

India's Examination Fraud Crisis: 2005–2026

A Twenty-Year Analysis

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Executive Summary

- **220 exam frauds across 21 states since 2005.** We have documented 220 incidents of exam fraud (paper leak, mass cheating, result manipulation, etc) between 2005 and 2026 — 72 in the 2005–2014 era and 148 since 2015. Confirmed exam appearances affected total approximately 9–10 crore students in the last 21 years. This is not a series of isolated scandals. It is a structural failure of the examination system across two decades, three dozen exam bodies, and every major governing party.
- **NEET and the medical family — India's most persistently compromised exam.** The medical entrance exam family is one of the most repeatedly compromised clusters in this dataset, with at least 15 documented incidents across NEET/AIPMT, state PMTs, AIIMS PG, NBE/FMGE, and MP Pre-PG. In the last twenty years, no other exam family matches this cluster for duration and recurrence. Other large exams impacted include: UP Police Constable Recruitment Exam 2024 (34L students appeared); RRB NTPC 2016 (56L students appeared); SSC CGL 2017 Tier-II (15L students appeared).
- **Pre-2015: fraud absorbed into results, and laws that came after missed the point.** Pre-2015, 20 of the 72 detected cases belonged to the Vyapam family in Madhya Pradesh. Across all 72 pre-2015 exams, only 12 were ever cancelled. Most of the graduates, officers, and doctors selected through those frauds are in service today. The nature of fraud has also transformed sharply: paper leak accounted for 32% of pre-2015 cases; post-2015, paper leak dominates at 70%. The shift reflects the WhatsApp era — one corrupt contact with a phone camera at a printing warehouse is enough. All six anti-leak laws passed in India since 2022 are primarily punitive and investigative — they criminalise leaks, collusion, OMR tampering, and digital manipulation, but do not by themselves guarantee end-to-end preventive controls across paper-setting, printing, transport, scanning, and tabulation.
- **Who governed when it happened.** Across all 220 cases, the BJP and its NDA allies account for 128 cases (58%); INC and its coalitions for 55 (25%); others for 37 (17%). Post-2015, 99 of 148 documented cases (67%) occurred under BJP or NDA governance — BJP State governments alone accounting for 60 cases, BJP-NDA Centre and NDA-allied state formations for 39, and the remainder. INC State governments accounted for 18 post-2015 cases; INC-led coalitions for 10; others for 21.
- **Gujarat, UP, MP, and Uttarakhand — the post-2015 surge states.** All four have been under BJP governance through their fraud clusters. Madhya Pradesh had 21 cases pre-2015 (the Vyapam era) and 6 more since, with only 1 cancellation — the exam apparatus is functionally unchanged. Gujarat had no documented cases before 2015; it has 13 since, with only 5 confirmed cancellations — the state's worst years all came after it passed two successive anti-leak laws. Uttar Pradesh had 7 pre-2015 cases and 12 post-2015, spread across BJP, SP, and BSP governance — the only state in this group where fraud cuts across parties. Uttarakhand, entirely absent from the pre-2015 dataset, now has 9 post-2015 cases all under BJP governance; 7 of 9 were cancelled.

- **Convictions: ~12 before 2015, 1 after.** The pre-2015 era produced approximately 12 documented exam-case conviction clusters — 8 in Vyapam/MPPEB sub-exams in Madhya Pradesh, 1 in the Chhattisgarh Vyapam PMT 2011 case (5 convicted), 1 in CRPF Constable 2009 (CBI special court), 1 in the RRB Mumbai 2010 case (10 convicted including the RRB chairman, 5 years RI), 1 in the Western Naval Command LDC 2010 case (INS Angre commander Saini and proprietor Rawat, 3 years RI each, September 2025), and 1 in the APSC ADO 2014 case (former APSC chairperson convicted). Since 2015, across 148 documented fraud cases, there has been exactly 1 verified conviction: the Haryana Judicial Services 2017 case, decided by a Delhi court in August 2024, investigated by the Chandigarh SIT — not the CBI. The CBI was involved in at least 17 post-2015 exam fraud cases and has zero documented convictions from its own post-2015 investigations. The ED was involved in at least 11 cases; zero documented convictions.
- **NEET-2024 and UGC-NET 2024 fiasco.** In NEET-UG 2024, the CBI missed the statutory 90-day chargesheet deadline against the alleged ringleader, who walked free on default bail. In UGC-NET 2024, the CBI found the supposed leak evidence was a doctored screenshot and filed a closure report — over 11 lakh registered candidates had already been displaced. The CBI that convicted the RRB Mumbai chairman in 2010 no longer functions as a credible exam fraud investigator.
- **The impunity of individuals.** Rajeev Nayan Mishra — linked to four exam leaks, operating seven shell companies to launder proceeds of ₹4–7 lakh per candidate, arrested under the UP Gangsters Act, named in an ED PMLA prosecution complaint in January 2026 — has obtained bail in every proceeding. Arif Vohra, vice-president of the Gujarat BJP Minority Morcha, was arrested as a key accused in the NEET-UG 2024 Godhra cluster and suspended by the BJP; zero documented convictions. Asit Vora, BJP member and chairman of the Gujarat exam board, oversaw 11 consecutive documented leaks per The Wire's investigation and resigned only after a criminal chargesheet.

Section 1: The Dataset — 2005 to 2026

1.1 Headline Numbers

Metric	Value
Total documented cases	220
Period covered	2005–2026 (as of 12 May 2026)
States covered	21
Exam appearances affected	~9–10 crore (confirmed public figures for majority of rows; remainder estimated)
Pre-2015 cases (2005–2014) / cancelled	72 / 12 (17%) — of which 20 are Vyapam/MPPEB sub-exams
Post-2015 cases (2015–2026) / cancelled	148 / 85 (57%)
Verified conviction clusters	~12 pre-2015 (8 Vyapam/MPPEB + CG Vyapam PMT 2011 + CRPF 2009 + RRB Mumbai 2010 + Navy LDC 2010 + APSC 2014); 1 post-2015 (Haryana Judicial Services 2017, SIT)
Anti-leak laws passed since 2022	6 — Rajasthan 2022/23, Uttarakhand 2023, Gujarat 2023, Odisha 2024, Jharkhand 2024, Central 2024

1.2 Year-by-Year Trend

Annual cases rose from 1 in 2005 to a peak of 16 in 2012, and reached 20 in 2021 — the highest single-year count in the dataset. The post-2015 annual average is 12 cases — 64% higher than the pre-2015 average of 7. Six anti-leak laws since 2022 have produced no visible reduction in frequency. NEET-UG 2026 was cancelled on 12 May 2026 — the date of this report.

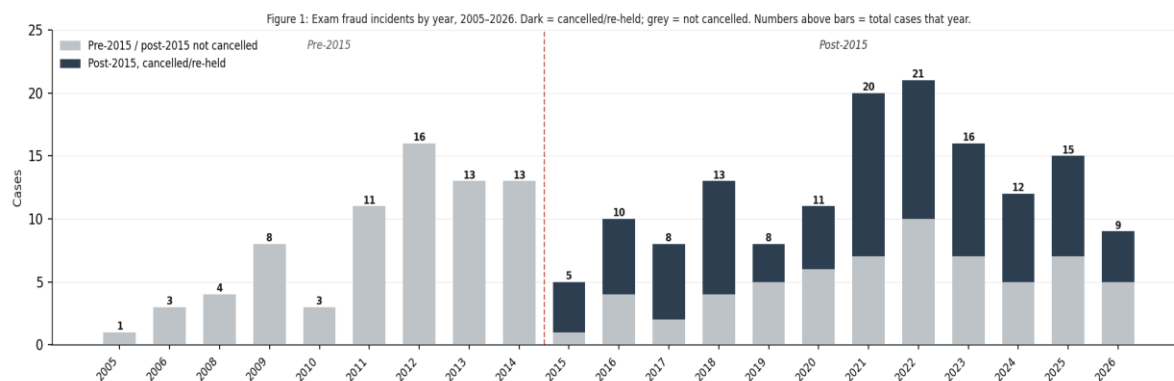


Figure 1: Exam fraud incidents by year, 2005–2026. Dark = cancelled/re-held; grey = not cancelled. Numbers above bars = total cases that year. Red dashed line = 2015 inflection.

1.3 States: Pre-2015 vs Post-2015

The sharpest post-2015 deterioration is in Gujarat (0 pre-2015 → 13 post-2015), Haryana (2 → 10), Bihar (1 → 9), Uttar Pradesh (7 → 12), Uttarakhand (0 → 9 — entirely new to the dataset), Karnataka (3 → 9), and Telangana (0 → 6 — also entirely new). Rajasthan also worsened (6 → 10). National-level exams increased from 15 to 27. Madhya Pradesh shows a nominal post-2015

decline (21 → 6), reflecting the end of the Vyapam cycle rather than improved governance — only 1 of its 6 post-2015 cases resulted in cancellation.

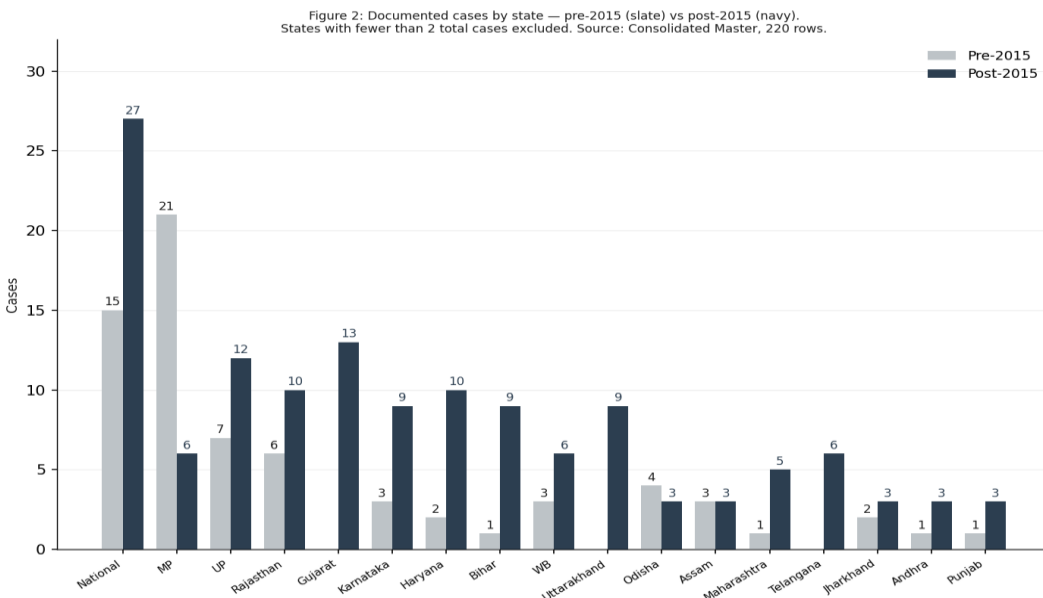


Figure 2: Documented cases by state — pre-2015 (slate) vs post-2015 (navy). States with fewer than 2 total cases excluded. Source: Consolidated Master, 220 rows.

1.4 Ruling Party Analysis

Post-2015, BJP and NDA formations account for 99 of 148 cases (67%). INC State governments account for 18 cases; INC-led coalitions for 10; others for 21. Across both eras combined, the BJP/NDA bloc accounts for 128 of 220 cases (58%) and the INC bloc for 55 (25%).

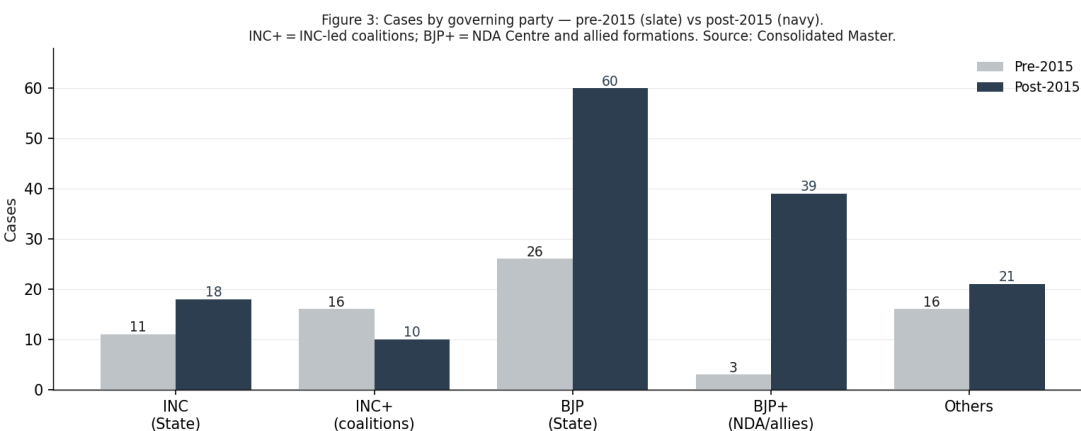


Figure 3: Cases by governing party — pre-2015 (slate) vs post-2015 (navy). INC+ = INC-led coalitions; BJP+ = NDA Centre and allied formations. Source: Consolidated Master.

Cancellation response by governing party:

Party / entity	Pre-2015 Cancelled	Pre-2015 Not cancelled	Post-2015 Cancelled	Post-2015 Not cancelled	Total
INC (State)	2	9	13	5	29

INC+ (UPA / coalitions)	3	12	7	4	26
BJP (State)	1	25	42	18	86
BJP+ (NDA / allies)	0	3	16	23	42
Others	5	11	7	14	37
Total	12	60	75	73	220

Post-2015, INC State governments cancelled 13 of 18 cases (72%); BJP State governments cancelled 42 of 60 (70%); the BJP-NDA Centre cancelled 16 of 39 (41%) — compared to the INC-UPA Centre's rate of 4 of 16 (25%) in the preceding decade. What is consistent across all parties is the record on criminal accountability: zero documented convictions in any post-2015 case outside the Haryana Judicial Services 2017 matter.

1.5 Fraud Type Shift

Paper leak grew from 32% of pre-2015 cases to 70% post-2015. Proxy/impersonation fell from 24% to 4%; OMR/result manipulation from 23% to 5%. The mechanism shifted from labour-intensive physical networks to a single person with a phone at a printing facility — a model that all six anti-leak laws are architecturally unsuited to stop.

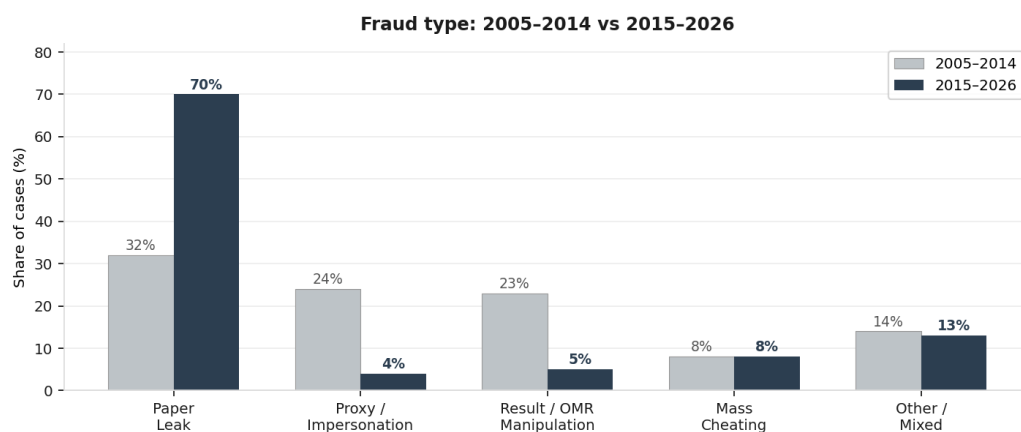


Figure 4: Fraud type composition, 2005–2014 vs 2015–2026. 'Other/Mixed' includes cases with multiple or uncertain fraud types.

1.6 The NEET and Medical Entrance Cluster

The medical entrance exam family is the most persistently compromised cluster in this dataset. At least 15 distinct incidents are documented when NEET/AIPMT, state PMTs, AIIMS PG, NBE/FMGE, and MP Pre-PG streams are counted together. No other exam family in this dataset matches this cluster for duration and recurrence across 20 years.

The Vyapam PMT branch ran across six annual cycles from 2008 to 2013 with no immediate wholesale exam cancellation located — but produced large-scale downstream consequence: the Supreme Court upheld cancellation of 634 MBBS admissions and degrees tied to the 2008–2012 cycles.

Exam	Incident	Outcome	Key fact
AIIMS PG 2006	Answer key leak before exam	Not cancelled	Early documented fraud in the national medical PG stream; pre-NEET era
Vyapam PMT 2008–2013	Proxy/impersonation across 6 annual cycles	No wholesale cancellation	SC upheld cancellation of 634 MBBS admissions/degrees downstream (2008–2012 PMT cycles)
JIPMER MBBS 2009	Paper leak / electronic cheating	Not cancelled	One of the earliest documented electronic leaks in a national medical entrance
RPMT Rajasthan 2009	Impersonation / fraudulent admissions	No statewide cancellation	Rajasthan HC ordered police probe; court action upheld cancellation of tainted admissions
MPPEB Pre-PG 2009 & 2012	Vyapam PG stream manipulation	No cancellation	Part of broader Vyapam ecosystem; PG medical admissions affected
AIIMS PG 2011 & 2012	Electronic cheating / paper access	Not cancelled	Recurring at the same institution in consecutive years
AIPMT 2011	Electronic devices used in exam halls	Not cancelled	Early use of Bluetooth devices in a national exam; arrests made
COMEDK UGET 2014	Organised impersonation / cheating	Not cancelled	Private engineering-medical entrance; ~1.2 lakh candidates affected
AP PG Medical 2014	Paper leak; state-ordered cancellation	Cancelled; re-exam held	One of last state medical entrance cancellations before NEET consolidation
UPCPMT 2014	Paper leak	Cancelled; re-exam held	1.09 lakh candidates; last major UP medical cancellation before NEET
AIPMT 2015	Paper circulated electronically, ~10 states	Cancelled; re-exam held	SC suo motu cognisance; Ravi Attri network — later linked to UP leaks in 2024
NEET-PG 2017	Server hack; ~200 candidates allegedly benefited	Not cancelled	Zero documented public disqualification of beneficiaries
NEET-UG 2021	Localised malpractice cases	Exam upheld	Multiple FIRs filed; no systemic breach established
NEET-UG 2024	Paper leak, Hazaribagh/Patna; ~155 beneficiaries	SC upheld; limited re-test	CBI missed 90-day deadline; ringleader got default bail; NMC suspended 26 MBBS students, cancelled 14 admissions
NEET-UG 2026	Jaipur printing facility suspected; ~22.75L registered	Cancelled 12 May 2026	Public Examinations Act 2024 invoked; CBI probe ordered; re-test announced

Other large exams impacted include: UP Police Constable Recruitment Exam 2024 (34L students appeared); RRB NTPC 2016 (56L students appeared); SSC CGL 2017 Tier-II (15L students appeared).

Section 2: The INC/UPA Era, 2005–2014

The pre-2015 era is defined by one structural fact: exam fraud was absorbed into results. Of 72 documented cases, only 12 were cancelled. **20 of those 72 are Vyapam/MPPEB sub-exams in Madhya Pradesh, all under BJP governance.** Removing Vyapam, the remaining 52 cases produced 12 cancellations (23%), nearly all driven by court orders rather than voluntary government action.

2.1 Vyapam: BJP's Systemic Failure in Madhya Pradesh

MPPEB (Vyapam) conducted 20 fraudulent exams between 2008 and 2013 — PMT six consecutive years, two Police Constable tests, Pre-Engineering, Pre-PG, Forest Guard, Patwari, Milk Federation, Food Inspector, Transport Constable, Contractual Teachers, Sub-Inspector, and Samvida Shala. All under BJP governance. Only 1 cancellation in 20 cases. The scam ran for six years before the STF investigated in 2013; the CBI took over in 2015 on Supreme Court orders.

CBI special courts have since convicted accused across multiple sub-cases, including: Patwari 2008 (10 convicted), PMT 2009 (convictions reported in fraudulent-admission sub-cases), Pre-PG 2009 (2 convicted), PMT 2010 (6 convicted, 5 years RI each), PMT 2011 (13 convicted), Police Constable 2012 (11 convicted May 2024, 7 years each), and Police Constable 2013 (5 convicted September 2022, 7 years each) — 7 documented Vyapam/MPPEB sub-exam conviction clusters in Madhya Pradesh. Convictions succeeded because each sub-case is a discrete impersonation fact triable on specific physical evidence. No Vyapam exam was cancelled voluntarily by the MP government.

2.2 Bihar Board: Six Years, Zero Statewide Cancellations

Between 2009 and 2014, under JD(U)-BJP coalition and then JD(U) alone, Bihar Board documented mass cheating at Class 10 and Class 12 every year. Zero statewide cancellations across six years; approximately 16 lakh students appeared annually. Those board certificates largely remained valid, unlike later cases where entire examinations or admission outcomes were cancelled.

2.3 INC-UPA Centre (2005–2014)

The INC-led UPA Centre had 16 national-level cases and cancelled 4 (25%). The UPA Centre produced three of the dataset's landmark pre-2015 non-Vyapam convictions: CRPF Constable 2009 (CBI special court convicted an ex-DIG and two others), RRB Mumbai 2010 (CBI obtained convictions of 10 people including the RRB chairman, 5 years RI), and Indian Navy Western Naval Command LDC 2010 (Special CBI Court convicted INS Angre commander Ramesh Chand Saini and coaching centre owner Rambir Singh Rawat in September 2025, 3 years RI each).

Section 3: The Collapse of Investigative Accountability

3.1 CBI — Before and After 2014

Before 2014, the CBI produced convictions in exam fraud across multiple cases: the RRB Mumbai 2010 case (10 convicted, 5 years RI); the Navy LDC 2010 case (convicted September 2025, 3 years RI each, 15 years from fraud to verdict); the CRPF Constable 2009 case; and multiple Vyapam sub-exam clusters. The Vyapam convictions — pre-2015 FIRs, CBI takeover by Supreme Court order — show the agency can convict when cases are granular and evidence-specific.

After 2014, the CBI has been involved in at least 17 exam fraud cases and has zero documented convictions from its own post-2015 investigations.

Case	Action taken	Conviction	Key failure / note
Vyapam/MPPEB (pre-2015 FIRs, CBI from 2015)	2,000+ arrests	✓ Multiple, 2018–2025	Exception: pre-2015 FIRs on SC order; discrete impersonation facts enabled conviction
SSC CGL 2017	Chargesheet 2019	✗ None	Trial pending 7+ years; zero documented outcome
JEE Main 2021	Multiple arrests incl. Russian national	✗ None	Zero documented convictions to date
NEET-UG 2024	3 chargesheets; 49 arrests	✗ None	Missed 90-day deadline; ringleader Mukhiya walked free on default bail
UGC-NET June 2024	FIR; inquiry	✗ Closure report	Evidence was a doctored screenshot; 11L+ registered candidates displaced; no arrests
UKSSSC Group-C 2025 (Uttarakhand)	CBI chargesheet Oct 2025	✗ None	CBI registered case and filed chargesheet within weeks; trial pending
WB SSC 2016; HP Police Constable 2022; CG PSC 2020; Army CEE 2017; AP APPSC 2022; BARC 2018; IBPS RRB 2025; WR CBT 2023–24; ECR Inspector 2025; AIPMT 2015	FIRs; chargesheets; arrests across multiple states and agencies	✗ None	10 additional confirmed CBI cases across states and exam types; active or stalled investigations; zero documented trial outcomes across all

3.2 ED — Attachment Without Accountability

The ED was involved in at least 11 post-2015 exam fraud cases through PMLA proceedings, including: UP Police Constable 2024 and RO/ARO 2024 (₹1.02 crore attached; 18 accused in prosecution complaint including Rajeev Nayan Mishra); REET 2021; Karnataka PSI 2021 (₹1.53 crore attached); HPSC HCS 2021; HPSC Dental Surgeon 2021; TSPSC Group-I 2022; Maharashtra TET 2019/2021; NHM Staff Nurse MP 2023; UKSSSC Graduate-Level 2021 (Uttarakhand); and WB SSC 2016. Across all eleven: **zero documented convictions**. ED cases

depend on the underlying predicate FIR being successfully prosecuted first. When state police cases stall, the PMLA case stalls with them.

3.3 UGC-NET 2024: Cancelled on a Fabricated Screenshot

The Ministry of Education cancelled UGC-NET on 19 June 2024 — the day after the exam — after the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) flagged integrity concerns. Over 11 lakh registered candidates were displaced. The CBI registered an FIR, investigated, and filed a closure report in January 2025 finding the supposed leak evidence was a doctored screenshot. No arrests were made.

The Ministry made a decision affecting over 11 lakh candidates on intelligence subsequently found to be fabricated. No official has been held accountable. The case illustrates the gap between precautionary cancellation and criminal prosecution. When the intelligence is wrong, the cost falls entirely on students.

3.4 The Individuals the System Protects

Bandi Sanjay Kumar, then Telangana BJP president and Lok Sabha MP, was named A-1 by Warangal Police in the Telangana SSC Class 10 Hindi paper leak (2023) and arrested at midnight from his residence. The Telangana HC quashed the FIR in 2025 for insufficient material; he denies sourcing the leak. He is now Union Minister of State.

Laxmikant Sharma, BJP Minister of Technical and Higher Education in Madhya Pradesh, was chargesheeted by the CBI in the Vyapam contractual teacher branch (2018). He ran the ministry that oversaw the exam board conducting 17 fraudulent exams. The same CBI gave him a clean chit in January 2019 'due to lack of evidence' — while convicting dozens of low-level impersonators from the same scam.

Asit Vora, BJP member and chairman of the Gujarat exam board, oversaw 11 consecutive documented leaks at GSSSB and affiliated bodies per The Wire's investigation. Retained through each incident; resigned only after a criminal chargesheet was filed. The BJP officially stated his resignation had 'nothing to do with the paper leak.'

Hakam Singh Rawat, BJP Uttarkashi Zila Panchayat member, was arrested by the Uttarakhand STF as the alleged UKSSSC paper leak mastermind (2022); his illegally constructed resort was bulldozed by court order. Re-arrested in 2025 for the same modus operandi, allegedly demanding ₹12–15 lakh per candidate. Expelled from BJP for six years.

Rajeev Nayan Mishra — linked to four exam leaks across UP and MP (UPTET 2021, NHM Staff Nurse MP 2023, UPPSC RO/ARO 2024, UP Police Constable 2024), operating seven shell companies, co-mastermind with Ravi Attri — was arrested by UP STF in April 2024, charged under the Gangsters Act, and named in an ED PMLA prosecution complaint in January 2026. Bail obtained in every proceeding; PMLA anticipatory bail obtained from Allahabad HC in September 2025, partly because the ED's own summons was procedurally defective. ₹1.02 crore attached. Zero documented convictions.

Babulal Katara, a sitting RPSC member, was arrested by the Rajasthan SOG in connection with the RPSC Senior Teacher Grade-II 2022 paper leak — alleged to have accessed and sold the

question paper while serving on the examining body itself, reportedly receiving approximately ₹60 lakh.

Methodological note. *All case counts and cancellation data are drawn from the Consolidated Exam Fraud Master Excel (220 rows, 2005–2026). Pre-2015 / post-2015 split uses exam year: year ≤ 2014 = pre-2015; year ≥ 2015 = post-2015 (where multiple dates appear in a row, the date when the exam was actually held is used). Party classification uses column J of the master Excel mapped to five clusters (BJP, BJP+/NDA, INC, INC+/UPA, Others) per the party mapping reference. Cancellation is defined as a statewide or national-level administrative order to cancel and/or re-conduct the exam; centre-level FIRs or local actions without a formal order are classified as not cancelled. Conviction data draws on the companion CBI/ED conviction workbook (165 rows with detailed prosecution columns) and the institutional additions file (rows 166–220). The Vyapam count (20) covers all MPPEB-named rows and Vyapam-linked sub-bodies in Madhya Pradesh.*