

Centre to pay more for PM Poshan scheme in schools

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Context

The material cost for cooking hot meals in schools under the PM-POSHAN scheme has been enhanced by 9.5%, considering the inflation index, causing an additional cost of ?954 crore to the exchequer in the financial year 2025-26, the Education Ministry said in a statement on Thursday.

PM Poshan

• In September 2021, the Union Cabinet approved the **Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman or PM-POSHAN** for providing **one hot cooked meal in Government and Government-aided schools** with the financial outlay of Rs 1.31 trillion.

• The scheme replaced the national programme for mid-day meal in schools or Mid-day Meal Scheme.

• **Primary (1-5) and upper primary (6-8)** schoolchildren are currently entitled to 100 grams and 150 grams of food grains per working day each, to ensure a minimum of 700 calories.

• It also covers students of pre - primary classes (children in the 3-5 year age group).

• Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Education Content.

• The **objectives** of the Scheme are to address two of the pressing problems for the majority of children in India, viz. **hunger and education** by:

1Improving the nutritional status of eligible children in Government and Government aided schools.

2Encouraging poor children, belonging to disadvantaged sections, to attend school more regularly and help them concentrate on classroom activities.

3Providing nutritional support to children of the elementary stage in drought affected and disaster affected areas even during summer vacation.