

## News

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**The Chhattisgarh High Court mandates that the State reimburse schoolchildren who get midday meals after being licked by a dog ₹25,000 apiece.**



The Court ruled that the State was negligent and mandated that it pay the kids' damages.

The State government has been ordered by the Chhattisgarh High Court to reimburse the kids of a middle school that served dog feces as lunch on July 28 for ₹25,000 apiece.

The youngsters, who routinely attend the school, received three doses of the anti-rabies vaccination, according to a Division Bench consisting of Chief Justice Ramesh Sinha and Justice Bibhu Datta Guru.

Nonetheless, the Court noted that the State had been negligent and mandated that it pay the kids' damages.

"Given that it was a government institution and a self-help group was tasked with providing the midday meal, we deem it proper that the State pay Rs. 25,000/- to each student of the concerned Middle School, who had consumed the said meal, within a period of one month from today," the Court ruled on August 19. "Even though 84 students of the school received three doses of anti-rabies medication, the State was negligent in ensuring that the food offered in the mid-day meal by the self-help group to the children of the school."

A news report concerning the event that occurred at the Government Middle School in Lachhanpur, Block Palari, in the district of Balodabazar was taken into consideration by the court on August 4.

Students had reportedly been offered food that had been licked by a dog. The youngsters then received anti-rabies vaccinations as a result of parental pressure. Considering the matter seriously, the Court had stated,

"Giving meals to pupils in schools is not a pointless formality; it must be carried out with honor. No one, especially a defenseless youngster, should be offered any food that has been licked or otherwise contaminated by a dog. Such oversights on the part of the officials in charge of the schools' operations are quite concerning given the amount of money the State Government spends on improving the schools and their equipment.

The State School Education department said on August 19 that the Jai Laxmi Swa Sahayata Samuh Self Help Group will no longer be involved in the school's midday food program. Additionally, the Court was informed that on August 6, the cluster principle and the principal in charge were suspended. It was also informed that additional instructors had been suspended.

The youngsters are under constant surveillance at the **Lachchhanpur** primary health clinic, the Court was further informed. On September 17, the matter will be heard again.

In the ruling, the Court stated, **"We hope and trust that the State would be more vigilant and careful in providing mid-day meal to the children studying in the Government Schools."**