

**DISTRICT LEVEL MONITORING COMMITTEE REITERATES
IMPORTANCE OF MENTAL-HEALTH SUPPORT, APPEALS TO ALL
STAKEHOLDERS TO ACT WITH SENSITIVITY, RESTRAINT**

Emphasizes strict adherence to the guidelines issued by the Press Council of India on reporting of suicide, including avoidance of sensational headlines, speculative narratives, disclosure of methods or locations, circulation of personal content, and oversimplified attribution of causes

May 13, 2026

The District Level Monitoring Committee constituted to review the recent student suicide incidents at BITS Pilani, K. K. Birla Goa Campus has undertaken a detailed assessment of the institutional ecosystem, student support mechanisms, and mental-health response framework presently in place at the campus and submitted its report to the Government on February 02, 2026.

The Committee observed that suicide is a complex and multi-dimensional issue influenced by several psychological, emotional, social, and environmental factors, and cannot be attributed to any single reason or isolated circumstance. However, based on interactions with stakeholders and preliminary observations, certain areas requiring urgent strengthening were identified.

The Committee noted that students in highly competitive academic environments may experience significant stress arising from academic workload, performance expectations, social isolation, emotional vulnerability, sleep disturbances, personal issues, and difficulties in seeking timely mental-health support. It was further observed that while counseling and peer-support mechanisms presently exist within the Institute, there is a need for substantial expansion in counseling capacity, preventive wellness initiatives, faculty sensitization, student engagement systems, and awareness regarding available mental-health resources.

During the review meeting held on April 24, 2026, the Dean of BITS Pilani, K. K. Birla Goa Campus informed the Committee that the recommendations made by the District Level Monitoring Committee have been implemented. It was further informed that the Institute has augmented its mental-health support system by increasing the number of mental-health professionals and has established a 24×7 mental-health support facility for students.

The Committee further noted that a medical camp was conducted by the Directorate of Health Services on April 10, 2026 at the campus as part of ongoing mental-health and wellness outreach initiatives. In addition, various awareness and counselling sessions were conducted by Dr. Vithoba Malkar focusing on mental well-being, stress management, emotional resilience, and the importance of seeking timely professional support.

A matter of serious concern highlighted during the review is the possibility of a “suicide contagion” or “cluster effect,” a phenomenon recognised in psychological and public-health literature wherein repeated exposure to suicide-related incidents may increase vulnerability among at-risk individuals, particularly young persons. Studies indicate that repetitive, sensational, or emotionally amplified reporting and circulation of such incidents can unintentionally contribute to emotional distress,

identification with the deceased, and imitative behaviour among vulnerable individuals.

In this context, the Committee has emphasised the importance of responsible communication practices by all stakeholders, including educational institutions, students, social media users, and media organisations. The Committee has specifically advised strict adherence to the guidelines issued by the Press Council of India on reporting of suicide, including avoidance of sensational headlines, speculative narratives, disclosure of methods or locations, circulation of personal content, and oversimplified attribution of causes.

The Committee reiterates that mental-health support and help-seeking behaviour must be normalised and encouraged without stigma. Students experiencing stress, anxiety, emotional distress, or psychological difficulty are urged to seek assistance from available counselling services, trusted faculty members, peers, family members, or professional mental-health practitioners.

The District Administration further appeals to all stakeholders to act with sensitivity, restraint, and responsibility in order to protect vulnerable students and maintain a safe, supportive, and psychologically secure academic environment.

(Mental Health Support: Tele-MANAS Helpline: 14416 / 1-800-891-4416 Emergency Medical Assistance: 108)

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