Among non-profit organisations in the country, The Akshaya Patra Foundation (TAPF) has a different tale to tell. Drawing back their prime inspiration towards providing annadana at ISKCON temple in the city, the goodness of serving food to the needy got a boost when like-minded philanthropists came together to use the capacities and facilities at the temple to eliminate hunger among students in government schools in the state. From humble beginnings of extending the reach of food charity to 1,400 children in 2000, the NGO has touched and transformed lakhs of student lives in the state and across the country.

With an outreach of more than 1.7 million students at 14,264 schools across 42 locations in 12 states in India, the initiative claims to be the world's largest not-for-profit mid-day meal programme. It foresaw the importance of countering malnutrition to support the right to education of children from socio-economically underprivileged children.

It gained more strength after a Supreme Court mandate in 2001, said Ajay Kavishwar, Director, PR, Planning and Advocacy, TAPF, as he shares the Akshaya Patra tale with Deccan Chronicle. "The mandate passed on November 28, 2001 directing all government and government-aided primary schools in all states after Akshaya Patra was also called upon to provide testimonies to the apex court is a remarkable milestone in our journey to reaching out to more," he said.

Elaborating on the current status of the organisation, he added that their state-of-the-art kitchens have become a subject of study attracting curious visitors from around the world. Providing fresh and nutritious meals to school students on a daily basis since its inception, the organisation has also embraced technological advancements to multiply their reach both in terms of quality and quantity. "While we ensure compliance towards matching with mid-day meal guidelines provided by the central and state governments, each meal that we provide goes through a testing phase to guarantee it reaches up to the level of our research-based computed nutritional values. Our in-house laboratories, which include highly qualified professionals on full time duty, holds equal responsibility in guaranteeing quality," explained Kavishwar.