

Breakfast scheme of Tamil Nadu

September 20, 2022

In news– State government of Tamil Nadu has recently launched the Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme for students of Class I to V in government schools.

About the scheme-

- The scheme **covers around 1.14 lakh students** in 1,545 schools.
- As of now, there are **nearly 46.7 lakh beneficiaries spread over 43,190 nutritious meal centres**. This includes around 3,500 students of National Child Labour Project (NCLP) special schools.
- Besides, as a consequence of the collaborative implementation of the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) and the nutritious meal programme, around 15.8 lakh children in the age group of 2+ to 5+ years receive nutritious meals.
- After the **improved version of the mid-day meal scheme in 1982, the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) at primary level (standards I to V) went up by 10% during July-September, 1982** as compared to the corresponding period in 1981.

Note:

- According to the 2019-21 National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-5's report, Anaemia is a major health problem in Tamil Nadu, especially among women and children.
- From 50% during the period of the 2015-16 NFHS-4, the prevalence of anaemia in children now went up to 57%.

History of food scheme for school children-

- In November **1920, the Madras (now Chennai) Corporation**

Council approved a proposal for providing tiffin to the students of a Corporation School at Thousand Lights at a cost not exceeding one anna per student per day.

- The scheme, **which was extended to four more schools and facilitated higher enrollment of students,** suffered a **setback in 1925** when the British government disallowed the expenditure on the supply of mid-day meals to students from the Elementary Education Fund.
- It was revived two years later, benefitting around 1,000 poor students in 25 schools.
- The **concept saw a State-wide application in 1956 when the then Chief Minister K. Kamaraj** decided to provide free noon meal to poor children in all primary schools across the State.
- The **Budget for 1956-57 contained a provision for supplying mid-day meals** to schoolchildren for 200 days a year, initially covering 65,000 students in 1,300 feeding centres.
- In July 1982, it was left to the then Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran to extend the programme to children in the 2-5 age group in Anganwadis and those in 5-9 age group in primary schools in rural areas.
- Subsequently, **the scheme – now called Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. Nutritious Meal Programme was extended to urban areas as well.**
- **Since September 1984, students of standards VI to X have been covered** under the scheme.
- **M. Karunanidhi,** as Chief Minister during the short-lived Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam Ministry (1989-91), **introduced the provision of boiled eggs once every fortnight,** starting June 1989.
- His successor, **Jayalalithaa, in March 2013, extended the scheme by including variety meals along with masala eggs as per the children's choice.**