

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3534
ANSWERED ON 02/04/2025

Rising cases of student suicides

3534 Shri Jose K. Mani:

Will the Minister of Education be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has the data regarding the number of student suicides happened in the country during the last three years;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the steps taken by Government to address the mental health crisis among students; and
- (d) whether there is a plan to regulate coaching centres and reduce academic pressure on students?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(Dr. SUKANTA MAJUMDAR)

(a) to (d): National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) collects data on suicides from police recorded suicide cases. 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 student suicides are available in the ADSI reports which are accessible at <https://ncrb.gov.in/accidental-deaths-suicides-in-india-year-wise.html>. As per these Reports, 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.

Education being in the concurrent list, it is shared responsibility of Centre and States 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 of Education, 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 by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, to improve access to quality mental health counselling and care services in the country. As on date, 36 States/ UTs have set up 53 Tele Mental Health Assistance and Networking Across States (MANAS) Cells and more than 19.90 lakh calls have been handled on the helpline number till date.

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 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.

In alignment with National Education Policy 2020's to ensure that the learning environments are engaging and supportive, the Department of Higher Education initiated the Integrated approach for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience, and Wellbeing under the Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Programme (MMTTP). It comprises online and in-person sessions, visits to institutions with innovative mental health practices, and an Annual National Wellbeing Conclave. The goal is to empower faculty to address student mental health concerns for early intervention. So far, 1,397 faculty from over 160 centrally funded HEIs have participated in 20 online sessions.

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.

To support the learner access to quality higher education through competitive examinations, SATHEE (Self-Assessment, Test and Help for Entrance Exams) has been launched in collaboration with IIT Kanpur to provide quality education to every student who intends to participate in competitive examination such as JEE, NEET and various state level engineering and other examinations. It leverages Web Platform, Mobile Application, YouTube live sessions & DTH channels for delivery.
