

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:370
ANSWERED ON:23.02.2011
UNHYGIENIC FOOD UNDER MID-DAY-MEAL SCHEME
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Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a number of cases were reported from across the country where children fell ill after consuming mid-day-meals at schools in the recent past;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;
- (c) whether the Government has conducted any inquiry into these incidents;
- (d) if so, the outcome thereof; and
- (e) the measures taken by the Government against the erring persons/institutions and also to stop such incidents from happening in future?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT(Dr. D. PURANDESWARI)

(a) to (e): Since 1.1.2010, six incidents of children falling ill, after consuming mid-day-meals, in Bihar, Delhi, Haryana, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh have come to the notice of the Government. In each case the matter was taken up with the concerned State Government for immediate and appropriate action and report. The status of action taken by the State Governments is mentioned below:

Bihar:

(i) During March, 2010, 300 children fell ill and 2 children were alleged to have died after taking mid-day meal. The viscera of one of the children as well as the food served to the children were tested by the Forensic Science Laboratory, Patna. The test report did not reveal any element that could have been hazardous to the children.

(ii) During October, 2010, 128 children had fallen sick after allegedly taking mid-day-meals. The sick children were provided prompt medical assistance and discharged after giving first aid.

Delhi: 29 children were stated to have fallen ill after eating mid day meal on 6.5.2010 in Hauz Qazi. The food was distributed to the students only after satisfying that the quality of food was good. The same supplier provided mid day meal to other schools also and there was no complaint. Sample of meal was collected from the school and sent for testing. Subsequent testing report revealed that mid day meal food was not the reason of sickness.

Karnataka: 153 students of Model Higher Primary School No. 1, Lakshmeshwar, Gagag District, Karnataka State were admitted on 12.6.2010 to local Government Hospital when they started vomiting after consuming Vegetable Pulav prepared at the school. As an immediate measure, place of cooking was changed to different room and school authorities were directed to keep the kitchen and surroundings clean. The Head Master has been suspended and cooks have been changed. Before serving the food two teachers have been asked to taste the food and then serve to the students.

Haryana: 10 children had reportedly fallen ill after taking mid day meal on 6.3.2010 at Hodal (Faridabad). The State Government has reported that the Committee constituted to enquire into the matter has not found enough evidence for proceeding further in the matter.

Madhya Pradesh: It has been reported in 'Dainik Bhaskar' dated 22.1.2011 that Mid Day Meal caused death of a girl and 9 children and 2 cooks fell ill. The State Govt. has reported that upon enquiry, it was found that neither the children died nor other people fell ill as alleged in the newspaper at village Tindokhar, District Murena, Madhya Pradesh after taking mid day meal. The death and sickness was caused due to accumulation of dirty water near the hand pump of the village.

The overall responsibility to ensure all logistic and administrative arrangements for wholesome and regular cooked mid day meal in every eligible school/institution lies with the State Government/UT Administration. However, in order to ensure that good quality food is served to the children under the Mid Day Meal Scheme, the Central Government has continuously been urging the State/UT Governments to:

- # lift only good quality foodgrains from FCI godowns after joint inspection
- # store food items in dry and safe places
- # ensure that food is cooked in a hygienic environment
- # properly train cooks to adopt hygienic practices
- # get the food tasted by 2-3 adults including one teacher
- # ensure availability of drinking water
- # involve the community in implementation and supervision of the scheme
- # get on an average 25% of the schools inspected every quarter.