



Mid Day Meal

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Why in News

Recently, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) has asked state governments to provide **Mid Day Meals (MDM) or food security allowance** whichever is feasible, to all eligible children till schools are closed due to COVID-19.

- Kerala is already providing hot-cooked meals to students at home.
- The schools across the country have been closed to contain the transmission of **COVID-19 outbreak.**

Key Points

- The ministry's order came after the Supreme Court issued notices to all state governments to explain how they would ensure the midday meals reach the vulnerable while schools stay shut.
- According to the **MDM Rules 2015**, when meals cannot be provided to students on account of unavailability of foodgrains, cooking cost, or due to any other reason, the state government is expected to provide a **food security allowance to each child consisting of foodgrains and cooking cost entitlement.**

- The MDM rules 2015, provide that:
 - The place of serving meals to the children shall be school only.
 - If the Mid-Day Meal is not provided in school on any school day due to non-availability of food grains or any other reason, the State Government shall pay **food security allowance** by 15th of the succeeding month.
 - The meal shall be prepared in accordance with the Mid Day Meal guidelines issued by the Central Government from time to time.
 - Procuring **AGMARK** quality items for preparation of midday meals, tasting of meals by two or three adult members of the school management committee, including at least one teacher, before serving to children.
 - The School Management Committee mandated under **Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009** shall also monitor implementation of the Mid-day meal Scheme.
 - The **State Steering-cum Monitoring Committee (SSMC)** shall oversee the implementation of the scheme including establishment of a mechanism for maintenance of nutritional standards and quality of meals.

Mid Day Meal Scheme

- The MDM Scheme comes under the Ministry of HRD.
- It was launched in the year 1995 as a **centrally sponsored scheme**.
- The scheme provides that every child within the age group of **six to fourteen years** studying in **classes I to VIII** who enrolls and attends the school, shall be provided **hot cooked meal** having nutritional standards of 450 calories and 12 gm of protein for primary (I- V class) and 700 calories and 20 gm protein for upper primary (VI-VIII class), free of charge every day except on school holidays.
- The scheme covers all **government and government aided schools** and also Madarsa and Maqtabas supported under the **Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan**.

Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan

- It is an overarching programme launched in 2018 for the school education sector extending from pre-school to class 12.
- It has been prepared with the broader goal of improving school effectiveness measured in terms of equal opportunities for schooling and equitable learning outcomes.
- It subsumed the three schemes of **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)**, **Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)** and **Teacher Education (TE)**.

Source: IE