

Indian students pursuing higher education abroad. There are no restrictions on cross-border students' mobility and such mobility can be owing to a variety of reasons such as affordability, access to bank loans, exposure to foreign societies, aptitude for particular branches of studies, inability to gain admission to top Indian institutions due to capacity limitation etc. Another reason could be the interest among students to join some of the universities in the world which have a long history of education and research spread over centuries.

(c) and (d) Upgrading the quality of Indian higher educational institutions and faculty is a continuous process. A substantial increase in Plan allocation has been made in the Eleventh Plan for the expansion of higher education, for setting up of institutions such as Central Universities in uncovered States, establishment of World Class Universities, Indian Institutes of Technology, Indian Institutes of Management, Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research, Indian Institutes of Information Technology and Schools for Planning and Architecture. Expansion of capacity of the existing institutions, incentivising State Governments for increasing State outlays on higher education, strengthening of science based research in universities, frequent updating of curricula, introduction of semester system, faculty improvement programme and other reforms are also being implemented in the Eleventh Plan for improving the quality of higher educational institutes and faculty.

#### **Vacant reserved seats in IITs**

1117. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN:

SHRI D. RAJA:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that as admission to Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) closed on 24 June, 2009, there were not enough qualified candidates to fill up reserved seats on offer for SC & ST, OBC and physically challenged and about 50 per cent of the seats remained vacant;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether it is a fact that some of such vacant seats were transferred to general category; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) The details of reserved seats, category-wise, in the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) in 2009 are as follows:-

Category	Available seats
1	2
Other Backward Castes (OBCs)	1546

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