

MID-DAY MEAL SCHEME

In Article 45 of the constitution says that "The state shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of the constitution for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years."

From the year 1951 the development project in our country began in a planned manner. In 1957 the All India Council for Elementary Education (AICEE) was set up at the Centre and it was given the responsibility of submitting recommendation for the expansion and progress of primary education. The Kothari Commission 1964-66 report was submitted in 1966. This Commission laid special emphasis on equality of education opportunities and drew the attention of the government towards the education for children belonging to backward classes, STs, and SCs and minorities comes in this group.

It also give suggestion for eradication of wastage and stagnation occurring at the elementary level. On its basis the NPE 1968 was announced. In 1979 the government started the non-formal education for those children in 6-14 years age group who could not take advantage of formal education due to some reason. In 1986 the NPE was announced. In it the Universalisation of Primary Education was accepted as the national goal. In 1987-88 the operation blackboard was started. The education for all conference was held in Thailand in 1990. The issue of the conference was to declaration of ~~It~~ on Education for all. In 1994 the DPEP was started. Despite all these efforts we have failed to Universalise Primary education and the most massive barriers in its path were, children not seeking admission despite schools being there and children dropping out in the middle. In educational terminology dropping out in the middle of the course is called

wastage. A number of Efforts were made to increase enrolment in Primary school as well as Contain wastage however not much success could be achieved. In the meanwhile the government was faced with the question of providing adequate nutrition of children. For this the high court had warned the Central and State governments too. Therefore to resolve both these problems the Central government initiated the National Programme of Nutrition Support to Primary Education on 15 August 1995. This is called the Mid-day Meal Scheme in short.

Aims of Mid-day Meal Scheme :-

Following are the five aims of this Scheme

- ① To increase children's enrollment in Primary school.
- ② To retain children in primary school and reduce wastage occurring at this level.

Notes

- ③ To increase presence of children in schools.
- ④ To render health benefits to children with nutritious meals.
- ⑤ To arrange joint dining for children in order to remove caste based differences and to cultivate the spirit of brotherhood among them.