

1	2
Scheduled Castes (SCs)	1265
Scheduled Tribes (STs)	659
Physically Challenged	251

Of the above, 337 seats for SCs, 458 seats for STs and 207 seats for Physically Challenged are being allotted to students in respective categories who will join a preparatory course of one-year's duration. After completion of the course, they will join the first year programme in IITs. This is a standard practice for many years and the results of this year are similar to the results of previous years.

(c) and (d) 53 out of a total of 1546 seats meant for OBC category could not be filled up with OBC candidates and were converted to general category as per a decision of the Supreme Court.

Quality of food served under MDMS

1118. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

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

(a) whether Government is aware that under the Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) the students have been served adulterated or highly contaminated food in various parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details of such incidents which came to the notice of Government in the last one year;

(c) whether NGOs appointed by Government to run the mid-day kitchens across the country are not providing safe meals to students; and

(d) if so, action contemplated by Government in this regard to ensure distribution of safe meals to students under the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) Certain cases of serving adulterated/contaminated food under the Mid-Day Meal Scheme have come to the notice of the Government during the year 2008-09. The details of such cases are as under:-

1. The newspapers Punjab Kesari, Dainik Bhaskar, Amar Ujala and Navabharat Times on 23.7.2008 reported incident of worms being found in mid-day meal served to children under the MDM Scheme in MCD Primary School, Mukund Vihar, Karawal Nagar, Delhi. An inquiry conducted by the Government of NCT of Delhi revealed that an insect was found in the container of rice supplied by the NGO entrusted with responsibility of

providing mid-day meal in the School. The distribution of rice was stopped and no child fell sick. The NGO had been warned to be careful in future by the Zonal Authorities. An explanation had been called from the concerned school in-charge on the matter for not performing his duties.

2. In Bisur School in Sangli District, Miraj Taluka, Maharashtra, 60 children food poisoned. The State Government has appointed flying squads, Vigilance squads to check quality of Mid-Day Meal.
3. The Bihar Government has reported that in Girls Primary School, Khajbatta a frog was found in the mid-day meal on 25.9.2008. However, no child was reported to be serious ill after the incident.

(c) and (d) No Sir. As and when any instance of supply of sub-standard mid-day meal by NGO comes to the notice of the Government, the concerned State/UT Government is asked to inquire into the matter and take strict action against the errant NGO, as also to take appropriate remedial measures to avoid recurrence of such incident in future. Govt. of India does not engage any NGO for preparing and serving mid-day meal to students as overall responsibility of implementing the Mid-Day Meal Scheme lies with the States/UTs.

Semester system in universities

1119. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the University Grants Commission (UGC) has decided to introduce the semester system in Universities and allow students enrolled in a programme to earn credits by opting for selective course within the University or even at other Universities;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the proposed reforms will reinvigorate our academic institutions and provide opportunities to our students to learn faster and have the ability to accommodate the diverse interests of students; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (d) As per the information furnished by the University Grants Commission (UGC), the Commission has suggested from time to time to introduce semester system along with choice based credit system in Universities. However, universities have academic autonomy to consider the suggestion for implementation according to their requirements and perceptions. The proposed academic reforms, including reforms in examination and assessment procedures, admission process and curriculum development, would, if implemented, reinvigorate our academic institutions. The Central Universities Act, 2009 [25 of 2009] establishing new Central Universities provides for academic reforms, including