

(a) whether Government is aware that students are committing suicide in different parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the necessary measures taken by Government to prevent them from this tragedy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (c) Sir, the details of suicides committed by students is not maintained centrally by the Ministry but it is a matter of great concern. Various socio-economic factors contribute to stress and anxiety among students especially school children. The Central Government has taken this issue seriously and has undertaken a number of steps to reduce examination related stress such as no Class X Board examination from 2011; introduction of grading system at Secondary School level; providing counseling for both students and parents; allowing fifteen minutes additional time to read Question Papers etc. Similarly, to counter stress amongst professional students, Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) have taken several measures to reduce academic strain on weak students by means of Special Slow Pace Programme; Mentoring Programmes; facilities for psychiatric intervention etc.

Both University Grants Commission (UGC) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) have notified regulations for prevention and prohibition of ragging in higher education institutions. The Ministry of Human Resource Development have taken several specific anti-ragging measures such as advertisement campaigns in the print, audio and audio visual media in order to sensitize various stakeholders towards the menace of ragging. An anti-ragging 'Helpline' is also functional with call centre facilities in English, Hindi and other Regional Languages for facilitating communication pertaining to incidents of ragging as well as to provide information on ragging and related issues.

Filling of OBC quota in professional colleges and institutions

3944. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that the OBC quota has not been fully filled by the professional colleges and institutions;

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (c) Since the Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Admissions) Act, 2006 provides for implementation in a phased manner consistent with the maintenance of standards of education, seats in certain courses of study in different institutions have not been fully filled. While all necessary guidelines have been issued to

institutions for implementing the Act, non-availability of students in certain subjects has also been reported by the University Grants Commission to be a reason for not fully filling earmarked seats.

Unrecognised private schools

3945. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of unrecognised private schools that exist in the country and the details thereof;
- (b) the status of such schools once the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act is notified;
- (c) whether Government will work with such schools in gaining recognition, by providing necessary assistance and the details thereof; and
- (d) whether Government has considered revising some of the existing norms of recognition such as the requirement of playgrounds and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) Ministry does not collect data of unrecognized private schools in the Country.

(b) Section 18 of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 *inter alia* provides that no school, other than a school established, owned or controlled by the appropriate Government or the local authority, shall, after the commencement of this Act, be established or function, without obtaining a certificate of recognition from such authority, by making an application in such form and manner, as may be prescribed.

(c) Section 19 of the RTE Act contains provisions regarding the norms and standards required to be fulfilled by the school and a time limit of three years for fulfilling such norms and standards, in case a school established before the commencement of the RTE Act does not fulfil the same.

(d) There is no proposal under consideration of the Government to revise the norms and standards for school as specified in the Schedule of the RTE Act.

Education of visually impaired students in schools

3946. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether his Ministry has taken cognizance of the plight of visually impaired students in Government schools and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (b) whether Government has taken stock of availability of equipment (such as Braille textbooks, Braille slates, abacuses, canes, etc.) across the country and the details thereof;