National Task Force (NTF) on Student Mental Health

Prelims *– Indian Polity & Governance.*

Mains *– GS II | Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.*

Why in the News?

Recently, a National Task Force (NTF) on Student Mental Health was formed.

- **Formed by** – Supreme Court of India.
- **Objectives** – To *address the mental health concerns* of students and to *prevent student suicides in institutions of higher education*.
- **Need** – National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data for 2021 highlights that *over 13,000 students lost their lives* by committing suicide in the country, which is almost twice a decade ago.

Status of Student suicides in Higher Educational Institutions
• **Rajya Sabha discussion data (2023)** – *98 student suicides* in colleges of higher education from the years 2018 to 2023. • 39 in IITs • 25 in National Institutes of Technology (NITs) • 25 in central universities • 4 in Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) • 3 in Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs) • 2 in Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs)

> *According to the NCRB report, student suicides accounted for 7.6% of the total suicides in India in 2022, with 1.2% of total suicides attributable to professional or career problems and 1.2% to failure in examinations.*

- **Composition –** Chairman and ex-officio members
  - **Ex-officio members** – Secretaries of the ministries of higher education, social justice and empowerment, legal affairs, and women & child development.
- **Functions –** Determining the most significant *factors for student suicides.*
- *Reviewing current rules* and providing suggestions.
- Carrying out *surprise checks* at universities and colleges.
- It can make recommendations for additional steps beyond its original mandate for efficient handling of student mental health issues.
- **Report preparation:**
  - Interim report - within 4 months.
  - Final report - within 8 months.

Reference

[The New Indian Express| NTF for Student Mental Health]

