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Media alert from the Media Scanning & Verification Cell, IDSP-NCDC.



Alert ID	Publication Date	Reporting Date	Place Name	News Source/Publication Language
3299	26.02.2016	26.02.2016	Palghar Maharashtra	www.indianexpress.com/English http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/palghar-247-children-fall-ill-after-eating-mid-day-meal-prepared-by-iskcon/
Title:	247 children taken ill after consuming mid-day in district Palghar, Maharashtra			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to DSU- Palghar, SSU-Maharashtra			

FOR A 60-bed sub-district hospital in Kasa in the newly formed Palghar district, it was a panic alarm Thursday evening with 247 children being rushed in with symptoms of food poisoning. The children reportedly fell sick after consuming mid-day meal at a zila parishad school in Kasa Budruk village. The khichdi served to the students was prepared by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), which also supplies mid-day meal to various government schools in Mumbai.

While many of the children were treated on out-patient department basis and discharged, 104 students had to be admitted, with two children sharing one bed and a few accommodated on mattresses on the ward floors. According to Dr Pradeep Narayan Dhodi, the medical officer on duty at the Kasa sub-district hospital, the condition of all 104 had stabilised by night. "They will be kept under observation," he said.

Soon after consuming the khichdi in the afternoon, officials said, the students started complaining of vomiting, giddiness, nausea and abdominal pain.

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Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India

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They were initially taken to a primary health centre, but had to be shifted from there due to limited medical supplies. The children were taken to the sub-district hospital by 4 pm.

Palghar Collector Abhijeet Bangar said an inquiry had been ordered to further probe the possible case of poisoning. "There is one centralised kitchen in Wada taluka that was being used by ISKCON to prepare meals for hundreds of students in different schools. We will check as to why only students of this school were affected and not the others," said Bangar, adding that no police case had been made yet in the matter. The Kasa sub-district hospital has only seven doctors and all of them were immediately asked to report to work. Ten private practitioners were also requested to attend to the children. "Initially, every child required IV fluid and some needed injection of dicyclomine for abdominal pain. We needed healthcare providers to check each kid," said Dhodi.

Palghar was made a separate district in 2014, but till now no district hospital has been constructed for its 29.9 lakh population. There are just three sub-district hospitals in Dahanu, Jawahar and Kasa but with no intensive care unit facility. The children were given symptomatic treatment on Thursday, said the officials. Social workers were also roped in to aid in the treatment. While the 60-bed hospital already had 30-odd patients admitted there, it was left with only 30 beds for the 104 children.

All these children are students of Class I to VII. According to sources, the food was served at 1.45 pm.

"I was at Murbad when the incident took place. It is really sad that so many kids from the Kasa Budruk village zilla parishad school fell ill after consuming midday meal. I was informed about the incident by zilla parishad officials. I was told that ISKCON was the agency that supplied the meal. If such incident can take place under a reputed agency like ISKCON, what can we expect from other local bachat gats. I am going to take up this matter with Education Minister Vinod Tawde on priority basis," said Tribal Development Minister and Wada MLA Vishnu Savra.

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