PRESS NOTE

National Taskforce on Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention
(Appointed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India)

Date: 10 September 2025

National Task Force Calls for Wider Participation in Surveys on Student Well-being & Suicide Prevention Marking World Suicide Prevention Day — 10th September 2025

In its judgment dated 24 March 2025, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India acknowledged with deep concern the rising incidence of suicides among students in universities and professional colleges, including institutions of national importance. The Court constituted a National Task Force under the Chairmanship of Justice (Retd.) S. Ravindra Bhat. This Task Force comprises experts from various areas. (Composition annexed)

Mandate of the Task Force

The NTF is tasked with preparing a comprehensive report that:

- Identifies major causes of student suicides, including ragging, discrimination, academic pressure, financial stress, and stigma around mental health.
- Examines systemic and institutional shortcomings impacting student well-being.
- Recommends concrete, actionable measures to improve mental health support and prevent suicides.

Background and situation

Current Situation

India has more than 60,380 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) with 4.46 crore enrolled students and 16 lakh faculty members (AISHE 2022–23).
According to the NCRB's 2022 report, 13,044 students died by suicide, accounting for 7.6% of all suicide deaths.

Task Force Activities

Institutional Visits

The NTF has visited 13 institutions across Delhi, Haryana, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu, engaging with students, faculty, administrators, and grievance committees. Special attention is given to students from disadvantaged backgrounds, and to infrastructure and services supporting well-being. More visits are planned.

Stakeholder Consultations

The Task Force has held consultations with medical students, disability rights activists, queer students, and SC-ST students, among others. Civil society groups, NGOs, and associations have also provided submissions.

Surveys

The NTF is conducting nationwide online surveys in English and Hindi for:

- Students in HEIs
- Parents/guardians
- Faculty members
- Mental health professionals
- General public

So far, responses have been received from:

- 80,000+ students
- 10,000+ faculty
- 15,000+ parents
- 700+ mental health providers
- 8,000+ concerned citizens

The surveys are hosted at: https://ntf.education.gov.in

Directions to Regulatory Bodies

The Department of Higher Education has directed regulatory bodies including AICTE, NMC, Pharmacy Council, Nursing Council, and Bar Council to ensure compliance. Institutions must furnish details of:

- Student/faculty composition by category and quota
- Mental health services available
- Records of suicides or attempts
- Student dropouts
- Grievance redressal committees (Anti-Ragging Committee, Internal Complaints Committee, Equal Opportunity Cell, etc.)
- Challenges and measures related to student well-being

All HEIs registered under AISHE are required to complete the institutional survey by 12th September 2025.

State Nodal Officers

To facilitate the working of the National Task Force across the states and UTs, nodal officers have been appointed in each of the state and UT. They will be coordinating with the NTF and also sharing the challenges, innovations and best practices from their respective states

Call to Action

On the eve of World Suicide Prevention Day (10th September 2025), the NTF appeals to students, parents, faculty, institutions, and mental health professionals to participate in the surveys and share their voices.

Take the survey now: https://ntf.education.gov.in

Annexure:

1. Justice. S. Ravindra Bhat, Former Judge, Supreme Court of India (Chairperson)
2. Dr. Alok Sarin, Consultant Psychiatrist, Sitaram Bhartia Institute of Science & Research, New Delhi (Member)
3. Prof. Mary E. John (Retired), Former Director, Centre for Women's Development Studies, New Delhi (Member)
4. Mr. Arman Ali, Executive Director, National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (Member)
5. Prof. Rajendar Kachroo, Founder, Aman Satya Kachroo Trust (Member)
6. Dr. Aqsa Shaikh, Professor, Department of Community Medicine, Hamdard Institute of Medical Sciences and Research, New Delhi (Member)
7. Dr. Seema Mehrotra, Professor of Clinical Psychology, NIMHANS (Member)
8. Prof. Virginius Xaxa, Visiting Professor, Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi (Member)
9. Dr. Nidhi S. Sabharwal, National Fellow, National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi (Member)
10. Ms. Aparna Bhat, Senior Advocate (as amicus curiae) (Member)
11. Dr. Vineet Joshi, Secretary, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Government of India (Ex-officio Member and Member Secretary)
12. Ms. Rina Sonowal Kouli, Joint Secretary, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Government of India (Convener of the Task Force)

The Ex-officio members of the Task Force are:

1. Sh. Govind Mohan, Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India
2. Sh. Sanjay Kumar, Secretary, Department of School Education, Ministry of Education, Government of India
3. Sh. Amit Yadav, Secretary, Department of Social Justice & Empowerment, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India
4. Sh. Anil Malik, Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India
5. Ms. Punya Salila Srivastava, Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India
6. Dr. Anju Rathi Rana, Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India