

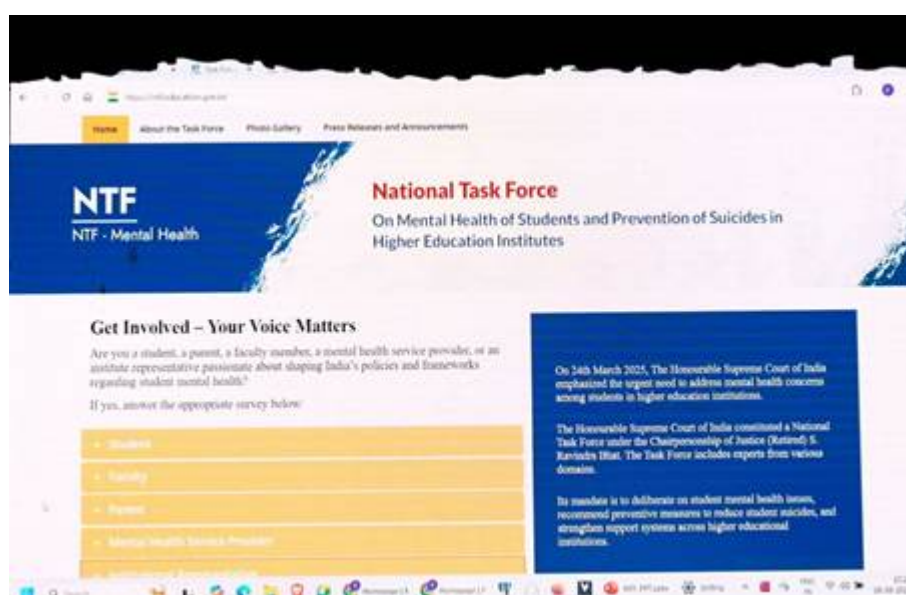
National Task Force on Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Launches Website to Invite Stakeholder Inputs

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The National Task Force on Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention in Higher Educational Institutions has officially launched its dedicated website today.

Constituted under the Chairmanship of Former Justice Shri Ravindra Bhat, the Task Force aims to develop comprehensive recommendations to improve student wellbeing and prevent suicides in HEIs.





The Chairperson emphasized that the National Task Force, constituted by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, is distinct from previous committees and task forces, as it is not confined to any particular institution or category of institutions. Rather, it brings all types of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across the country within its purview.

He further highlighted the Task Force's diverse composition, comprising experts from fields such as social sciences, disability rights, gender studies, clinical psychology, community medicine, and others.

Underscoring the multi-pronged strategy being adopted, he urged all stakeholder groups to extend their active support and collaboration.

Dr. Vineet Joshi highlighted that the National Task Force is engaging with a wide spectrum of institutions, ranging from central and state universities to private colleges, technical institutes, and other Higher Education Institutions

(HEIs) across the country. He emphasized that this inclusive approach ensures that the concerns, challenges, and perspectives of diverse institutional settings are taken into account while formulating recommendations.

He further stated that the Department of Higher Education is extending all possible support to the Task Force, be it in terms of coordination, data sharing, policy inputs, or facilitating outreach to institutions and stakeholders. Dr. Joshi reiterated the Department's commitment to strengthening student well-being and mental health frameworks within higher education, and affirmed that the Ministry is closely aligned with the objectives of the Task Force.

The newly launched website serves as a central platform to gather diverse perspectives from key stakeholders including:

- Students of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)
- Parents of such students
- Faculty Members
- Mental Health Service Providers
- Heads of Institutions
- General Public, including friends or family members of students affected by suicide, alumni, NGOs, media professionals, and other concerned citizens.

The portal hosts structured online survey questionnaires, available in English and Hindi, designed to collect anonymous and confidential inputs on a wide range of themes including:

- Campus environment
- Inclusivity and belongingness
- Sources of distress and systemic discrimination
- Existing support systems and grievance redressal mechanisms
- Suggestions for improving student wellbeing

In addition to stakeholder surveys, a specialized Institutional Survey has been made available for Heads of HEIs to submit data on reported suicides, preventive mechanisms, and student support infrastructure in their respective institutions.

The website also includes an open space for concerned citizens to share personal insights, observations, and recommendations.

On-Ground Consultations and Institutional Visits

As part of its multi-pronged approach, the Task Force is undertaking visits to various higher education institutions across the country. These visits involve:

- Direct interactions with students, faculty, administrators, and grievance redressal committee members
- Open fora for students to voice their experiences
- Special focus on the needs and perspectives of students from disadvantaged and marginalised communities
- Assessing on-ground infrastructure and support services for student wellbeing

The Task Force is also consulting with subject matter experts, NGOs, mental health professionals, and reviewing relevant data, reports, and research to ensure a comprehensive and evidence-based approach.

The National Task Force appealed to all stakeholders and the State Nodal Officers appointed for this initiative to actively participate in the process by responding to the surveys in large numbers. The diversity of views and lived experiences collected through this participatory process will play a critical role in shaping the final recommendations of the Task Force.

For more information and to participate, please visit: ntf.education.gov.in

The event was attended by the Chairperson of National Task Force, Shri Ravindra Bhat; Secretary, Department of Higher Education and member Secretary of the National Task Force, Dr Vineet Joshi; Joint secretary, Department of higher education and convenor of the task force, Smt Rina Sonowal Kouli; Members of the task force, as well Secretary, Department of Legal affairs as an ex-officio member; officials from NIC & Ministry of Education and representatives from media.

MV/AK

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