

disproportionately high compared to the intake capacity of schools. The enrolment position in the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan has increased to 11,21,012 in 2012-2013 as compared to 10,58,450 in 2010-2011.

The management wise data for the Higher Education was compiled for the first time for the year 2010-11 under the All India Survey on Higher Education, according to which the no. of Government colleges is 26.8 percent of the total no. of colleges and the percentage of students enrolled in these colleges is 39.2 percent of the total.

(b) No, Sir.

Mid day meal tragedy in Bihar

67. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the mid-day meal tragedy at two schools in Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any investigation has been conducted into the tragedy; and

(d) if so, the findings thereof and action taken, if any, against the responsible persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. SHASHI THAROOR): (a) to (d) A tragic incident took place in Navsrijit Government Primary School, Gandaman, Block Masrakh, District Saran of Bihar, where 23 children died after availing of the mid-day meal on 16th July, 2013. In all 79 children are enrolled in this school and on the fateful day, 55 children availed of the mid-day meal, out of which 46 children and one cook were hospitalised.

As there was no kitchen-cum-store in this school, the food-grains and other food items were stored in the house of the Head, who would issue the daily quota of ration to the cooks for cooking at school. On 16th July, the same practice was continued and the Head Teacher issued the food items to the cook. However, during cooking, the cook noticed that the oil was different and it had a peculiar smell. She brought it to the notice of Head Teacher, who chided her by saying that this oil has been procured for her own house and there was nothing wrong

with it. She further ordered the cook to go ahead with the cooking, who complied with the orders. As per the MDM Guidelines, at least one teacher should taste the MDM before it is served to the children. In this particular case, this practice was not followed even when the children complained of odd smell and peculiar taste of the food. This, later, led to the unfortunate incident where 47 children and the MDMS cook were hospitalised and 23 of them died.

Prima facie, this is a case of grave negligence. Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) reports have confirmed contamination. The Medical Experts also felt that the contamination was substantial so as to cause death. A First Information Report (FIR) has been lodged against the head teacher, she has been arrested and further investigation is under way. She has also been placed under suspension. The services of the Block Resource Person for MDMS have been discontinued. The guideline to ensure quality safety and hygienic under the MDMS have been reiterated to all States/UTs.

Quality of food served in mid day meals

68. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that food served to the school children under Mid Day Meal Scheme is unhygienic and of poor quality in many schools in the country;

(b) if so, whether any investigation is make into the matter; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and what measures are proposed to be taken to see that quality food under hygienic condition is served to the children?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. SHASHI THAROOR): (a) to (c) A total of 39 complaints of poor quality of Mid-day-meals have been received in this Ministry since last three years from various States. The details are given in the Statement (*See* below). The test reports by the Shriram Institute for Industrial Research, New Delhi also show that many samples fail to meet the nutritional and calorific values prescribed under the guidelines.

These complaints were referred to the concerned State Governments, who have taken necessary action in 30 out of the 39 cases. The allegations were