



Those with soft corner for criminals are making 'Thoko Neeti' remarks: Dy CM

PTI

LUCKNOW, 3 JANUARY

Hitting back at SP chief Akhilesh Yadav for his recent 'Thoko Neeti' (encounter policy) remarks, UP Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma Thursday said those "having a soft corner" for criminals are using new words to weaken the government's drive against crime and criminals.

He claimed that criminals who roamed freely in the previous SP regime were now in jail.

"He (Akhilesh) does not have any answer. In the previous SP government, criminals roamed freely on the streets, operated as party workers inside a police station. Now those criminals are in the jail.

"Those having soft corner for criminals are using new words only to weaken the government's drive against crime and criminals. The more vigorous attack is done on the criminals, the more pain is felt by those having sympathy towards them," Sharma told PTI in an interview.

His remarks came days after Yadav alleged that the police officers in Uttar Pradesh are following the 'Thoko Neeti' (encounter policy) of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to avoid getting transferred.

"The UP chief minister is advocating his Thoko Neeti (encounter policy) everywhere. Due to this, there is a trend among the police officials that they undertake encounters when they anticipate that they can be transferred. Their acts are emulated by their subordinates," Yadav

Our endeavour is that Uttar Pradesh, which was earlier synonymous with crime and criminals, should now be known for work and development. Instead of guns and country-made revolvers in hands, there should be computers

had said.

Seeking support from all sections of the society for the success of anti-crime measures taken by the BJP government, Sharma said that the UP chief minister has made it amply clear to policemen that there should be "zero tolerance" towards crime.

"Our endeavour is that Uttar Pradesh, which was earlier synonymous with crime and criminals, should now be known for work and development. Instead of guns and country-made revolvers in hands, there should be computers," he said.

To a question on the NHRC issuing notices to the state government from time to time on police encounters, he said, "All police encounters which took place in the state during the current BJP regime are based on facts."

He trashed as "baseless" the allegations of fake encounters levelled by non-BJP parties.

"All police encounters and actions that took place in the state were based on facts and there were cases regis-

tered against the criminals. As far as allegations of fake encounters are concerned, they are baseless. Those who have levelled allegations, do not have any proof to authenticate their claims," Sharma said.

In November 2018, the NHRC had sent notices to the UP government and the director general of police over reports that a youth was shot dead in an alleged fake encounter by the state police in Muzaffarnagar.

The deputy CM said that since the Adityanath government took over on March 20, 2017 to December 9, 2018, there have been 3,083 police actions, in which 7,155 criminals were arrested and 857 injured in police encounters. The number of criminals killed, when the police had to fire in self-defence stood at 69.

"In these encounters, 541 cops were injured, while four lost their lives. The campaign undertaken against the criminals in the state (since the government was formed) has successfully instilled fear among the criminals and a sense of security in the public," Sharma said.

To another question, he said, "The biggest achievement of the UP government was that all the festivals be it Eid, Kaanwar Yatra, Holi, Dussehra and Deepawali passed off peacefully. There was no communal riot or any untoward incident. Apart from this, not a single terror attack took place in the state."

Sharma said the UP Anti-Terror Squad was able to arrest more than 45 people with terror links.



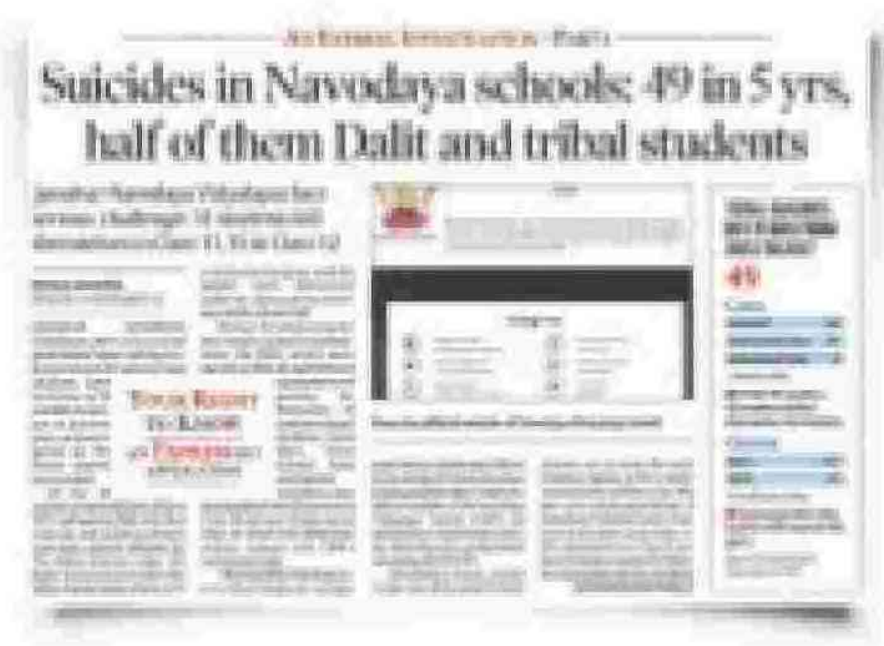
Navodaya suicides: HRD sets up panel, asks for two counsellors in each

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 3

RESPONDING TO the investigation by *The Indian Express* on student suicides in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNVs), the HRD Ministry has set up a task force, headed by psychiatrist Dr Jitendra Nagpal, to look into the circumstances leading to such deaths and suggest ways to arrest the disturbing trend.

The ministry has also sought approval of the Department of Expenditure (DoE) for engaging two full-time counsellors — one male and one female — in each of the 630 JNVs, according to a statement issued Thursday.

On December 24, 2018, *The Indian Express* had reported that the Central government's resi-



***The Indian Express* report on December 24**

dential schools for talented rural children witnessed 49 student suicides from 2013 to 2017, including that of 25 Dalit and tribal students.

The investigation revealed that there are few trained counsellors on campus and that it's largely left to "overburdened" teachers to look after the welfare

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



Navodaya

of students.

Expressing “serious concerns” over these findings, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), headed by former Chief Justice of India H L Dattu issued a notice to the school education secretary in the HRD Ministry on January 1 seeking a response within six weeks.

The ministry has been directed to submit its response on: whether trained counsellors are available on campus; if there is dedicated staff to ensure students are not left alone in their rooms; and whether students have access to emergency assistance through counselling over telephone and a suicide hotline service.

The HRD Ministry’s statement came after the matter was raised in Rajya Sabha during Zero Hour by Congress MP Viplove Thakur.

“The schools were opened to promote national integration. Children from different parts of the country compete with each other to study in these schools and today the situation has come to such a pass that they are forced to commit suicide. This is a very serious problem. It looks like we have put our next generation into such a mental quandary that they are being forced to commit suicide,” Thakur said.

“No effort was made to understand what has led to this situation. No effort is being made to understand the backgrounds of these children, not even principals and teachers are trying to do it,” she added.

Responding to her concerns, HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar informed Parliament that his Ministry has set up a committee to look into the matter. “I agree, there shouldn’t be even one student suicide. Let the committee submit its report, we will consider its recommendations. We are also trying to engage counselors in each school,” he said.

Reacting to the development, a JNV principal, whose school witnessed a suicide in



Indian Express, Delhi

Friday, 4th January 2019; Page: 3

Width: 13.38 cms; Height: 11.77 cms; a4; ID: 22.2019-01-04.12

2017, told The Indian Express, “This is definitely a step in the right direction. Our students are staying away from family. JNV teachers already have a lot of responsibilities. A full-time counselor is definitely needed on campus. Having said that, (we) should also try to recruit hostel wardens as soon as possible.”