

**NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR NUTRITIONAL
SUPPORT TO PRIMARY EDUCATION
(MID-DAY MEAL SCHEME)**

**MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
(DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION & LITERACY)**

**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(2009-10)**

NINTH REPORT

FIFTEENTH LOK SABHA



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

NINTH REPORT
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(2009-10)

(FIFTEENTH LOK SABHA)

NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR NUTRITIONAL
SUPPORT TO PRIMARY EDUCATION
(MID-DAY MEAL SCHEME)

MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
(DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION & LITERACY)



Presented to Lok Sabha on 11.3.2010

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 10.3.2010

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

February, 2010/Phalguna, 1931 (Saka)

P.A.C.1904

Price: Rs. 28.00

© 2010 BY LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

Published under Rule 382 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha (Eleventh Edition) and Printed by the General Manager, Govt. of India Press, Minto Road, New Delhi-110002

CONTENTS

| | PAGE |
|--|-------|
| COMPOSITION OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (2009-10) | (iii) |
| INTRODUCTION | (v) |
| PART-I Report | |
| I. Introductory | 1 |
| II. Organisational set up | 1 |
| III. Budget and Expenditure | 1 |
| IV. Input System for the Scheme | 2 |
| V. Implementation of the Scheme | 3 |
| VI. Objective—Supporting the universalisation of primary education by improving enrolment, attendance and retention | 6 |
| VII. Impact on enrolment | 8 |
| VIII. Impact on attendance | 8 |
| IX. Impact on retention | 9 |
| X. Supply of Foodgrains and Stock out with FCI godowns | 10 |
| XI. Drawal of foodgrains in excess of requirement | 11 |
| XII. Diversion of funds and foodgrains | 11 |
| XIII. Provisioning of cooking infrastructure | 12 |
| XIV. Monitoring and evaluation | 13 |
| PART-II Observations and Recommendations | 14 |

APPENDICES

| | |
|--|----|
| I. Minutes of the Third Sitting of Public Accounts Committee (2009-10) held on 27th October, 2009 | 19 |
| II. Minutes of the Eighth Sitting of the Public Accounts Committee (2009-10) held on 28th January, 2010 | 21 |

COMPOSITION OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
(2009-10)

*Shri Gopinath Munde — *Chairman*

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Anandrao Vithoba Adsul
3. Dr. Baliram
4. Shri Khagen Das
5. Shri Naveen Jindal
6. Shri Satpal Maharaj
7. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
8. Dr. K. Sambasiva Rao
9. Shri Jaswant Singh
10. Shri Jitendra Singh (Alwar)
11. Kunwar Rewati Raman Singh
12. Shri Yashwant Sinha
13. Shri K. Sudhakaran
14. Dr. M. Thambidurai
15. Shri Aruna Kumar Vundavalli

Rajya Sabha

16. Shri Prasanta Chatterjee
17. Shri Sharad Anantrao Joshi
18. Shri Ashwani Kumar
19. Shri Shanta Kumar
20. Dr. K. Malaisamy
21. Shri N.K. Singh
22. Prof. Saif-ud-Din Soz

SECRETARIAT

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| 1. Shri Ashok Sarin | — | <i>Joint Secretary</i> |
| 2. Shri Raj Shekhar Sharma | — | <i>Director</i> |
| 3. Shri Sanjeev Sharma | — | <i>Deputy Secretary</i> |

*Appointed as the Chairman of the Committee *w.e.f.* 6th January, 2010 *vice* Shri Jaswant Singh resigned from the Chairmanship of the Committee.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Public Accounts Committee as authorised by the Committee, do present this Ninth Report (15th Lok Sabha) on "National Programme for Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid-day Meal Scheme)" based on Report No. PA-13 of 2008 of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India Union Government (Performance Audit).

2. The Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year ended March, 2007, Union Government, No. PA 13 of 2008 (Performance Audit) was laid on the Table of the House on 24.10.2008.

3. The Committee took evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of School Education and Literacy) on the subject at their sitting held on 27.10.2009. The Committee considered and finalised this Report at their sitting held on 28th January, 2010. Minutes of the sittings form Appendices to the Report.

4. For facility of reference and convenience, the Observations and Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report.

5. The Committee would like to express their thanks to the representatives of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of School Education and Literacy) for tendering evidence before the Committee and furnishing information that the Committee desired in connection with the examination of the subject.

6. The Committee place on record their appreciation of the assistance rendered to them in the matter by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.

NEW DELHI;
26 February, 2010

6 Phalgun, 1931 (Saka)

GOPINATH MUNDE,
Chairman,
Public Accounts Committee.

PART I REPORT

I. Introductory

The National Programme for Nutritional Support to Primary Education (commonly known as the Mid-Day Meal Scheme) was launched as a centrally-sponsored scheme in August 1995. The scheme was intended to boost universalisation of primary education by increasing enrolment, attendance and retention levels of children and simultaneously impacting on the nutritional levels of primary students across the country in phased manner by 1997-98. The scheme was further revised in 2004 and again in 2006. The scheme of 2006 was intended to:

- (i) Improve the nutritional status of children in classes I-V in Government, local body and Government aided schools, and Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative & Innovative Education (AIE) centres;
- (ii) Encouraging poor children belonging to disadvantaged sections to attend schools more regularly and help them concentrate on classroom activities; and
- (iii) Providing nutritional support to children of primary stage in drought affected areas during summer vacation.

The nutritional value of the cooked mid-day meal was increased from 300 to 450 calories and the protein content therein from 8-12 grams to 12 grams. The scheme of 2006 also provided for adequate quantities of micronutrients like iron, folic acid, vitamin-A etc.

II. Organisational set up

2. The Mid-day meal scheme is approved, funded and monitored by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Elementary Education and Literacy). The Joint Secretary (Elementary Education-I) is in-charge of the scheme under the overall supervision of the Secretary, Department of Elementary Education and Literacy. One Deputy Secretary and one Deputy Education Adviser assist the Joint Secretary (Elementary Education-I) in discharging his duties under the scheme.

The implementation of the scheme rests with the State/Union Territory Governments. Each State has its own implementing, monitoring and control structure.

III. Budget and Expenditure

3. The table given below shows the details of budget allocation and expenditure from the years 2002-03 till 2006-07:

(Rupees in crore)

| Year | Total grant as per Appropriation accounts | Expenditure as per Appropriation accounts |
|---------|---|---|
| 2002-03 | 199.03 | 1099.00 |
| 2003-04 | 1375.00 | 1375.00 |
| 2004-05 | 1588.55 | 1588.55* |
| 2005-06 | 3186.34 | 3184.00 |
| 2006-07 | 5234.27 | 5230.74 |

*As per Audit there was difference of Rs. 1232 crore in the expenditure as per records of the Ministry (MDM Division) and as per Appropriation Accounts. Ministry stated (September 2007) that the amount was released as additional Central assistance by Ministry of Finance to States directly.

4. It has been stated by the Audit that the expenditure as stated above excludes value of subsidy of Rs. 6898.29* crore allowed to Food Corporation of India on supply of foodgrains for the scheme during the years 2002-03 to 2006-07.

5. In the post evidence reply the Department of School Education and Literacy intimated the Committee that the budget allocation and expenditure incurred during 2007-08 and 2008-09 is as under:

| (Rs. in crore) | | |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Year | Budget allocation | Expenditure |
| 2007-08 | 6678.00 | 4930.77 |
| 2008-09 | 8000.00 | 6982.54 |

6. When asked about the value of subsidy allowed for the scheme during the years 2007-08 and 2008-09, the Ministry simply informed in a post evidence reply:

"Department of Food and Public Distribution has been requested *vide* letter no. 8-4/2008-MDM dated 16.11.2009 to furnish the details of subsidy received in the year 2007-08 to 2008-09. The information is awaited".

IV. Input System for the Scheme

7. According to Audit, Central assistance was provided to the States by way of:

- (i) Free supply of foodgrains from the nearest godown of FCI at the rate of 100 grams of wheat/rice per student per school day (cost of which was reimbursed to FCI by Government of India);
- (ii) Reimbursement of actual cost of transportation in the form of subsidy for transportation of foodgrains from the nearest FCI Depot to the primary schools, subject to a maximum of Rs. 50 per quintal with additional cost to the States which were hilly, economically backward and/or lacked rail facilities**.
- (iii) Cost of cooking (including ingredients such as pulses, vegetables, cooking oil, condiments, cost of fuel and wages payable to the cooking agency) was being met by the States until September, 2004. However, from 2004-05, the Government of India allowed the States Governments to earmark a maximum of 15 per cent of the additional Central assistance (ACA) under the Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) for meeting cooking costs. Assistance for cooking costs at the rate of Rs. 1.00 per child per school day was provided from September, 2004 in addition to the above ACA of 15 per cent. Rates of assistance for cooking costs were revised to Rs. 1.80 per child per school day for special category States in the Northern Eastern Region provided these States contributed a minimum 20 paise (Rs. 1.50 per child per school day for other States/Union Territories provided these contributed minimum of 50 paise) from 16 June, 2006;

*Calculations, according to Audit, are based on the difference between economic rate and the BPL rate of food grains.

**Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, Sikkim, Tripura, Assam and Uttarakhand.

- (iv) Physical infrastructure such as kitchen-cum-store, adequate water supply for drinking and cooking, cooking devices, containers for storage of foodgrains and other ingredients and utensils for cooking and serving were to be provided by States/local bodies by utilizing their funds along with those available under various centrally-sponsored schemes. Assistance to construct a kitchen-cum-store up to a maximum of Rs. 60,000 per unit per school and replacement of kitchen devices at the overall average cost of Rs. 5000 per school was also provided *w.e.f* 16 June, 2006 under the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education; and
- (v) Assistance for Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (MME) at a rate not less than 0.90 per cent of the total assistance on items such as foodgrains, transport cost and cooking cost was provided only from 2004-05. This was increased to a minimum of at least 1.8 per cent of such assistance from 2005-06. However, 0.2 per cent of such assistance was retained/utilized by the Central Government out of the total 2 per cent provided in the scheme.

V. Implementation of the Scheme

8. It has been brought out by Audit that at the local level, the State Governments were expected to assign responsibility for implementation and supervision of the programme to an appropriate body *e.g.* Gram Panchayat, Municipality, Village Education Committee, Parent-Teacher Association and School Management-cum-development Committee. Responsibility for cooking would as far as possible be assigned to local women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Youth Clubs affiliated to Nehru Yuvak Kendras (NYKs), Village Education Committees (VECs), School Management-cum-Development Committees (SMDCs), Parent Teacher Associations/Mother Teacher Associations (PTAs/MTAs), or good Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) where available.

9. As per the scheme of 2004, the overall responsibility for implementation of the programme vested with the State/UT Administration. This included providing necessary infrastructure such as a kitchen-cum-store, adequate water for drinking and cooking/washing, cooking devices, containers for storage and utensils for cooking and serving making all logistical/administrative arrangements necessary for regular serving of a wholesome, cooked mid-day meal of satisfactory quality and nutritive value of 300 calories and 8-12 grams of protein content (raised to 450 calories and 12 grams of protein content in the revised scheme 2006) to eligible schools/Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS)/Alternative and Innovative Education (AIE) centres and providing financial and other inputs over and above those to be provided by way of central assistance.

10. On being asked whether the each of the organizations such as SHGs/VECs/NGOs etc. were assigned the responsibility for implementation in supervision of the programme, the Ministry stated in a written note:

"District-wise data is not maintained by the GOI. However, after receiving this questionnaire relevant information has been sought from the States/UTs which is still awaited. It will be made available on receiving it from them".

The Ministry also intimated that in 35 States/UTs the involvement of Self Help Groups (SHGs)/Mahila Mandal/Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI)/Standard Monitoring Committee (SMC)/Village Education Committee (VECs)/School Management

Development Committees (SMDCs)/Mother Groups/Parent Teacher Association (PTA)/NGOs/Centralised Kitchen was in present.

11. On a specific query whether the scheme was a Government programme or private programme, the Secretary, Department of Elementary Education and literacy stated during evidence:

"It is a completely Government programme except that the community is encouraged to contribute in things like utensils, plates for children to eat on, glasses and so on. All the crucial elements of the programme are provided for by the Central Government and the State Governments".

12. As regards the involvement of NGOs in the programme, the Secretary stated:

"We do have information about NGOs being involved in the programme. According to information available with us, in about 20 States NGOs are being utilized for the mid-meal programme and this is actually in keeping with the guidelines of the mid-day meal scheme where we have allowed voluntary organizations to be associated for the supply of the mid-day meal and for provision of resource support to the programme in terms of training, monitoring and research".

13. On being asked to provide a list of NGOs, Trusts or any other organization (other than Government Agencies involved in implementating the Mid-Day Meal programme in any manner in all the States/Union Territories of India, the Ministry furnished the information received from 10 States. The list showed nil involvement of agencies in the States of Jammu & Kashmir, Meghalaya, Government of Andaman and Nicobar Administration, Union Territory of Daman and Diu, Government of Lakshadweep etc., but it shows heavy involvement of Public Private Partnership (PPP) in the States of Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. In Rajasthan, NGOs were active in 22 Districts with 7,443 number of schools having a capacity of 7,42,598 students. In the State donations were also received in MDM trust to the tune of Rs. 90,35,101.00 lakhs. Donors also contributed a sum of Rs. 2,183.96 lakhs for the NGOs in PPP in this programme. In the State of Uttar Pradesh NGOs were implementing the MDM programme in 32 districts. In the West Bengal only one NGO is stated to have been involved in the implementation of the programme.

14. When the Committee enquired about the guidelines laid down for engagement of voluntary organizations with the programme, the Ministry in a written note stated as under:

"As per Guidelines of Mid-Day Meal Scheme 2006, the major groups of activities for which Voluntary Organizations may be associated with the programme are—

- Supply of cooked mid-day meal, and
- Provision of resource support to the programme, *e.g.*
 - ▶ Training and capacity building,
 - ▶ Monitoring and evaluation, and
 - ▶ Research.

Assignment of supply responsibilities to Voluntary Organizations:

Identification of voluntary organizations, which are suitable for being assigned supply responsibility under the NP-NSPE, 2006 for a school or group of schools may

be done by the City level SMC for Municipal towns and District level SMC for all other areas. Once a voluntary organization is so identified, the decision to actually award supply work to it for a school or a group of schools may be taken by a body empowered in this behalf by the State Government, *e.g.* the Gram Panchayat, VEC/SMC/PTA, Municipal Committee/Corporation, etc. The City or District SMC should keep the following aspects in mind while determining suitability of a voluntary organization for supply of cooked mid-day meal.

- (i) The voluntary agencies should not discriminate in any manner on the basis of religion, caste and creed, and should not use the programme for propagation of any religious practice.
- (ii) The voluntary agency should be a body that is registered under the Societies Registration act or the Public Trust Act, and should have been in existence for a minimum period of two years.
- (iii) Commitment to undertake supply responsibility on a no-profit basis.
- (iv) Financial and logistic capacity to supply the mid-day meal on the requisite scale.
- (v) Commitment to abide by the parameters of NP-NSPE, 2006 particularly with regard to the prescription of eligible children, nutrition content etc.
- (vi) Willingness to work with PRIs/Municipal bodies in accordance with relevant guidelines of the State Government.
- (vii) It will furnish to the body assigning the work to it an Annual Report along with audited statement of accounts in terms of all grants received from the State Government, both in cash and kind, duly certified by an approved Chartered Accountant.
- (viii) The voluntary organisation shall not entrust/sub-contract the programme or divert any part of the assistance (foodgrains/money) to any other organization/agency.
- (ix) Commitment to return to the State Government any permanent/semi permanent assets acquired by the Voluntary Organisation from the grants received under the programme, once the Voluntary organization ceases to undertake the supply work.
- (x) All accounts, stock and registers maintained by the voluntary organisation should be open to inspection by officers appointed by the State Government.
- (xi) State Governments may prescribe such other conditions, as they may deem appropriate in addition to the conditions stated above.

Engaging Voluntary Organizations for Resource Support:

The State/UT level SMC may identify voluntary organizations for providing resource support to NP-NSPE, 2006 in the form of training and capacity building programmes, monitoring and evaluation and research studies".

15. The Committee also wanted to know in unequivocal terms whether any of the sitting or former Member of Parliament, his near family Members or relatives have been involved in any capacity through an NGO or any other body in the implementation of the Scheme and also desired to know whether the spouse/relative of any of the District Collectors or any other official of the Ministry/State Government/District Administration/Block Administration has been involved in the implementation of the Scheme in any capacity. Even after granting two extensions for furnishing the reply, the Ministry could not provide any concrete information in this regard but stated:

"All States/UTs have been requested to give the information. In spite of repeated reminders on phone, the information is still awaited".

VI. Objective—Supporting the universalisation of primary education by improving enrolment, attendance and retention

16. Audit has pointed out that though the scheme had been operational for more than 12 years and involved annual outlays reaching Rs. 5234.27 crore in 2006-07, the Ministry had not established any system to assess the outcome of the scheme in terms of well-defined parameters. according to Audit, the Mid-Day-Meal Scheme (MDM) which was to provide the impetus for attracting and retaining children in the schools is being implemented with the primary purpose for providing one daily meal without link to the education, nutrition and health objectives. This instrumentality has not been followed up with a comprehensive detailed impact analysis on support to the educational, nutritional and health objectives.

Audit has observed that the objectives of increasing enrolment, retention and attendance and impacting on nutrition , which were set right from the start of the programme in 1995, were not dependent on cooked meal or uncooked ration. Thus, the crucial aspect of the system of measurement of the outcomes of the scheme objectives had remained elusive for a long period. The MDM scheme was launched with the aim of attracting children to schools and, thus, bringing about improvement in enrolment. However, the objective related to enrolment was consequently not mentioned in the scheme objectives of 2006.

In this connection, the Ministry have stated in their advance information that as the objectives of this scheme were the same and supplementary to the main programmes on Elementary Education and Health and Nutrition under which these parameters are being assessed under these main schemes, so no separate assessment of impact exclusively due to Mid-Day Meal (MDM) was got done.

17. The Committee enquired about the assessment made by the Ministry, the Secretary Department of School Education and Literacy whilst deposing before the Committee said:

"The first issue that I want to touch upon is the observation of the Audit that objectives of the Scheme have not been pursued or monitored and that there is a lack of clarity in the objectives. The Department of School Education and Literacy implements two flagship programme for universalisation of elementary education. One is Sarva Siksha Abhiyan and the other is the Mid-Day Meal Programme. Both these Schemes have common objectives and they also

have a common Mission structure. There is one National Mission and one Executive Body for both Sarva Siksha Abhiyan and the MDM Scheme. There are 42 independent monitoring institutions which monitor both the programmes together. So if a particular monitoring institution goes to a particular district to monitor the SSA, that same monitoring institution is also entrusted with the responsibility of monitoring the Mid-Day Meal Programme. No separate mission has been created for the Mid-Day Meal Programme as it is seen as a programme that should serve the ends of the SSA by addressing the problem of class room hunger. In this sense, the Mid-Day Meal supplements the efforts of the SSA programme and together they have the goal of creating a positive environment which would lead to universalisation of elementary education. Together, these two programmes seek to make elementary education available and accessible to all children specially to those children who belong to the most disadvantaged sections so, the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, supplementing the SSA to bring these children to school, to enroll and to retain them in school becomes a very important factor and support for SSA.

The basic purpose of the Mid-Day Meal Scheme is to help children overcome hunger in school, to be able to concentrate better on class room activities. The objective of the Scheme is also to increase enrolment, attendance and retention, to improve nutritional status of the children in elementary schools, to decrease the number of drop-outs, to teach them hygienic practices, to develop the feeling of togetherness and social harmony because of the opportunity to eat together and to break social divide such as caste, gender community divides. One very important step that Mid-Day Meal Scheme takes in this direction is to prescribe that the cook, as far as possible should belong to SC and ST communities. For the SSA and the Mid-Day Meal Programme and other programmes of this nature, to take effect, it takes a pretty long time. It is a long gestation period for Schemes of this type."

The witness also added:—

"There has been some rephrasing of the objectives in the revised guidelines of the Mid-Day Meal Scheme. But the basic purpose remains the same to address the class room hunger and to create an environment for universalisation of elementary education through addressing class room hunger. I also want to mention that just as the Mid-Day Meal Scheme is implemented as part of SSA in the Ministry of HRD, Department of School Education, similarly the arrangement is that the Department of Education implements the Scheme in 31 States and UTs and it is only in four States that some other Department implements the Scheme. That is for historical reasons. All other components for universalisation of elementary education have been practically subsumed under Sarva Siksha Abhiyan. But we continue to implement the Mid-Day-Meal Scheme as a separate Scheme. It seems that MDM is a stand alone programme because it has separate budget allocations but that is essentially because of its size and administrative ease. If it were not such a large programme requiring this kind of an administrative effort and attention it too would have been subsumed in the SSA itself."

18. The Committee wanted to know why did the Ministry not establish any system to assess the outcome of the scheme in terms of well-defined parameters to ensure proper evaluation of the scheme specially when it entails budgetary allocation of as much as Rs. 5234.27 crore (in 2006-07). In the post evidence reply it has been intimated by the Ministry that for the year 2008-09 budgetary allocation was of Rs. 8000.00 crores. It is not practicable and feasible to measure the exclusive impact of Mid-Day Meal on educational, social and nutritional development of children. Since MDM Scheme supplements the efforts of SSA towards universalisation of Elementary Education and under SSA the educational parameters are being monitored it is not considered advisable to duplicate the same efforts under the MDM also. Measurement of nutritional level is the mandate of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and they have been requested by this Ministry to measure the nutritional status of these children in the next round of NFHS. This Ministry has also commissioned a comprehensive evaluation of the Scheme to the Programme Evaluation Organization (PEO) of the Planning Commission in December 2005. The report is awaited.

VII. Impact on Enrolment

19. According to Audit, the MDM Scheme was launched with the aim of attracting children to schools and, thus, bringing about improvement in enrolment. However, the objective related to enrolment was consequently not mentioned in the scheme objectives of 2006. The Ministry neither analyzed/used the available State level data to assess the impact on enrolment nor fixed any measurable target to improve the coverage of children.

20. The Committee wanted to know from the Ministry whether food/meal provided under MDM Scheme could be leveraged for inducing poor and disadvantaged sections to send their children to school and whether the Ministry proposed to take any suitable action in this regard. Replying to the query the Ministry intimated through a written note:—

"It is generally understood that amongst the children attending Government schools, a large number belong to the disadvantaged social and economic groups of the society. Since MDM is provided in all the Government, Government-aided and Local Body schools and EGS/AIE centres including Madaras and Maqtabas supported under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, it serves the purpose of bringing the children of poor and disadvantaged groups to schools."

VIII. Impact on Attendance

21. It has been brought out in Audit Report that the scheme objectives of 1995 and 2004 included among others, a positive impact on the attendance rate of primary school children. The objective related to attendance was dropped from the scheme objectives of 2006 for reasons not on record. The Ministry did not analyse the data of attendance received from the State governments to assess the impact of the scheme on attendance despite collecting the data of estimated average attendance rate since 2004. Neither the Ministry nor the State governments has established or even attempted to establish any system for measuring a direct relationship between increase in attendance and the MDM Scheme.

22. When asked as to why the dropout rates were not collected for MDM covered schools and whether the Ministry were serious about successful implementation of the scheme, the Ministry stated through a written note:—

“As mentioned earlier this Ministry has elaborate arrangements to track the changes/improvement in educational parameters including dropout rates. The information regarding dropout rate is being collected by Statistical Division of this Ministry in Selected Education Statistics. So, there is no need to collect the same data by MDM as it will be duplication.”

23. The Committee enquired about the reasons for not analysing the data of attendance received from Governments to assess the impact of MDM Scheme. Replying to the query the Ministry stated in a written reply:—

"It is not practicable and feasible to measure the exclusive impact of Mid-Day Meal on educational parameters including attendance. Since MDM scheme supplements the efforts of SSA towards universalisation of Elementary Education and under SSA the educational parameters are being monitored it is not considered advisable to duplicate the same efforts under the MDM also. MHRD commissioned a sample study on student attendance at primary and upper primary level in 2006-07 in 20 major States. The overall attendance at primary and upper primary level was 68.5% and 75.7% respectively. In 2009 another study on attendance of students was conducted. The attendance was found to be 75.7% at primary and 81.6% at upper primary level."

24. When asked specifically the reasons for not analysing direct relationship between increase in school attendance and MDM Scheme the Ministry intimated through a written note:—

"There are so many interventions, including Mid-Day Meal Scheme, to attract and retain children in schools. It will not be possible to analyse direct relationship between increase in school attendance and Mid-Day Meal Scheme. Further, the attendance in school is also dependent on several other factors including, *inter alia*, the overall school environment, availability of teachers, the teaching-learning process and the games and sports facilities available."

IX. Impact on Retention

25. Audit has brought out that the scheme also envisaged in 1995/2004 the decrease in the dropout rate was one of the outcomes. The Ministry had no scheme specific data with regard to dropout rates in Government and Government aided schools/ EGS/AIE centres and thus the impact of MDM on dropout rate could not be analyzed. The statistical division of the Ministry furnished data to audit showing a reduction in dropout rates. However, this data included private school children as well and therefore, could only serve as a broad base rather than specific indicator for dropouts. Thus, the dropout rates were not collected for MDM covered schools at all. The Ministry, consequently, was unable to assess the impact of MDM on retention levels. The states also did not establish a system of reliable data capture on retention/dropout rate of children in the primary schools covered under the scheme and its consolidation at district and block levels.

X. Supply of Foodgrains and Stock out with FCI godowns

26. The Committee were informed that the scheme *inter-alia*, provide for central assistance by way of free supply of foodgrains from the Food Corporation of India (FCI) as also reimbursement of the cost of transportation from the nearest FCI depot to the concerned primary school. The Committee were also apprised that the State Governments were responsible for ensuring availability of adequate stocks of foodgrains with the FCI so that there was a continuous supply of foodgrains to schools. However, in Jharkhand, foodgrains were short lifted (between 17 *per cent* and 32.33 *per cent*) during 2005-06 due to non-availability of stock with the FCI. In Uttarakhand, children in 75 test checked schools were deprived of the meal for the same reason. Instances of delay and short delivery of foodgrains in schools were also noticed in other States like Assam, Kerala, Arunachal Pradesh, Orissa and Bihar.

27. On a specific query of the Committee regarding measures taken to ensure availability of sufficient foodgrains, the Ministry replied that instances of non-availability of foodgrains in some States as pointed out by audit were brought to the notice of FCI for furnishing their comments and taking corrective action. The Ministry also stated that in case of Uttarakhand geographical condition hampered transporting of foodgrain. When further asked whether the comments from FCI have since been received, the Ministry in a post evidence reply submitted as under:—

"FCI has informed that the position of availability of foodgrains in these States can be assessed from the monthly closing balance of stocks. During the year 2005-06, the closing stocks of rice in the said States were as under:—

| Month | Closing Balance of Stocks (Rice) | | | | | | |
|----------|----------------------------------|-------------|-------|--------|-------------------|--------|-------|
| | Jharkhand | Uttarakhand | Assam | Kerala | Arunachal Pradesh | Orissa | Bihar |
| April-05 | 72 | 196 | 125 | 172 | 4 | 250 | 213 |
| May-05 | 67 | 177 | 114 | 180 | 5 | 252 | 220 |
| June-05 | 39 | 147 | 151 | 181 | 5 | 278 | 169 |
| July-05 | 23 | 129 | 126 | 221 | 6 | 264 | 162 |
| Aug.-05 | 13 | 87 | 118 | 229 | 8 | 216 | 151 |
| Sep.-05 | 11 | 67 | 99 | 195 | 7 | 232 | 119 |
| Oct.-05 | 11 | 42 | 58 | 116 | 5 | 148 | 104 |
| Nov.-05 | 13 | 55 | 45 | 84 | 4 | 87 | 81 |
| Dec.-05 | 14 | 87 | 50 | 112 | 6 | 142 | 66 |
| Jan.-06 | 18 | 115 | 46 | 134 | 3 | 249 | 93 |
| Feb.-06 | 39 | 169 | 71 | 130 | 1 | 336 | 194 |
| Mar.-06 | 47 | 98 | 91 | 198 | 4 | 405 | 226 |

From the above stated position, it can be seen that as compared to the proportionate monthly allocations, ample stocks were available with FCI throughout the year in the said States."

XI. Drawal of Foodgrains in Excess of Requirement

28. As per the scheme guidelines, the State nodal Departments were to furnish to the Ministry, by 15th January every year, a district-wise request for allocation of foodgrains based on the enrolment data of eligible primary schools and Education Guarantee Scheme/Alternative and Innovative Education (EGS/AIE) centres as on the preceding 30th September and anticipated enrolment in the next financial year. Based on the request, the Ministry in turn, allocated foodgrains district-wise. However, the Ministry did not maintain the figures of actual enrolment for the various States.

The scrutiny by Audit revealed that allocation of foodgrains was based in anticipated enrolment (not on actuals) and an average of attendance rate prepared district-wise and submitted by the Nodal Departments of the State concerned.

It was noticed that the projected enrolment was unrealistically high and led to significantly higher allotment of foodgrains by the GOI than what was drawn.

Based on the enrolment data furnished to audit and limiting it to the average attendance rate of the children, it was noticed that in ten States there was an unexplained excess drawal of foodgrains valued at Rs. 72.17 crore over the estimated requirement during 2002-07 as worked out by audit (as shown in the table given below). Since utilization certificates (paragraph 18.4) were not being received regularly by the Ministry, the systemic imperfections and the need for an explicit accounting for the foodgrains drawn was evident.

29. In regard to the drawal of foodgrains in excess of requirement the Ministry admitted in February, 2008 that allocation of foodgrains based on anticipated enrolment and average attendance rate was not realistic and from 2007-08 onwards, the Central assistance to the States was being provided on the basis of the number of children actually availing mid-day meal. The Audit has observed that excess withdrawal was noticed in 7 States *viz.* Tripura, UP, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Haryana and Rajasthan. The Ministry have, as revealed by Audit stated that they were pursuing the concerned States Governments to investigate the matter and send the ATR immediately.

30. When asked as to what action was being contemplated by the Ministry in order to adjust the quantities registering excess withdrawal, the Ministry intimated in a post evidence reply as under:—

"It appears that due to lack of understanding of the operation of scheme in the field this observation has come up. The States are entitled to lift within the allocated quantity. Whatever remains unutilized at the end of the financial year is treated as resource for the next year and is adjusted against the allocation of the next year."

XII. Diversion of Funds and Foodgrains

31. Audit has pointed out diversion of funds and foodgrains in 11 States/UTs *viz.*, Kerala, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Nagaland, Assam, A&N Islands, Meghalaya, Bihar, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh. The Ministry have informed that out of these 11 States, 5 States *i.e.* Bihar, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya and

Uttar Pradesh have furnished details of remedial measures taken by them in this regard. In a post evidence reply the Ministry informed that the information from three States *i.e.*, Government of Nagaland, UT administration of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Government of West Bengal had since been received. It is apparent to note that Ministry could not procure information from three States in a time bound manner to be submitted to the Committee. On a specific query whether any accountability on diversion of funds and foodgrains being fixed, the Ministry did not give any comments and the reply of the Ministry was silent on this aspect.

XIII. Provisioning of Cooking Infrastructure

32. The essential infrastructure for implementation of the cooked Mid-Day Meal Scheme was the pucca kitchen-cum-store, kitchen devices and clean drinking water. However, during audit of selected schools, deficiencies relating to kitchen sheds, kitchen devices and facility of clean drinking water noticed in 20 States. The Ministry stated in February 2008 that Central assistance for kitchen sheds was being provided in a phased manner and it intended to cover all schools by 2008-09.

33. It has been brought out by Audit that the Ministry prescribed in its guidelines that teachers should not be assigned responsibilities that would interfere with teaching and learning activities. Test check of the selected schools revealed that in most States the teachers were actively involved in receipt of foodgrains, procurement of vegetables and condiments, supervision of cooking and serving of meals thereby leading to a loss of valuable teaching time.

34. It was informed during oral evidence that only half of the total number of schools availing MDM Scheme had kitchen sheds despite allocating Rs. 5,000/- crores for the purpose. The Committee wanted to know what was the figures regarding construction of kitchen sheds in schools. Replying to the query the Ministry informed through a written note that:—

"In the year 2006-07, a decision to provide Central Assistance towards construction of kitchen shed-cum-stores @ Rs. 60,000 per unit to the States/UTs in a phased manner was taken. The total gap reported by the States/UTs in the annual plan and budget 2009-10 is 2,62,809 units. Since then Central assistance of Rs. 4480 crores has already been released to States/UTs for construction of 7,46,758 Kitchen Sheds as per details given below:—

| Year | Units | Amount (Rs. in crore) |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| (a) 2006-07 | 2,21,039 | Rs. 1,326 |
| (b) 2007-08 | 2,22,849 | Rs. 1,337 |
| (c) 2008-09 | 3,02,870 | Rs. 1,817 |
| Total | 7,46,758 | Rs. 4,480 |

The number of kitchen sheds completed and in progress are 2,73,131 and 98,142 respectively. As per the information provided by the States/UTs in their Annual Work Plan 2009-10, there are still 2,62,809 schools where no kitchen shed is sanctioned. It is

proposed to provide kitchen sheds in these schools during the balance period 11th Five Year Plan.

The progress in construction of kitchen-cum-store has been slow because many of the States/UTs have complained that the Central assistance released for this purpose is not adequate and the unit cost required to be enhanced. The Government of India has considered the request of the States/UTs and revised the policy for construction of kitchen-cum-store. Now, the Central Govt. will prescribe plinth area norm on the basis of number of children studying in the School. The cost of construction of kitchen-cum-store would be determined on the basis of prescribed plinth area and the State Schedule of Rate. The cost will be shared between Centre and NER State on 90:10 and other States/UTs on 75:25."

XIV. Monitoring and Evaluation

35. The original scheme provided for supervision, monitoring and evaluation by setting up committees at Block, District and State levels to generate community support for the goal of universalising primary education. At the national level the scheme had no monitoring in place until 2004 when a National Level Steering cum Monitoring Committee was prescribed in the revised scheme (September 2004). The Steering cum Monitoring Committees (SMCs) were to be set up at four levels *viz.* National, State, District and Block with functions of guidance, monitoring, coordination and taking action on reports of independent monitoring agencies. The Ministry have informed the Committee that as per information received from States/UTs in their Annual Work Plan and Budget 2008-09 SMCs have been constituted in all States/UTs.

36. The Committee desired to know whether the Steering cum Monitoring Committees regularly and whether there were any shortfalls in meetings and the reasons thereof. Replying to the query the Ministry candidly admitted in a written note as under:—

"The Steering cum Monitoring Committee meetings are not being held regularly. However, due to the repeated insistence from GoI the situation has improved. The reasons of shortfalls in meetings has been sought from States/UTs."

They also added:—

"This Ministry is not receiving the minutes of meetings of SMC on regular basis. However, this Ministry has also prescribed in the QPR the mention of major decisions taken in the SMC meetings held at the State level."

PART II

Observations and Recommendations

1. The National Programme for Nutritional Support to Primary Education, commonly known as the Mid-Day Meal Scheme launched as a Centrally-sponsored scheme in August, 1995 was intended to boost universalisation of primary education by increasing enrolment, attendance and retention levels of children and simultaneously impacting on the nutritional levels of primary students across the country. Budget allocation for the scheme has increased from Rs.1099.03 crores as in 2002-03 to Rs.8000 crores in 2008-09. In addition to the budgetary support the scheme was also aided by a subsidy of Rs. 6898.29 crore allowed to Food Corporation of India on supply of foodgrains for the scheme during the years 2002-2003 to 2006-07. The scheme was revised in 2004 and again in 2006. According to the Department of School Education and Literacy, the Mid-Day Meal Scheme supplements the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), which is a scheme for universalisation of elementary education. The improvements brought about as a result of revised scheme are increase in the calorific value of the food supply to the children (from 300 to 450 calories) and increase in the protein content from 8-12 grams to 12 grams. Although the objectives of the Mid-Day Meal Scheme are laudable and have assisted in moving towards universalisation of primary education, yet, certain shortcomings in the implementation of the scheme have come to the notice of the Committee through the examination of the subject which are discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.

2. The Committee regret to observe that the funds allocated for the Mid-Day Meal Scheme were not utilized during the years 2007-08 and 2008-09. Against the budgetary allocations of Rs. 6678.00 crores and Rs. 8000.00 crores in 2007-08 and 2008- 09 respectively the actual expenditure during these years was Rs. 4930.77 crores and Rs. 6982.54 crores. Obviously under utilisation of funds during last two years must have affected various features of the scheme. The Committee would like the Ministry to analyze the reasons for this under utilization of funds and take suitable steps to obviate such a situation in future.

3. The Committee note that the guidelines stipulated for the scheme do provide for the operation of voluntary organisations and non-governmental organisations etc. Considering that such organisations could also play a useful role in operationalising the scheme, however, it is important to emphasize that the programme must neither be perceived as NGO-driven nor get dominated by them. Since Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) are being used in some States for associating Voluntary Organisations/ NGOs in the Mid-Day-Meal Scheme, the Committee desire that the Ministry should prescribe specific guidelines to govern particularly the PPP framework. Although the State Governments, keeping in view their own circumstances and requirements, do require a degree of flexibility to modify the guidelines but the basic principles underlying the guidelines governing PPPs should not be diluted.

The Committee also desire that the Ministry should develop appropriate criteria to adjudge the suitability of NGOs/private partners for participating in the scheme's implementation. The selected NGOs/private partners should have a strong local and grassroots presence in the States where they operate and should also be fully conversant with local needs and culture. In order to meet the above mentioned criteria, the Ministry and State Governments should discourage the tendency of outside agencies undertaking such tasks and maintain that Voluntary Organisations /NGOs deliver the required results from the local perspective. The Committee are also of the view that the Ministry should undertake periodic assessments of the performance of such Voluntary Organisations /NGOs in order to satisfy themselves that the scheme is being implemented in the intended spirit complying with the prescribed procedures laid down for the purpose.

In the light of the fact that the Government plays a pre-eminent role in the funding and implementation of the scheme, the Committee would like to emphasize that monetary grants, if required to be provided should be made available only to good, reputed and functional Voluntary Organisations/NGOs which comply with all the directives of the Government and fulfil all the parameters laid down by the Ministry. The Committee also feel that concerted efforts should be made by Ministry to raise the bar for entry of NGOs in the programme and their performance constantly monitored in order to check misuse of public funds that may take place in the guise of Public Private Partnership.

4. The Committee also note that, in some cases, public figures/civil servants have associated themselves through the device of the establishment and management of such organizations as NGOs. However, the Committee are constrained to point out that such information in regard to the association of public figures/civil servants with the programme was not furnished to them by the Ministry. It would, therefore, be appropriate if the Ministry devise a mechanism whereby full disclosure exists about the role of such persons in these organisations considering its sensitivity and the issue of utilization of funds for private purpose. They feel that service delivery of the scheme should not become an instrument of benefit for interested persons.

5. The Committee's examination has also revealed that the scheme of central support for providing the foodgrains through Food Corporation of India (FCI) is plagued with several deficiencies. The scheme, *inter alia*, provide for central assistance by way of free supply of foodgrains through the Food Corporation of India (FCI), as also reimbursement of the cost of transportation from the nearest FCI depot to the concerned primary school. The Committee are surprised to note that the allocation of foodgrains was based on anticipated and not on actual enrolments, prepared district-wise and submitted by the Nodal Department to the States concerned. The Committee are of the view that this approach could lead to a situation where the extent of lifting of foodgrains by the State Governments could be confused with or interpreted as progress in terms of the scheme's objectives. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry and the State Governments should devise such measures, as are based on actual and original numbers to measure genuinely the progress regarding the MDM scheme in terms of student enrolment, attendance, retention and reduction in the drop-outs which were the major objectives of the scheme at the time of its inception.

6. In this connection, the Audit has also brought out some instances of stock out with FCI godowns and also cases of drawal of foodgrains in excess of requirements. At the instance of the Committee, the Ministry have simply forwarded a tabulated data submitted by FCI indicating the closing balance of stocks in seven States which did not contain any data regarding foodgrains received against the specific requirements made. The Committee are surprised that the Ministry seem to be satisfied with the reply of the FCI in regard to the stock out situation in FCI godowns. According to them, mere furnishing of tabulated data indicating monthly closing balance of stocks can not be a parameter which can substantiate that FCI had sufficient stock at all times to cater to the requirements of the schools in serving the Mid-Day Meals in an uninterrupted manner. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should obtain district wise details from FCI where the food shortages were noticed during the last three years so that corrective measures could be taken and shortcomings removed. In their opinion, it is imperative that the Ministry should continuously monitor the supply of the foodgrains and also give clear cut instructions to the States for maintaining buffer stock in the areas/districts having rough terrain and inclement weather like in Uttarakhand and other hilly States. The Committee also recommend that the Ministry should explore the feasibility of buying food grains locally when conditions like stock outs are noticed.

7. The Committee note that seven States *viz.* Tripura, UP, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Haryana and Rajasthan drew foodgrains in excess of their requirements. This depicts faulty assessment on their part and tardy monitoring mechanism in place for the purpose. The Ministry have conceded that the allocation of foodgrains was based earlier on anticipated enrolment and average attendance rate. However, from 2007-2008 onwards, the central assistance to the States is being provided on the basis of the number of children actually availing Mid-Day Meals. The Committee hope that the Ministry and FCI would take appropriate measures with the implementing authorities in various States so that foodgrains is lifted on realistic assessments. The Committee feel that the reported cases of overdrawal of foodgrains as also the stock out situations mentioned above should invariably form an integral part of the agenda during the monitoring/review meetings of the Ministry.

8. The Committee have been given to understand that the two schemes *viz.*, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Mid-Day Meal have been dovetailed by the Government and no separate mission has been created for the MDM programme as it was seen as a programme that would serve the purpose of SSA by addressing class room hunger. In the opinion of the Committee as both the schemes are supplementary to each other, it would be difficult for the Government to measure the achievements of the MDM scheme which were anticipated at its inception apart from satisfying class room hunger. The Committee desire that a mechanism ought to be worked out by the Ministry which would enable them to assess the impact of Mid-Day Meal Scheme independent of SSA.

9. Another area of concern has been the reported instances of diversion of funds and foodgrains meant for the Mid-Day Meal programme in 11 States which present an appalling scenario whereby the very purpose of establishing this scheme remains defeated. It clearly indicates lack of proper monitoring on the part of the

Ministry. The Committee take a very serious view of such instances whatever be the reasons thereof. The Committee are of the view that such instances may lead to financial manipulation by vested interests. The Ministry should have initiated suitable remedial measures to check such repeated instances. That this was not done is regretted. The Committee hope that Ministry would now take this matter with the States at appropriate level so that such instances do not take place. The Committee regret to point out that the Ministry have not responded to their specific query in regard to fixation of accountability in respect of diversion of funds and foodgrains. They, therefore, urge that the States should be persuaded to fix responsibility for such irregularities at the earliest in a time bound manner.

10. The Committee are surprised to find that the most vital infrastructure requirement for implementation of the cooked Mid-Day Meal Scheme *i.e.*, pucca kitchen-cum-store/kitchen sheds has not yet been provided in all the schools which avail of this scheme notwithstanding the fact that an amount of Rs. 5000 crore has been allocated for this and other related purposes. The Ministry had informed the Committee in February, 2009 that based on the central assistance all the schools would be provided cooking infrastructure by the year 2008-2009. They have now stated (17th December, 2009) that 2,62,809 schools are yet to be sanctioned kitchen sheds. They have also stated that it was proposed to provide these schools with kitchen sheds during the remaining period of 11th Five Year Plan. It is matter of concern that even according to the Ministry, it would take at least three years to provide kitchen infrastructure to more than two and half lakhs of schools. Obviously due to lack of infrastructure for cooking food the meals may have to be provided by outside agencies or it will be cooked in unhygienic conditions or by using space provided for class rooms. To remedy such a situation, the Committee recommend that the policy for construction of kitchen-cum-store should be revisited and all out efforts should be made for construction of required kitchens without further loss of time.

11. Another related area which requires intervention of the Committee is the fact that contrary to the existing guidelines prescribed by the Ministry that teachers should not be assigned responsibilities which would interfere with the teaching and learning activities, it was found that in most States teachers were actively involved in the implementation of the scheme such as receipt of foodgrains, procurement of vegetables and condiments, supervision of cooking and serving of meals thereby leading to a loss of valuable teaching time. The Committee are of the view that any splurge in the duties of the teachers other than teaching activities is not only violation of the prescribed guidelines but also an obstruction in learning eventually leads to injustice to the students. The Committee therefore, would like to have an assurance from the Ministry in unequivocal terms that involvement of teachers in the scheme is limited only to supervision/cooperation in serving of the meals without compromising with their teaching duties and alternatively additional support mechanism in terms of manpower and related facilities should be provided to the schools wherever required.

12. The Committee note with satisfaction that Steering-cum-Monitoring Committees (SMCs) have been constituted in all the States/UTs which would enable an effective monitoring and evaluation of the scheme. However, they would still like to

know from the Ministry whether SMCs have been set up at all the four levels *i.e.*, National, State, District and Block and have been performing their functions of guiding, monitoring, coordinating and taking action on reports of independent monitoring agencies. Although the SMCs in States/UTs have been constituted, yet their meetings are not being held regularly. It appears to the Committee that the Government is reluctant to mobilize these SMCs to meet regularly and submit their minutes to the Ministry. The Committee feel that Ministry should have taken proactive action *suo-moto* to ensure that meetings of SMCs are held regularly and the findings sent to the Ministry. The Committee would like to be intimated about the concrete steps taken by the Ministry in this regard.

13. Although the scheme has now been in operation since 1995, yet no specific assessment has been conducted by the Ministry to find out the extent to which the original objectives of the scheme such as improving enrolment, attendance and retention have been achieved. The Committee do not approve of the common monitoring institution that has been entrusted with the responsibility of monitoring both the schemes *i.e.*, SSA and Mid-Day Meal Programme. The improvements in educational outcomes, health and nutrition must be assessed and measured with reference to the stated objectives of the scheme. The Committee are of the view that the Ministry and State Governments should conduct an impact assessment of the scheme in order to ensure that its implementation was resulting in the desired outcomes.

14. The Committee note that there was a qualitative shift in the focus of the scheme in September, 2006 from education (with its emphasis on enrolment, learning levels and attendance) to nutrition and health. The Committee are constrained to note that although one of the main objectives of the revised scheme in September, 2006 was to positively impact the nutritional and health levels of primary school children, the Ministry had not collected data on the nutritional status of children covered under the Mid-Day Meal Scheme. Further, it is disconcerting to note that there were no linkages with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for the health checks prescribed under the scheme. The Committee, therefore, recommend that Ministry should ascertain the impact of the nutritional and health levels of primary school children and adhere to this revised objective.

NEW DELHI;
26 February, 2010
6 Phalguna, 1931 (Saka)

GOPINATH MUNDE,
Chairman,
Public Accounts Committee.

APPENDIX I

MINUTES OF THE THIRD SITTING OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (2009-10) HELD ON 27TH OCTOBER, 2009

The Committee sat from 1230 hrs. to 1330 hrs. on 27th October, 2009 in Room No. 53, First Floor, Parliament House, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Jaswant Singh — *Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Naveen Jindal
3. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
4. Shri Jitendra Singh (Alwar)
5. Kunwar Rewati Raman Singh
6. Shri Aruna Kumar Vundavalli

Rajya Sabha

7. Shri Prasanta Chatterjee
8. Shri Sharad Anantrao Joshi
9. Shri Ashwani Kumar
10. Dr. K. Malaisamy

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri Raj Shekhar Sharma — *Director*
2. Shri M.K. Madhusudhan — *Additional Director*
3. Shri Sanjeev Sharma — *Deputy Secretary*

Representatives of the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India

1. Shri Vinod Rai — Comptroller & Auditor General of India
2. Ms. Rekha Gupta — Dy. CAG Report Central (RC)
3. Shri Gautam Guha — Director General of Audit, (Defence Services)
4. Shri R.B. Sinha — Director General (Report Central)
5. Shri P.K. Kataria — Pr. Director (Report Central)

A. Representatives of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of School Education and Literacy)

1. Smt. Anshu Vaish — Secretary (SE&L)
2. Shri S.K. Ray — AS&FA (HRD)
3. Smt. Anita Kaul — Joint Secretary
4. Shri Anant Kumar Singh — Joint Secretary

B. Representative of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Shri Amit Mohan Prasad — Joint Secretary

C. Representative of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution (Department of Food and Public Distribution)

Shri Bhagwan Sahai — Joint Secretary

At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the Members, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India and the representatives of the Ministries of Human Resource Development, Health and Family Welfare and Food and Public Distribution to the sitting of the Committee. The Chairman then, drew the attention of the representatives of the Ministries to the provisions of Direction 58 of the Directions by the Speaker regarding confidentiality of proceedings.

2. The Committee, thereafter, took up the subject 'National Programme for Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid-Day Meal Scheme)' for discussion. The representatives of the Ministry of Human Resource Development explained various aspects of the Mid-Day Meal Scheme and attended to the queries of the Members. As some queries required detailed and statistical reply, the representatives of the Ministry submitted that they would furnish written replies in due course.

3. The Chairman thanked the C&AG of India and his colleagues for providing assistance to the Committee in examining the subject. The Chairman also thanked the representatives of the Ministries of Human Resource Development, Health and Family Welfare and Food and Public Distribution for appearing before the Committee and furnishing information that the Committee desired in connection with the examination of the subject.

The witnesses then withdrew.

A copy of the verbatim proceedings of the sitting has been kept on record.

- | | | |
|--------|-----|-----|
| 4. *** | *** | *** |
| 5. *** | *** | *** |
| 6. *** | *** | *** |

The Committee then adjourned.

*** Matters not related to this Report.

APPENDIX II

MINUTES OF THE EIGHTH SITTING OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (2009-10) HELD ON 28TH JANUARY, 2010

The Committee sat on Thursday, the 28th January, 2010 from 1130 hrs to 1415 hrs. in Committee Room 'C', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Gopinath Munde — *Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Anandrao Vithoba Adsul
3. Dr. Baliram
4. Shri Khagen Das
5. Shri Naveen Jindal
6. Shri Satpal Maharaj
7. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab
8. Kunwar Rewati Raman Singh
9. Shri Yashwant Sinha
10. Shri K. Sudhakaran
11. Shri Aruna Kumar Vundavalli

Rajya Sabha

12. Shri Prasanta Chatterjee
13. Shri Sharad Anantrao Joshi
14. Dr. K. Malaisamy
15. Prof. Saif-ud-Din Soz

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri Ashok Sarin — *Joint Secretary*
2. Shri Raj Shekhar Sharma — *Director*
3. Shri M.K. Madhusudhan — *Additional Director*
4. Shri Sanjeev Sharma — *Deputy Secretary*
5. Shri D.R. Mohanty — *Under Secretary*

