

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1363
ANSWERED ON 11/12/2023

INCREASE OF SUICIDE CASES OF STUDENTS IN HEIs, IITs, IIMs & NITs

1363. SHRI S. VENKATESAN:
SHRI RITESH PANDEY:
KUNWAR DANISH ALI:
SHRI A.K.P. CHINRAJ:
MS. S. JOTHIMANI:
SHRI M.V.V. SATYANARAYANA:
SHRI MADDILA GURUMOORTHY:
SHRI JAYADEV GALLA:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether suicide cases among students of school, colleges, IITs, IIM, and NITs, IIT have seen an increase in recent years and if so, the details of such cases since 2014; State-wise especially for the State of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh;
- (b) the details of suicide cases of OBC/ SC/ ST students took place in 2022 and 2023;
- (c) whether the Government has conducted a study in this regard after setting up a Committee and is also aware that many Central Universities and Government schools still lack mental health counselors for students;
- (d) if so, the findings of such Committee and whether the Government has implemented/considered implementing any pre-emptive measures/schemes/ initiatives/ programmes under the National Suicide Prevention Strategy to actively tackle and reduce the number of student suicides and if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the State Government of Andhra Pradesh has submitted any proposal/memorandum in this regard;
- (f) whether the Government will consider to evolve legal framework to address caste-based discrimination by implementation of UGC (Promotion of Equity in HEIs) Regulations, 2012 across all Central Educational Institutes;
- (g) whether there have been instances where students from marginalised communities were being asked their entrance test ranks during campus recruitment in various IITs and if so, the details thereof; and
- (h) the number of students dropped out from IIT Madras since 2014 till date alongwith reasons?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(DR. SUBHAS SARKAR)

(a) and (b) : 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. State wise number 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. State / UT wise 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/adsiyarwise2022/1701611156012ADSI2022Publication2022.pdf>

(c) and (d) : As per the Accidental Deaths & Suicide in India (ADSI), 2022, Report of NCRB, 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.

The Government accords the highest importance to each incident of suicide on campuses of educational institutions and has initiated numerous initiatives in this regard. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 further stipulates that the development of capacities that promote student wellness such as fitness, good health, psycho-social well-being, and sound ethical grounding are also critical for high-quality learning and for reducing mental pressure. It also provisions opportunities for students to participate in sports, culture/arts clubs, eco-clubs, activity clubs, community service projects, etc.

University Grants Commission (UGC) (Redressal of Grievances of Students) Regulations, 2023 have been formulated to safe guard the interest of students. UGC had also notified UGC Regulations on curbing the menace of Ragging in Higher Educational Institutions, 2009 and amended in 2016, and issued circulars for strict compliance of the regulations. 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. UGC has also circulated the National Suicide Prevention Strategy, 2021 formulated 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.

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.

The Ministry of Education has undertaken various other steps such as peer assisted learning, introduction of technical education in regional languages for students in order to ease the academic stress. An initiative, named 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. Besides this, students' specialized psychological counselling

helplines, students' wellness centres, buddy-support system and various other measures have been implemented in IITs and other Institutions, for early detection of cases of psychological stress.

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.

(e) : No such proposal/memorandum in this regard has been received from the State of Andhra Pradesh.

(f) : 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. Apart from the above, UGC has amended its anti ragging regulation by third amendment on 29.06.2016 which covers all caste based discrimination in ragging.

In order to proactively address any issues of SC/ST students, Institutes have set up mechanisms such as SC/ST students' cells, Equal Opportunity Cell, Student Grievance Cell, Student Grievance Committee, Student Social Club, Liaison officers, Liaison Committee etc. Further, University Grants Commission (UGC) has issued instructions from time to time for promoting equity and fraternity amongst students.

(g) : Students from marginalized communities are not asked to disclose their entrance test ranks during campus recruitment.

(h) : In the Higher Education sector students have multiple options and they choose to migrate across institutions and from one course/programme to another in the same institution. The migration/withdrawal if any, is mainly on account of securing seat by the students in other departments / institutions of their choice or on any personal ground. As informed by IIT Madras, since 2014 out of enrolment of 9595 students, the number of students who withdrew from the courses are 44 (0.45%) in Under Graduate programme which is on account of majority joining another Institution and remaining for personal and health reasons.
