

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2119
ANSWERED ON 19.03.2025**

Stress among students

2119 **Shri Harbhajan Singh:**

Will the Minister of Education be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Ministry is aware of growing stress among students leading to depression and suicides;
- (b) if so, whether any corrective measures are being taken by the Ministry to address this issue;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and, if not, the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether the Ministry would review syllabus, exam patterns and other structural issues that may have been contributing to stress among students; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(DR. SUKANTA MAJUMDAR)

(a) to (e): National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) stipulates number of initiatives to ensure that the learning environments are engaging and supportive. It inter alia provides for availability of professional and career counselling, and counselling system for handling stress and emotional adjustment.

Ministry of Education, has been actively working towards improving the mental health and wellbeing of students across the country. 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. A “National Tele Mental Health Programme” has been launched in 2022, to improve access to quality mental health counselling and care services in the country. As on 17.03.2025, 36 States/ UTs have set up 53 Tele Mental Health Assistance and Networking Across States (MANAS) Cells. More than 19,58,109 calls have been handled on the helpline number.

UGC has issued Guidelines for Promotion of Physical Fitness, Sports, Student’s Health, Welfare, Psychological and Emotional Well- being at HEIs on 13.04.2023, which provide for promoting physical fitness and sports activities for students; creating safeguards against academic pressure, peer pressure, behavioural 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. Accordingly, IIT Madras, IIT Delhi, IIT Guwahati, IIT Gandhinagar and IIT Roorkee have conducted workshops on Mental Wellness & Stress Management, involving multiple educational Institutions and experts in the field of mental health, to develop a comprehensive approach to suicide prevention and mental health promotion.

An Integrated approach for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience, and Wellbeing has been conceptualized under the Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Programme. The goal is to empower faculty to address student mental health concerns for early intervention. Under this integrated approach, so far, 1,397 faculty from over 160 centrally funded HEIs have participated in 20 online capacity building sessions. Visits to institutions like MNIT and AMU showcased effective mental health initiatives. In November 2024, the National Wellbeing Conclave, hosted at IIT Hyderabad, brought together 350 stakeholders from 100 HEIs, with more than 50 HEIs showcasing emerging practices.

Keeping in view the growth in number of unregulated private coaching centers in the country in the absence of any laid down policy or regulation; instances of such centers charging exorbitant fees from students; undue stress on students resulting in students committing suicides etc.; Ministry of Education has circulated a Guidelines for Regulation of Coaching Centers to States/UTs on 16.01.2024 for consideration by way of appropriate legal framework. This has been followed up with another letter to the States/ UTs on 16.07.2024. The Guidelines encompass several key aspects, including laying emphasis on significance of mental well-being, advocating for the prioritization of counsellors and psychologists' support within coaching centres; no batch segregation; maintenance of records etc.

NEP 2020 recognises that the current nature of secondary school exams, including Board exams as well as entrance exams is compelling the students as well as parents to opt for coaching for better results. It is replacing valuable time for true learning with excessive focus on coaching only for passing examination/entrance test through rote learning and memorization. In this context, it suggests introducing greater flexibility, student choice, and best-of-two attempts, assessments that primarily test core capacities and develop further viable models of Board Exams that reduce pressure and the coaching culture. Students have been facing the issue of appearing for multiple entrance examinations conducted by different universities / HEIs separately to secure a seat in any of these institutions. For higher education, entrance examinations like CUET, JEE, NEET etc. are conducted based on learning level in core subjects studied in Board level examinations. JEE exams are conducted twice a year and student has option to appear in these examinations and the best of two results is considered. CUET, JEE and NEET are available in 13 Indian languages for ease of students' comprehensibility.

Education being in the concurrent list, Centre and States are equally responsible to address this issue.
