The Centre is putting its money where its mouth is on the three-language formula in schools, allocating ₹50 crore in this year’s Budget to support the appointment of Hindi teachers in non-Hindi speaking States.

The new scheme will also provide financial assistance for the appointment of Urdu teachers in any locality where more than 25% of the population is from an Urdu-speaking community, as well as teachers of modern Indian languages to teach a third language in those schools of Hindi speaking States that demand them.

The three-language formula has been official Central policy for decades, but has long been opposed in a number of non-Hindi speaking States, especially Tamil Nadu. It came back into the spotlight when the draft National Education Policy was released in May. It was later amended to allow for the teaching of any Indian language as the third language, apart from English and the mother tongue. This new scheme seems to enable the implementation of the original formula by supporting the appointment of Hindi teachers, but not other language teachers, in non-Hindi speaking States.

A scheme to strengthen teacher training institutions, which had received an allocation of ₹488 crore last year, has been completely dropped this year. A scheme to incentivise girls to enrol in secondary education has also seen its Budget slashed, from almost ₹256 crore in last year’s revised estimates to ₹100 crore this year.

Allocations have risen for mid-day meals as well as for Samagra Shiksha, the flagship scheme for school education, leading to an overall 12% rise in allocation to the department.

In her budget speech, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman focussed on the draft NEP’s recommendations for research, quality and governance in higher education. Stating that India has the potential to become a hub for higher education, she proposed to start a “Study in India” programme to encourage foreign students to enrol in Indian higher educational institutions.

In fact, the scheme had already been given ₹50 crore last year and the allocation has been increased to ₹65 crore this year. Overall, the department’s budget rose by 14%.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

3-language formula takes the cake in outlay

₹50 crore for appointing Hindi teachers in non-Hindi speaking States; scheme to aid teachers of Urdu and other languages

₹50 crore for appointing Hindi teachers in non-Hindi speaking States; special scheme to aid teachers of Urdu and other languages