

Suicides by Students due to exam stress

***434. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA:
SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR:**

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the tendency of committing suicide due to failure in examinations or poor results and tension is on the rise among the students;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have ever given serious consideration to the matter;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the year-wise details of the students committing suicide; and

(f) the steps taken so far by Government to check it?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) and (b) The attention of the Government has been drawn from time to time to the problem of increasing stress levels among students during examinations and instances of some students committing suicides due to failure in examinations and stress. There are various other contributing factors to such levels including parental pressure, increasing competition and the fast changing social and economic conditions.

(c) to (f) Yes, Sir. While no data regarding the number of suicides committed by the students is maintained centrally, the Ministry is deeply concerned with the issue of high stress level among students caused by the public examinations at the end of class X and XII conducted by various boards, Joint Entrance Examinations for IITs and other entrance examinations. To address the question of promoting equality in access to education as also allow the students to have a stress free environment of joyful learning, the Ministry had convened a meeting recently with Eminent Educationists, Principals, representatives from premier institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Technology and Indian Institutes of Management, Heads of the Boards of Examination and

others. It was unanimously agreed that there must be systemic reforms to eliminate exam-related stress. It was also felt that a national consensus on the issue should be reached through wider discussion.

In the context of review of the National Curriculum Framework, a National Steering Group has been constituted by NCERT under the chairmanship of Prof. Yashpal, which is being facilitated by 21 National Focus Groups. One of the Focus Groups will address the issue of carrying out public examination reforms.

The Standing Committee of the IIT Council in a meeting held on the 5th March, 2005 discussed the issue of stress caused by the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) and the mushrooming of coaching institutes. It was decided that IIT Directors will come out with concrete proposals for bringing out reforms in the JEE.

In pursuance of the decision taken in the meeting, the Council of Boards of School Education in India (COBSE) is organizing a one day conference on the 1st May, 2005 of the chairmen of the School Education Boards to deliberate further and evolve a national consensus on this issue. Once the national consensus is reached, the process of examination reforms will be initiated before the conduct of the 2006 examinations.

SCs/STs/OBCs Judges

***435. SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN:** Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are applying the principle of social justice in appointment of constitutional posts such as judges of High Courts and Supreme Court of India; and

(b) if so, the ratio of representations given to SCs, STs, OBCs, women and minorities in the existing strength of the High Courts/Supreme Court?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) Appointments of Judges of the Supreme Court of India and High Courts are made under articles 124 and 217 of the Constitution of India, respectively, which do not provide for reservation for any caste or class of persons. No statistics is, therefore, maintained for number of Judges belonging to SC/ST/OBCs and minorities. There are, however, one woman