

Mental health facilities in Government educational institutions

517. SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a dearth of mental health facilities in Government schools and universities across the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) if not, the details of availability and recruitment of trained counsellors and the student-counsellor ratio in these institutions, school/university-wise;

(d) the details of suicides committed by students and faculty members/teachers of schools and universities during the last three years, school/university-wise;

(e) the funds allocated, released and utilised for mental health facilities in these institutions during that period, school/university-wise; and

(f) the steps taken by Government to improve such facilities in these institutions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. SATYA PAL SINGH): (a) to (c) As education is a subject in the concurrent list of the constitution, a majority of the schools are under the control of the respective State Governments. The States and UTs are advised to frame a special strategy for guidance and counselling in schools. It is recommended to have teachers qualified on guidance and counselling services and thereby capable of conducting varied guidance and counselling programmes in schools. Moreover, the existing teachers are also trained for this purpose and Guest Lectures by prominent people in different fields are also arranged. Guidance and counselling is an essential part of in-service training programmes for teachers and Principals. Under the Integrated Scheme for School Education-Samagra Shiksha launched from 2018-19, there is provision for supporting States and UTs on interventions related to guidance and counselling in schools.

Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) and Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNVs) have norms for engaging counsellors to address the needs of mental health afflicted students. 436 educational counsellors have been engaged by KVs wherever counselling and guidance services are required. Similarly, 2 counsellors per JNV (one male and one female) have been approved. In addition, principal of JNVs are authorized to engage the services of professional counsellors/psychiatrist from a Government hospital to provide guidance and support to students identified having mental health needs. Further, short term courses are arranged for training teachers for guiding and counselling of

students. The trained teachers perform as master trainers for other staff in schools. Morning PT and evening games are compulsory for all students to ensure physical and mental fitness.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has mandated appointment of counsellors and wellness teachers on full time basis. The board also inspects schools from time to time to ensure compliance of its byelaws.

NCERT has been training personnel as counsellors to work in schools for last many years specially dealing with mental health related skills. NCERT is further augmenting efforts by training teachers to work as mentors rather than only subject experts. The National Curriculum Framework (NCF), 2005 recommends measures like making examinations more flexible, provision of guidance and counselling in schools, and making learning child-centric etc. The States and UTs have adopted or adapted the NCF as per their local context.

The University Grant Commission (UGC) has framed guidelines on safety of students on or off campus of Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs). As per these guidelines HEIs should mandatorily put in place a broad base “Students counselling system” for the effective management of problems and challenges faced by the students such as anxiety, stress, etc.

(d) Data on student suicides in school and college campuses is not maintained by this Ministry. However, as per the data available on ‘Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India 2015’ published by National Crime Records bureau (NCRB), a total of 8934 students had committed suicide in the year 2015. The report mentions that 1360 persons below the age of 18 years and 1183 persons below the age of 30 years committed suicide during 2015 due to failure in examination.

(e) and (f) In the year 2018-19, the Department of School Education and Literacy, MHRD launched Samagra Shiksha-An Integrated Scheme for School Education covering children from classes I to XII which subsumes the erstwhile Centrally Sponsored Schemes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE). The scheme has provisions for equitable and quality education for students from Class I to XII through dedicated components of equity and quality education. The main objective of the Samagra Shiksha Scheme is to impart quality education that facilitates the holistic development of the child. Under Samagra Shiksha, projects on guidance and counselling of students have been approved and an amount of ₹ 728.86 lakh has been approved for the year 2018-19 for this purpose.