

Chandigarh: UT to get new MDM kitchens in eight govt schools

CHANDIGARH: In a move that will benefit students of government schools of UT Chandigarh, the education department has decided to construct mid-day meal kitchens in eight more schools.

At present there are seven school-based kitchens that are providing mid-day meal to students of government schools along with three centralized kitchens. The development was confirmed by UT education secretary BL Sharma.

As per officials, the newly proposed eight MDM kitchens will be cluster based and so will also serve food to their own students and to a few (2-3) neighborhood government schools).

The new kitchens will be a welcome step as food prepared in kitchens of schools has been stated to be better in quality and hygiene. "As a result the intake of MDM is 100% in kitchen-based schools while much less in schools where it comes from outside," said a senior official requesting anonymity.

The eight new MDM kitchens that have been proposed by the education department also includes the three kitchens which were approved by the ministry of human resource and development along with seven other schools. Lack of budget led to delay in construction of these three kitchens, TOI has reported in the past.

In this year's project approval board's meeting of MHRD, budget was denied for the three mid-day meal kitchens, which had been a long pending demand of UT Chandigarh. The department had then planned to take out budget from state budget for the three kitchens. UT had also decided on the schools where they planned to build the three MDM kitchens.

As per officials these three kitchens will now be constructed along with five more that are being proposed by department under the central government's mid-day meal scheme.

The schools where kitchens have been proposed are Government Model Senior Secondary School in sector 20 B, 40B, Dhanas and Government Model High School in Karsan, Raipur Kalan (New building), Pocket No 10 Manimajra, sector 29 and sector 12.

It was in 2017 that mid-day meal kitchens in seven government schools were turned into cluster kitchen and have started catering to three to four surrounding schools as well. These schools include Government Model Senior Secondary School(GMSSS), Times Market in sector 26, GMSSS-10, GMSSS-15, GMSSS-44, GMSSS-47, Government Model High School(GMHS)-38 and GMHS 42.

Besides school based MDM kitchens government schools are served food by three centralized kitchens - Shivalik View (a unit of CITCO), Chandigarh Institute of Hotel Management, Sector 42 and Dr Ambedkar Institute of Hotel Management.