



MIDDAY MEAL SCHEME REFERS TO THE ANDHRA PRADESH (A STUDY DOKKA SEETHAMMA MADHYHNA BADI BHOJANAM IN ANDHRA PRADESH)

Economy

Dr M Nirmala Bai Second Grade Teacher Municipal Corporation Primary School, R.S mada Street Tirupati

ABSTRACT

The Mid-Day Meal (MDM) scheme in Andhra Pradesh, officially known as the **Dokka Seethamma Madhyhna Badi Bhojanam**, provides free, nutritious hot-cooked lunches. It covers students from classes I to X in government and aided schools, and has also been expanded to government junior colleges Key Features and Nutrition Norms. The scheme is designed to combat malnutrition, boost school attendance, and reduce dropout rates. **Daily Nutritional Allocations:** Students receive allotted quantities of polished rice, pulses, vegetables, oil, boiled eggs, and peanut chikki, adjusted based on primary (classes I-V) vs. upper primary and high school (classes VI-X) standards. **Eggs & Nutrition:** Boiled eggs are served multiple days a week to ensure children receive adequate protein and micro-nutrients. Weekly Zonal Menu The Andhra Pradesh government implements a strictly regulated zonal-wise weekly menu (updated recently) to provide variety and maintain nutritional balance across schools. A standard rotating menu typically includes: **Monday:** Rice, Egg Curry, and Chickpea (or Peanut Lentil preparations). **Tuesday:** Pulihora (Tamarind Rice), Tomato Dal, and Boiled Egg. **Wednesday:** Vegetable Rice, Aloo Kurma, Boiled Egg, and Chickpea. **Thursday:** Vegetable Kichidi, Tomato Chutney, and Boiled Egg. **Friday:** Rice, Dal/Sambar, Boiled Egg, and Chickpea. **Saturday:** Rice, Sambar, and Sweet Pongal. Extension to Junior Colleges In a major state-specific expansion, the government reintroduced the mid-day meal scheme in nearly 475 government junior colleges to support marginalized students continuing their higher education. **Monitoring and Implementation** The scheme involves rigorous monitoring using real-time mobile applications and departmental dashboards to track daily attendance, food quality, and delivery across various districts from Srikakulam to Chittoor. To check daily district-level statistics, school coverage, or detailed operational guidelines, you can visit the official MDM - Government of Andhra Pradesh portal. Further national guidelines are available via the PM Poshan website.

KEYWORDS

HISTORY

The Midday Meal Scheme refers to the government of India programme introduced in all government elementary schools to provide children with cooked lunches. Tamil Nadu was the first state in India to introduce this scheme. The first school which had the scheme was the Sourashtra Boys Higher Secondary School, Madurai, which implemented it in 1955. On 28 November 2001 the Supreme Court asked all state governments to begin this programme in their schools within 6 months. The programme has shown many positive effects. Many parents who couldn't send their children to schools due to poverty, were eager to get their children free nutritious food and this incentivized them to send their children to school. The Midday Meal Scheme increased the number of school-going children.

ROOTS OF THE PROGRAMME

The roots of the programme can be traced back to the pre-independence era, when a midday meal programme was introduced in 1925 in Tamil Nadu. Initiatives by state governments began in the 1962–63 school year.

The Indian state Tamil Nadu was a pioneer in introducing midday meal programmes in India to increase the number of children enrolling in school; K. Kamaraj, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu at the time, introduced it first in Chennai and later extended it to all districts of Tamil Nadu. During 1982, 1 July onwards, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, M. G. Ramachandran upgraded the existing midday meal scheme in the state to 'Nutritious noon-meal scheme' keeping in mind that around 68 lakh children were malnourished. Gujarat was the second state to introduce an MDM scheme in 1984, but it was later discontinued.

A midday meal scheme was introduced in Kerala in 1984, and was gradually expanded to include more schools and grades. By 1990–91, twelve states were funding the scheme to all or most of the students in their area: Goa, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh. Karnataka, Odisha and West Bengal received international aid to help with the implementation of the programme, while in AP and Rajasthan the programme was completely funded by foreign aid.

In Karnataka, the Children's Love Castles Trust started providing midday meals in 1997. A total of eight schools were adopted and a food bank programme and an Anganwasi milk Programme were started. The food-bank programme was replaced by the State Government midday meal scheme

INITIATIVES BY THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

President Pranab Mukherjee launching mid-day meal scheme at a Central Government-run school

The government of India initiated the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NP-NSPE) on 15 August 1995. The objective of the scheme is to help improve the effectiveness of primary education by improving the nutritional status of primary school children. Initially, the scheme was implemented in 2,408 blocks of the country to provide food to students in classes one through five of government, government-aided and local body run schools. By 1997–98, the scheme had been implemented across the country. Under this programme, a cooked midday meal with 300 calories and 12 grams of protein is provided to all children enrolled in classes one to five. In October 2007, the scheme included students in upper primary classes of six to eight in 3,479 educationally backward blocks, and the name was changed from National Programme for Nutrition Support to Primary Education to National Programme of Mid Day Meals in Schools. Though cooked food was to be provided, most states (apart from those already providing cooked food) chose to provide "dry rations" to students. "Dry rations" refers to the provision of uncooked 3 kg of wheat or rice to children with 80% attendance.

SUPREME COURT ORDER

In April 2001, the People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) initiated the Public Interest Litigation (Civil) No. 196/2001, People's Union for Civil Liberties v. Union of India & Others popularly known as the "right to food" case. The PUCL argued that article 21 – "right to life" of the Indian constitution when read together with articles 39(a) and 47, makes the right to food a derived fundamental right which is enforceable by virtue of the constitutional remedy provided under article 32 of the constitution. The PUCL argued that excess food stocks with the Food Corporation of India should be fed to hungry citizens. This included providing midday meals in primary schools. The scheme came into force with the supreme court order dated 28 November 2001, which requires all government and government-assisted primary schools to provide cooked midday meals.

INTERIM ORDERS

The Supreme Court occasionally issues interim orders regarding midday meals. Some examples are

Order regarding	Exact text	Order dated
Basic entitlement	"Every child in every place and Government assisted Primary Schools with a prepared midday meal with a minimum content of 300 calories and 8–12 grams of protein each day of school for a minimum of 200 days"	28 November 2001
Charges on conversion cost	"The conversion costs for a cooked meal, under no circumstances, shall be recovered from the children or their parents"	20 April 2004

Central assistance	"The Central Government... shall also allocate funds to meet with the conversion costs of food-grains into cooked midday meals"	20 April 2004
Kitchen sheds	"The Central Government shall make provisions for construction of kitchen sheds"	20 April 2004
Priority to Dalit cooks	"In appointment of cooks and helpers, preference shall be given to Dalits, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes"	20 April 2004
Quality safeguards	"Attempts shall be made for better infrastructure, improved facilities (safe drinking water etc.), closer monitoring (regular inspection etc.) and other quality safeguards as also the improvement of the contents of the meal so as to provide nutritious meal to the children of the primary schools"	20 April 2004
Drought areas	"In drought affected areas, midday meals shall be supplied even during summer vacations"	20 April 2004

ENTITLEMENTS

The nutritional guidelines for the minimum amount of food and calorie content per child per day are:

Entitlement norm per child per day under MDM		
Item	Primary (class one to five)	Upper primary II (class six to eight)
Calories	450	700
Protein (in grams)	12	20
Rice / wheat (in grams)	100	150
Dal (in grams)	20	30
Vegetables (in grams)	50	75
Oil and fat (in grams)	5	7.5

In the case of micronutrients (vitamin A, iron, and folate) tablets and de-worming medicines, the student is entitled to receive the amount provided for in the school health programme of the National Rural Health Mission

FINANCES

The central and state governments share the cost of the Midday Meal Scheme, with the centre providing 60 percent and the states 40 percent. The central government provides grains and financing for other food. Costs for facilities, transportation, and labour is shared by the federal and state governments. The participating states/territories contribute different amounts of money, depending on whether they are Himalayan states, Northeastern Region (NER) states, union territories without legislature, or the residual (Non-NER states and union territories with legislature). The share contributed by states is often larger than what is stipulated. While the eleventh five-year plan allocated ₹384.9 billion (equivalent to ₹450 billion or US\$4.7 billion in 2023) for the scheme, the twelfth five-year plan has allocated ₹901.55 billion (US\$9.4 billion), a 134 percent rise. The public expenditure for the Mid Day Meal Programme has gone up from ₹73.24 billion (US\$760 million) in 2007–08 to ₹132.15 billion (US\$1.4 billion) in 2013–14. In 2020–21, the Midday Meal Scheme budget comprised 11% of the total budget for the Ministry of Education. The per day cooking cost per child at the primary level has been fixed to ₹4.13 (4.3¢ US) while at the upper primary level is ₹6.18 (6.4¢ US). As of FY24 - 25, the budget estimate of the PM Poshan Scheme stands at Rs. 12,467.39 crore (US\$ 1.49 billion).

IMPLEMENTATION MODELS

Decentralised Model

This is the most widespread practice. In the decentralised model, meals are cooked on-site by local cooks and helpers or self-help groups. This system has the advantage of being able to serve local cuisine, providing jobs in the area, and minimising waste. It also allows for better monitoring (e.g., by parents and teachers). In total, the MDM Scheme employs over 2.5 million cooks/food preparers (referred to as cooks-cum-helpers), usually providing a small honorarium for their work (equal to approximately US\$14 per month).

Centralised Model

In the centralised model, an external organisation cooks and delivers the meal to schools, mostly through public-private partnerships. Centralised kitchens are seen more in urban areas, where density of schools is high so that transporting food is a financially viable option.

Advantages of centralised kitchens include ensuring better hygienic as large scale cooking is done through largely automated processes. Various NGOs such as the Nalabothu Foundation, Akshaya Patra Foundation, Ekta Shakti Foundation, Naandi Foundation, and Jay Gee Humanitarian Society provide midday meals.

International Assistance

International voluntary and charity organisations have assisted. Church World Service has provided milk powder to Delhi and Madras Municipal Corporation; CARE has provided corn soya meal, Bulgar wheat, and vegetable oils; and UNICEF has provided high proteins foods and educational support.

REFERENCES

1. The Hindu English Daily: Jan. 21 2020 Statement of Health Minister of Andhra Pradesh
2. Singh N. And Badiger C. (2018): "Knowledge of Rural children about Mid-Day Meal"
3. V. Sangeetha, J.P.Sharma, V. Lenin (2013). Food Security Vs Nutritional Security Need for Multi-sectoral Convergence, International Journal of Agriculture and Food Science Technology.
4. Hemant Mishra "India's experience with implementing the Mid-Day Meal (MDM)"
5. Manisha Garg and Kalyan Sankar Mandal (2013): Mid-Day Meal for the Poor, Privatised Education for the Non-Poor Vol. 48, Issue No. 30, 27 Jul, 2013 "Poshan Abhiyaan - Jan Andolan"
6. poshanabhiyaan.gov.in. Retrieved 24 March 2023. *Mid-Day Meal scheme to be now called PM POSHAN, to cover students of pre-primary classes also - Times of India*
7. The Times of India. 29 September 2021. Retrieved 13 October 2021.
8. Chettiparambil-Rajan, Angelique (July 2007). "India: A Desk Review of the Mid-Day Meals Programme" (PDF). *World Food Programme. Archived from the original* (PDF) on 20 October 2013. Retrieved 28 July 2013.
9. www.wikipedia journals