



Centre of  
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Education

## **News Coverage in Indian Print Media on Teachers and Teacher Education January-December 2023.**

### **Background Research Papers 8:**

#### **State of Teachers, Teaching and Teaching Education Report for India 2023**

CETE: 2023

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**Abstract:** A total of 38 media reports primarily in English medium national and local newspapers on various matters of relevance to teachers, teacher recruitment, and teacher education, and connected with the themes of the SOTTTER 23 report, appearing between January and December 2023 were identified and collected. The pieces were organised and summarised under four themes: recruitment, shortages, policy, norms and standards for teacher recruitment, working conditions of teachers, teaching/teacher quality, and one international report. Large-scale recruitment and shortage of government teachers in many states made the news, requiring 30-40% of teachers to be added to the workforce. High courts were actively involved in regulating transparency in teacher recruitment and the adherence to norms. The Supreme Court ruled that the BEd cannot be treated as an appropriate qualification for primary school teaching. From states, there was an indication of teachers' rights being curtailed through social or administrative regulation.

**Keywords:** *recruitment, shortage, court ruling, teacher working conditions*

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### State of Teachers Teaching and Teacher Education for India Report Background Papers

1. CETE (2023). **Teachers in India in 2021-22: The picture from UDISE+**. Background paper 1: State of Teachers, Teaching and Teaching Education Report 2023.
2. CETE (2023). **Teachers in India: A snapshot from the Periodic Labour Force Survey**. Background paper 2: State of Teachers, Teaching and Teaching Education Report 2023.
3. CETE (2023). **Public and private sector contract teachers in India: An analytical research paper**. Background paper 3: State of Teacher, Teaching and Teacher Education Report 2023.
4. CETE (2023). **Quality of pre-service teacher education and teacher supply in India: An analysis of TET data from one state**. Background paper 4: State of Teachers, Teaching and Teaching Education Report 2023.
5. CETE (2023). **Status of teachers in the workforce in eight states: A report based on SOTTTER 23 Survey**. Background research report 5: State of Teachers, Teaching and Teaching Education Report 2023.
6. CETE (2023). **Status of teacher educators and student teachers in eight states: A report based on SOTTTER 23 Survey**. Background research report 6: State of Teachers, Teaching and Teaching Education Report 2023.
7. CETE (2023). **Teacher supply demand: A review of literature**. Background paper 7: State of Teachers, Teaching and Teaching Education Report 2023.
8. CETE (2023). **News coverage in Indian print media on teachers and teacher education January-December 2023**. Background research report 8: State of Teachers, Teaching and Teaching Education Report 2023.

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**Abbreviations**

AI	Artificial Intelligence
BEd	Bachelor of Education
BT	Graduate Teachers
DEd	Diploma in Education
NCTE	National Council of Teacher Education
NEP	National Education Policy
OBC	Other Backward Classes
PG	Post Graduate
PU	Pre- University
SC	Scheduled Caste
SMC	School Management Committee
SOTTTER	State of Teacher Teaching and Teacher Education
ST	Scheduled Tribe
STEM	Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics
TET	Teacher Eligibility Test
UDISE	Unified District Information System for Education

## 1. Introduction

A total of 38 media reports primarily in English medium, national and local newspapers on various matters of relevance to teachers, teacher recruitment, teacher education, and connected with the themes of the SOTTTER 23 report were identified and collected. These media pieces have been summarized in this short report, under five themes covering about 14 states, one foreign country, and additionally news of a general or pan-India nature:

1. Recruitment, shortages: Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Gujarat
2. Policy, norms and standards for teacher recruitment: Supreme Court, High Court of Calcutta, Governments of Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka
3. Working conditions of teachers: Pan India
4. Teaching/ teacher quality: General
5. International News: United States of America on Teacher Retention

**Tables 1 and 2 provide a summary of the items covered and categorised under themes.**

Table 1 Summary of types of new items analysed		
	Total no. of items	
I. Summary of chronological distribution of new items		
January, February, March	3	January- 2; February- 1
April, May, June	7	April- 2; May- 3; June- 2
July, August, September	5	July- 2; August- 3; September- 1
October, November, December	18	October- 6; November- 12; December- 1
II. Summary of article count theme-wise		
Recruitment	14	Recruitment- 9; Shortage- 5
Policy	7	
Working conditions	7	
Teacher/teaching quality	5	
International news in national dailies	1	
III. Coverage of states		
North East	1	Assam- 1
East	6	West Bengal- 4; Odisha- 1; Jharkhand- 1; Bihar- 1
North	3	Uttar Pradesh- 2; Himachal Pradesh- 1
West/Central	3	Gujarat- 1; Chhattisgarh- 1; Maharashtra- 1
South	11	Karnataka- 9; Telangana- 1; Tamil Nadu- 4
General coverage (not particular about the state )	10	KVS- 1; Other reports- 9

Table 2 Cross tab of themes and regional representation				
	Recruitment	Policy	Working conditions	Teacher/teaching quality
North East	1	-	-	1
East	3	1	1	-
North	-	2	-	-
West/Central	4	1	1	-
South	5	2	3	2
General coverage reports	1	1	3	2

## Summary

News from almost all states except for North Eastern states was covered in the 38 news items that were collected and examined.

**Recruitments and shortages** of teachers made it to the news given the large proportions and the tremendous public interest in government recruitment opportunities. Reports covered large recruitments in six states, including Bihar where 1.7 lakh teachers are to be recruited; the size of recruitment indicated adding between 20 to 40% of UDISE 2021-22 government teacher numbers to the government teacher workforce. In the case of West Bengal and Karnataka, the long-awaited High Court ruling enabled pending recruitment to be pursued. Severe teacher shortages were reported for Gujarat and Jharkhand where 30-40% of government positions seemed to be lying vacant. In Kalyana Karnataka (backward districts) the vacancies reported were between 33% and 26%. A personal story of one woman who returned from Australia to take up a government job in West Bengal, after a wait of close to eight years is indicative of the high stakes in government employment. The involvement of courts in two states is also indicative of the high-stakes nature of government appointments. In Uttar Pradesh, candidates stormed the political office of the ruling party, demanding attention to their grievances.

**Policy, Norms and Standards** affecting teachers and teacher recruitment were evident. A ruling with far-reaching implications came from the Supreme Court against NCTE allowing BEd to be considered equivalent and applicable in primary school teaching jobs. The high-stakes nature of teacher recruitment as well as its process to corruption, etc is evident in the court's involvement in two states—court action led to the cancellation of eight-year-old appointments in West Bengal for not following due process, and clarifying norms to be applied in course of appointment of married women in Karnataka. Uttar Pradesh instituted a new service commission to enable greater efficiency and transparency in teacher appointments. Two state governments have also initiated policy reforms which will lead to more teacher appointments to ensure subject teacher availability in middle school.

**Working/ service conditions of teachers** made it to the news in the form of opinion pieces and a few new items that drew attention to the social and political control of teachers. Opinion pieces generally noted that teachers in India work under suboptimal conditions of inadequate infrastructure and professional support. Several pieces drew attention to the social and administrative restrictions of teachers. One opinion piece noted the erosion of teachers' fundamental rights particularly freedom of speech, on account of social media putting pressure on institutions/ employers of the teachers. One item from Tamil Nadu drew attention to teachers being subjected to patriarchal community norms of dress code even though state circulars stated no such restrictions on them. Bihar Government issued a circular restricting its newly appointed teachers from becoming members of associations and expressing criticism of the state's education policies and programmes. Private school teachers were in the news in Telangana as the state Chief Minister announced a continuation of allowances that were provided to them during COVID-related hardships, indicating that their plight was not much improved, and was a political issue.

On **teacher quality**, primarily the need for better quality training was noted, and the potential of using AI in training. The effect of TET in ensuring quality was flagged. The possibility that India can supply STEM teachers to the world and the need to institute more teacher training facilities was also noted in one opinion piece.

**International teacher news** that made it to the news in India was the teacher shortages in the US and secondly a piece on the impact of AI and the need for teachers to be prepared for the fourth industrial revolution.

## Item wise summary

### 2. Recruitment, Shortages

The **Chhattisgarh** government announced the recruitment of 12,489 school teachers to address shortages in government schools. Registration was scheduled to run from May 6 to June 6, 2023, managed by the Chhattisgarh Professional Examination Board (CPEB). Applicants need a B.Ed. or D.Ed. degree, aged 21 to 35 (with a 5-year relaxation for SC/ST/OBC). The recruitment covers various subjects for classes 1 to 8. Candidates could also apply online on the CPEB website, by paying Rs. 350 for general and Rs. 250 for SC/ST/OBC candidates. The selection process described was a written test and an interview; exam dates would be announced post-registration. The initiative's stated aim was to enhance education quality, provide jobs, and encourage qualified individuals to contribute to the state's educational growth (Education World, May 2023).

**Bihar** Public Service Commission announced the teacher recruitment of 1.7 lakh teachers and began registration on its portal (The Indian Express, November 2023).

**Tamil Nadu** Teacher Recruitment Board released a recruitment notification inviting online applications for the post of graduate teachers and block resource teachers in school education and other departments. The application process was scheduled to commence on 1st November 2023, and the deadline for submission is November 30, 2023. To be eligible, candidates must have completed a Bachelor's degree and a 2-year Diploma in Elementary Education, with relevant subjects pertinent to the specific recruitment. Successful completion of the Tamil Nadu Teacher Eligibility Test Paper-2, with emphasis on the relevant optional subject, was also required for direct recruitment (Pandey, October 2023).

Teachers in **Tamil Nadu** requested the School Education Department to postpone the scheduled BT (Graduate) and PG (Post Graduate) deployment counselling. They argued that conducting the counselling mid-academic year disrupts students' studies since it occurs in the middle of the school year. The teachers also highlighted that deploying a new teacher to a previously vacant position, temporarily filled by a teacher through the School Management Committee (SMC), curtails their employment opportunities. In response, the Director of School Education asserted that the aim was not to disturb the regular teachers in schools and that only surplus teachers would be deputed to schools where there is a genuine need for additional teaching staff (The Hindu, November 2023).

The **Odisha** Junior Teacher exam was conducted at several state locations in the state from November 3, 2023, to November 17, 2023, and the Odisha Junior Teacher Answer key was released (The Times of India, November 2023).

KVS recruitment 2023 exam dates for non-teaching were announced by the **Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan** on the official website between January to March 2023. The exam for the non-teaching posts of Assistant Commissioner, principal, vice principal, and finance officer will be conducted (Ganesh, January 2023).

Tumultuous scenes unfolded both inside and outside the ruling BJP's state office in **Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh** as hundreds of candidates seeking government teaching jobs attempted to storm the party's headquarters. The situation escalated into a confrontation with police, resulting in the use of force to disperse the demonstrators. The protesters, alleging malpractice in the teacher recruitment process initiated for 69,000 posts, demanded immediate appointments from the Education Department. They accused the party activists and police of brutally assaulting them. In June 2020, the release of the merit list for 69,000 teachers triggered a wave of petitions in courts. In March 2023, the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court cancelled one merit list for 6,800 reserved category

candidates and instructed the State government to re-evaluate the entire merit list. The merit list for 6,800 reserved category candidates was released two years ago but has yet to receive appointment letters. The article stated that protesters went to the party office to meet State President Bhupendra Singh Chaudhary, but they were beaten by the party activists and police. The disgruntled protester noted that if their demands were not met, then they would be forced to demonstrate outside the state legislature (The Hindu, November 2023).

The Times of India profiled Ms Pranita Mishra (30 years), a government school teacher aspirant, who had travelled from Australia to participate in the **West Bengal** State School Service Commission (SSSC) counselling. She chose a school in north Bengal's Alipurduar, more than 750 km from her home in south Bengal's Midnapore, where she would be living alone. Ms Mishra was quoted saying: "I always wanted to be a teacher. It is my passion and dream job. I worked hard to get a school teacher job and cracked the exam". She had passed the State Level Selection (SLST) for upper primary schools exam in 2015 and had been awaiting counselling for close to eight years. In the interim, as there were delays on account of alleged irregularities, currently being probed by Central agencies, Ms. Mishra had begun considering other employment options (The Times of India, November 2023).

**Gujarat** was reported to be facing inadequate teaching staff. Data presented in the state assembly in March 2023 shows nearly 32,674 teaching posts lay vacant statewide as of December 2022. These vacancies comprise around 15 per cent of the total number of approved posts of teachers in government and government-aided schools (Shah, October 2023).

The Kalyana **Karnataka** region was reported to be facing severe teacher shortages in government schools face severe teacher shortages, with 33% vacancies in primary schools and 26% in secondary schools. Out of 60,988 sanctioned positions, 18,780, including headmasters and teachers, remain unfilled. Over 600 teachers are overstaying on deputation, worsening the academic future for students. Primary teacher vacancies account for 33% (15,247 posts) against the sanctioned 46,008, with Yadgir and Ballari districts being the most affected. Secondary schools have 26% (2,940 posts) vacant positions against the sanctioned 11,329, with Yadgir district facing the highest shortfall. In addressing this crisis, the government needs to revoke the deputation orders and reassign teachers to their original schools (Para, June 2023).

The High Court of **Karnataka** decided to allow the State government to appoint 12,901 teachers from the provisional selection list for the position of graduate primary teacher for classes VI to VIII in government and aided educational institutions. However, the court has deferred the appointment of 451 candidates pending the outcome of their pleas before the Karnataka State Administrative Tribunal (KSAT) regarding the submission of caste-cum-income certificates. A Division Bench headed by the Chief Justice partially allowed appeals filed by candidates who contested the process adopted for considering caste-cum-income certificates for selection to these teaching posts. The court observed that the State government could proceed with the appointment process due to the peculiar circumstances of the matter, which had halted the teacher appointment process across the state. The Bench directed petitioners to address their concerns about the caste-cum-income certificate norms by approaching the KSAT, providing relief to the government to fulfil the urgent need for teachers in classes VI to VIII. If the eligibility of the 451 candidates without the prescribed certificates is deemed invalid by the KSAT, those positions may be filled by the candidates excluded from the merit list but have submitted the required certificates, as per the Bench's directive (The Hindu, October 2023).

Jean Dreze and activists from BGVS and local organisations in **Jharkhand** protested the prevalence of single-teacher schools in the state. Out of the total 35,438 primary schools,



6,904 are single-teacher schools and those account for 19.48 per cent. they demanded compliance with the Right to Education Act norms (Dutta, August 2023).

Madhu Bangarappa, the Education Minister of **Karnataka**, has admitted to a deficiency in the recruitment of Physical Education (PE) teachers by the government since 2006. It has been reported that among the 1,231 state-run Pre-University (PU) colleges, there are currently no PE teachers. Despite the allocation of funds by the Finance department for the hiring of 20 PE teachers in PU colleges fifteen years ago, none have been employed. The shortage of PE teachers extends to primary and high schools, leading qualified candidates to stage protests, and urging the commencement of the recruitment process (The Indian Express, December 2023).

For more than 500 days, a group of several hundred individuals has been engaged in a continuous protest at the doss house of the Lucknow Municipal Corporation. Contrary to being homeless, these individuals are actively seeking employment. Despite being qualified to teach in government schools, they find themselves without job opportunities. Their chosen protest site, the Kanshi Ram Eco Garden, located approximately 200 meters away, serves as a gathering place for 25 to 50 job seekers each day. Most of these individuals hold B.Ed degrees or Basic Training Certificates (BTC), and their schedules are organized to ensure a continuous presence. This group is part of the 6,800 OBC and SC job aspirants advocating for appointments under the Assistant Teachers Recruitment Examination (ATRE)-2019. Alleging irregularities and illegalities in the recruitment process, these candidates have been protesting against the contentious issue of the recruitment of 69,000 teachers, which was announced in the lead-up to the 2019 parliamentary polls. The protests by OBC and SC candidates have extended to the Vidhan Sabha during the recently concluded winter session, including marches to the offices of major political parties. Rita Shekhar, another candidate, emphasized that their demand for joining letters, promised after the release of the candidate list in January 2022, must be fulfilled (Kumar, December 2023).

The Karnataka State government has handled the case of two recently employed graduate primary teachers in Haveri district, who requested maternity leave after giving birth just before commencing their service, as an exceptional circumstance. As a result, the government has approved six months of Child Care Leave (CCL) for them. This action follows the initial denial of their maternity leave requests by the Deputy Director of the Department of Public Instruction in Haveri, who referred to the policy applicable only when childbirth takes place after joining work (The Hindu Bureau, December 2023).

The Union Budget 2023 included the announcement that the Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya National Mission on Teachers and Teaching (PMMMNMTT) scheme would be continued, but no budget allocations for the same were announced later during the year. The Union Finance Minister also announced during her budget speech, the creation of 38,800 new positions for teachers and support staff in Tribal Schools (The Hindu, 2023, February 1).

The Maharashtra state government intends to incorporate private kindergartens into the framework of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, to establish a standardized curriculum for pre-primary education. This initiative is designed to improve the quality of early education and bridge the gap between Anganwadis and primary schools. To facilitate the implementation of this policy, the government plans to connect 1,10,000 Anganwadis with state-run primary schools. While currently, 43,000 Anganwadis are linked to primary schools, primarily focusing on nutritional support and vaccinations, they will now extend their role to include formal education. Trained Anganwadi workers and primary school teachers will collaborate to deliver instruction based on a dedicated curriculum (Pandit, May 2023).

### 3. Policy, Norms and Standards

Times of India (2023) reported that the **Tamil Nadu** School Education Minister disclosed plans to enhance education standards:

1. Government middle schools with over 100 students will receive five subject teachers to improve teaching quality and enrollment rates.
2. Administrative skill training will be provided to all 35,847 headmasters in government and government-aided primary and middle schools, with an allocation of 10 crore annually to train 6,000 headmasters.
3. Model schools will expand to cover all 38 districts in the state, with an allocation of 250 crore from the budget.
4. Plans are underway to establish two sports schools of excellence in each district, with an estimated cost of 9 crore.
5. Government higher secondary schools without history and commerce groups will incorporate the third group gradually.
6. All government schools will organize annual day functions to showcase children's talents, with an allotted budget of 15 crore.
7. A new project will teach Tamil language to the children of guest workers alongside their mother tongue.

The **Supreme Court has raised concerns** about the decision-making process concerning the eligibility criteria for primary-level teachers. They've highlighted the issue of the government directing the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) to include BEd as a qualification without independent consideration by the NCTE itself. The court emphasized that such decisions should be made by expert bodies independently, as mandated by law. The judgment points out that including BEd as a qualification for primary teachers might not align with the required pedagogical skills and training necessary for this specific level of education. The court quashed the NCTE's notification allowing BEd as an additional eligibility criterion for primary teachers, citing procedural flaws and lack of independent decision-making by the NCTE (The Telegraph, August 2023).

The **Calcutta High Court** cancelled the appointment of 36,000 primary school teachers recruited in 2016 due to manipulations in the hiring process. The court ordered the West Bengal government to fill these vacancies within three months. The affected teachers can work for the next four months but will receive reduced salaries. The appointments were made without an aptitude test, leading to the cancellations. Allegations of corruption prompted investigations by the CBI and the Enforcement Directorate, resulting in the arrests of former Bengal education minister Partha Chatterjee and others (Hindustan Times, May 2023).

The **Karnataka government** established a State Education Policy Commission, appointing Sukhdev Thorat, former UGC chief, as its chair. Comprising retired IAS officers, writers, and professors, this 15-member committee aims to draft the Karnataka State Education Policy by February 28, 2024. The commission will address enhancing school and higher education enrollment, ensuring quality education accessibility, promoting democratic values, and boosting employability. Subject experts/advisors, administrative support from DSERT and KHEC, and TA/DA as per Karnataka government rules are integral to the commission. In response to a panel's input, including Thorat's, the state government had earlier agreed in principle to form this committee. The Karnataka Congress, in its manifesto, highlighted the intent to create a more equitable and constitution-based education policy for the state, differing from the National Education Policy (NEP) (Prasad, October 2023).

The state **Government of Uttar Pradesh** approved the formation of the Uttar Pradesh Education Service Selection Commission for recruitment of teachers in higher, secondary

and basic education departments in the state. The proposed Uttar Pradesh Education Service Selection Commission is to conduct recruitment of teachers in higher education, secondary education, basic education, vocational education, minority, welfare, waqf and labour department (The Indian Express, August 2023).

The **Himachal Pradesh High Court** expressed concern over non-appointment of regular teachers by successive governments and said the state is trying to save money by sucking the blood of the helpless unemployed youth who are compelled to accept any term of appointment. The high court rejected the state government's appeal against the quashing of the government order of August 27, 2007, denying the benefit of Parents Teachers Association (PTA) Rules, 2006, to those engaged in schools in urban areas. It stated that the government order had rightly been quashed by the single judge vide its judgment passed on September 29, 2020 (Lawrence, November 2023).

Despite directives from the Supreme Court and the Karnataka High Court, the **Karnataka** government's decision to exclude over 1,800 married women from the list of selected Graduate Primary Teachers for Classes 6 to 8 was reported to cause uncertainty. The ongoing issue, spanning changes in government, revolves around the submission of fathers' caste-cum-income certificates instead of spouses'. The recruitment process, initiated in March 2022, received over 1.15 lakh applications for 15,000 positions. A provisional list in November found 13,052 candidates eligible, but a single judge bench quashed it due to contested rejections of caste-cum-income certificates. A subsequent Division Bench allowed government appeals, deferring appointments pending the Karnataka State Administrative Tribunal's decision. Challenges around caste-cum-income certificates persist, leading to candidates seeking justice through the KSAT. The government's release of revised lists added confusion, leaving candidates uncertain. The government, relying on a 1986 Government Order, considers the husband's income for married women. Dismayed candidates have approached the Supreme Court, citing manipulation of reservation categories. Despite assurances, the prolonged uncertainty underscores the need for clarity and fairness in the government's handling of these cases (Goudar, November 2023).

#### 4. Working/Service Conditions

An **all-India** survey by Zamit (a private company) indicated that approximately 55% of teachers experience difficulties in completing their daily tasks due to work-related stress and tension. The findings highlighted the significant pressure teachers face in their jobs, affecting their ability to fulfil regular responsibilities. Around 300 teachers from various parts of the country participated in this survey. Interestingly, 71% of the surveyed teachers acknowledged the pivotal role of ed tech in helping them manage their work pressure more effectively. They emphasized the increasing importance of ed tech platforms for teachers and the broader school ecosystem. Additionally, nearly 85% of teachers confirmed that ed tech tools contributed to enhancing their teaching and related skills, emphasizing their significance in the professional lives of educators. It revealed that a considerable percentage of teachers, spanning various age brackets and experience levels, struggled due to psycho-emotional factors like irritability, anger, sadness, and anxiety, impacting their performance and well-being. Overall, the survey underscores the prevalence of stress among teachers and the potential implications for students' academic development, emphasizing the role of ed tech in supporting teachers' mental well-being and enhancing their professional capabilities (Kumar, October 2023).

An opinion piece drew attention to challenges faced by Indian teachers outdated infrastructure which restricts teachers' ability to deliver engaging and interactive lessons, as they may not have access to essential teaching aids, equipment, or technology. Overwhelming workload because teachers may struggle to maintain a healthy work-life

balance, leading to feelings of exhaustion, demotivation, and even a higher risk of leaving the profession altogether. Outdated curriculum and evaluation methods standardized tests put undue pressure on teachers to “teach to the test.” This narrow focus on test performance detracts from a holistic approach to education and overlooks students’ unique strengths and abilities. Consequently, teachers feel demotivated and frustrated as they cannot cater to their students’ diverse learning styles and talents. Lack of relevant teacher training and professional development opportunities, most teachers rely on their schools for PD workshops. These workshops mostly have a very standard approach which doesn’t fit every teacher’s development needs. Thus, most teachers struggle to see how these trainings relate to their daily teaching responsibilities. To overcome these challenges schools need to Upgrade Infrastructure, Teacher Evaluation and Feedback, Targeted Professional Development and Recognition Appreciation and Long-term Investment and Policy Support (Khanna, July 2023).

Chief Minister of **Telangana** K Chandrashekhar Rao announced the extension of monthly financial assistance of Rs.2,000 and 25 kg of fine rice to private teachers during the pandemic, therefore as a gratitude three lakh private teachers have announced their support to the BRS in the elections (Telangana Today, November 2023).

Despite government orders, schools in **Tamil Nadu** prevented teachers from wearing salwar kameez. GO. No. 67, issued by the Personnel and Administrative Reforms Department in 2019, allows government school teachers to wear comfortable salwar kameez, several schools are unaware of the order and enforce dress codes of their own (Krishna, November 2023).

The **Bihar** government issued a warning to newly recruited teachers, stating that they may face disciplinary action, including the cancellation of their appointments, if they form or join any association and protest against the Education Department's policies. The Bihar Teachers Recruitment Exam 2023 saw 1.20 lakh candidates clearing the examination for 1.70 lakh teaching positions in the state. The warning comes after some newly appointed teachers were found to have formed an unregistered association and criticised the department's policies (The Times of India, November 2023).

An opinion piece noted that teachers are being denied their fundamental rights of freedom of speech, on account of pervasive social media. Education in India is a massive industry. There are around 15 lakh schools and 1,050 colleges, with over 1.1 crore teachers. But the rules for this industry remain nebulous, with schools and universities prioritising themselves and their students. This often means that rather than being respected as educationists, teachers are denied their fundamental rights, such as the right to freedom of speech and expression on social media. A real problem for teachers today is the policing that occurs outside the classroom, where students and institutions expect behaviour from them that is impossible to maintain. Director of NIFT Bengaluru Susan Thomas noted that “We in India have always kept knowledge locked up — either in terms of caste access or literacy access. Now there is social media, which is a democratic space where anyone interested in any topic can form a community, like, share, and engage in a creative space. There is a tremendous amount of agency here,” she says. “NIFT’s social media policy is on using the space creatively. There are no guidelines on whom to follow or not, yet we take care of our brand” (Kochhar, June 2023).

The Election Commission of **Maharashtra** has declared the poll plan for elections to the graduates and teachers constituencies. As per the poll schedule, notification will be issued on January 5, polling will be held on January 30 and counting will take place on February 2 (Marpakwar, January 2023).

## 5. Teacher/Teaching Quality

One opinion piece noted that the primary reason is the quality of school teachers and their training. Quality school teacher pedagogy is the foundation of quality education, for the level of education cannot rise above the quality of teachers (Gupta, November 2023).

Vishnukant S Chatpalli, Vice-chancellor of **Karnataka** State Rural Development and Panchayat Raj University, Gadag noted that teachers play an important role in the quality of education. Mandatorily qualifying TET will only help in recruiting the best teachers. Shilpika Dass, Lotus Valley International School, Noida says that apart from subject knowledge, teachers transact the learning process for the students. The TET being made a mandatory requirement for PGTs will not have an adverse effect as teachers of senior classes must have exemplary content knowledge and pedagogy. This move will facilitate bringing all teachers, regardless of the grades they teach, under the same umbrella of basic qualifications, thereby ensuring equity and equality (Bancharuay, February 2021).

The district of Barpeta in **Assam** was reported to be embracing the future with innovative AI solutions for teachers and students. This initiative, spearheaded by Prasenjit Sarma, a Block Resource Person (BRP) in Barpeta's education department signifies a paradigm shift in how technology can be harnessed to elevate the teaching and learning experience. The turning point in Prasenjit's exploration into the intersection of education and technology occurred with the foray into the realm of AI. The culmination of this exploration resulted in the creation of three groundbreaking apps, officially launched on November 3: the Lesson Plan Creator, an AI teacher tool for students, and an AI proofreading assistant. Each app aims not only to simplify the teaching process but also to provide a more personalised and enriched learning experience for students. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's tweet and the subsequent review meeting on November 20 underline official acknowledgement. Dr. Omprakash, the Mission Director of Samagra Shiksha Assam, has expressed the government's commitment to the initiative in a letter to the Deputy Commissioner of Barpeta. Education Minister Ranoj Pegu has recommended the translation of the Lesson Plan Creator app into Assamese recognizing its potential impact on Assamese students (Chetry, November 2023).

Infosys Founder and Chairman Emeritus, N R Narayana Murthy, stressed the imperative for India to invest in elevating the standards of research and education. He noted the commencement of the National Education Policy (NEP) and proposed expediting its impact by enlisting 10,000 highly accomplished retired teachers in STEM fields. The objective is to establish 2,500 "Train the Teacher" colleges across 28 states and 8 union territories. Murthy recommended a year-long training program, indicating that a group of 4 trainers could annually instruct 100 primary and secondary school teachers. This approach aims to train 250,000 teachers in each category annually. Over 5 years, these trained Indian teachers are expected to transition into trainers themselves. Murthy suggested a compensation of approximately \$100,000 per year for each retired teacher. The overarching goal is for the nation to advance to stage 4 of innovation, particularly in areas impacting the lives of the poorest citizens in remote regions. Success in stages 3 and 4 necessitates enhancing the quality of primary, secondary, and higher educational institutions to foster independent, critical, and analytical thinking, Socratic questioning, and an emphasis on applying theory to address real-world challenges (Baruah, November 2023).

## 6. International

K-12 schools in the **United States** are facing a growing challenge in retaining teachers, particularly impacting schools designated for Title 1 funding, where turnover rates have been double the national average of 8%. This issue has been compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has intensified existing talent challenges in education.

Research indicates that compensation plays a significant role in driving teachers away, while also being a factor that retains them. Additionally, an unmanageable workload emerges as a major reason prompting departures, contrasting with those choosing to stay due to a perceived manageable workload (Economic Times, April 2023).

Reporting from the **United States**, one piece argued for the central role of teachers as the fundamental foundation of the nation; they nurture the minds and skills of the next generation. For ages, the teacher was considered the source of information and knowledge. The US educational reformer said, "If we educate today's students as if they were living yesterday, we would steal their tomorrow." In this new era, every teacher should have the 21st-century skills to teach highly informed and aware students. The world has become automated because of Industrial Revolution 4.0. The education system must be modified to keep pace with this revolution. Educators and students will use AI in education to harness the power of innovation for the advancement of mankind (Ghughyal, July 2023).

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