

Punjab: Over 9,000 students take Ramanujan mathematics test

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A differently-abled 11-year-old student, Jashandeep Singh, was among 9,112 students that took the sixth Ramanujan mathematics test held Sunday at over 35 centres in Sangrur and Patiala. This test, which is organised in memory of legendary mathematician S Ramanujan, was started in 2013 by Banera (Sangrur district) government school teacher Devi Dayal and some of his colleagues. On Sunday, over 500 teachers were part of the initiative. Jashandeep of village Kalbanjara had come to appear for the test in the sub-junior category as he is in Class 4.

He filled the OMR answersheet with his left foot and even did rough calculations the same way. His father, Kuldeep Singh, said, "He was born with no arms and the right leg is of shorter than the left. Hence we have used artificial limb to help him walk independently. His left leg is fine. Earlier, we used to wonder what he will do when he grows up. But my wife started teaching him how to perform various works with his left leg and he started writing, painting as well. We taught him at home till the age of seven and sent him to Government Primary School, Kalbanjara in Lehragaga constituency of Sangrur after that. Now, he competes with normal students of his age and scores first position in his class. He has also won prizes in calligraphy competitions competing with normal students."

"I enjoyed solving sums and completed the paper in about an hour," said Jashandeep.

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The test is divided in 3 groups — sub-junior group (Class 4, 5), junior group (Class 6-8) and senior group (Class 9,10). Toppers of each group get cash prizes worth Rs 2,100, 3,100 and 5,100, respectively. Apart from this, prizes are given to top 21 positions in each categories, said Devi Dayal, who teaches mathematics.

Funds for the test are generated through voluntary donations and the test is only for government school students to prepare them for competitive exams, added Dayal. It has Rs 20 fee for participation, and 100 multiple choice questions for seniors and 60 MCQs for sub-junior students. The exam is held in Punjabi, said Prince Kumar, another teacher associated with the exercise.