



Dr. Amarjit Singh
Additional Secretary
Tel: 011- 2338 1096
Fax: 011- 2338 1306

भारत सरकार
मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय
स्कूल शिक्षा और साक्षरता विभाग
शास्त्री भवन
नई दिल्ली - 110 115
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION & LITERACY
SHASTRI BHAVAN
NEW DELHI-110 115

D.O. No. 13-4/2013-MDM-2-1

5th April, 2013

Dear *Sh. Imkonglemba,*

I write this to apprise you of the findings of the Fourth Joint Review Mission on the Mid Day Meal Scheme for the State of Nagaland, which visited your State from 17th to 24th March, 2013 through a Team comprising representatives from Government of India, State Government of Nagaland and representatives from the Office of Supreme Court Commissioner for MDMS. The Team covered 34 schools in 2 districts viz. Kohima and Dimapur during the visit and presented its report to the State Government on 23rd March 2013.

2. The Mission appreciated the steps taken by the State Government to ensure adequate vegetables in the Mid Day Meal, large number of women cook-cum-helpers from scheduled tribes and no discrimination in the implementation of MDM Scheme. They particularly appreciated proper storage of buffer stock of foodgrains, availability of sufficient numbers of kitchen devices and eating plates especially in Kohima District. The Mission also observed some best practices viz. kitchen-cum-stores with chimney and provision of meat once in a week in MDM.

3. The major findings / recommendations of the Review Mission, on the basis of field visits in the selected districts that need your personal attention, are as under:

i) **Irregular supply of MDM**

During the field visit observations, it was found that there has been disruption in few of the visited schools in providing MDM in both the districts. State Government should ensure and take necessary steps for the serving of the MDM to the children regularly without any disruption.

ii) **Delay in release of the funds**

The team observed that there is a considerable delay in release of funds from the State Government to the Directorate of School Education (State MDMS Implementing Agency) resulting in disruption of Mid day Meal Scheme in the State. The team has strongly recommended that the release of the funds from the State Finance Department to the School



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Education Department should be made within one month from the date of receipt of the Funds from Govt. of India for smooth implementation of the MDM Scheme in the State.

iii) Shortage of staff

There is an acute shortage of staff for implementing the scheme at all levels. Accordingly, the State Government may consider making available the designated staff at State, District & Block levels strictly for the MDMS, out of MME Funds on a contract basis for better and effective implementation of MDM Scheme in the state.

iv) Inspections by the officials:

It was observed that inspections were not carried out regularly by Block/District officials due to shortage of man power at District and Block Levels. However it was observed in few schools that CRC/EBRC have visited the schools but they have not inspected the MDM aspect. Mid-Day-Meal Programme should be supervised more vigorously and proper record should be maintained in the pre-designed format to be filled by the officials on their visits to the schools. The field functionaries inspecting other schemes viz. SSA, TOT may also be advised to inspect the MDM also. Specific goals may be assigned to the officers at District and Block Level for making surprise visits to the schools. At least 25% schools under their jurisdiction may be inspected by these functionaries during each quarter. A copy of their report, with specific recommendations for improvement may be submitted to the head of the concerned Institution of Govt of Nagaland.

v) State Review Mission

The State Govt. may set up State Review Mission on the pattern of Review Mission of Govt. of India to review the Scheme in the poorly performing districts / blocks at regular intervals.

vi) Social Audit

Nagaland has a rich tradition of communitization of public services. Therefore, it may consider the successful experience of Social Audit of MDMS in Chhittoor and Khammam districts of Andhra Pradesh. The audit process has three components; creating awareness about the entitlements under the Scheme, creating redressal mechanism for registration of complaints and grievances and ensuring that those grievances are redressed in a timely manner.

vii) Capacity Building

Capacity building of the stakeholders: The Mission recommends the following for the capacity building of the stakeholders of the scheme:-

- a) Periodic orientation of teachers/ VEC Members for the entitlements of the children in MDM and for proper management and maintenance of accounts and other registers.
- b) A Training Programme may be arranged for the cook cum helpers in the schools for the cooking of the meals in hygienic manner in keeping with the local taste so that the food is not only nutritious but palatable and keeping with the local tastes.
- c) A brochure containing MDM guidelines and instructions for maintenance of records in English as well as in local dialect may be got printed and circulated to all the teachers/head teachers /VECs, Block and District Level Officials.

viii) Community Mobilization

The community involvement was found to be strong by virtue of the Village Education Committee (VEC). In Govt. Middle school, Jakhama Village of Viswema Block in Kohima district, the kitchen-cum-store has been constructed with the MDM funds being provided by the Govt. and the Community has also contributed funds for better construction. This training of VEC/SMC should also reflect specific needs and concerns of Mid Day Meal Scheme. The Mission recommends that Department of Education and SPD, SSA may include VEC/SMC training module for Mid Day Meal Scheme also in the training module of VEC/SMC.

ix) Convergence

- a. No record relating to School Health Programme was found in any of the visited schools. The Mission was told that Health check- up is carried out by the Primary Health Centre (PHC) on a half yearly basis and the record is being maintained by them. There is a need for improved hygienic practices through education in terms of hand-washing, safe drinking water etc. This will enhance the health benefits of this scheme. Similarly, we need to ensure regular health check up in convergence under NRHM; supply of IFA tablets, Vitamin A, De-worming tablets and spectacles. An immediate exercise needs to be undertaken to identify anaemic and under weight girl children in schools and provide necessary health and nutritional support to

address the same. Those children who are chronically malnourished need to be encouraged to have extra food over what is required for their age. This should be particularly true of girls.

- b. Construction of dining hall in convergence with MP & MLA Local Area Development (MP/MLA LAD) scheme should be taken up on priority basis. This has shown some good result in Tripura. Wherever it is not possible to provide dining halls, at least it needs to be ensured that all schools must have mats. These mats may be purchased out of MME funds.
- c. Children should also be sensitised about the importance of hand washing before taking meal, cleanliness, and hygiene. The stakeholders should also be involved in these activities.

x) Display of proper MDM logo

The Mission recommends that State Government should issue necessary instructions to the schools for displaying logo (according to MDM logo guidelines available on website; www.nic.in), daily menu, entitlements as well as rights of children on food norms at prominent places outside the school wall.

xi) Monthly data entry

It has been observed that the Monthly data entry process in to the MDM MIS portal is very slow in the state due to the poor internet connectivity, irregular supply of electricity and shortage of adequate staff for data entry at the District level. The state needs to introduce an innovative mechanism in the state to expedite the monthly data entry in the portal in a time bound manner.

xii) Grievance Redressal Mechanism (GRM):

Suggestion box / complaint register should be kept at a convenient place in the school to enable the visitors to give their suggestions and views for improving the scheme. The toll free no. needs to be installed and widely publicised and displayed on the walls of every school and functionaries need to be oriented to use it when needed. It should work on all days and 24 hours.

xiii) Honorarium to cook cum helpers

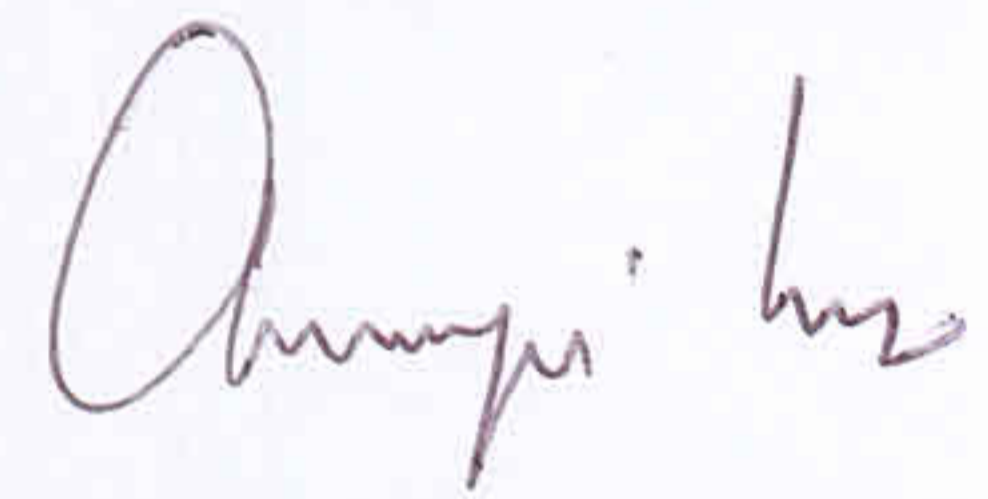
Although the payment of honorarium to cook cum helpers is being released by the directorate to SDEO offices on quarterly basis but the

Mission found in a few schools in both Kohima and Dimapur districts the honorarium to cooks cum helpers is being paid once in a year. It was also observed that in few of the schools the engagement of cook cum helpers is also not according to the prescribed norms. The Mission recommends that the honorarium to Cook-cum-helpers should be paid through Banks on a monthly basis instead of annually and Cook-cum-Helpers may be engaged as per prescribed norms.

I shall appreciate if you kindly look into the above recommendations of the Review Mission and take appropriate action in a time bound manner. A little effort on your part will go a long way to ensure that no child remains hungry in the schools; this is truly God's own work which we all are privileged to carry out.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,



(Amarjit Singh)

Sh. Imkonglemba, AO
Commissioner & Secretary
Government of Nagaland
Civil Secretariat
Kohima – 797 001