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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
5255	01.05.2019	01.05.2019	Lakhisarai Bihar	Hindustan Times English Newspaper 01 st May, 2019/Page No. 12
Title:	Mid-day meal sends 51 children to hospital in Bihar's Lakhisarai district			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to DSU-Lakhisarai, SSU-Bihar			

Fifty one students fell ill with severe stomach ache, nausea and diarrhoea after eating their mid-day meal in their school Tuesday afternoon in Bihar's Lakhisarai district, officials said.

The students of Mahrath Middle School in Halsi block of Lakhisarai district were rushed to the Sikandra Primary Health Centre in neighbouring Jamui district, barely four kilometers from the school.

Doctors who attended the children at the hospital said that all of them were safe and healthy..

Lakhisarai civil surgeon Ashok Kumar said, "Fifty-one children had taken ill and admitted to the Sikandra primary health centre (PHC) with complaints of severe stomach pain, nausea and diarrhoea. They will be discharged by this evening." He ruled out possibility of any foul play.

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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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“Though there could be rumours that a lizard may have slipped into the mid-day meal, the symptoms of food poisoning could be a ramification of water contamination or improper hygiene in food chain,” added Kumar.

Kumar said the students were taken to Sikandra PHC in Jamui because it was closer (4 km) to the school than the Halsi community health centre, which was 15 km away.

Earlier, panic prevailed in the school soon after the children started showing symptoms of diarrhoea and nausea while some others lay on the floor groaning in pain.

Initially, the authorities found only 20 of them sick and rushed them to hospital but their number soared to 51 within an hour, causing panic among the students and the staff. The district administration was alerted soon. Officials quickly reached the school and sent all the ailing children to hospital.

Halsi's block development officer, Pritam Anand said out of the 51 students, 45 were treated at the Sikandra PHC while six were admitted to a private clinic.

Shobhendra Kumar Chaudhary, DM of Lakhisarai, said, “Administration has sent medical team and ambulance to Sikandara village. We are trying to ensure the best medical facilities to the sick children free of cost. We have confirmed with doctors that condition of all the children is stable and out of danger. In case anyone's condition turns serious, we will shift them to any advanced medical facility.”

Raj Kumar Singh, school principal of Utkramit Madhya Vidyalaya, said that the incident was accidental.

“The school management always takes best efforts for convenience and comforts of the students. Utmost care is taken while preparing mid-day meal. We are trying to find out what went wrong that the children had to suffer. Strict action will be taken against the guilty if lapses are found.”

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