

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:41

ANSWERED ON:07.08.2013

QUALITY OF FOOD UNDER MDMS

Chavan Shri Harischandra Deoram;Kumar Shri P.

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a number of children died/fell ill due to intake of poor quality of mid day meal in different parts of the country recently;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the number of cases of death and illness of children reported during the last one year, State/UT-wise;
- (c) whether the incidents were got investigated and if so, the outcome thereof, incident-wise along with the number of persons/officials found guilty and punished;
- (d) whether the Government has constituted a committee to review the guidelines on Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDMS); and
- (e) if so, the details thereof including the steps taken or being taken by the Government to check such incidents in future?

Answer

MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI. M.M. PALLAM RAJU)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the table of the Lok Sabha.

Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) to (e) of Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 41 for 07.08.2013 raised by Shri Harishchandra Chavan and Shri P. Kumar regarding Quality of food under MDMS

(a) to (c): During the last one year, 12 complaints of poor quality of mid day meals have been received in this Ministry. After receiving the complaints from stakeholders, these complaints were referred to the concerned State Governments for taking corrective measures under intimation to this Ministry. The case-wise position is given in Annexure. The action taken include a warning to the concerned NGO and officers responsible, the initiation of departmental proceedings against the Principal / Headmaster, the suspension of erring officials and the registration of criminal cases against responsible persons for their negligence.

The tragic incident of 23 deaths occurred in Navsrijit Govt. Primary School, Gandaman, Block Masrakh, District Saran on 16th July, 2013. Out of 79 children, 55 children had availed of the MDM; 46 children and 1 cook were affected after taking the meals. 23 children died in the incident. The Government deputed an Additional Secretary of the Department on the 17th July, 2013 for an onsite investigation. He visited all the bereaved families and submitted a detailed report to the Government. Based on which a letter was issued to the State Government of Bihar. The State Government has filed an FIR under Sections 302, 307, 328 and 120(B) of IPC against the Head teacher and others. The Head teacher has been arrested and placed under suspension. Departmental proceedings have been initiated against her. The services of the Block Resource Person for MDMS terminated. The State Government has issued detailed instructions to the teachers, to taste the mid day meal before serving it to the children. They have also initiated a massive programme for completion of the incomplete kitchen-cum-stores.

(d) & (e): The Central Government has already setup a Committee for revision of the MDM Guidelines. The draft Guidelines are ready and have been circulated to the eminent experts from various disciplines viz. Food Safety, Social Audit, Fuel Efficiency, and Capacity Building to seek their valuable inputs. The draft guidelines have also been shared with all States / UTs during Education Secretaries meeting held on 25th June, 2013 with a request to furnish their comments.

After the unfortunate incident of Bihar, the Central Government has issued detailed guidelines on 22nd July, 2013 to ensure quality, safety and hygiene under Mid Day Meal Scheme to all the States / UTs with a request to take prompt action on following points:-

- i) Setting up of an effective Management Structure for MDM at various levels.
- ii) Mandatory tasting of the meal by at least one teacher before it is served to the children.
- iii) Safe storage and supply of ingredients to schools.
- iv) Capacity building of stakeholders.
- v) Procurement of pulses and ingredients of branded and Agmark quality and supply to schools on the lines of Maharashtra.
- vi) Awareness about entitlements under Mid Day Meal Scheme.
- vii) Convening of District level Vigilance and Monitoring Committee meeting under the Chairmanship of senior most Member of Parliament from the district.

viii) Social Audit of the Scheme. A pilot in this regard had already been carried out in Bihar.

ix) Testing of food samples by FSSAI / CSIR / NABL accredited lab.

x) Prompt action on the reports of the Monitoring Institutes, Joint Review Mission etc.

xi) Contingency Medical Plans.

Secretary, School Education & Literacy, reviewed the situation through Video conference with all the State Education Secretaries and urged them to strengthen MDMS and call a meeting of District level Vigilance and Monitoring Committee immediately.

The Union Human Resource Minister organized a National level Consultation with experts in nutrition and mid day meal for taking the views of the stakeholders on 31st July, 2013. This was followed by Convergence meeting by the Planning Commission between MHFW and MHRD and other stakeholders on 2nd August, 2013.