.education.gov.in>. These guidelines, *inter alia*, provide 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, it provides for 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 Guidelines provide, *inter alia*, for training of Cook-cum-Helpers on nutrition, cooking processes, health and hygiene, preparation of raw grains and vegetables, recipes, serving skills etc. States/ UTs provide training to CCHs in collaboration with Institutes of Hotel Management, Food Craft Institutes, FSSAI, State Universities etc. Many States/ UTs conduct the Cooking Competitions and also give cash prizes to the winners to encourage them to cook varied and nutritious meals. The States and UTs 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. The guidelines also envisage for all children in the school to wash their hands with soap.

As per information received from the State Government of Andhra Pradesh, a few incidents of water/food contamination have occurred, and affected students were admitted to the hospitals immediately, and after treatment, all of them were discharged safely. As a follow up, special inspections have been conducted in all Government Hostels in the State and action has been taken to rectify the defects.

Further, FSSAI has prepared Food Safety Guidebook for Teachers/Students. The booklet provides with the detailed information of how to conduct the different test on food adulteration. FSSAI through its social media channel has created a dedicated

playlist “How to check for adulteration”. FSSAI also have mobile food testing vans called Food Safety on Wheels (FSW) to reach remote areas and conduct training and awareness activities as well.

POSHAN Maah/ POSHAN Pakhwada is celebrated by States and UTs facilitating community mobilisation and ensuring schools undertake meaningful activities such as special School Management Committee (SMC) meetings, awareness campaigns on nutrition and hygiene. Various other activities such as quiz, painting competition, rally, nukkad natak for disseminating the information on use of millets, handwash, balance diet and importance of green leafy vegetables etc. are also organized at school level.

The State Government of Andhra Pradesh has issued Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) for maintenance of hostels, child safety and security, food safety, water safety, personal health and hygiene, reporting of untoward incidents and crisis management. Guidelines have also been issued for cleaning water tanks, maintenance of RO Plants, safety, security, health, mental well-being, and protection of all girl students residing in Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs).
