

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- 2408
ANSWERED ON- 04/08/2025

Caste-Based Discrimination in Higher Education Institutions

2408. Shri K Radhakrishnan:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has any data of suicide cases of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Students in Higher Educational Institutions like IITs, IIMs, Central Universities and other institutions during the last ten years;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, year-wise and institution-wise;
- (c) whether any specific cases of caste-based discrimination have been reported in these institutions during the above said period;
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with action taken thereon; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government and the University Grants Commission (UGC) to prevent discrimination and ensure mental health, support and inclusive environment for SC/ST students in these institutions?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(DR. SUKANTA MAJUMDAR)

(a) to (e): 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>.

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.

To address the burden of mental disorders, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is implementing the National Mental Health Programme (NMHP) in the country. The objectives of DMHP component under NMHP is to provide suicide prevention services, work place stress management, life skills training and counselling in schools and colleges.

A “National Tele Mental Health Programme” has been launched in 2022 and Tele MANAS Mobile Application in 2024, to improve access to quality mental health counselling and care services in the

country. As on today, 36 States/ UTs have set up 53 Tele Mental Health Assistance and Networking Across States (MANAS) Cells. More than 24.50 lakhs calls have been handled on the helpline number.

To address the issue of equity and inclusion in the education, Government has taken multipronged approach and initiatives. UGC (Promotion of Equity in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2012 have been notified, which is applicable to all the HEIs under its purview. It 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. The regulation provides for establishment of Equal Opportunity Cell and appointment of Anti-Discrimination Officer in each University. It also stipulates setting up of Counselling Centres with professionally trained counsellors to provide services to students, research scholars and faculty including non-teaching staff.

UGC (Redressal of Grievances of Students) Regulations, 2023 have been formulated to safeguard the interest of students. As per the regulation, universities are required to constitute Students Grievance Redressal Committee and appoint Ombudsperson.

UGC had also notified Regulations on curbing the menace of Ragging in Higher Educational Institutions, 2009 which have been further amended on 29.06.2016 to bring all caste-based discrimination in ambit of ragging. 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.

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.

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

Further, 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. 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. Both these guidelines lay emphasis inter alia on sports, yoga, meditation etc. to address the well-being and mental health concerns. HEIs are promoting the integration of yoga in the academic life on campus by introducing year long yoga event calendars, dedicated courses on yoga etc.

Department of Higher Education has initiated the Integrated approach for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience, and Wellbeing under the Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Programme. 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.

The process of strengthening and upgrading mental-health infrastructure in educational institutions is accorded due priority.