

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:311

ANSWERED ON:18.03.2015

SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Khadse Smt. Raksha Nikhil

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

- (a) whether the Government/University Grants Commission (UGC) has issued directions to all universities including institutions of higher learning to establish a cell to monitor and deal with sexual harassment cases;
- (b) if so, the details thereof including the mechanism put in place by the Government/UGC to ensure compliance of its directions;
- (c) whether UGC has constituted a task force to review the existing arrangements for safety and security of girls and women in particular on the campuses of institutions of higher learning;
- (d) if so, the details thereof including the key findings of the task force along with the action taken/being taken by the Government/UGC thereon; and
- (e) the other initiatives taken/being taken by the Government/UGC to prevent and prohibit sexual harassment in higher educational institutions?

Answer

MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SMT. SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 311 FOR 18.03.2015 ASKED BY SHRIMATI RAKSHATAI KHADSE, HON'BLE MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT REGARDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

(a) & (b): Yes, Madam. The University Grants Commission (UGC) has issued directions on 27th January, 2015 to Vice Chancellors of all Universities to establish a cell in their institution to deal with issues of gender based violence and gender sensitization programmes. The UGC directions elaborate that this cell in the University will help in putting into effect a policy of zero tolerance on campuses for gender based violence and harassment. The cell could provide on-going management advice, supervision and oversight, as well as information material against gender based violence and harassment. In order to ensure compliance of its directions, the UGC has approved the UGC (Gender Sensitization, Prevention and Prohibition of Sexual Harassment of Women Employees and Students and Redressal of Grievances in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2015.

(c) & (d): Yes, Madam. The University Grants Commission (UGC) had set up a task force to look into the measures to provide safety to women within the campuses. The recommendations of the committee titled "SAKSHAM- Measures for ensuring the safety of women and programmes for gender sensitization on campuses" are available at http://www.ugc.ac.in/pdfnews/5873997_SAKSHAM-BOOK.pdf. The Task Force had expressed concern on lack of gender sensitivity in higher educational institutions and suggested adoption of course module and workshops on gender sensitization to cover faculty, support staff, administration and students of these institutions. The Committee also recommended that civic redressal mechanism for combating sexual harassment can be given its fullest scope.

As per the recommendations of this task force, apart from requesting all Universities to set up cells for dealing with issues of gender based violence and gender sensitization programmes, all Academic Staff Colleges (ASCs), under the UGC, have been requested to make a course and module on Gender Sensitization mandatory in both the Refresher and Orientation Courses for in-service training of teaching staff. Women Studies Centres, funded by the UGC, have also been advised to work with gender sensitization cells and other stakeholders. In order to ensure compliance of its directions and to give the civic redressal mechanism the fullest scope, the UGC has approved the UGC (Gender Sensitization, Prevention and Prohibition of Sexual Harassment of Women Employees and Students and Redressal of Grievances in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2015.

(e): The UGC has requested all Universities to develop a page on their web-site for lodging of complaints of Sexual harassment and to take prompt action against the erring official/faculty members on such complaints. The UGC has further requested Vice-Chancellors of Universities to sensitize the management and the teachers of the institutions and to work out a road map of action for the guidance of colleges and other institutions, which may include the items like holding of conferences, seminars, conducting of workshops and classes for self-defence of girls, research and studies.

