

Suicide by students

†3952. SHRI Y.P. TRIVEDI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether trend of suicide by school and college students has increased in the last year;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) the number of suicides committed so far in Mumbai; and
- (d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (d) 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.

Agreement with China in higher education

3953. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether country has entered into an agreement with China on recognizing each others certificate in higher education to facilitate cross border mobility of students for advance studies or job purposes; and
- (b) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, the Government has entered into an Educational Exchange Programme (EEP) with Peoples' Republic of China on November 21, 2006, which facilitates exchange of scholars, teachers, experts and students.

Students well-being and staff exchange programme with Australia

3954. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether India and Australia have identified the safety and well-being of students as a matter of high priority in the bilateral efforts to build a broad knowledge partnership;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the MoUs signed so far; and
- (d) the new areas identified to focus in the current year and staff exchange programmes identified so far between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Hon'ble Minister of Human Resource Development visited Australia from 6th to 10th April 2010 and held extensive discussions with various Ministers of the Federal Government of Australia as well as State Governments of Western Australia, New South Wales and Victoria regarding the safety and well being of Indian students in Australia. The Australian side has sent an update on the measures taken by the Victorian Government to help safeguard the well-being of Indian students.

An Educational Exchange Programme to enhance collaboration in area of education with Australia is already existing. Further, a Joint Ministerial Statement on education was signed by the Hon'ble Minister of Human Resource Development with Deputy Prime Minister of Australia on 8th April, 2010. Three MoUs in the field of education were also signed on 8th April, 2010 during the visit include:

- (i) MoU between Association of Indian Universities and Universities Australia.
- (ii) MoU between Central Board of Secondary Education and Australian Council of Education Research and
- (iii) MoU between the Energy Research Institute (TERI) and Deakin University.

Rajiv Gandhi Udyami Mitra Yojana

3955. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has started Rajiv Gandhi Udyami Mitra Yojana;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and