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A flourishing academic life begins with a healthy physical and mental condition. A country becomes developed when its productivity gets increased and this depends upon the citizens of the country. But our productivity depends largely on our health condition. A proper diet and nutrition is the need of every individual. A child cannot concentrate on the academics if the child feels hungry or stressed. A good portion of population in our country lives under the poverty line. The kids in this group often face malnutrition problems due to lack of adequate food. Understanding the nutrition needs of the children of our country, the Indian Government launched Mid Day Meal (MDM) plan in the country. According to this plan, the Government will provide free mid day meals to all school students in the school. Though it was launched recently, this scheme was first started by Madras Presidency in the year 1923. In the year 1960, under the Chief Ministership of K. Kamaraj this program was introduced in a large scale. Though in the initial years, this scheme covered only the primary students, but later on the then Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Dr. M.G. Ramachandran decided to universalize the scheme and thus provided it to the students up to 10th standard.

The success of the scheme in Tamil Nadu opened up the doors for implementing it for the students of the rest of the country. In the year 1995, the then Indian Finance Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh suggested the Government to generalize the project so that students from different part of India could reap the benefit of the project. Thus â€˜National Program for Nutrition Support to Primary Educationâ€™ was launched in the country. According to the program, the national government will provide grains free of cost and he States will provide the costs of other ingredients, salaries and infrastructure. This system was called provision of dry rations. But most of the states were reluctant to provide the necessary funds for the scheme. So in November 28, 2001, the Supreme Court of India gave a famous direction that the state Governments had to provide cooked lunch to the school going students. In May 2004 a new coalition government was formed in the centre, which promised universal provision of cooked meals fully funded by the centre.

The core objective behind the implementation of Mid Day Meal scheme is to increase the participation of students into the schools. Mid Day Meal Program was expected to attract more children to come to school and in this way it will increase enrolment, attendance, retention and bring down drop-out rate. Mid Day Meal Program also helps the poor families by lessening their hesitation to send their children to school where they do not have to worry about providing food to the children during school hours. Mid Day Meal Program will enhance the learning capacity of children as nutritious food is served to them every day although no study has as yet been conducted on this. Today, Mid Day Meal scheme is serving primary and upper primary school children in entire country.

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