

## Mid-Day Meal Scheme renamed to PM POSHAN

Mid Day Meal Scheme was started in India from 15th August 1995 under the name of 'National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NP-NSPE)'. In October 2007, NP-NSPE was renamed as 'National Programme of Mid Day Meal in Schools,' which is popularly known as Mid-Day Meal Scheme. Recently, the Vice President of India has proposed the inclusion of milk in mid-day meals of children. Hence, it is important to know the importance of the scheme for the [IAS Exam](#).

### Mid-day Meal Scheme Latest News

In September 2021, the Mid-Day Meal Scheme was renamed 'PM POSHAN' or Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman. PM POSHAN will extend the hot cooked meals to students studying in pre-primary levels or Bal Vatikas of government and government-aided primary schools, in addition to those already covered under the mid-day scheme.

### PM POSHAN

The revamped scheme has been launched for 5 years, from 2021-22 to 2025-26, with a budget of Rs 1,30,794.90 crore. The government hopes it will benefit 11.80 crore children studying in 11.20 lakh schools across India. The scheme is different from the mid-day meal scheme in the following ways:

1. Apart from providing nutritional meals to schoolchildren, the revamped scheme will also focus on monitoring the nutritional levels of schoolchildren.
2. A nutritional expert will be appointed in each school to ensure that the BMI, weight levels and haemoglobin levels of the students are monitored.
3. In districts with a high prevalence of anaemia, special provisions for nutritional items would be made.
4. The government is also considering developing nutrition gardens on school campuses with active participation by students.
5. There could also be cooking competitions held under the scheme to promote ethnic cuisine and innovative menus based on local ingredients.

Aspirants can read similar articles from the links mentioned below:

<a href="#">UIDAI</a>	<a href="#">Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan</a>
<a href="#">Sukanya Samriddhi Scheme – Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Campaign</a>	<a href="#">Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)</a>
<a href="#">Poshan Abhiyan – National Nutrition Mission</a>	<a href="#">Child Health Programmes</a>

## What is a mid-day meal?

It is one meal that is provided to all children enrolled in government schools, government-aided schools, local body schools, special training centres (STC), madrasas and makhtabs supported under [Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan \(SSA\)](#).

## What is the objective of MDMS?

The main objectives of the MDM scheme are:

1. To increase the enrolment of the children belonging to disadvantaged sections in the schools.
2. Leading enrolment to increased attendance in the schools.
3. To retain children studying in classes 1-8.
4. To provide nutritional support to the children of the elementary stage in drought-affected areas.

## Salient Features of Midday Meal Scheme

1. It is the world's largest school meal programme aimed to attain the goal of universalization of primary education.
2. The Ministry of Education (earlier known as the Ministry of Human Resources and Development) is the authorized body to implement the scheme.
3. It is a centrally sponsored scheme hence cost is shared between the centre and the states. (Centre's share – 60 percent.)
4. Tamil Nadu is the first state to implement the midday meal scheme.
5. In 2001, MDMS became a cooked midday meal scheme under which each eligible child was provided with a prepared midday meal for a minimum of 200 days:
  - Energy intake – 300 calories
  - Protein intake – 8 to 12 grams
6. Till 2002, the scheme was only designed for government, government-aided and local body schools. Later, children studying in Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative & Innovative Education (AIE) centres too were included under the scheme.
7. In 2004, MDMS was revised:
  - Central assistance provided for cooking cost
  - Transport subsidy included for all states (Max. of Rs 100 per quintal for special category states and Rs. 75 per quintal for other states.)
  - Management, monitoring and evaluation of the scheme.
  - Provision to serve midday meals during summer vacation to the children of drought-affected areas was also added.
8. In 2006, the MDMS was again revised:
  - Cooking cost was enhanced to Rs 1.80 per child/school day for States in the North Eastern Region and Rs 1.50 per child/school day for other States and UTs.
  - Nutritional norm was revised – Energy intake was increased from 300 calories to 450 calories and protein intake was increased from 8-12 grams to 12 grams.

9. In 2007, class 6-8 children studying in 3,479 Educationally Backwards Blocks (EBBs) were included in the scheme.
10. SSA-supported madrasas and maktabas were included in this scheme in 2008.
11. Apart from the calories and food intake, for micronutrients (tablets and deworming medicines), each child is entitled to receive the amount provided for in the school health programme of the [National Rural Health Mission](#).

## MDM Rules, 2015

Midday Meal Rules 2015 are notified on 30th September 2015 under [National Food Security Act \(NFSA\) 2013](#).

1. Under the MDM rules, schools are empowered to utilize other funds for midday meals in case MDM funds get exhausted.
2. On occasions where schools and other required bodies are unable to provide cooked meals to children; they are to provide food allowances to beneficiaries.
3. Accredited labs to take on the monthly testing of meals on a random basis.
4. Under MDM rules 2015, if children of any school don't get food for 3 consecutive school days or 5 days in a month, the concerned state government has to fix the responsibility on a person or an agency.

### Salient Features of MDM Rules, 2015:

- Each child from class 1-8 within the age group of six to fourteen years is eligible for a cooked nutritious meal every day except school holidays; with the following nutritional requirements:

Calories Intake	Primary	Upper Primary
Energy	450 calories	700 calories
Protein	12 grams	20 grams
Food Intake	Primary	Upper Primary
Food Grains	100 grams	150 grams
Pulses	20 grams	30 grams
Vegetable	50 grams	75 grams
Oil and Fats	5 grams	7.5 grams

- The schools procure AGMARK quality items for preparation of midday meals.

- The meals are to be served in the school premises only.
- Each school should have a hygienic cooking infrastructure to cook midday meals in a hygienic manner.
- The School Management Committee (SMCs) play a vital role in the monitoring of MDMS. SMCs are mandated under the right to free and compulsory education act, 2009 or [Right to Education Act](#)
- The headmasters or headmistress are empowered to utilize the school funds on the account of midday meal fund exhaustion. However, the same has to be reimbursed to the midday meal fund as soon as the school is credited with the MDM fund.
- The Food and Drugs Administration Department of the State may collect samples to ensure the nutritive value and quality of the meals.
- Food allowance to be provided to the children whenever cooked meals are not provided due to unforeseen circumstances in the manner stated below:
  1. Quantity of Food grains as per entitlement of the child; and
  2. Cooking cost prevailing in the State.

## How is the Midday Meal Scheme implemented?

It is implemented using one of the three models:

1. Decentralized model – Preparing meals on the site by local cooks, [Self-help groups](#) etc.
2. Centralized model – In the place of local on-site cooks, under this model, an external organization cooks food and delivers it to the schools.
3. International assistance – Various international charity organizations aid government schools.

## Criticism of the Midday Meal Scheme

There are several loopholes that are a point of discussion:

1. Despite such integrated child development schemes, India faces severe issues like child stunting, child mortality, child wasting and undernourishment. The same is reflected with India's rank of 94 in [Global Hunger Index 2020](#).
2. Caste-based discrimination mars the objective of MDMS -The 2008 Report by the National Campaign on Dalit Rights to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights also highlights that midday meals are usually served in upper-caste localities and that during times of caste tensions, Dalit children are denied the meal to assert the dominance of these upper caste communities.
3. The National Family Health Survey 2015-16 reported 39 percent of children to be chronically undernourished.
4. Quality of food is often debated where various media reports mention the health of children deteriorating with the food provided under the midday meals.
5. Linking Aadhar to midday meal scheme has its own demerits of limiting the children's access to the MDMS due to many not having aadhar cards.

Also read about other important [government schemes](#) for various competitive examinations including UPSC exam, in the linked article.

## Frequently Asked Questions on Mid Day Meal Scheme

### Q 1. When and who introduced the Mid Day Meal scheme?

Ans. Mid Day Meal Scheme was started in India on August 15, 1995, under the name of 'National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education'. The Ministry of Human Resources and Development (MHRD) is the authorized body to implement the scheme.

### Q 2. What are the different models of Mid Day Meal Scheme?

Ans. The different models of Mid Day Meal are as follows:

- Decentralized model
- Centralized model
- International assistance