

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1960
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.12.2024

PM-POSHAN SCHEME

1960. SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL:

Will the Minister of Women and Child Development be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has replaced the National Midday Meal Programme with PM-POSHAN Scheme;
- (b) if so, the details of the difference between two schemes;
- (c) the details of the improvement noted in the outcome due to introduction of the new scheme; and
- (d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure nutritious and affordable food for school going children across the country?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SAVITRI THAKUR)

(a) to (d) The PM POSHAN scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of Education. As per the inputs received from Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education, Government has approved the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN)' earlier known as 'National Programme for Mid-Day Meal in Schools' for providing hot cooked meal to eligible children in Government and Government – aided Schools from 2021-22 to 2025-26. The Government has also approved following additional features under PM POSHAN Scheme:-

- i. **Inclusion of Balvatika:** The provision of hot cooked meal to children of pre-schools or Balvatika (before class I) and children studying in classes I to VIII 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', the States and Union Territories 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 and economic development and 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 disaster impacting the State/Union Territory, part of State/Union Territory, in a State/Union Territory or whole country as may be declared by the State/Central Government under its powers as Disaster Management Authority.

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 Union Territory Administrations. The Government of India has issued detailed guidelines on quality, safety and hygiene to ensure serving of good quality meal under the Scheme to all the States/UTs. These guidelines are available on official website <https://pmposhan.education.gov.in>. 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 2-3 members of School Management Committee including at least one teacher before serving to children.
