

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1935
ANSWERED ON 20/12/2023

CASTE DISCRIMINATION IN CEI

1935 SHRI P. WILSON:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether more than 60 suicide of students from SC/ST has been reported in central education institutes (CEI) and more than 25,000 students from SC/ST, OBC have dropped out of CEI in the last five years, if so, the details of suicide in each institution for the past five years and reasons therefor;
- (b) whether any committee report/study has been conducted to identify the reasons for increase in caste discrimination in CEI, if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether Government has considered framing a policy to ensure representation of members from oppressed communities of all committees of CEI and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(DR. SUBHAS SARKAR)

(a) : Education being a concurrent list subject, Educational Institutions are managed by both Central and State Government. Majority of the Educational Institutions in the country falls in the purview of the State / UT Government. National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) collects data on suicides from police recorded suicide cases. Details of the number of suicides of students in 2022 is available in the Accidental Death & Suicide in India (ADSI) 2022 report of the NCRB which is accessible at

<https://ncrb.gov.in/uploads/nationalcrimerecordsbureau/custom/adsiyarwise2022/1701611156012ADSI2022Publication2022.pdf>.

As per ADSI, 2022, Report of NCRB, there are various causes of suicides like professional/career problems, sense of isolation, abuse, violence, family problems, mental disorders, addiction to alcohol, financial loss, chronic pain etc.

In the Higher Education sector, students have multiple options and they choose to migrate across institutions and from one course/programme to another in the same institution. The migration/withdrawal if any, is mainly on account of securing seat by the students in other departments / institutions of their choice or on any personal ground.

(b) & (c) : The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) recognises multiplicity of factors, including lack of access to quality schools, poverty, social mores & customs, and language have had a detrimental effect on rates of enrolment and retention among the various categories of Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) which include: gender identities,

socio-cultural identities (such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, OBCs, and minorities), geographical identities, disabilities (including learning disabilities) etc. The issues of equity and inclusion are analogous across school and higher education. Hence, NEP 2020 aims to ensure that no child loses any opportunity to learn and excel because of the circumstances of birth or background. NEP 2020 reaffirms that bridging the social category gaps in access, participation, and learning outcomes in both school and higher education will continue to be one of the major goals of all education sector development programmes.

To address the issue of equity and inclusion in the education government has taken multipronged approach and initiatives.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) (Promotion of Equity in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2012 have been notified, which is applicable to all the HEIs under its purview. It provides for HEIs to take measures to safeguard the interests of the students without any prejudice to their caste, creed, religion, language, ethnicity, gender and disability. The regulation provides for establishment of Equal Opportunity Cell and appointment of Anti-Discrimination Officer in each University. It also stipulates setting up of Counselling Centres with professionally trained counsellors to provide services to students, research scholars and faculty including non-teaching staff.

UGC (Redressal of Grievances of Students) Regulations, 2023 have been formulated to safeguard the interest of students. As per the regulation, universities are required to constitute Students Grievance Redressal Committee and appoint Ombudsperson.

UGC had also notified Regulations on curbing the menace of Ragging in Higher Educational Institutions, 2009 which have been further amended on 29.06.2016 to bring all caste-based discrimination in ambit of ragging. In order to prevent ragging in Higher Education Institutions, UGC has setup a nationwide toll free 24x7 anti ragging helpline 1800-180-5522 in 12 languages which can be accessed by students in distress owing to ragging related incidents.

In order to proactively address any issues of SC / ST students, Institutes have set up mechanisms such as SC / ST students' cells, Equal Opportunity Cell, Student Grievance Cell, Student Grievance Committee, Student Social Club, Liaison officers, Liaison Committee etc. Further, UGC has issued instructions from time to time for promoting equity and fraternity amongst students.
