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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION & LITERACY  
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**D.O. No.3-1/2013-MDM-1-1(EE.5)**

**5<sup>th</sup> April, 2013**

Dear *Ms Royan,*

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 Haryana which visited your State from 17<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2013 through a Team comprising representatives from Government of India, State Government of Haryana, representative of Hon'ble Supreme Court Commissioner Office for MDMS. The Team covered 23 schools in 3 districts viz. Kurukshetra, Kaithal and Panipat during the visit and presented its report to the State Government on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2013.

2. The Mission appreciated the steps taken by the State Government to ensure that the children get hot cooked meal without any interruption. They particularly appreciated the maintenance and proper storage of buffer stock of food grains in the visited schools; engagement of people of weaker sections as cook cum helpers, provision of additional Rs. 150 per month per cook cum helper by the state since September, 2012 and timely payment of honorarium to them. The provision of Rs. 511.20 lakh for kitchen devices and eating utensils (plates and spoons) for all the students and for procurement of storage bins for storage of food grains as well as maintenance of record of height, weight and Hb estimation for all the children in the visited schools was greatly appreciated.

3. The major findings / recommendations of the Review Mission on the basis of field visit in the selected districts are as under:

- i) Despite advance release of funds by Government of India, there is considerable delay in release of funds to the districts and the schools. It took 71 days for the funds to reach the district level in case of adhoc grant and more than 100 days in case of 1st installment. Funds released under II<sup>nd</sup> installment by the Government of India are yet to be received by the nodal department at State level. This results in the situation where teachers pay the conversion cost, out of their pocket or any other school grant. The State should develop a mechanism in this regard for promptly



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transferring the funds directly from the State to the schools by E-transfer. Green Channel Scheme is urgently required to be introduced on the similar lines as that of Andhra Pradesh. Under the "Green Channel Scheme" funds are made available without any interruption throughout the year for the MDM as mentioned in several of my letters addressed to State Principal Secretaries/Secretaries.

- ii) Prepositioning of resources like food grains and cooking cost is essential for avoiding any interruption in the serving of MDM. It was observed that there is no mechanism in the districts of Kaithal and Kurukshetra for collecting information on utilisation of food grains and cooking cost from schools on a monthly basis. Due to this, the allocations are made on the basis of number of children only and without taking in to consideration the availability of food grains and cooking cost at the school level, which results in piling up of food grains and cooking cost in some schools and shortage of food grains in other schools, which even resulted in disruption in serving of mid day meal in two schools in Kaithal district.
- iii) ISKCON is operating the Centralized kitchens in Kurukshetra district covering 55000 children in three blocks out of five blocks. The Mission observed that kitchen-cum-stores are constructed in some of the schools covered by the centralised kitchen, which are not being used and in some other schools plenty of space was available for construction of kitchen-cum-stores which have not been constructed so far. The MDMS guidelines clearly envisage that the option of centralised kitchen should be exercised only in the case of non-availability of space for construction of kitchen-cum-stores. You may also appreciate that MDMS also takes care of larger issues of social cohesiveness, community participation, empowerment of women besides feeding children, which cannot be ensured where food is supplied by centralized kitchens. Another important issue in this regard is utilisation of food grains at centralised kitchens. The records at the centralised kitchens indicated that more food grains are used vis-à-vis number of meals served and they are not providing meal as per actual number of children and are supplying lesser quantity of meal.
- iv) The Review Mission also observed an urgent need to strengthen the monitoring system. The inspection reports and the records of the random checks done by Block and district officials in schools were not found there at all. The Team has been unable to obtain these or verify the veracity of the inspection and monitoring procedure. State should set up a robust monitoring system with mandatory inspections by the officials as per defined Terms of Reference and follow up mechanism on the inspections. MME funds must be used for improving management system.

- v) Separate kitchens-cum-stores were found in most of the visited schools. Although LPG cylinders and connections are available in most of the schools, fire wood was also used for cooking purposes in majority of them. Cook-cum-helpers do not work on fire wood chulhas inside kitchens in smoky atmosphere. Therefore, in many schools the original kitchens are not used and food was prepared in verandah. In district Kaithal, SSA has recently constructed kitchen cum stores with provision for smokeless chulhas but under the slab patila with stove cannot be placed due to faulty design. As a result cooking is done outside the kitchen. In district Kurukshetra, where kitchens sheds are available as food is being supplied by ISKCON, there is no utility for kitchen cum stores.
- vi) The collaboration between the school and the local health units (sub-centre and PHC) needs to be strengthened for joint planning, implementation and monitoring of IFA supplementation and deworming programme by the Departments of Education as well as Health and Family Welfare. IFA tablets, deworming tablets and Vitamin 'A' supplementation were not available in most of the schools. Such issues could be addressed if the supply of IFA tablets and deworming is rigorously monitored by the District Coordination Committee.
- vii) The menu circulated by the State Government containing vegetables and pulses are not provided on a daily basis as per food norms of the scheme especially on the days when rice and dal, karhi rice, atta halwa, chana halwa and meetha dalia, sweet sevian are served. The recipes being provided by the ISKON do not have vegetables at all.
- viii) RTE Act has strengthened community participation through School Management Committees. SMCs have been given an important role in monitoring of MDMS. While SMC meetings appear to be held regularly the role of the SMC in monitoring MDMS is not mentioned anywhere. Even the minutes make no mention of it. Capacity building exercises of SMC must include a module on monitoring so that the members are made aware and trained to monitor the MDMS properly. A record of their findings must be added to the minutes of SMC meetings.
- ix) The Mission observed that mid day meal in NCLP schools in Panipat district is being served through the nearby Government schools. The number of working days for NCLP schools (312 working days), differs from regular elementary schools (240 working days). Providing of Mid Day Meal to NCLP schools should not be linked with school kitchens because the children in NCLP schools are deprived of MDM on the days when regular elementary school is not working. You need to devise some mechanism to serve MDM in the NCLP schools on all working days.

- x) Community participation and dissemination of information are very crucial for successful implementation of a Scheme. Therefore, it is important that all schools are instructed to display entitlements of children under MDMS, menu and MDM logo outside walls of kitchen premises as well as on any other prominent places in the schools so that general public is aware that the MDM scheme is being implemented in the school.
- xi) Other recommendations:
- Need for State level Review Mission for monitoring the implementation of scheme in poorly performing districts.
  - Orientation trainings should be organised for all MDM in-charge teachers, Block and District functionaries and SMC members to make them understand the vision and outlook of MDM programme.
  - Speed up the process of data feeding for MDM Web Portal.
  - Grievance Redressal Mechanism needs to be strengthened for registering grievances under the scheme as discussed in the Report.
  - Evaluation studies of the scheme should be conducted by the State Government through an independent external agency.

Kindly take necessary action on these issues as well.

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

With regards,

Yours Sincerely,



(Amarjit Singh)

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