

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.202
ANSWERED ON 27/11/2024

Suicide of students in educational institutions and coaching centres

202 Shri Harbhajan Singh:

Will the Minister of Education be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Ministry is aware of several cases of suicides of students in educational institutions and coaching centres;
- (b) if so, the number of such suicides during the last five years;
- (c) the steps taken by the Ministry to prevent suicide of students in educational institutions and coaching centres; and
- (d) the steps taken by the Ministry to make quality education more affordable and accessible to students?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(Dr. SUKANTA MAJUMDAR)

(a) to (c): Comprehensive analysis of the data related to the accidental deaths and suicides in the country is published in the yearly Accidental Death & Suicide in India (ADSI) reports by National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB). Year wise and State wise details of students' suicides are available in the year wise ADSI reports which are accessible at <https://ncrb.gov.in/accidental-deaths-suicides-in-india-year-wise.html> .

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.

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 22.11.24, 36 States/ UTs have set up 53 Tele Mental Health Assistance and Networking Across States (MANAS) Cells. More than 15,95,000 calls have been handled on the helpline number.

UGC issued advisory to HEIs on 06.01.2023 regarding the National Suicide Prevention Strategy framed by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

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, 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 Higher Education Institutes (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 and IIT Gandhinagar have conducted workshops on Mental Wellness & Stress Management, in Northern, Western and Southern regions during May-August, 2023, involving multiple educational Institutions and experts in the field of mental health, to develop a comprehensive approach to suicide prevention and mental health promotion. Inter IIT Wellness Meet was organized by IIT Roorkee on 13th-14th February, 2024, and Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar (IITGN) hosted a two-day workshop on students' mental well-being titled 'Building Scalable Systems for Student Wellbeing in Residential Programs' in its campus on March 4-5, 2024.

A Capacity Building Programme has also been launched to enhance mental health resilience and wellbeing in HEIs, which offers a platform to share best practices and collaborate with experts on student's mental health. From May to October 2024, more than 900 faculty members participated in various sessions held across HEIs. Additionally, the National Wellbeing Conclave was conceptualized to create a collaborative platform for students and faculty to exchange ideas, showcase initiatives, and share best practices. First National Wellbeing Conclave has been held on 9-10 November 2024 at IIT Hyderabad, the Conclave brought together more than 300 stakeholders from centrally funded institutions, 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.

(d): The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) makes provisions to ensure full access, equality, and inclusiveness. Since education is a subject in the Concurrent List, the implementation of NEP 2020 is a joint responsibility of the central and state governments. The government is committed to providing quality education to all.

For enhancing access to Higher Education, number of initiatives have been taken like:

(i) Opening of more HEIs - The number of Universities/University level Institutions registered under AISHE have increased to 1168 in 2021-22 from 760 in 2014-15. Similarly, number of Colleges registered under AISHE have increased to 45473 in 2021-22 from 38498 in 2014-15.

(ii) Implementing various Scholarship and Fellowship schemes for providing financial assistance to students, including for SC/ST/OBC and Minority students and underserved regions.

(iii) Allowing well performing HEIs (based on NAAC and NIRF ranking) by University Grants Commission (UGC) to offer full Open Distance Learning/Online Programmes based on quality parameters.

(iv) Providing much-needed flexibility and appropriate Exit as well Re-entry options in the Higher Education system, to facilitate students to choose their learning trajectory.

(v) Providing anytime, anywhere learning opportunities for all learners through Study Webs for Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM) platform, which provides high quality structured online courses in multiple disciplines.

(vi) Conducting JEE, NEET (UG) and Common University Entrance Test (CUET) Exams in 13 languages, to facilitate students and making available Text Books in Indian Languages to facilitate students, particularly from vernacular/rural background.

(vii) 10% reservation for Economically Weaker Section; reservation for SC/ST/OBC; preparatory classes for SC/STs for appearing in JEE exam; JEE exam being conducted in local / regional languages etc.
