

Role of teachers in the modern society

[Profession](#), [Teacher](#)



his was the consensus among speakers at a dialogue organised by Idara-i-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) in connection with the World Teachers Day at Children's Library Complex on Friday. The theme for the day was " Take a stand for teachers! " Ali Institute of Education Director Dr Shahid Majeed said the teachers' status needed to be improved by offering them lucrative salaries as this measure alone could make teaching a profession of choice and not of compulsion for people. " If government can give double salary to motorway police why it can't do so for teachers, " he asked. He said the teachers, instead of rigidly following textbooks, should exercise freedom and impart education to their students on the basis of curriculum. ITA programmes director Dr Baela Raza Jamil said the demand for quality teachers was very high as there was a dearth of such professionals in the country. She said the learning level of students in public as well as private schools in rural parts of the country was abysmally low and there was a lot of room for improvement. She said sustained enrolment was a big issue in public sector schools and only quality education could hold children in schools. Referring to ASER survey 2011 report, she said, some 40 per cent classes were offering multi-grade education simultaneously and stressed that all classes should be separated by improving infrastructure and teachers' strength. After the 18th Amendment and inclusion of Article 25-A, it was the responsibility of provinces to enact law and ensure free and compulsory education for children in 5-16 year age group. She said the Islamabad Capital Territory had already introduced a law to make education free and compulsory, while Punjab had constituted a commission to formulate a draft law for the purpose. She, however, observed that the

commission must not hold closed-door meetings and instead make the draft law public and let all stakeholders give their input. ITA Director (Research) Dr Hafiz Muhammad Iqbal said for imparting quality education to students, there was a need for developing quality teachers. For a teacher to be competent, he said, it was imperative that he or she should have command over subject matter, besides having pedagogical skills. " This ultimately raises the issue of pre-service and in-service training of teachers and we stand for this, " he said. Punjab Teachers Union central secretary general Taj Haider said political interference in education sector, especially schools, should be done away with. He said only education could strengthen Pakistan. Teachers' leader Rashid Bhatti said the government had engaged teachers in activities other than classroom teaching that was not good for the profession. He stressed teachers should be allowed to work in classrooms without any interference. He also urged the headmasters to coach weak teachers to improve quality of education. Beaconhouse School System head of studies Roohi Haq, PACADE's Inayatullah, ITA Trustee Jamil Najam, Christian Teachers Association chairman Anjum Paul and Malik Allah Dad also spoke on the occasion. The ITA also launched ' Anita Ghulam Ali World Teachers Day Award 2012' for the best classroom practices on environmental education and climate change.