



Government of West Bengal
Office of the Project Director
Cooked Mid Day Meal Project
School Education Department
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Memo No : 642-SE(CMDMP)/MISC - 09/2010

Dated: 06.12.2012

From :- Arnab Roy
Secretary to the Govt. of West Bengal
School Education Department

To :- Rita Chatterjee
Joint Secretary (MDM), Govt. of India,
MHRD, Department of School Education & Literacy
Shastri Bhavan, New Delhi-110115.

Sub:- Action taken report on findings and recommendations of Joint Review Mission on MDM- Present Status.

Madam,

With reference to your D.O. No.12-5/2011- DESK (MDM) dt: 15.10.2012 on the above noted subject, this is to inform you that the findings of Joint Review Mission (JRM) were duly communicated to all Nodal Officers of MDM vide this office memo no. 557/1(35)-ES(PLNG)/0/MDM-30/2009, dt: 08.09.2011, and 667/SE(CMDMP)MISC/9/2010, dt: 28.11.2011, for taking immediate remedial actions.

Dr. Amarjit Singh, the then Joint Secretary, MHRD, GOI, was duly informed of this action by us vide this office memo no. 77-SE(CMDMP)/MISC-09/2010, dt: 06.03.2012. However, the latest status report on action taken is hereby submitted for favour of your information and taking necessary action.

- 1. Delay in release of cooking cost:-** We have taken all out efforts to ensure that cooking cost and remuneration to cook-cum-helpers reach every school/SHGs at least one month in advance. The present monitoring report has reflected improvement on this issue.
- 2. Regularity in serving meals:-** It is true that feeding of MDM on Saturdays was not done in some schools during earlier times. But presently the situation has much improved and almost all schools are now feeding their students on working Saturdays also.
- 3. Community participation:-** Mostly the community participation in MDM activity is being done through the SHG members who are the mothers of the school students or local people. To make the public aware of this issue- radio jingle and TV spots were duly broadcast/ telecast from 6 AIR centers of West Bengal and Door Darshan, Kolkata centre. Besides, leaflets in vernacular and campaign through

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local cable channels were made. Moreover, workshops and seminars on this issue were also organized in Block/Sub-division/District and State Level to emphasize on this community participation.

4. **School Health Programme:-** During earlier months there was not much progress on implementation of School Health Programme in MDM running schools in our State. But due to intervention of State and District Officials, the situation has improved. Much progress on implementation on Health Programme has been noticed on our visit to Jhargram Sub-division and other areas of West Medinipur district a few months back. We are keeping close touch with Health Department Officials so that each and every MDM running school gets the facility of School Health Programme regularly.
5. **Problem of fuel:-** We have requested all Nodal Officers and implementing agencies to introduce smokeless chulla as much as possible in MDM cooking. In urban areas we gave stress on LPG gas cooking in the interest of cleaner environmental ambience. But because of recent price hike of LPG cylinders and the declaration of the Oil Companies notifying MDM gas supply as 'Non-domestic category', the Nodal Officers as well as the school authorities are facing tremendous fund crunch in arranging LPG cooking for MDM purpose. As an interim measure, we have instructed all Nodal Officers to utilize MME fund for installation of LPG connection and purchase of LPG cylinders to keep the MDM service uninterrupted. Govt. of India was also informed of this decision for information with the request to ratify the decision and also to issue suitable instructions on this important issue in the interest of smooth MDM service. Presently there is no problem of getting LPG gas connection.
6. **Evaluation study on food norms of children of primary schools:-** It is true that in tribal areas the students of primary classes need rice more than 100gm as MDM. The JRM also noticed this issue. Our local survey and monitoring reports also corroborate the claim. Hence, Govt. of India may consider giving upper primary scale of rice to the students of primary classes in tribal areas.
7. **Special measures for Kolkata region:-** To tackle the problems in Kolkata region we have had several discussions with the Nodal Officers of Kolkata region, the FCI Authority, LPG Authority, Teachers and some reputed NGOs for improvement of the shortcomings in Kolkata in regard to MDM with the cooperation of all concerned. As a result of these measures taken, much improvement in implementation of MDM in the schools of Kolkata has been noticed. We are now thinking of running small clustered kitchens involving 5 to 10 schools with the help of some reputed and philanthropic NGOs. 65 numbers of centralized kitchens is already operational in Kolkata region for serving cooked MDM to school students of this area. All the cluster authorities were instructed to give much attention while carrying cooked food from centralized kitchen to schools in hygienic and safe container with firm lids. We have also requested all Nodal and Implementing Authorities to see that the Proper headgear and aprons are mandatorily used by the member of SHG/Cooks. As a result of persuasion from all corners, the quality of MDM rice supply in the schools of Kolkata has improved. The Chief Secretary, Govt. of West Bengal, in consultation with the Food & supplies Deptt., Govt. of West Bengal, has issued an instruction to lift good quality of rice for MDM purpose in 10 districts of West Bengal including Kolkata, if necessary, out of State procured rice held by the Food & Supplies Deptt., Govt. of West Bengal, vide memo no. 297-ES/CMDP/GEN/7/2012(PTLL), dt: 18.06.2012. After the issue of this order the situation in supply of good quality rice in the schools of Kolkata is being noticed.

8. **Grievance Redressal Mechanism:-** Grievance Redressal Mechanism has been set up from State Level to Block Level in our State. Grievances related to MDM can be lodged and disposed of, as per nature of the complaint, at respective level. (viz. School Level, Sub-Inspector of schools /Block Level, Sub-Division Level, District Level and also State Level). Required telephone numbers and the names of contact persons have been displayed in every MDM running schools as well as in the Web-site of School Education Department, Govt. of West Bengal. Besides, anybody can register Grievance through E-mail also. Again, Complaint / Grievance box has also been erected at all MDM offices.

We have given much stress on speedy disposal of Grievances received through any media. During the last three years we received 255 numbers of complaints about MDM from various corners of our State, may that be in the form of written complaint, complaint received through E-mail, news published in the newspaper, our personal visit to schools and even complaint received over phone/fax etc. Out of these, 247 numbers of complaints have already been resolved and the remaining are in process.

9. **Poor Quality of rice :-** With our active persuasion with FCI and the Officials of State Food & Supplies Deptt., the quality of rice in Kolkata region has been improved. We have categorically informed all the schools of Kolkata region not to lift MDM rice if found below standard.

Moreover, after the issue of the Chief Secretary's circular, instructing Food Deptt., Govt. of West Bengal, to supply State procured rice, in case of necessity, for MDM purpose, situation has really improved in respect of receipt of good quality of rice by schools from FCI in Kolkata.

10. **Convergence with other Departments:-** To increase coordination among the concerned departments for successful implementation of MDM scheme in our State. The Chief Secretary, Govt. of West Bengal, vide his circular no. 111-CS/2011 dt: 9.06.2011, has issued a guideline mentioning duties and responsibilities of each level of officers engaged in MDM scheme. He has also directed all concerned to submit the progress report on each issue by each implementing agency regularly to the State Nodal Authority (Secretary, School Education Department/Project Director, CMDMP) so that he can review the progress or lacuna, if any, in the State Level monitoring meeting in every quarter. As a result, the convergence with related departments has been better which contributed to improvement of qualitative aspect of MDM scheme in our State.

Yours faithfully,



Arnab Roy

Secretary to the Govt. of West Bengal