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The event would also honour Ranju Batra, chairman of the Diwali Stamp project, who worked behind the scene for several years campaigning before the US Postal Service.

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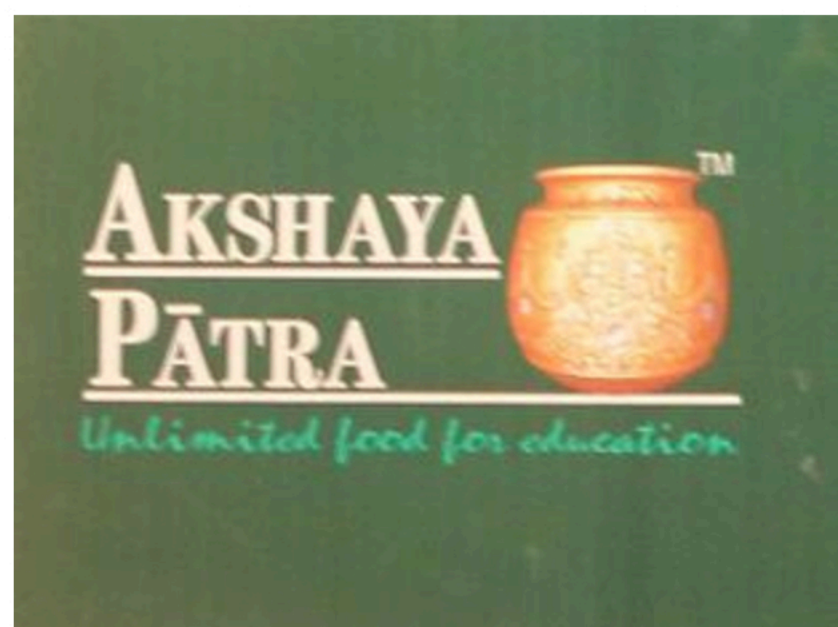
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Karnataka inks agreements with Akshaya Patra, Akshara Foundation

By ET Bureau | Updated: Oct 20, 2016, 08.40 PM IST [Post a Comment](#)

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BENGALURU: The Karnataka government signed agreements Thursday with the Akshaya Patra Foundation and Akshara Foundation to tackle malnutrition and improve learning levels.



Akshaya Patra, which is run by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), is known to run the world's largest school lunch programme.

The agreement with Akshaya Patra involves serving fortified rice to 4.5 lakh children in 2,600 schools in Bengaluru, Ballari and Dharwad districts as part of the midday meal programme. One kg of fortified rice will be mixed with the 99 kgs rice supplied to these schools.

A year later, the government will review the benefits of fortified rice on the health of children.

Akshara Foundation will roll out the second phase of its Ganita Kalika Andolana (Math Learning Movement) in an effort to improve pass percentage in mathematics and science, which is low in government schools.

The 3-year partnership will have Akshara Foundation reach out to 1.29 lakh children in Classes 4 and 5 with specially-designed math kits across 4,419 schools in Bengaluru Rural, Chikkaballapura, Chamarajnar, Chitradurga, Gadag and Dharwad districts at a cost of Rs 15.96 crore.

The Bengaluru-based nonprofit ran the first phase of the programme in 7,515 schools covering three lakh children in the backward Hyderabad-Karnataka region.

Karnataka's Primary and Secondary Education Minister Tanveer Sait signed the agreements.

Akshaya Patra, which is run by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), is known to run the world's largest school lunch programme. The nonprofit supplies midday meals to over 5 lakh children in 2,841 schools.

"The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has asked states to go for fortified meals including rice, wheat, grain flour, oil, milk and salt. As a result, we want to start with fortified rice," Sait said.