

FAZILKA SCHOOL HEAD & TEACHER SUSPENDED OVER STRIPPING INCIDENT,
CHARGESHEET TO FOLLOW

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- **CAPT AMARINDER ORDERS NO LAXITY ON THE ISSUE, SAYS GOVT
COMMITTED TO GIRL EDUCATION & EMPOWERMENT**

Chandigarh, November 6: The head and a teacher of the Government Girls School, Village Kundal, Fazilka, have been suspended on the directives of Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh, over the alleged stripping of girls following the discovery of a sanitary pad in the school toilet.

The orders were issued late on Monday night after he received the inquiry report, which found the incident to be a case of gross negligence, indifference and insensitivity on the part of the teachers of the school.

The Chief Minister has issued strict instructions to show no laxity in the matter as the respect and dignity of the girl students could not be allowed to be compromised at any cost. He has reiterated his government's commitment to providing a favourable environment for the education and empowerment of girls.

The Chief Minister had on Friday ordered a probe into the allegations of stripping made by some of the students and their parents. The Chief Minister had also directed Secretary Education Krishan Kumar to complete the investigation by Monday and take further action as necessary.

The incident was brought to the notice of Captain Amarinder Singh after a video showed girl students crying and complaining that they had been stripped by the teachers in the school premises. The teachers were reportedly trying to find out which of the girls was wearing a sanitary pad, after one was found in the school toilet.

The inquiry report said the students were checked twice on the directions, and with the full knowledge of, the school head Kuldeep Kaur and teacher Jyoti. The girls were checked with their clothes on the first time, and then the two women got them checked again by senior girl students of Class VIII with their clothes taken off, as per the SDM Abohar, at whose office the statements of Kuldeep and Jyoti were recorded on Monday.

During the first checking, which was undertaken in the mid-day meal kitchen, Kuldeep Kaur was standing outside all through the process, the inquiry committee members, DEO Fazilka Kulwant Singh, SHO Sadar Abohar Angrej Singh and District Child Protection Officer Fazilka Ritu, have stated in their report.

The committee unanimously agreed to the indifference and insensitivity towards women's physical dignity expressed by the school staff. The report further said that though there may not have been any intent of physical/sexual assault, the teachers, at the outset, were found to be negligent and careless.

A chargesheet will be issued under Rule 8 of the Conduct Rules against the Kuldeep and Joyti, who have already been placed under suspension, according to the Fazilka DEO.