

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1953
ANSWERED ON 20/12/2023

MEASURES TO PREVENT SUICIDE BY STUDENTS

1953 SHRI R. DHARMAR:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is an increase in cases of suicide by students in educational institutions like IITs including IIT- Chennai/Mumbai, NITs, IIMs, Central/State Universities and AIIMS especially among students from SC, ST and OBC Communities;
- (b) if so, details thereof along with number of students who committed suicide during last five years and current year, State/year-wise including Tamil Nadu;
- (c) whether the cases of suicide are proportionately higher in students pursuing higher education, details thereof;
- (d) whether Government has given any directives to State Governments in this regard; and
- (e) steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government to prevent suicides?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(DR. SUBHAS SARKAR)

(a) to (e) : 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. Data of suicide cases of students of all these institutions across the country are not maintained by Ministry of Education. 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/adsiyarwise2022/1701611156012A_DSI2022Publication2022.pdf

To address the issue of suicide, the government is taking multi-pronged measures and provides psychological support to students, teachers and families for mental and emotional well-being to avoid incidences of suicide.

An initiative of Ministry, MANODARPAN, covers a wide range of activities to provide psychological support to students, teachers and families for mental and emotional well-being during the COVID outbreak and beyond.

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has formulated National Suicide Prevention Strategy to consider suicide prevention a public health priority. It also provides a framework for multiple

stakeholders to implement activities for prevention of suicides in India. UGC had circulated the National Suicide Prevention Strategy amongst Universities and HEIs.

UGC had also notified UGC Regulations on curbing the menace of Ragging in Higher Educational Institutions, 2009 and amended it in 2016, and issued circulars for strict compliance of the regulations.

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.

To address the issue of mental health and well-being during and after COVID, UGC had issued advisories to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) on 05.04.2020.

University Grants Commission (UGC) (Redressal of Grievances of Students) Regulations, 2023 have been formulated to safe guard the interest of students.

UGC has also issued Guidelines for Promotion of Physical Fitness, Sports, Student's Health, Welfare, Psychological and Emotional Well- being at HEIs on 13.04.2023, which provides for promoting physical fitness and sports activities for students; creating safeguards against academic pressure, peer pressure, behavioral issues, stress, career concerns, depression and other issues on the mental health of students; to teach positive thinking & emotions in the student community; and to promote a positive and supportive network for students.

The Ministry on 10.07.2023 has also circulated a broad framework for emotional and mental well being of students in HEIs with request to take proactive measures to incorporate the same in the institutional functioning and instil a feeling of confidence in the student community.

The higher educational institutions take various steps such as conducting workshops/seminars on Happiness and Wellness, regular sessions on Yoga, induction programs, extracurricular activities including sports and cultural activities, assigning of one faculty adviser for small group of students to support with their academics and monitor their progress, and appointment of Student Counsellors for overall personality development and de-stressing students. Further, students, wardens and caretakers are sensitized to bring to notice the signs of depression in fellow students to the authorities so that timely clinical consultation may be provided.

The University Grants Commission has notified UGC (Promotion of Equity in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2012 which is applicable to all the HEIs under the purview of UGC and 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 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. Universities are also required to constitute Students Grievance Redressal Committee and appoint Ombudsperson as per the UGC (Redressal of Grievances of Students) Regulations, 2023.
