

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. *2
ANSWERED ON 22.07.2024

Overhauling of NTA

*2. SHRI MANICKAM TAGORE B:
DR. KALANIDHI VEERASWAMY:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the Government is considering to make an overhaul of the National Testing Agency in the wake of leak of papers of the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET-UG) recently;
- (b) whether it is also true that over 24 lakh students were affected because of the leak of NEET papers, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether seventy such papers were leaked affecting more than two crore students during the last seven years;
- (d) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to safeguard the future of the students; and
- (e) whether the Government is considering to scrap NEET examinations as demanded by many States, especially Tamil Nadu, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF EDUCATION
(SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN)**

(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) IN RESPECT OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. *2 FOR REPLY ON 22.07.2024 REGARDING “OVERHAULING OF NTA” ASKED BY SHRI MANICKAM TAGORE B, DR. KALANIDHI VEERASWAMY, HON’BLE MEMBER(S) OF PARLIAMENT

(a) to (e):

- The NEET(UG) 2024 Examination was conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA) on 5th May 2024 at 4750 Centres in 571 cities (including 14 Cities abroad).
- 24,06,079 candidates registered for the examination, out of which 23,33,297 candidates appeared in the same. After the conduct of NEET(UG) 2024 Examination, certain cases of alleged irregularities/cheating/malpractices were reported. In only one instance, there has been a likely breach of chain of custody of Question Paper. The Ministry of Education has asked the Central Bureau of Investigation to conduct a comprehensive investigation into the entire gamut of alleged irregularities including conspiracy, cheating, breach of trust etc. w.r.t. the NEET(UG) 2024 Examination.
- NTA was established in 2018 as a specialised body to conduct examinations for entrance to Higher Education Institutions. Since its inception, NTA has conducted over 240 examinations involving more than 5.4 crore students.
- Further, to suggest effective measures for conducting transparent, smooth and fair conduct of examinations by the NTA. the Ministry of Education has constituted a High-Level Committee of Experts to make recommendations on Reforms in mechanism of examination process, Improvement in Data Security protocols and Structure and functioning of NTA. The Committee comprises of the following experts:

1	Dr. K. Radhakrishnan, Former Chairman, ISRO and Chairman BoG, IIT Kanpur.	Chairman
2	Dr. Randeep Guleria, Former Director, AIIMS Delhi.	Member
3	Prof. B J Rao, Vice Chancellor, Central University of Hyderabad.	Member
4	Prof. Ramamurthy K, Professor Emeritus, Department of Civil Engineering, IIT Madras.	Member
5	Shri Pankaj Bansal, Co-Founder, People Strong and Board Member- Karmayogi Bharat.	Member
6	Prof. Aditya Mittal, Dean Student Affairs, IIT Delhi	Member
7	Shri Govind Jaiswal , Joint Secretary, Ministry of Education, Govt. of India	Member Secretary

- The Committee has also co-opted two more members i.e., Prof. Amey Karkare, Professor of Computer Science and Engineering, IIT Kanpur and Dr. Debapriya Roy, Assistant Professor, IIT Kanpur.
The Terms of Reference of the Committee is attached as **Annexure**.
- As a deterrence to unfair means in public examinations, the Central Government has enacted the Public Examination (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act 2024. This Act has come into force w.e.f. 21st June, 2024 and Rules have also been notified thereunder on 23rd June, 2024.
- At present, there is no proposal to scrap the NEET(UG) Examination.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO PART (A) to (E) OF THE REPLY OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. *2 ANSWERED ON 22.07.2024 ASKED BY SHRI MANICKAM TAGORE B, DR. KALANIDHI VEERASWAMY, HON'BLE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT REGARDING "OVERHAULING OF NTA"

Terms of Reference of the High Level Committee of Experts

(i) Reform in mechanism of examination process

(a) To analyse the end-to-end examination process and suggest measures to improve efficiency of the system and to forestall any possible breach.

(b) To conduct a thorough review of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)/Protocols of the NTA, and suggest measures to strengthen these procedures/protocols along with monitoring mechanism to ensure compliance at every level.

(ii) Improvement in Data Security protocols

(a) To evaluate the existing data security processes and protocols of NTA and recommend measures for its improvement.

(b) To examine existing security protocols related to the paper-setting and other processes for different examinations and make recommendations to enhance robustness of system.

(iii) Structure & Functioning of National Testing Agency

(a) To make recommendations on the organizational structure and functioning of the National Testing Agency (NTA) for implementation of recommendations given under point 3(i) and 3(ii) and clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of functionaries at every level.

(b) Assess the current Grievance Redressal Mechanism of the NTA, identify areas of improvement and make recommendations for enhancing its efficiency.