

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1496
ANSWERED ON:30.11.2011
SUICIDE BY STUDENTS
Punia Shri P.L.

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

- (a) the number of suicides committed by the students during the last three years and the current year, State-wise;
- (b) whether any study has been conducted to analyse the reasons for such suicides;
- (c) if so, the details thereof alongwith the steps taken to prevent them;
- (d) whether any helpline has been started for the distressed and suicide prone students for their counselling; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. D. PURANDESWARI)

(a): The detail of suicides committed by students is not maintained centrally by the Ministry.

(b) & (c): Education is a subject in the Concurrent List, the Central Government and State Governments are equally responsible for reducing stress and pressure on students. Consequently, a comprehensive study on this issue is not possible to be undertaken by Central Government alone. As per information obtained from the Indian Institute of Technologies (IITs) and National Institute of Technologies (NITs), there were 24 number of suicide cases in central educational institutions of the country during the last four years. Fact finding Committees/Inquiry Committees are constituted by the respective Institutes in suicide cases. Reasons for suicides as per the findings of the Committees include depression, academic load, peer pressure and also emotional/interpersonal issues. Based on the reasons identified, institutes have taken various preventive measures viz. providing sport and extra curriculum activities, appointment of Student Counsellors to address personal, academic, psychological and family related problems, setting up yoga centers/ counseling centers, provision of anxiety helpline, appointment of students' ombudsman, introduction of slow pace programme for academically weaker students and setting up disciplinary action committee to take urgent action in case of any complaint of reported ragging, discrimination based on caste, creed, religion and gender etc. Analysis shows that in addition to the above mentioned causes of suicide, increased pressure on the wards by the parents to achieve high academic and professional targets unmindful of the ground realities has contributed to stress and depression leading occasionally to suicides.

Various socio-economic factors contribute to stress and anxiety among students especially school children. The Central Government has taken this issue seriously and has undertaken a number of steps to reduce examination related stress such as optional class X Board examination by Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) from 2010-2011; introduction of grading system at Secondary School level; introduction of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE); more internal choices of questions; the number of questions have been reduced to make the students comfortable in respect of time and speed; proper weightage to internal school based assessment based on project work and assignments; sample question papers, marking schemes and blue print of the question papers to familiarize teachers and students about the nature of questions and question papers; five chances of improvements in class X in all subjects etc. Also five chances of compartment in class XII examination in one subject have been provided; testing has been shifted from content based to problem solving and competency based; providing counselling for both students and parents; allowing fifteen minutes additional time to read question papers etc.

(d) & (e): University Grants Commission (UGC) has notified regulations for prevention and prohibition of ragging in higher education institutions. The Ministry of Human Resource Development have taken several specific anti-ragging measures such as advertisement campaigns in the print, audio and audio-visual media in order to sensitize various stakeholders towards the menace of ragging. An anti-ragging 'Helpline' is also functional with call centre facilities in English, Hindi and other Regional Languages for facilitating communication pertaining to incidents of ragging as well as to provide information on ragging and related issues.