

**WP No.13642 of 2021**

**THE HON'BLE CHIEF JUSTICE**  
**and**  
**P.D.AUDIKEVALU, J.**

(Order of the Court was made by the Hon'ble Chief Justice)

Written instructions issued by the Principal Secretary to the State Government in the Social Welfare and Women Empowerment Department to learned Advocate-General have been filed in court. It appears from such instructions that all students in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> standards are getting the hot cooked nutritious meals upon classes in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> standards resuming with effect from September 1, 2021 in the State.

2. The remainder of the classes will resume on November 1, 2021. It is submitted on behalf of the State that immediately upon resumption of the other classes, the children will get their hot cooked nutritious meals with egg from the first day of the resumption of school.

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3. The petitioner submits that if the entire lot of children in the State covered by the midday meal programme receives hot cooked nutritious meals on a daily basis, the petitioner may have nothing further to say; but the petitioner requests the court to direct the State to not suspend the midday meal programme, whatever may be the circumstances.

4. For a start, it must be appreciated that the midday meal scheme for school-going children in the rural areas was resumed though the lockdown had not been completely lifted. It was resumed through cooking undertaken at anganwadi centres before schools reopened for the 9<sup>th</sup> standard onwards, whereupon hot cooked nutritious meals with eggs were supplied to the children going to school. The remainder of the students should be supplied the midday meals when schools reopen for the other classes from November 1, 2021.

5. While it is hoped that the worst is behind us, what the pandemic may have taught humanity is to not take anything for granted and be prepared for the worst. It would do well for the State

to prepare a plan of action where, whether there is any natural calamity or disaster or the pandemic or anything which is beyond the everyday difficulty, there is a Plan-B or a Plan-C ready, so that the vulnerable children and young adults do not go without nutritious meals.

6. List the matter four weeks hence for a status report to be filed by the Secretary in the Social Welfare and Women Empowerment Department together with an indication as to whether there is an exigency or emergency plan in place to deal with a situation as the one brought about by the pandemic.

7. List on 26.11.2021.

(S.B., CJ.) (P.D.A., J.)

सत्यमेव जयते 22.10.2021

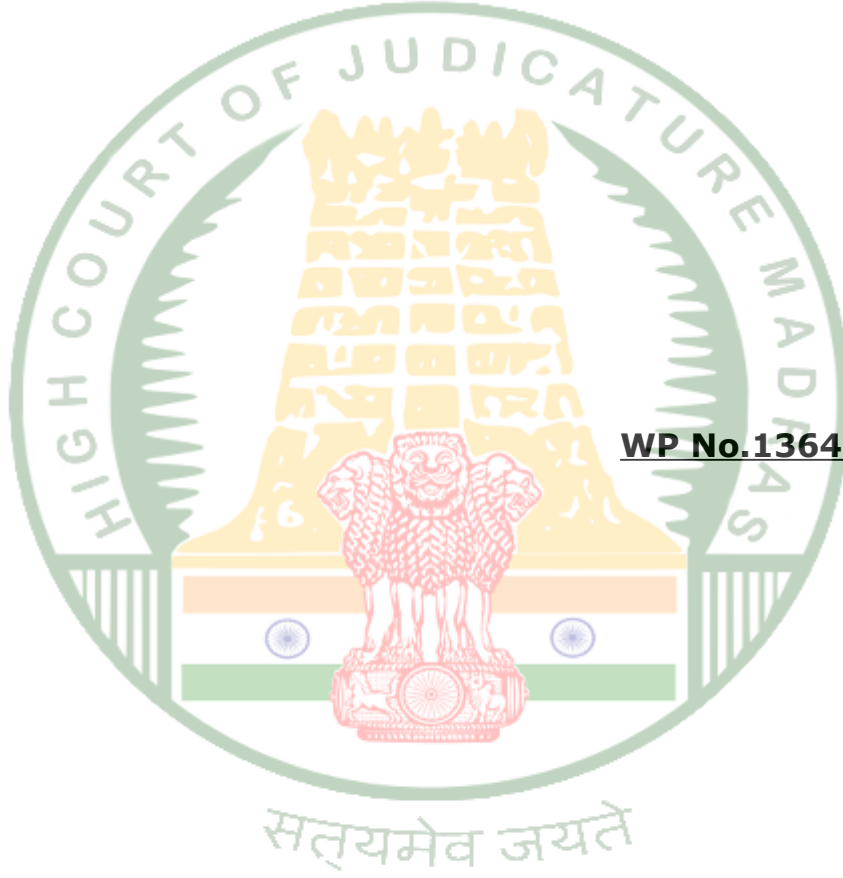
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