

Manipur declares Saturdays 'No School Bag Day' for students upto Class 8; move aimed at imparting extracurricular skills

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- In a bid to promote other skills apart from textbooks the government has taken the initiative
- The decision was taken after considering the long term physical and mental effects of carrying heavy school bags every day by young students

The Manipur government's 'No School Bag Day' initiative has been receiving a good response from students, some school authorities and parents. The education department of Manipur recently decided to enforce a 'No School Bag day' on all working Saturdays for students of classes one to eight, including the government, government-aided, and private schools in a bid to promote other skills apart from textbooks.

"For so many years, we have been carrying bags. The bags are also heavy but we get used to carrying bags. Now we don't have to carry bags on Saturdays. We thank the government, an eighth standard student Tanya told *ANI*.

The decision was taken after considering the long term physical and mental effects of carrying heavy school bags every day by young students, who can go through lots of inconveniences, health problems and discomforts, and to make schools more conducive and a joyful place for learning.

"The world is changing so fast, we must give some liberty to children. After due consideration, the education department took the decision," chief minister N Biren Singh told *ANI*. The students of the primary and mid-level school are often found engaged in routine work related to the school curriculum, additional homework and assignments.

This leaves young boys and girls with little time for other activities, including games, sports, extra co-curricular activities that help students in personality development, the release said. The government has also directed the schools to ensure that students take part in extra co-curricular activities, games and sports, recreation, and make the school a more joyful place for learning on all working Saturdays.