

CENTRE CONSTITUTES A 'GROUP OF FOOD SECRETARIES' FROM STATES ALONG WITH SENIOR OFFICERS OF CENTRAL GOVT. TO DELIBERATE ON THE FRAMEWORK OF THE COMMUNITY KITCHENS SCHEME

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Poverty & Hunger and related issues

Centre has constituted a "Group of Food Secretaries" from States along with Senior officers of Central Govt to deliberate on the framework of the Community Kitchens Scheme.

While announcing the Constitution of 'Group of Secretaries' Shri Piyush Goyal, Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, Textiles and Commerce & Industry today affirmed that Community Kitchens scheme needs to be prepared- which is simple, transparent and in the benefit of people. Shri Goyal said, "We should have empathy towards poor of the country and should ensure collective resolve to run successful and transparent food programmes to ensure proper nutrition to children".

Addressing the all India Food Ministers meeting, here today, Shri Goyal stated that PMGKAY is probably the world's largest food programme undertaken, during COVID period. He said no one in the country was deprived of food grains. 'The credit goes to all present here, and specially our Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji". It should be our resolve that quality food grain should reach the beneficiaries in all parts of the country," he said.



Thanking all the States for coordinating with the Centre to ensure that food grain distribution goes on smoothly, the Minister stated that it was a huge achievement that even during the peak of COVID-19, we did not allow any food shortages to occur. He said it is the result of collective efforts that no case of death due to starvation has been reported during the pandemic.

Shri Goyal said that it should be our resolve that quality food grain should reach the deserving beneficiaries in all parts of the country on the basis of need for focused and identified set of

people who are vulnerable especially women and children including homeless, slum dwellers, workers on industrial and construction sites.



During the pandemic, Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) has proved to be a boon. Shri Goyal informed that more than 80 crore beneficiaries have been provided free food grains ensuring #HarGharAnn. This shows the sensitivity of PM's big heart to provide hope to people.

The next meeting at the officers' level shall be held virtually on 29th November to deliberate on the framework proposal.



Expressing delight at the extension of PMGKAY till March 2022, Shri Goyal said that the government will incur an expenditure of Rs.2.6 lakh crore in PMGKAY from Phase I-V, which will

begin from Dec 1, 2021 after the completion of Phase 4. Referring to the crucial agendas of today's meeting, the Minister said that Model Community Kitchens Scheme, in the context of directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court and One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) with regard to status of implementation across various states (enabled in 34 States/UTs), Aadhaar seeding of Ration Cards and Biometrically authenticated FPS transactions will be discussed.

Talking about the Model Community Kitchen Scheme, he said Community Kitchen will be of the community, run by the community & for the welfare of the community.

The Minister urged that it needs to be built on 4 pillars of Quality, Hygiene, Reliability & Spirit of Service. It will help us realize the goal that no one Sleeps Hungry, he added.



Shri Goyal further stated, "Productivity is never an accident. It is always the result of a commitment to excellence, intelligent planning, and focused effort" He said that India is celebrating 75 weeks of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav and in these remaining weeks of the mahotsav, "Let's discuss ideas to make India Aatmanirbhar in meeting its food requirements", he urged.

The Group of Food Secretaries include Food Secretaries from 8 states of Kerala, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Assam, Bihar, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh. The Food Secretary of Madhya Pradesh will be heading the Group.

Minister of State for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey and Secretary Department of Food and Public Distribution, Shri Sudhanshu Pandey participated in the meeting.



Food ministers who attended the event were Food Minister of Bihar Smt. Leshi Singh, Food Minister of Delhi Shri Imran Hussain, Food Minister of Gujarat (MoS) Gajendra Singh Parmar, Food Minister of Himachal Pradesh Shri Rajinder Garg, Food Minister of Kerala Shri GR Anil, Food Minister of Punjab Shri Bharat Bhushan Ashu, Food Minister of Tamil Nadu Shri Thiru R. Sakkarapani, Food Minister of Uttar Pradesh Shri Ranvendra Pratap Singh and Food Minister of Puducherry Shri AK Sai J. Sarvanakumar.

Besides, Secretaries and other senior officers from various states were present at the meeting.

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