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10 reasons why India needs 'Guru-Cool' teachers

They tell you why we need not just more teachers in our country, but better ones too.

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Guest Author Sep 4, 2014



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by The Akshara Foundation

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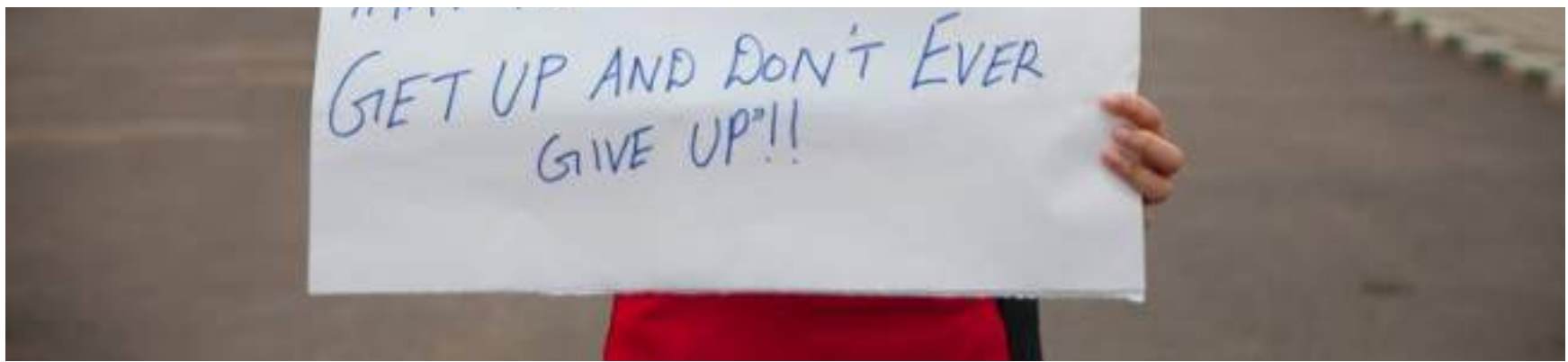
This Teacher's Day we are breaking the mould. Celebrated more often than not, as a routine calendar-centric activity where a few students praise their teachers, some politician utters

predictable words and newspapers await photos — this time we at Akshara Foundation are turning the gaze on professionals that have the most complex job in the world – bringing up our future scientists, politicians, doctors, businessmen, shopkeepers, and futuristic filmmakers.

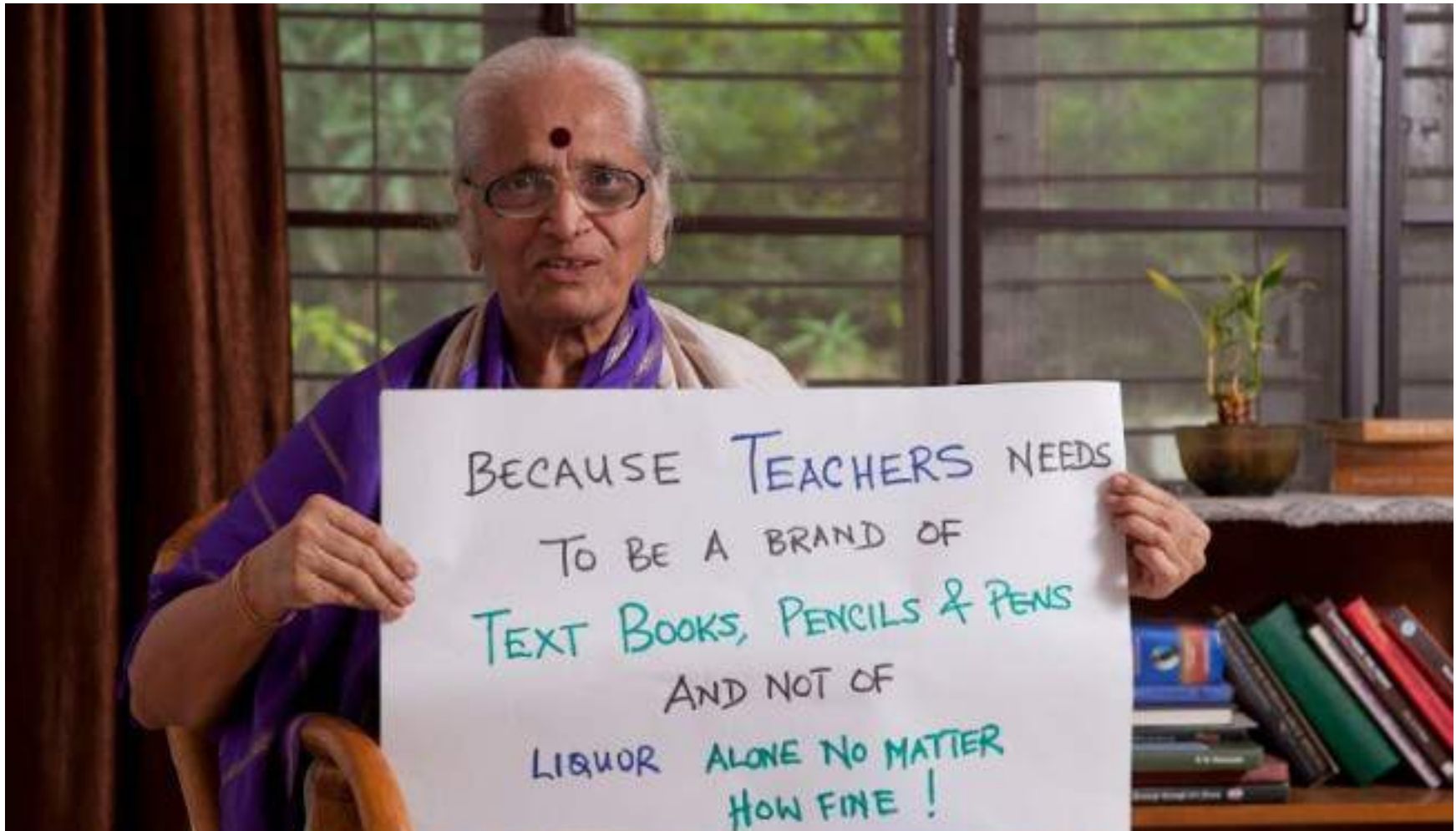
We reached out to ten people (each of them an achiever in their own way) who gave us ten reasons why we need to elevate the status of the teaching profession and reclaim our teachers for our children. Each of these pithily drafted each that passes the test of substance and easy communication, each that will trigger a hundred conversations.

1. Ashwini Ponnappa: Indian shuttler and silver winner at the Commonwealth Games 2014 in Glasgow.



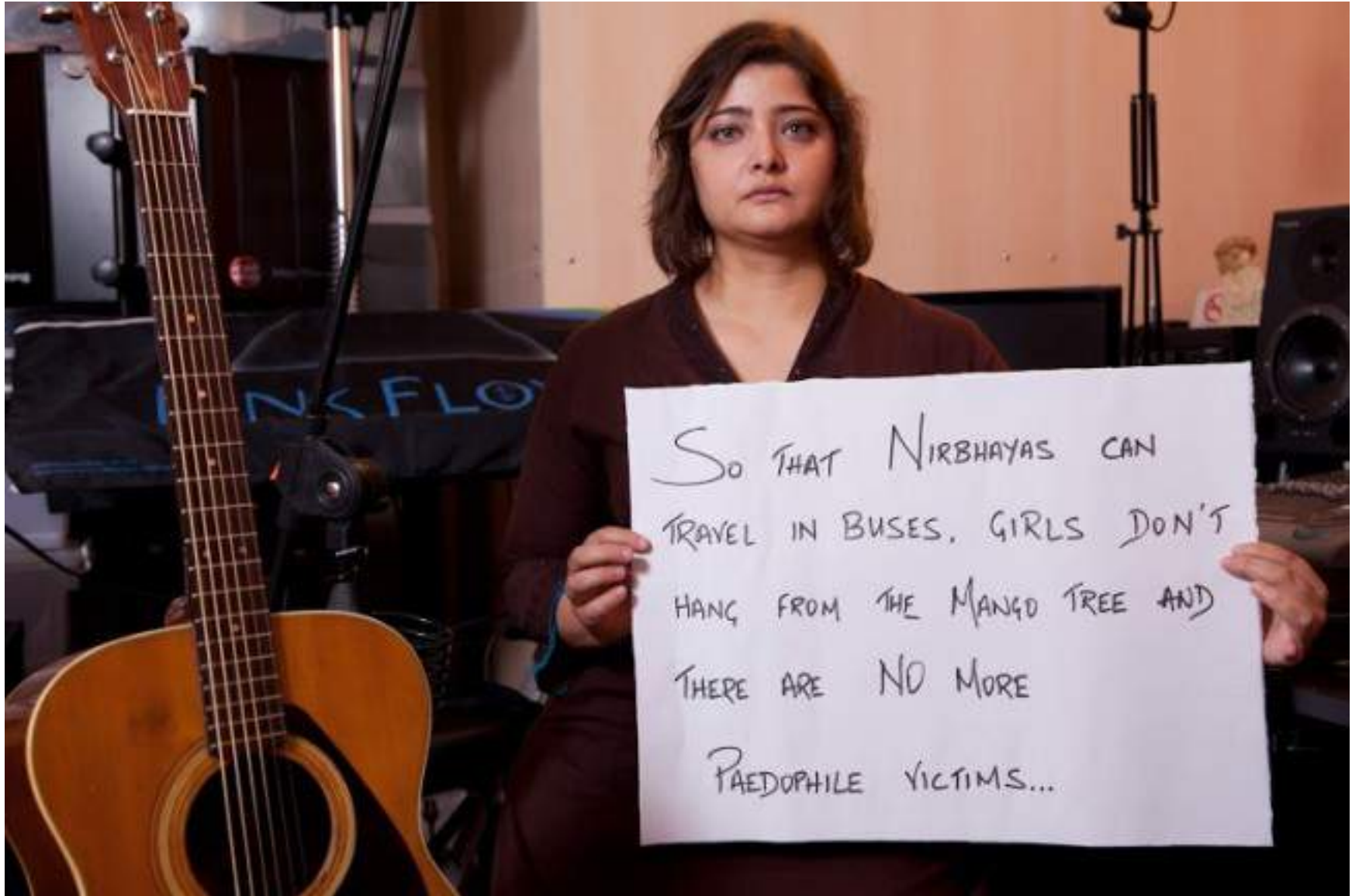


2. Usha Vishwanath: At the age of 80, Usha is an active social worker.

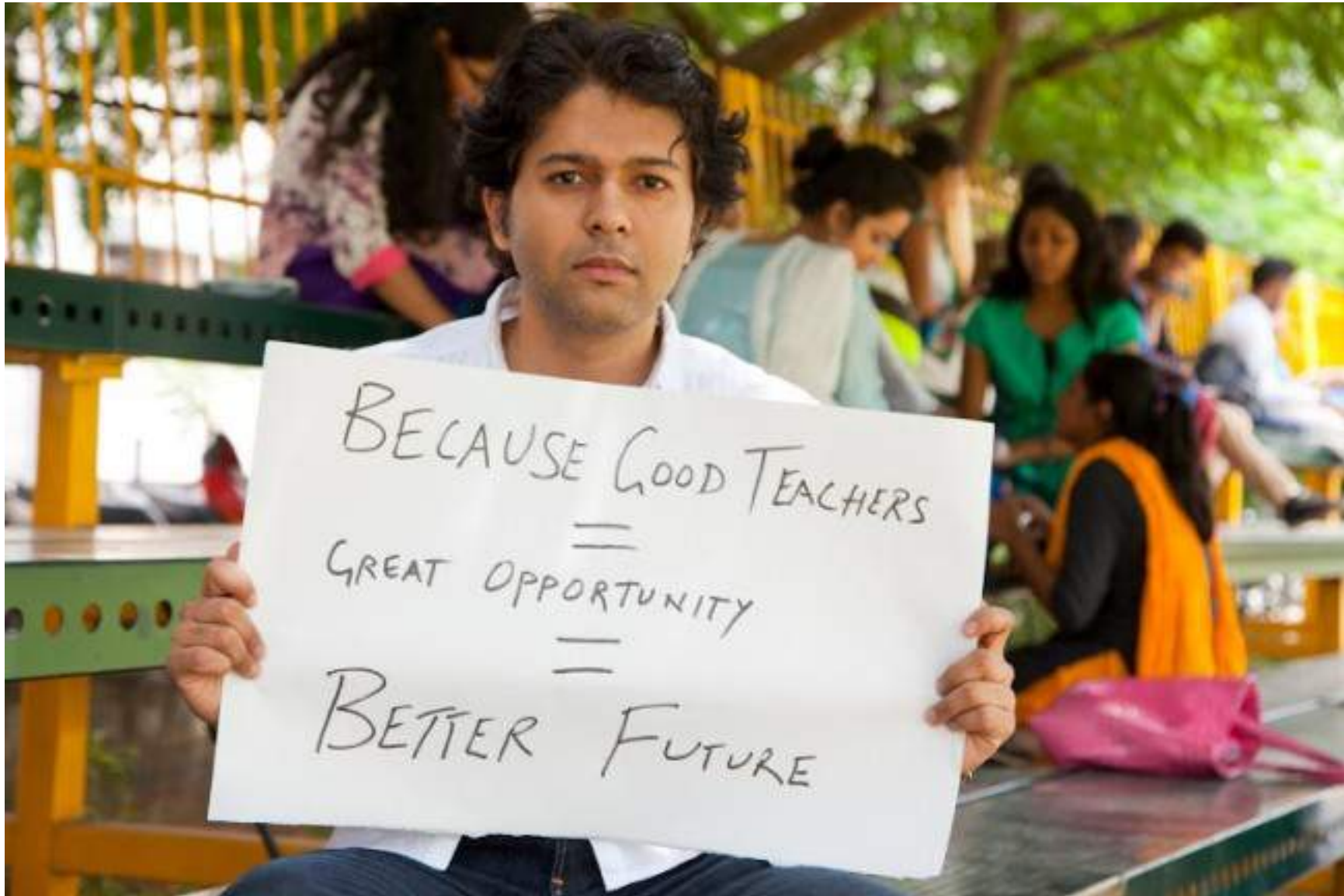




3. Vasundhara Das is an Indian singer, actress, composer, entrepreneur, speaker, songwriter, and environmental activist.

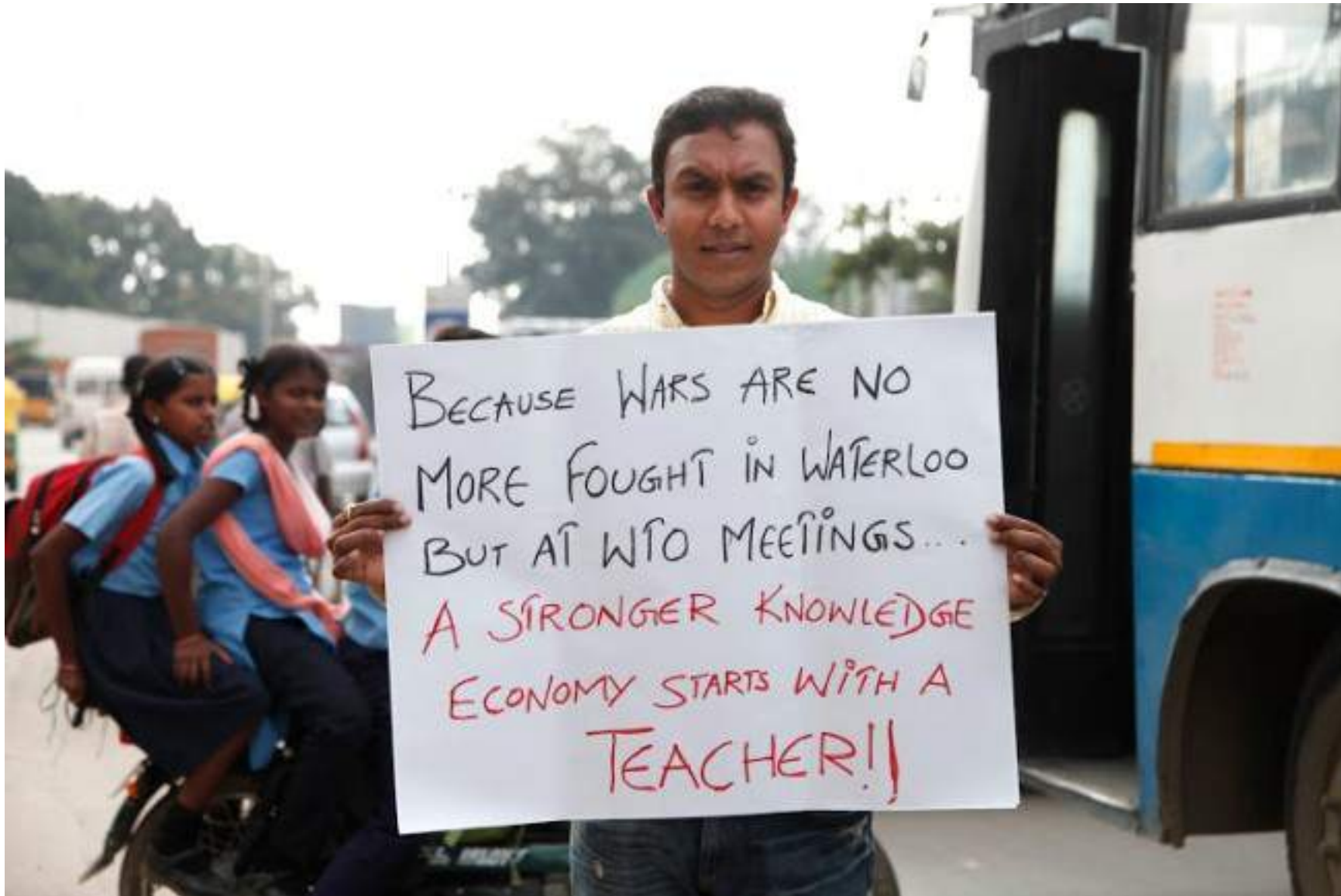


4. Saad Khan is an Indian film director, screenwriter, acting teacher, founder and creative head of Centerstage, a new wave media movement based in Bangalore that promotes new artists in the city.



5. Vikram Nalagampalli is Founder, Voterite.com – a portal that

bridges the gap between the voter and electoral candidates.



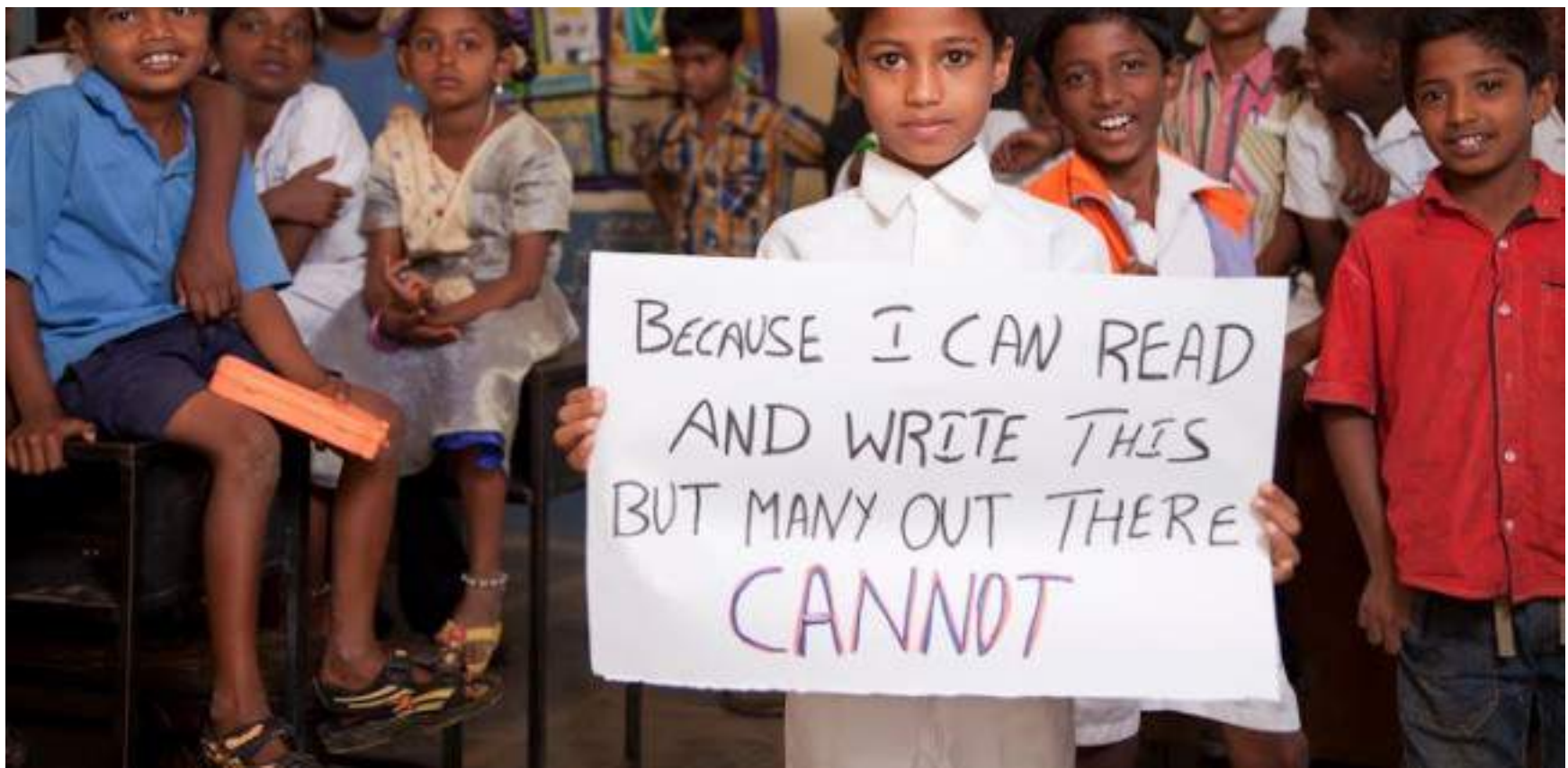
6. MJ Pijosh...the name says it all!





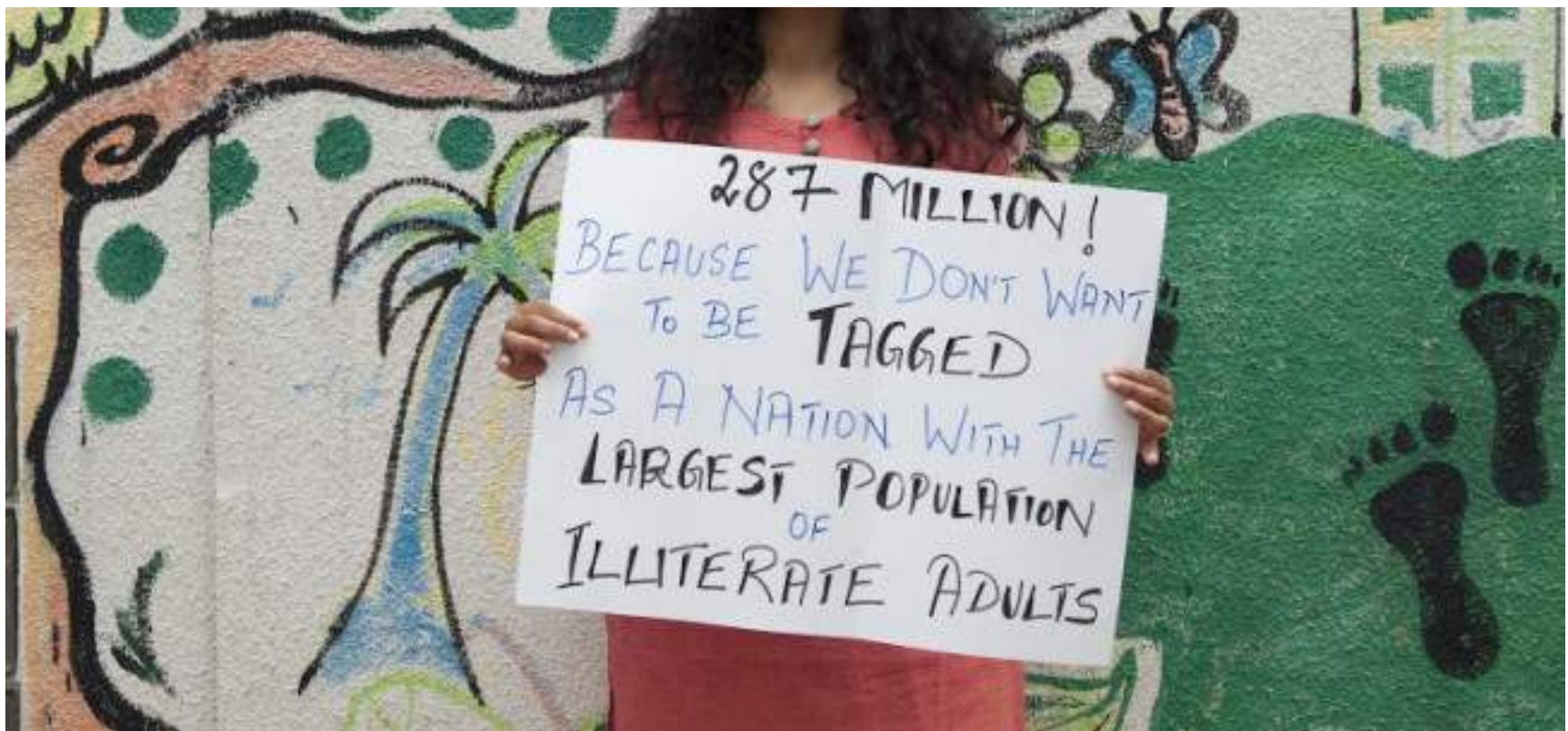
7. Amin, is a student at Seva Bharat Trust Govt Schools, Vivek Nagar and recently participated in the All India Robot Olympiad.





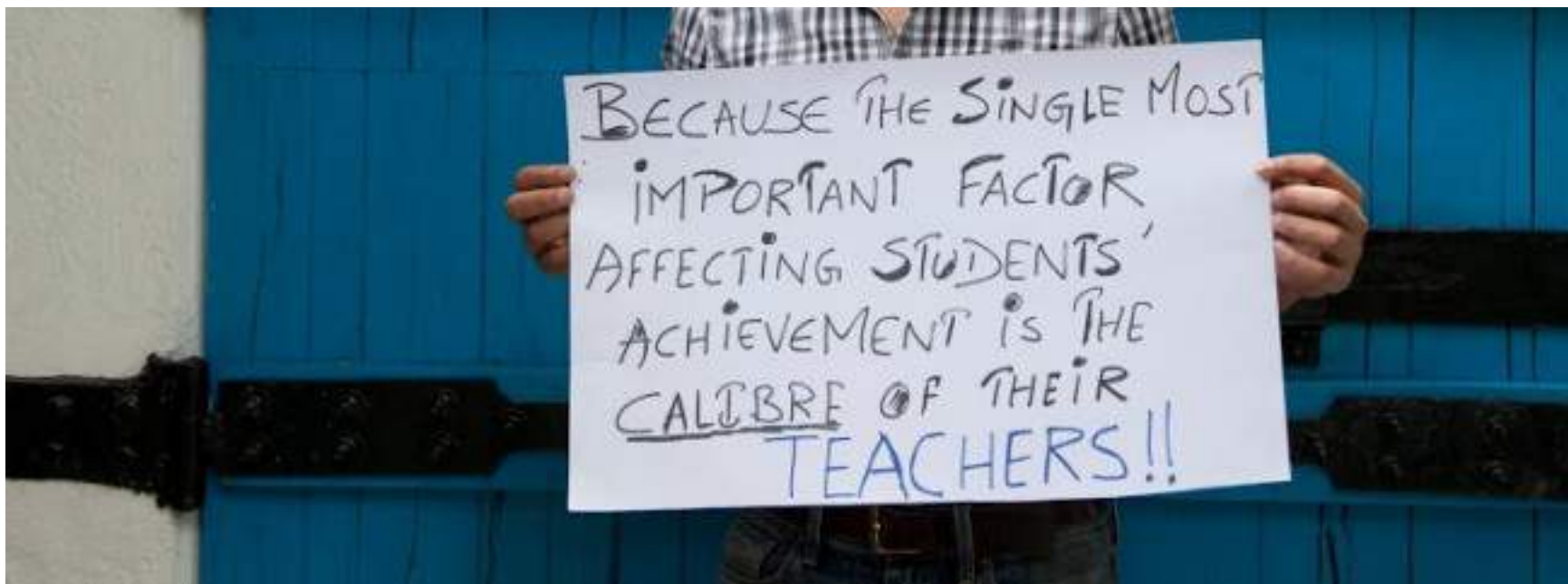
8. Aarti Mohan is the Chief Editor and Head, Content, at The Alternative, an online magazine that strives to make sustainability a way of life through conversations, everyday choices and practices that can lend itself to positive social impact.



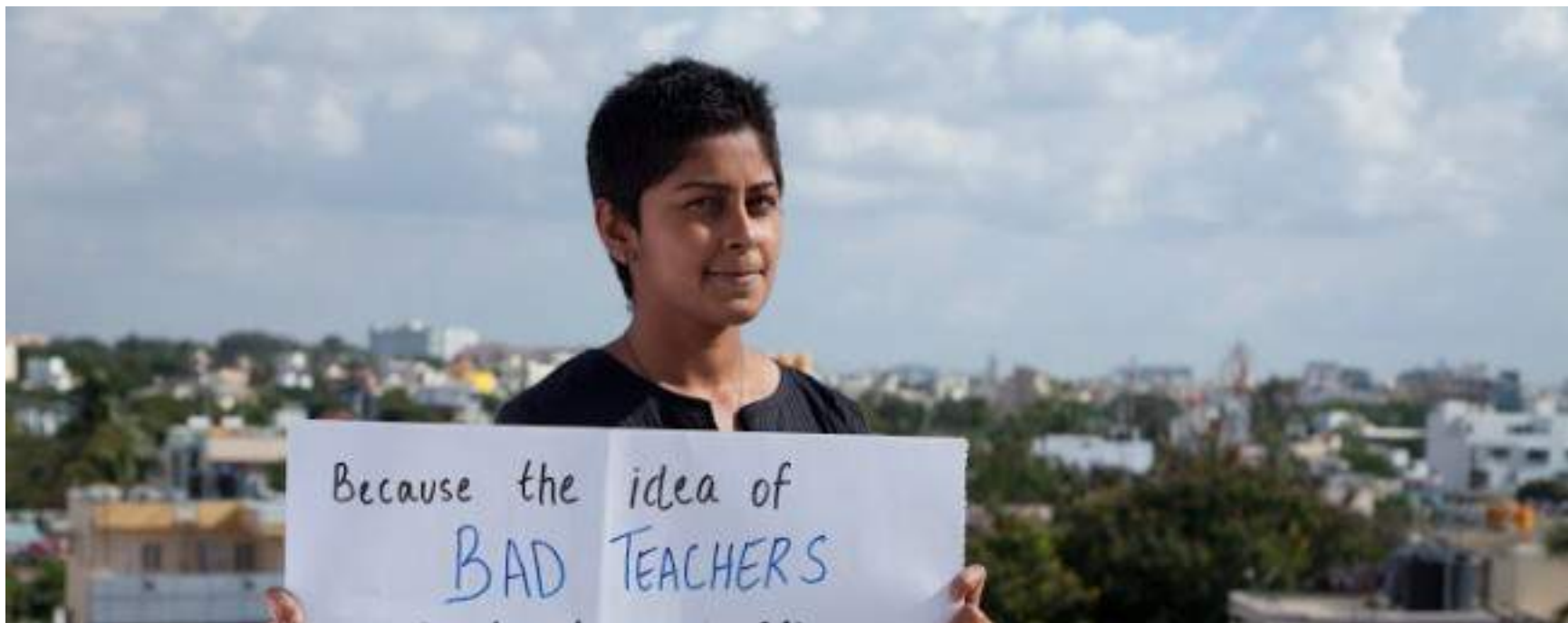


9. Chef Manu Chandra, Partner The Fatty Bao & Monkey Bar and Executive Chef Olive Beach





10. Bhavana Rajendran, is a social development researcher and a theatre artist.





We at Akshara Foundation have also tested these reasons' resonance with a cross section of people after extensive engagement with various stakeholders.

Each of these ten people bring a positive energy to the issue that is a tribute to the spirit of pedagogy, to that warrior who often fights the societal battle all alone in a classroom that very often has bare walls, rickety benches, chipped blackboards and children who have little but a spirit to break through the innumerable barriers.

NB: The most recent reports including the UNESCO-Education for All 2014 and ASER have all painted a grim picture of the state of primary education in the country. Among the many reasons cited, the lack of well trained and motivated teachers seems to be the most critical to the dismal education scene in India.

Photos by: Sandesh Ravikumar

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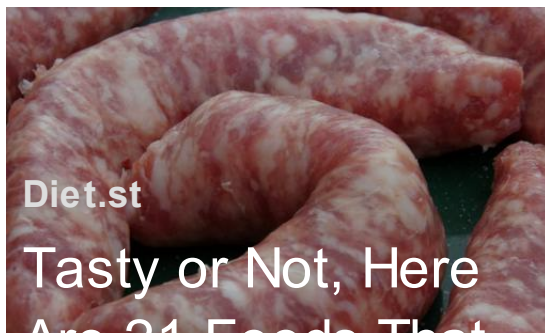
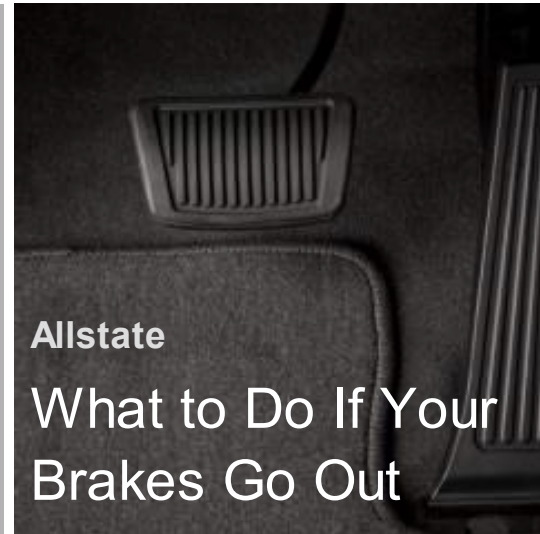
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