

In Goa, schoolkids to get 2 water breaks

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Panaji: Following in the footsteps of states like Kerala, Karnataka, Telangana and Tamil Nadu, Goa too has issued instructions to schools to ring a short bell twice during school hours to signal a 'water drinking break' for students. The directives will be applicable from Class I to XII for government, state aided as well as private schools.

The 'water break' will be of two minutes each, for which the bell will now go off after the second and sixth period (lecture) each day during school hours.

"It has been observed that students in the school do not drink sufficient water, which results in dehydration, which in turn may have long-lasting



School students drink water during a water break in Kerala

effects on their health," deputy director of education Shallesh Zingde said, in the circular issued on Wednesday. Zingde told TOI that the initiative was taken by director of education Vandana Rao, who took a cue from other states that have introduced such a break.

Until now, during the five-and-a-half hours for which Goa's schools operate, there was only one 15 minute recess, which acts as a break to eat snacks and drink water.

The new instructions issued on Thursday will be applicable to special schools as well.

Dr Rufino Monteiro said that Goa has a high instance of urinary tract infections and as the state also has a hot and humid climate, it is important to reinforce in children the need to drink sufficient water.

"Only ringing a bell to remind students to drink water is not enough. It should be supplemented by teachers seeing to it that students bring enough water with them and there should also be adequate clean toilets so the students can also relieve themselves. Many a time, students do not want to drink water because there are no clean toilets available," Monteiro said.

School headmasters said that there are no restrictions preventing students from drinking water, even while the teacher is teaching.