

Suicide rate soaring in State: Report

Highest number of fire-related deaths were reported among women

BANGALORE: India has seen a three-fold increase in the number of suicides since 1980 with Karnataka earning the dubious distinction of being among the top five states contributing to over half of the unnatural deaths in the country.



The painful reality was revealed in a report titled "Injury and Violence in India: Facts and Figures," released recently by the Department of Epidemiology, Nimhans, along with the World Health Organisation

(WHO).

From 40,000 people ending their lives three decades ago, the figure had reached 1.22 lakh in 2009. The national average was 110 per million population, according to the report.

The other states with a high suicide rate are West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra.

In fact, the alarming rise in people committing suicide has been observed not just in major cities, but also in the upcoming Tier II cities and rural areas.

The report pointed out that Tiruppur district in Tamil Nadu, with a population of 1.2 million, had a suicide rate of 32 per lakh people, which was close to Bangalore's 39 per lakh people.

The 2009 records show

Sikkim taking the lead, followed by Kerala, Chhattisgarh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. The states with less suicides are Manipur, Bihar and Nagaland.

Even the editorial in the latest "Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine - Suicide Incidence and Epidemiology" quotes the WHO as saying that out of the four lakh people who attempted suicides in 2008, about 40 per cent were in Japan, China and India.

Experts believe 60 per cent of the suicides could have been prevented with proper inter-

vention, the author said.

While suicides have been reported across all ages and sex, more women aged between 15 and 34 resorted to suicide, especially by consuming poison and setting themselves afire. Although the highest number of fire-related deaths were among women, many cases went unregistered or unreported.

In order to deter people from ending their lives, the report has recommended that those with suicidal tendencies should be given early support.

It was necessary to detect

such tendencies early and treat those with mental health problems like depression, anxiety, mood disorders, alcohol problem and drug use, the report said.

Life-skill education for youngsters and family and community support would also help in preventing people from taking their lives.

Setting up poison treatment centres and crisis management helplines will go a long way in reducing suicides, the report said.

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