

New kitchen will serve freshly cooked, hygienic and nutritious meals to over 21,000 children

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New Delhi,

Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister of Delhi, Shri Manish Sisodia inaugurated The Akshaya Patra Foundation's new centralised kitchen in Mohan Cooperative Industrial Area of New Delhi. The kitchen sponsored by ABB India has the capacity to cater to the nutrition needs of students through 25,000 midday meals across various Government schools in the surrounding areas. Initially, it will serve over 21,000 children of 24 Government schools in the national capital and gradually extend its reach. Mohan Cooperative kitchen will be The Akshaya Patra Foundation's 51st kitchen in the country. From January 1st 2020, Akshaya Patra will begin operations in Mohan Cooperative Industrial Area, Jahangir Puri and Samaypur Badli, feeding 64,179 children across 134 schools in the national capital through these three kitchens.

The chief guest for the launch event was Shri. Manish Sisodia, Deputy Chief Minister and Education Minister of Delhi. The guests of honour were Shri. Ajay Dutt, MLA - Ambedkar Nagar, Shri. Sahi Ram, MLA - Tugalakabad, Shri. Sanjeev Arora, President - Motion Business, ABB India Ltd, and Chef Manish Mehrotra of Indian Accent Restaurants. The event was presided by Shri. Chanchalpathi Dasa, Vice-Chairman, The Akshaya Patra Foundation.

The inauguration event was followed by a school visit and ceremonial serving of meals to the children. The dignitaries present unanimously commended Akshaya Patra for its efforts to address hunger and malnutrition in India through its kitchen network spread across 12 states and 2 union territories. They expressed their support and encouragement for the Foundation's feeding endeavour. ABB India's partnership with Akshaya Patra is over a decade old and has been expanding in line with the mission of Akshaya Patra to feed 5 million children by 2025.

Shri. Manish Sisodia highlighted the importance of wholesome meals for all-rounded growth of children. He mentioned that they were happy with the standards maintained at Akshaya Patra kitchens, therefore decided to partner with the organisation. He expressed his delight that after a lot of efforts the kitchen in Delhi has started and now the children will get nutritious and hygienic mid-day meals from Akshaya Patra.

“ABB has been deeply engaged with community development activities over several years positively impacting more than one lakh lives across the country. One of the CSR focal areas for ABB India is “Education and Skill development”. Our partnership with Akshaya Patra aligns well with our key theme in social impact projects,” said Sanjeev Arora, President, Motion Business, ABB India. “We are privileged to have the opportunity to support nutritious meals in surrounding 24 schools through this state-of-the-art kitchen. When this is fully functional, ABB will support the meals to 21,000 students in the region. A healthy, nutritious meal is a stepping stone to realizing the potential of children, transforming young lives for a better future of the nation,” he added.

Over the years, the support by ABB India towards Akshaya Patra has increased many folds from the Mid-Day Meal Programme to supporting a centralized kitchen. The current partnership of ABB India with Akshaya Patra supports around 50,000 meals daily to Government school children across Gujarat, Karnataka and Delhi.

Shri Madhu Pandit Dasa, Chairman – The Akshaya Patra Foundation, expressed his gratitude to the Government of Delhi and Chief Minister, Shri Arvind Kejriwal for this opportunity to serve the children of Delhi. He also thanked the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) and the Government of India for their continued support to the Foundation’s feeding initiative over the last 19 years.

Shri Chanchalpathi Dasa said, “We are grateful to the Hon’ble Deputy CM of Delhi, Shri Manish Sisodia Ji for launching our 51st kitchen today. Over the last two decades, it has become evident that mid-day meals serve as a stimulus for children to come to school. I have personally met many of these children as well as their families and heard from them what this meal means to them.” He further added, “We are immensely grateful to ABB India Foundation for sponsoring this kitchen and enabling us to reach more than 21,000 children in Delhi. This partnership will contribute to the sustainability integral to our endeavour and help us reach in our mission.”

All the new kitchens set up in Delhi are powered by green fuel, including solar power for heating water, natural gas for powering infrared burners, etc. A hybrid solar water pump provides the water for cooking, with a capacity to heat 15,000 litres of water to 80°C through the year. Bratt pans are used for cooking rice, dal, and vegetables. The Bratt pans have a capacity of 450 litres and can cook rice for 2000 meals in 30 minutes and vegetables for 5000 meals in 1 hour. The dal cooker also has a capacity of 450 litres and can cook dal for over 2500 meals in under 2 hours. The kitchens are also equipped with a semi-automated puri machine which can fry about 6000 puris per hour.

The state-of-the-art kitchen in Mohan Cooperative Industrial Area, New Delhi will follow the highest standards of hygiene, food safety, and quality to ensure that nutritious food is cooked and delivered to children. Continuing with the practice of serving food in accordance to the local palate, the Foundation's menu for Delhi will include aata poori, besan poori, aaloo curry, chole, rice, sambhar, dal, and kadi. All the gravy items will have mashed vegetables added to them to enhance their nutritional value. Similarly, triple fortified salt and fortified oil will be used for cooking. With children's acceptability in mind, a conscious effort made to make the meal flavoursome to add to improve food consumption.

While Mohan Cooperative kitchen will feed 21,133 children in Delhi, Jahangir Puri kitchen funded by Franklin Templeton Investments will feed 21,110 children and Samaypur Badli kitchen funded by SBI Capital and United Way of Delhi will feed 21,936 children.

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