

Putting textbooks aside

These govt school kids will now see & do to learn science

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BENGALURU: From January, government school students in Bagalkot and Vijayapura will have a reason to be excited about going to school.

Science centres, set up by the state government with the help of Agastya International Foundation, will start running in these two districts. These core science activity centres (CSACs) were soft-launched in 2014, but full-fledged operations will begin in January, with equipped labs, bus and food facilities for students.

Ferried by bus, 150 students of Class V to X will visit the centres every day to explore the world of science. Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics, Computer Science,



A teacher explains a point to the students during a lab session at the core science activity centre in Bagalkot. The government has tied up with an NGO, which provides resource persons, to run such centres.

these subjects will be taught through videos, experiments and models. Besides these, they will have astronomy labs to learn about space and ecolo-

gy labs, where they will engage in activities like gardening and composting. A unique feature of the science centres will be the 'Tod Phod Jod' labs, where

students will take apart refrigerators, bicycles and other appliances to see how they work. Lessons on motors will no longer be about staring at the blackboard or images in their textbook as students will see first-hand how they work, by opening up fans and blenders.

Mahadevi Telagi, a primary school teacher in Vijayapura, said, "I had not worked with chemicals before, so I was scared of such experiments. I took my students to the centre where they did experiments on their own. They were excited and are curious to learn more."

The centres are being set up as part of the science for school education programme of the government. Agastya International Foundation provides trained resource per-

sons, while the government will run the centres and take care of the expenses.

Two more centres in Bidar and Shivamogga will begin operations in a few months. A centre in Hubballi is being run by the Foundation with help from local NGO Deshpande Foundation. Students here have become scientists in their own right, creating organic ropes, recycled notebooks and even publishing their own books.

"Science is a subject where you require hands-on practice through experiments. The Foundation has the expertise. With their help, we are trying to promote interest in science," said P C Jaffer, state project director of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

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