

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION No.140
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05.03.2018

Saksham Task Force

***140. SHRIMATI KIRRON KHER:**

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has adopted the recommendations of the 'Saksham Task Force' set up by the University Grants Commission for gender sensitisation and safety on campuses;
- (b) if so, the details of the recommendations which have been accepted and those which have been implemented along with the manner of implementation; and
- (c) whether the Universities across the country, both private and public, have implemented the same on their campuses and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) to (c): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.140 FOR 05.03.2018 ASKED BY SHRIMATI KIRRON KHER, HON'BLE MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, REGARDING SAKSHAM TASK FORCE

(a) to (c): The University Grants Commission (UGC) had set up a Task Force under the Chairmanship of Prof. Meenakshi Gopinath, Ex-Member, UGC on 8th January, 2013 to review the existing arrangements, identify loopholes and inadequacies and to formulate remedial measures to address the concerns of all girls and women, and of the youth who study and live in the country's numerous and diverse University campuses. The Task Force submitted its report titled as "SAKSHAM- Measures for Ensuring the Safety of Women and Programmes for Gender Sensitization on Campuses" to the UGC on 30th October, 2013.

The Task Force in its report made the following recommendations: (i) setting up a Gender Sensitization Unit within the UGC; (ii) campus safety policies should not result in securitization, such as over monitoring or policing or curtailing the freedom of movement, specially for women; (iii) all members of Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) must undergo processes of gender sensitization, whether students, faculty, administration or support staff. All students must undergo some course or workshop during their period of study; (iv) all HEIs must formulate guidelines for dealing with sexual harassment in their respective institutions, whether they be autonomous, affiliating, co-educational or women's colleges; (v) a handbook on sexual harassment and gender sensitization to be prepared for all faculties; (vi) courses and workshop modules on gender sensitization for all sections of the HEI community; (vii) sufficient lighting in and around campuses, reliable public transport, accommodation, toilet facilities and health (including sexual health) for women's security and freedom from harassment; (viii) strengthening of women's studies centres in Universities and women's development centre cells in colleges; (ix) undertaking of recommended Projects/ Research Collation of existing materials and mapping exercises including prioritizing research proposals concerning sexual harassment and violence in universities and colleges (x) NAAC to build in an essential gender audit component as part of the evaluation process in its assessment and accreditation procedures. A copy of the Report of Task Force is available at http://www.ugc.ac.in/pdfnews/5873997_SAKSHAM-BOOK.pdf .

UGC accepted the recommendations of the Task Force and to ensure compliance of the recommendations of Task Force, UGC notified University Grants Commission (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal of Sexual Harassment of Women Employees and Students in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2015. These Regulations describe responsibilities of the HEIs, grievance redressal mechanism, process for making complaint and conducting inquiry, interim redressal, punishment and compensations, consequences of non-compliance etc. UGC Regulations being statutory in nature are binding for all HEIs. A copy of these Regulations is available at <http://egazette.nic.in/WriteReadData/2016/169477.pdf> .
