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Government school doubles enrolment in 2 years, ropes in alumni for funds

The enrolment has gone up from about 360 to over 800.

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Salik Ahmad (<http://www.hindustantimes.com/columns/salik-ahmad>)
Hindustan Times



The Seth Durgadutt Jatiya Government Senior Secondary School at Bissau has carried out construction work worth Rs 15 lakh. (HT Photo)

Students' enrolment in a government senior secondary school in Rajasthan's Jhunjhunu district has more than doubled in two years – from about 360 to over 800.

Seth Durgadutt Jatiya Government Senior Secondary School at Bissau still gets recommendations for admissions, said principal Kamlesh Tetarwal. “This (admission rush) usually happens in top private schools.”

Besides increasing enrolment, the school has improved infrastructure by roping in its alumni.

The school staff have adopted unusual ways for enrolment. “My brother-in-law, who owns a gas agency, has a few pick-up trucks. I borrowed one for a month last year and put up school hoardings on it,” said the principal.

Schoolteachers mounted on the truck a loudspeaker that played a recorded advertisement of the school; the truck was driven through Bissau for a month during the admission season, Tetarwal said.

“In addition, hoardings of the school were put up at about 25 villages in the area. As a result, the school added about 200 students last year.”

The same method was adopted this year too, resulting in enrolment of another 200 students. In the past two years, the school has added six more sections in senior classes. “The school is now facing a dearth of teachers,” Tetarwal said.

Development work worth about Rs 15 lakh was carried out under the principal’s initiative. “I created a WhatsApp group of the school alumni and told them to not forget the contribution of their school in their success,” said Tetarwal, who taught political science at the school during 1994-96.

The principal said he used to post pictures in the group of small works done, such as plantation and filling up potholes on the road leading to the school. “Inspired by the initiative, alumnus Kamal Poddar, a chartered accountant in Mumbai, donated Rs 5 lakh for the repair and paint of the school building,” Tetarwal said.

Another alumnus has agreed to pay tuition fees of all girl students every year. The school has girls in Class 11 and 12; the alumnus paid Rs 51,000 last year and the amount to be paid this year is close to Rs 80,000.

The school has markedly improved its results. In 2014-15, Class 10 and Class 12 (science) recorded pass percentage of 40% and 73%, which shot up to 100% in both the classes in 2016-17. The school conducts evening classes, enquires parents if a student is absent, and awards meritorious students with cash prizes.

Jhunjhunu collector Dinesh Kumar Yadav, who visited the school recently, said he was impressed by the efforts of the principal and staff.

“It’s as good as a private school, even better than some. The teaching standard has gone up, that’s why more and more people are sending their kids to the school,” Yadav said.

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