

A SHAKA I M, JAGTIAL DC
AWARD CATEGORY: EDUCATION

With extra classes, motivated teachers, Telangana district races to the top in Class 10 results

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JAGTIAL (TELANGANA),
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IN 2017-18, Jagtial district of Telangana recorded the highest pass percentage in the state among government and private schools in secondary school examinations (Class 10). The distinction, coming for the second year in a row, underlined how far Jagtial had come from the time before 2015 when more than half its students would fail to clear the exam.

It was in 2016 that District Collector A Sharath took it upon himself to change this. He did this by introducing an initiative called Uttejani, which involved encouraging teachers to give extra classes to weak students and introducing special classes to prepare the children for the exams.

In 2017-18, Jagtial district's pass rate was 97.56 per cent, slightly more than the 97.35 per cent registered the previous year. Of the 200 government schools in the district, 117 had cent per cent results.

Sharath, 54, was recognised under the category 'Education' at the first The Indian Express



Excellence in Governance Awards.

"It was the product of teamwork by the entire district administration, the teaching community, and parents and students. We identified the gaps, filled them and motivated the students," says Sharath.



Jagtial DC A Sharath receives the award from Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Ram Vilas Paswan; (right) a Class X student speaks about self-motivation at a government school in Jagtial.



Revenue Divisional Officer Dr G Narendar, who is responsible for monitoring extra classes at 10 schools, says, "Uttejani is a programme to motivate both SSC students and teachers, so as to enhance their performance, through simple, goal-oriented measures. Students who are weak have extra classes of one hour each before school and after." These classes begin October onwards, towards the mid-term point, and students who stay back after school are provided healthy snacks such as upma and polka to ensure they do not go hungry. Teachers are also urged not to take any leave once the extra classes start, and may have their increments slashed if a student under their charge fails.

"In each school, a teacher has adopted 10 students to give them special classes. We have created groups of five, each of which has one student who is doing well, two who are average and two who are academically weak. For the morning class, at 4.30 am, the teachers in-charge of SSC students give a wake-up call on the phones of their parents," said District Education Officer S Venkateshwarlu. District Collector Sharath visits one school every week and some-

times even takes a class or two.

"Initially, the teachers were taken aback, but in one year they themselves gave an undertaking that if their students failed, we would take any action against them. The teachers were confident that none of the students would fail, and that is what is happening," said G B Reddy, Principal of Government Boys' School at Peddapur.

There are some though who believe the scheme is putting undue pressure on teachers and students. "Uttejani started off well but teachers were under so much pressure to get results that many resorted to encouraging mass copying. In some cases, the teachers were found to be aiding cheating by camping near exam centres in Kodanayal mandal, police raided houses near exam centres and found teachers, including a mandal education officer, writing the answers. They have been booked," said former Congress MLA from Jagtial T. Jeevan Reddy. DEO Venkateshwarlu, however, said this was an isolated incident.

Defended Sharath, "Students may go back home from school and forget it all. Igniting minds through Uttejani has yielded a wide impact."

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