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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION & LITERACY  
SHASTRI BHAVAN  
NEW DELHI-110 115

D.O. No.13-2/2012-MDM 2-1

Dated 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2012

Dear *Ranmeet,*

The 4<sup>th</sup> Review Mission consisting of the representatives from Government of India, Office of the Supreme Court Commissioner for MDM, UNICEF and State Government visited Punjab visited Amritsar and Pathankot districts from 3<sup>rd</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> October, 2012 to review the implementation of Mid Day Meal Scheme.

2. The Review Mission was pleased to note the proactive role of teachers in the implementation of Mid Day Meal scheme as well as the development of the schools. The Review Mission commends their contribution, particularly that of Shri Satnam Singh, Head Teacher, Dholesah village in the Majitha Block of Amritsar district. Shri Singh raised Rs.25.00 lakh for the school building. Shri Singh is voluntarily paying the electricity bills of the school since 1995. The ambience and environment of his school matched with the best private schools. Another Teacher, Ms Pavinder Kaur, Principal, Government Senior Secondary School, Sultanwind, Amritsar contributed Rs.1.00 lakh for implementation of Mid Day Meal Scheme when funds were not available in the school for the scheme. The Mid Day Meal Scheme was implemented in an uninterrupted manner because of her initiative.

3. The Review Mission also appreciates that the State Government provided funds from its resources for the procurement of eating utensils by schools. The eating utensils were available in more than 90% of the schools and supply was awaited in the remaining schools; the order had been placed with the local manufacturers/suppliers who had also collaborated in this social cause by delivering the eating utensils in most of the schools without levying transportation charges for these utensils. The State Government also deserves appreciation for providing Rs.. 200/- from State Government's resources to Cook-cum-helpers over and above approved norms of Rs. 1000/-. I am also pleased to note that the payment of honorarium to cook-cum-helpers has been made to August, 2012 or September, 2012 in some schools. I would however, advise that e-transfer of the honorarium in the bank account of cook-cum-helpers may be ensured for speed of operations and transparency.



4. The Review Mission observed that central assistance released during December, 2011 was made available to the Education Department by State Finance Department in the month of July, 2012. Although mid-day meal scheme was continued by school authorities, by taking credit facility from local shops, you may like to impress up on State Finance Department to adopt Green Channel System of Andhra Pradesh under which each month's requirement of funds is released in advance to the implementing agencies. A copy of these guidelines has already been circulated to all State Governments.

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

**i) Coverage of children:**

The coverage of primary and upper primary children during 2012-13 has gone down from 84 % against 80% coverage during 2011-12. It has gone down from 91% to 85% for Upper Primary schools during the same period. The reasons for this decline may be ascertained and necessary steps may be taken to increase the coverage of children under the scheme.

**ii) Proposed Structure for MDMS in the State:**

No Director/Additional Director/Joint Director/Deputy Director/Assistant Director has been assigned exclusively to Mid-Day Meal Scheme. Review Mission has suggested an elaborate management structure at State, District and Block levels. Kindly take necessary action in this regard and fill up various posts on deputation/contractual basis. The expenditure on this account can be debited to MME component of the Scheme. In case the State Govt. requires additional funds for this purpose, a detailed proposal may be submitted to MHRD so that we are able to provide additional funds from the National Component of MME.

**iii) Enhancement of Contract Fee to Assistant Block Manager under MDMS:**

There is a disparity in the contract fee of Assistant Block Manager under MDMS and that of Accountants under SSA. Both the posts have comparable responsibilities and similar nature of duties. Therefore, action may be taken to remove or narrow down this disparity.

**iv) Strengthening of Management, Monitoring and Supervision of the Scheme in Punjab:**

The State has started feeding annual data into the MHRD's MIS web portal but the pace of data entry is very slow and considerable efforts need to be made to ensure data entry for all schools. You may kindly ensure that all annual data entries are made immediately and action for monthly data

entries is also taken in a time bound manner. In case of any problem, NICs designated officers and nodal officer in MHRD may be contacted for resolving the outstanding issues.

**v) Release of funds to NCLP Schools:**

The State Govt. of Punjab has started providing assistance to NCLP schools at the Upper Primary norms w.e.f. 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2012. The District Education Officer releases funds to the Project Director, NCLP who in turn releases them to NCLP schools. The circuitous route for the release of funds delays their availability with NCLP schools. As recommended by the Review Mission, the District Education Officer should release funds to NCLP schools directly as is being done for primary and upper primary schools under his jurisdiction.

**vi) Utilization of the Interest accrued on the MDM Grant:**

The Review Mission observed that the State/District had earned interest on the MDM funds kept in saving bank account in Banks. The interest earned by the State/District authorities could have used this interest for the purpose for which original grant was released. This would have saved many schools from taking credit facility or making contribution from their own pocket during the period when the schools were running short of funds. Kindly take necessary action in this regard hereafter.

**vii) Release of cooking cost:**

Cooking Cost is a vital component under Mid-Day Meal Scheme for meeting the cost of pulses, vegetables, oil/fats, condiments, fuel etc. per child per school day under Mid-Day Meal Scheme. The cooking cost has to be provided independent of the food grains utilised per child per day. But Review Missions noticed that School Management Committees utilize cooking cost in proportion to the food grain consumed per child per school day. It is once again re-iterated that cooking cost should be released to the implementing agencies as per the number of children who availed Mid-Day Meals and should not be linked with the utilization of food grains under MDMS.

**viii) Adjustment of Unspent balance of Food grain from next month/quarters**

The Review Mission noticed that some of the schools were having unspent balance of food grain. The District Authorities, however, dumped additional food grain without taking into account the unspent food grain available in the schools. The schools were at a loss to know what to do with the food grain lying with them in excess of their monthly/quarterly requirement. It is, therefore, suggested that all district authorities must seek information on the

unspent balance of food grain available at the school at the end of each month/quarter and adjust it from the future supply of food grain.

**ix) Verification of the Accounts/ Records of MDMS:**

The State Govt. could not submit the correct information to MHRD on the utilization of funds released during 2011-12. The central assistance of Rs. 50.00 crore was released in December, 2011 under second instalment to Punjab. The State Government stated that it has utilised this amount. Therefore, further central assistance of Rs. 25.15 crores was released during 2011-12.

Subsequently, it was informed that State Finance Department had released Rs.75.15 crore to Education Department in July, 2012. Thus the State Government had not furnished correct information on the utilisation of funds released during 2011-12. This situation should be avoided as it affects the credibility of the State functionaries.

**x) Transfer of Funds & Manpower to Pathankot:**

Pathankot has been recently created as a new district from the area of Gurdaspur district. But the manpower and financial management of MDMS in Pathankot is still with Gurdaspur district. It may be ensured that necessary man-power and financial resources are made available to Pathankot urgently.

**xi) Convergence**

The Review Mission observed that toilets in the schools were not clean and most of them did not have proper water supply. Kindly ensure that water supply in these toilets is provided and they are regularly cleaned because they can become source of serious infections particularly to the girl students. This is also a major reason for keeping the girl child out of school.

Health check-ups were carried out in all the visited schools but Iron Folic Acid and Micronutrients were not administered to the children by the State Health Department. This needs to be taken up with the Health Authorities.

**xii) Other Issues**

Some of the other areas of concern indicated in the Report of Review Mission relate to:

- Need for State level Review Missions for monitoring the implementation of scheme in poorly performing districts,

- Engaging young personnel for enthusiasm and dynamism along with experienced retired personnel instead of engaging all retired personnel as District Managers under MDMS,
- Proper dissemination of information to the field functionaries,
- Display of MDM logo and daily menu in all schools,
- Delivery of LPG at School level by the dealers,
- Need for social audit of the Scheme through local stakeholders.

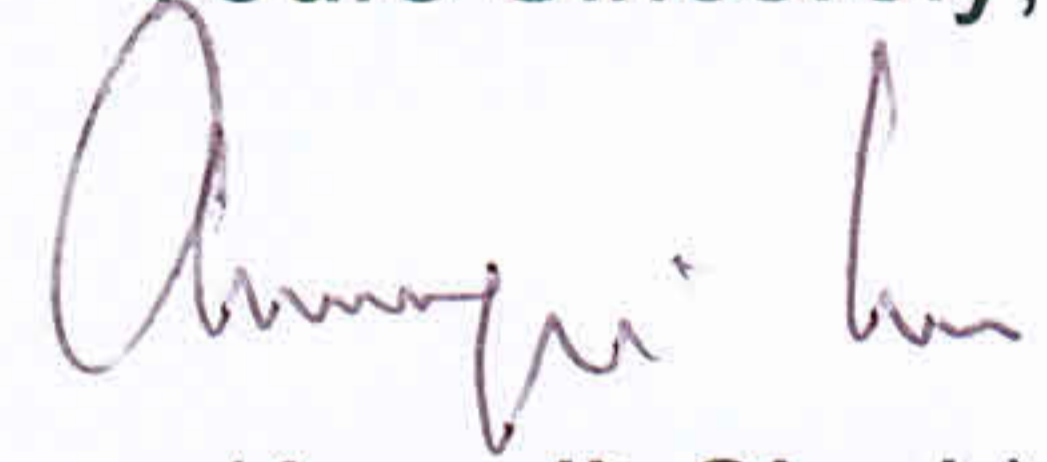
Kindly take necessary action on these issues as well.

6. 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 school. **Do remember, this is truly God's own work which we all are privileged to carry out.**

Please feel free to write if there is anything we can do at this end for effective implementation of MDMS in your State.

With regards,

Yours Sincerely,



(Amarjit Singh)

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