

# Teacher training in India set for regulatory overhaul

**LEARNING IT ANEW** National Council For Teacher Education promises drastic action against teacher training colleges, 3,000 of which could be barred from taking admissions from the next academic year

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**NEW DELHI:** The business of teacher education is set for a clean-up. And some would say long overdue.

The blueprint being wielded by the apex regulator, the National Council For Teacher Education (NCTE), promises drastic action against errant institutions—nearly 3,000 teacher education colleges may be barred from admitting fresh students from the next academic year.

Simultaneously, by January next year, NCTE will put out a ranking of the top 100 teacher training institutes.

While the move could potentially create some confusion, the government believes it is essential to curb the growth of poor quality institutions and bring about transparency in teacher training.

“We have (given) approval for 18,000-19,000 courses running in around 15,000 institutions. The gap (those who have not submitted the baseline information) is around 3,000-4,000 colleges. We are giving time till 30 June and those who will not submit, cannot admit,” said NCTE chairman A. Santhosh Mathew.

NCTE is the apex teacher education regulator in India and functions under the Union human resource development (HRD) ministry.

NCTE has already collected preliminary data through affidavits and show-cause notices it has served to around 12,000 institutions.

Mathew said those who approach NCTE after the expiry of the deadline will have to undergo inspections ahead of admitting students.

According to him, NCTE is hitting the reset on the grading system, with less emphasis on physical assets. Now on, physical assets will get just 10% weightage,



■ The focus on learning outcomes and teachers' training are key, said NCTE chairman A Santhosh Mathew

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20% weight will go to academic assets, 30% to teacher transactions and 40% to students' learning outcome. Currently, there is no weightage on learning outcomes for approval or accreditation of such institutions, and it is solely driven by physical infrastructure.

Learning outcomes are a weak link, something that has been confirmed by several studies including the Annual Status of Education Report published by education non-profit Pratham. For example, the 2016 ASER report said the overall learning level among Indian students is “pretty disappointing”. The report underlined that one in two Indian students can't read books meant for three classes below, a scenario that has not changed since 2009.

“For years, we have given a lot

of importance to physical assets; when are we going to talk about learning outcome? That's what we are trying to do now. We are going to conduct a proctored test under which aspiring teachers will be videographed during practical classes. We shall run Big Data to score their performance,” Mathew said, adding both institutions and individuals will get performance scores.

He said some 90 video vans are being used to videograph classes and a national portal to host details of teachers taking classes, including the notes distributed in class, will be set up.

Along with the baseline data on physical and academic assets, NCTE will run data analytics to assess the performance of a school and how the students are performing in a real-life class environment.

Mathew said NCTE is also working to rank teacher education colleges, more than two-thirds of which are run privately. He said NCTE has roped in Adil Zainulbhai, chairman of Quality Council of India, to assist in devising the rankings. As a first step, NCTE will unveil top 100 institutions by January 2018 and rankings over the next 12 months thereafter.

“We shall use data analytics and select some 1,200 institutions and then will inspect some 400-500 institutions before giving top 100 ranks. The scores and ranks will be made public and parents and teachers will be free to take informed decisions,” Mathew added.

He said the focus on learning outcomes and teachers' training are key because with automation, many jobs, especially the assem-

bly-line kind of jobs, will be of less demand. Unless the school sector improves, it will be tough to find enough efficient workers in future. “What will happen to the youth bulge? Its time to think about it,” he added.

“Any education policy that focuses on learning outcome is a positive step. Such a system for teacher education colleges will help in improving the overall quality of schooling in India. India needs to focus on an output-driven education model rather than input-based system to improve quality. Besides, the ranking of teacher education colleges also will help motivate these institutions to better their standing and enjoy the subsequent benefit of better brand value and students' faith,” said Rohin Kapoor, director, education practice, at consulting firm Deloitte India.