

2nd policeman in Maharashtra passes away due to COVID 19 on Sunday

By Raju Vernekar
Mumbai, April 26

Among the 96 among the police personnel of Maharashtra 2 of them died today. Seven of them had been recovered so far. Among the two police COVID-19 victim policemen - a 58 year old policeman attached to Vakola police station (North West Mumbai), died last week, while another policeman, a 52-

year-old Head Constable, lost his life to coronavirus on Sunday. He was a resident of Kamothe in Navi Mumbai and was admitted to the MGM Hospital on 23 April. He passed away in early morning on Sunday.

Meanwhile, the Maharashtra

Health Department said on Saturday that the death rate of COVID-19 patients in Maharashtra is currently 4.4 per cent. The death rate in the state is currently 4.4 per cent due to COVID-19. On analyzing 269 deaths in the state, the mortality rate in

patients under 50 is comparatively low. "This age group is 0.64 per cent in ages 21-30. It increases with increasing age. It is highest in the age group of 61-70 years at 17.78 per cent. This increases the likelihood of complications in patients,"

added health department. The total number of COVID-19 cases in Maharashtra has risen to 6,817, including 301 deaths. The Health Department said that there were 394 new positive cases and 18 deaths in the state in the last 24 hours.

Armed group tenders apology to MLA regretting their mischievous act

IT News
CCpur, April 26,

Armed group presently ensuing suspension of Operation with the Government of India and Manipur - the Hmar Peoples' Convention (HPC), (D) reportedly apologies to Thanlon Assembly Constituency MLA Vungzagin Valte in connection with the extortion

threat at difficult times. Report said that the militant group ensuing Suspension of Operation (SoO) with the government of India and Manipur reportedly served extortion note to provide them rice and money when the MLA was busy loading PMKGAY rice which he purchase from his local areas development fund to be distributed to the people of Thanlon Assembly constituency which he

represented as MLA. When people across the planet particularly to the people of his constituency are hit hard by the lockdown to prevent from COVID -19 pandemic, the demands made on him by UG groups caused a severe hitch on his process of preparedness in providing relief to his people. However, a positive development took place after the HPC (D) leadership

coming to their senses tendered an apology today around 10:30 am at the Churachandpur town residents of the MLA. Report reaching here said that the HPC(D) Secretary Isaac Hmar and the PRO tendered the apology. The armed group leader assured the MLA that they will never commit such mischievous act that disturbed the people.

Kerala Govt. provide additional assistance to Manipuri guest workers - AIYF

IT News
Imphal, April 26

Following the report about the hardship being faced by the Manipuri guest workers and their family in Kakkannad area of Kochi in Kerala due to the lockdown for containing COVID -19 pandemic, authority of the Government of Kerala and comrades of AIYF, AISF and NFYW of Kerala had provided additional assistance to them after the All India Youth federation (AIYF) Manipur State Council communicated and urged them to provide essential edible items as relief material.

A statement of the AIYF Manipur State Council, signed by its Secy. Kh. Himalay said that after getting the report about the hardship being faced by the Manipuri Guest workers numbering around 101 at Kakkannad in



Kochi, comrades of AIYF and AISF of Kerala immediately rushed and inspected about their hardship. The appreciation of the guest worker regarding payment of room rent has been solved by the concern department of the Kerala Government, Himalay said.

He added that in addition to the meal provided by the community kitchen, government of Kerala through Taluk office Kanayanoor

Enarkulam have distributed rice, dal, edible oil, onion and salt etc. to not only the Manipuri guest workers but also to workers from other states staying in the area. Himalay extended his gratitude to the government of Kerala for showing concern of the Manipuri guest workers for making sure of their salary during lockdown as well as clearance of pending salary on time. He appealed the Manipur

government to act like Kerala Government when by providing all facilities to workers of company or firm in the state of Manipur. While appreciating the government of Manipur for opening the www.tengbang.in, the AIYF said that as guest workers could not avail the facility due to lack of proper education the government should look into the matter when it comes to guest workers. The statement further said that the comrades of AIYF in Andhra Pradesh, after communicated by the Manipur State Council AIYF had delivered edible items to stranded students in their state. It further appealed Manipuris facing hardship due to the lockdown outside the state to contact at Cell Phone No. 7005060359, 7005858148 or 9856378887 for any help.

PREPAK greets people on its 'Colonialism Resist Day 2020'

IT News
Imphal, April 26

Armed rebel group People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK) greets the people in connection with the 'Indian Colonialism Resist Day 2020' observance and pay revolutionary salute to the victims of dreaded COVID-19 Pandemic. The outfit also pays revolutionary salute to those who are struggling at hospital due to attack by COVID-19.

The outfit observed the 'Indian Colonialism Resist Day' recalling the oppressive ruled by the Indian authority and the atrocities committed by the Indian security forces to the civilian of the region under the shadow of the various black laws,

particularly in remembrance to the 1980 incident of Patsoi Langjing Khunou, where Indian Security force CRPF committed inhuman crime to the civilians. The outfit in a statement said that while Indian military forces have been committing genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and crimes of aggression in Kangleipak which have been prohibited by the ICC, the Government of India has been misleading the international community by projecting the liberation movement of Kangleipak as an internal law and order problem of India.

The outfit called on the people of Kangleipak to work collectively to fight the Government of India, the State Government and the security

forces who are directly involved in committing in all kinds of atrocities to the International Criminal Court (ICC) or criminal tribunal set up by the UNSC. Mainland Indians have been subjecting people of WESEA to all forms of racial discrimination and harassment. Many young students have been murdered and many more young girls have been sexually assaulted in different parts of mainland India, it remarked. The outfit went on to allege that mainland Indians do not share any empathy with the people of WESEA, what they crave for are the territory and resources of the region India became a State party to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination

(CERD) in 1968 but it has not yet enacted any law which can effectively deal with racism in the country, it said. Nonetheless, CERD has been monitoring what the signatory countries have/have been doing to curb racism in their respective countries. The Government of India submitted its report to CERD only in 1996 and 2007. Since then, New Delhi is unable to submit any report, PREPAK said. Subsequent upon the report submitted in 2007, CERD pointed out that AFSPA is a racist law and asked India to repeal it. It then called upon all the people to raise the slogan 'Go back Indian military forces' collectively and grasp the opportunity to restore the lost sovereignty of Kangleipak

Health Directorate clarifies news report by Imphal Times regarding preparation to fight COVID-19 at Tamenglong district

IT News
Imphal, April 26

Reacting to Imphal Times news report appeared on April 22 issue under the heading "Lack of infrastructure Equipment in District hospital Tamenglong - a serious concern for denizens", Additional Director of the Directorate of Health Services Manipur clarified that they are well prepared to face challenges arises due to COVID -19 pandemic in Tamenglong District Hospital. A clarification note released late yesterday said that As many as 8 consignments of covid-19 prevention item have been issued to District hospital Authority of Tamenglong. So far 51-PPES, 1020-N95s, 8185-Triple masks, 160- Hand sanitizers, 4500-pairs of Hand Gloves, 11-jars of sodium Hypochlorite solution have been issued for the district hospital, the statement added. The clarification note added that Tamenglong district has 5 Isolation beds, 2 in the district hospital and one each in Tousem, Tamei and Oinamlong PHCs. As there is no ICU bed dedicated for COVID-19 patient at present, no dedicated ventilator has been issued, the clarification note said. The statement added that Manipur has two ICMR

approved Laboratories for COVID-19 testing at JNIMS and RIMS, which is more than many other North-Eastern states. As the District Hospital Tamenglong has no ICMR approved laboratory, no testing kit was given to the Hospital, it added. The statement however said that a quarantine centre of capacity 20 has been established at JNV school at Duigaling in anticipation of the possible influx after relaxation of lockdown. The clarification note further said that special activities are taken up by opening 17 surgical outreach camps in collaboration with JNIMS, Imphal. One Mega Disability screening camp benefiting around 300 people, monthly PMSMA camp benefiting 5132 (total ANC) for detection of High risk pregnant women, free Mega outreach health camp at PHC Tousem benefiting 1478 patients and one free heart screening camp at District Hospital under RBSK has been conducted. In connection with the clarification Imphal Times once more is drilling to break the ice of what is happening on ground. Imphal Times will publish more story to make sure that people of Tamenglong too remain safe from the attack by the dreaded COVID-19 pandemic.

CRPF conducts awareness prog. on COVID-19

IT News
Imphal, April 26

109 BN CRPF under the aegis of IGP Manipur and Nagaland sector conducted a civic action programme today at Pouna village (Senapati). In this programme safety items like Surgical Face Masks (Three Ply), Hand sanitizers, Hand Gloves, Hand Wash and

Lizol Floor cleaner have been distributed to Village/Club Presidents of Senapati area for further distributing to marginalized section of Pouna village area. This programme was conducted to provide assistance to citizens of Pouna village area and to spread awareness about preventive measures against COVID-19. (Contd. on Page 2)

KYKL observes 26th Raising Day

IT News
Imphal, April 26

Showing serious concern to the misery cause by the COVID-19 Pandemic across the world armed rebel group Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL) observed its 26th Raising Day just for namesake. A statement of the outfit said, "Sharing the misery caused by the COVID-19 pandemic with people around the world in general, and with the people of Manipur in particular, we celebrated it only in name this year".

The occasion was celebrated in the headquarters and other units of the organization by hoisting our flag and paying floral tribute to the martyrs, followed by reading out our chairman's message conveyed to the people of Manipur. "I would like to appeal to all people to fight the pandemic, standing as one, regardless of race, colour and religion", a statement of the outfit said and shares the sorrows of the people caused cause by COVID-19. The outfit further showed respect to the selfless works of health care workers during such difficult times.

Banian thanks the appointment of Full time secy. MSAK

IT News
Imphal, April 26

Banian Repertory Theatre has appreciated the appointment of Kshetri Jugindro Singh as the full time Secretary of the Manipur State Kala Akademi (MSKA). A statement said that State Kala Akemi has been neglected for a long time and appointment of a full time Secretary, the Banian Repertory Theatre felt that left over work for promotion of Arts and Culture can be completed with the appointment of the full time Secretary. Kshetri Jugindro is the third NSD graduate from the state of Manipur. He has been actively involved for promotion of Manipuri Theatre

CSOs continue to help villagers

IT News
Imphal, April 26

Co-ordinating Body Khurai today handed over bakery products and package drinking water to staffs of Tengenoupal district DC office and to the police personnel of Tengenoupal district police station as a mark of respect to their selfless effort to contain the COVID-19 pandemic in the state. Few members of the Co-ordinating body handed over the item while they were on their way to Kwatha to provide help to the villagers during this ongoing lockdown. Kwatha is famous for the processed Bamboo shoots. And this time the fermented bamboo shoot are likely to be spoiled as they failed to sent it to market due to the ongoing lockdown. After the villagers contacted, the Co-ordinating Body Khurai today collected almost all the processed bamboo shoots without losing their invested money.



Echo of a Pyre

Dr. Aniruddha Babar
Tetso College, Dimapur, Nagaland

I wake up in the middle of the night
All drench in sweat with fear
That dream that I was seeing
I realized am living this year

World is set on fire
Humanity is burning
God has disappeared beyond the eternity
Eyes are blindly still searching

with the sweat on my forehead and restless heart,
burning thoughts killing my brain
I sit on my desk
with an aching soul and agonizing pain

The tears of hunger and the blood of thirst,
hated among people, indifference- the eternal curse
Pandemic or a wrath of God, Rape of life or a murder for a cause
a comic Apocalypse or hollow Redemption amidst the living
corpses interspersed

As I write at 2 AM, finding way through the insanity of my mind,
contesting with the ghostly shadows of surviving corpses and
cold stares of their eyes

Sins and Virtues, Gods and Demons, coldness of hearts, no
compassion to feel

O' Human ! A Paragon of Animals ! you are burning in your own
pyre of ignorant sacrifice ..

MOMA distribute edible items to journalist



IT News
Imphal, April 26

Project Director of the Manipur Organic Mission Agency (MOMA), K. Debabarta Sharam today distributed edible food items to the

members of the All Manipur Working Journalist Union as a relief material to curb down their difficulties during the lockdown called to contain the COVID-19 pandemic. Items including Cabbage, banana, ginger, tomato etc. were distributed to the journalists.

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CRPF conducts awareness



A brief lecture on Covid-19 has also been delivered where in it is informed that **Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)** is an infectious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome corona virus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). Villagers have been advised to wear a protective face masks and maintain utmost hygiene in their day to day affairs. They should seek medical advice in case they feel unwell by calling a doctor.

Shri. Vinod Sawant, Deputy Commandant informed that in view of prevailing emergency in the country due to COVID-19, people

should take all preventive measures in view of complete lock down and follow all instructions issued by the Government as well as local administration. Insp/GD- Abdul Majeed T.S, SI/GD Sensa Ram and Jawans have conducted the programme maintaining social distancing and other precautions of COVID-19. Sh. C.L. David, (Chairman, Pouna Colony), Sh. M. Athili, (Secretary, Pouna Colony), Senapati District and all villagers appreciated the efforts of 109 Bn CRPF in providing essential items to the needy/marginalized section of society.

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Locusts' outbreak: Causes & Consequences



By: Sanjenbam Jugeshwor Singh

According to FAO, locusts and grasshoppers are short-horned insects like crickets and long-horned grasshoppers. They breed in exponential numbers as they migrate long distances in destructive swarms even from one continent to another. In India, there are four species of locusts: desert locusts; migratory locusts; Bombay locusts and tree locusts. Human activity has made an Ocean circulation pattern misbehave-triggering a weird confluence of events that has caused the infestation. If there is slightly above normal rainfall and green vegetation develops, the insects can rapidly increase in numbers in a month or two. An outbreak usually occurs within an area of about 5000 sq. km (100 km by 50 km) in one part of a country. If an outbreak or contemporaneous outbreak are not controlled and if widespread or usually heavy rainfall in adjacent areas, several successive seasons of breeding can occur, causing further hopper band and adult swarm formations-called an upsurge. This can affect an entire region. If an upsurge is not controlled and ecological condition continue to increase in number and size which can lead to plague. The last

few upsurges lead to plagues. In India, the last major plague was in 1987-89 and last major upsurge was in 2003-05. The recent outbreak of locusts attack on Indian farmland occurred due to erratic rainfall in deserts of the Middle East in 2018 which created conditions conducive for locusts to breed. Abundant rain water gathered in different parts of the arid deserts over Saudi Arabia, Oman, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen after the region was hit by cyclone Mekunu in May 2018. It ended up creating favourable breeding conditions for deserts locusts. Locusts' swarms are known to retreat by November every year, but longer seasonal rainfall in India has created favourable for locusts in the Thar Desert. The insect behind the mayhem are desert locusts, which despite their name, thrive following periods of heavy rainfall that trigger blooms of vegetation across their normally arid habitat in Africa and Middle East. Experts say, a prolonged bout of exceptionally wet weather including several rare cyclones that struck eastern Africa and Arabian Peninsula over the last 18 months (Cyclone Mekunu in May 2018 & Cyclone Luban in October 2018) are the primary culprits. The recent storminess cyclonic storm-Pawan (Cyclone Luban in October 2018) is related to the Indian Ocean Dipole, an Ocean temperature gradient that was recently extremely pronounced something that's also been linked to the devastating bushfires in Eastern Australia. Two cyclones brought heavy rains to the Arabian Desert and help locust breed freely. Locusts spread out and breed more.

The insects not only causes immense damage to crops on farmland by ravaging leaves, flowers and fruits but they also destroy plants just by their weights as they come in massive numbers. Even a small swarm of

locusts engulfing an area of 1sq.km devours food in a day that can feed as many as 40,000 people as reported by FAO. File photo of 21st February 2020 shows swarm of desert locusts over ranch near the town of Nanyuki in Laikipia County of Kenya. According to FAO, desert locusts that are primarily responsible for an invasion across different agro-climate zone and crop damage are present somewhere in the deserts between Mauritania and India. India has been battling locusts' attacks with moderate success since December. However, the onset of monsoon could bring more trouble. Several countries across multiple agro-climatic zones ranging from Africa, the Middle East to Asia are ruling under unprecedented locusts' attacks. A warning-"Desert Locust Watch"- put out by FAO on 2nd March, has described the situation as extremely alarming, especially in Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia. While India has also suffered from the locusts attacks, the country has for now brought the situation under control but only after substantial damage to crops in Rajasthan and Gujarat. India along with Iran and Pakistan falls in the southwest zone, which the UN's FAO has identified as among the three flashpoints for locusts swarms. The other two include the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea zone. Of the three, the Horn of Africa has been the most severely hit by locusts swarm attacks to the extent that the FAO has described it as "unprecedented threat to food security and livelihoods". Countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia are among the 17 that have witness locusts attacks in the Horn of Africa. In the Red Sea Zone, locusts have damaged vegetation in Saudi Arabia, Oman and Yemen. In India, oilseed, cumlin and wheat

across nearly 1.7 lakh hectares of farmlands have been affected by locusts' swarms, which come in from Pakistan through the border areas of Rajasthan and Gujarat. Amid Covid-19 pandemic, India's response to natural disasters is expected to be tested again this summer when a giant locust storm from the Horn of Africa is expected to attack farmlands in South Asia, starting from the Horn of Africa and joined by desert locusts from breeding ground en route. One locust stream can travel over a land corridor passing over Yemen, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and India, impacting farmlands in Punjab, Haryana and the Indo-Gangetic plain. But another stream passing over the Indian Ocean can directly attack farms in peninsular India and then head toward Bangladesh. Together, this can cause a serious food security issue. The destructive power of a typical locust swarm, which can vary from less than 1sq.km to several hundred sq.km is enormous as per the websites of FAO. The looming locust attack which could undermine food security in the Afro-Asian region, follows the economic devastation and saving of income by the Covid-19 pandemic. Though, it's almost impossible to exterminate a locust attack, the severity of it can be reduced by destroying egg masses laid by invading swarms. This involves using insecticides bait and spraying insecticides on both the swarms and their breeding grounds. As said, **prevention is better than cure**, so we must prepare now to face another invasion by locusts in our country.

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Virtual Classrooms as a neo-Pedagogy: Deify or Demonise?



By: Mr. Paajakhpup Guite,
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Education sector is no exception to the COVID-19 onslaught. However, thanks to the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as it provides a safety net to the sector against a total collapse. Taking refuge in the ICT, education continues its chain of knowledge dissemination to the people. But, in the backdrop of COVID-19, pedagogy is phenomenally changing its face or orientation. The traditional brick and mortar system of teaching is being tweaked into a novel way of virtual teaching. This new teaching method is being customized and streamlined to suit the developing needs of students without physical contacts between a teacher and students. Simply put, this is called a Virtual Classroom.

Physical to Virtual
Pedagogy has its history. Even a room of four-sided walls, as a centre of learning, has its precedent. Initially, Nature provided open spaces under the shades of a tree. However, the under-tree-learning was not regularised and formalised. In the next dispensation, learning took its venue at closed spaces. Both open and closed space learning were physical. Moreover, they are in presence of both teacher and students; thereby a two-way communication (i.e., teaching and learning) was efficient and effective. Men strived hard to develop tricks and traits so that he could

adapt to forces of Nature, if not complete control over it. He began to exploit natural resources and scientifically processed for various unprecedented inventions since the mid-18th century AD. This process is called Industrial Revolution. Of the many inventions, ICT is a highly sought after technology in this 21st century AD. Therefore, at this critical COVID-19 upheaval, ICT has become the anointed gift of this uncertain modern time as far as communication is concerned.

Job Market Plummets
Ideally, no invention can substitute human beings completely, because human beings and machines always work in silos. At this critical hour of crisis, technology is a sine qua non. Yes, technology does need human resources (HR), but reduces the role of human beings to a great extent.

With technological interventions, the employment rate takes its ugly turn. Teacher employments, both in public and private schools are seeing a record low. To put this into perspective, thousands of teachers in schools, colleges, university, etc. are likely to run the risk of their professions being fired, with no social and financial security left with them. Only a razor-thin percentage of them will be hired to work in tandem with technology. A recorded lecture by just a single teacher has the capacity to reach millions of students in one fell swoop. In such instances, the future of D.E.L.E.D and B.E.d. students is bleak. These students have for years been in serpentine queue to find a place in teaching profession. But to no avail - ends up in a virtual classroom. Moreover, since this mode of pedagogy requires no many teachers, the recruitment procedure must be cumbersome.

At the disposal of technology, a teaching and learning process can reach all four corners of the earth, while conventional teaching has the capacity to reach only the four-sided walls of the room.

Following COVID-19 outbreak that has plunged us into a stringent

lockdown curb; virtual classrooms are mushrooming up in Manipur. The burgeoning online teaching owes its credit to non-State actors, because they work so hard in order to continue with the chain of supply side of education to meet the demands of students. Privately owned firms like Enlightopedia, Youth Explore TV (Learn At Home), Pointrex Educational Solutions Pvt. Ltd. etc. in Manipur are really encouraging at this hard time of COVID-19.

Technological Injustices
Technology has a spatial limitation. Despite high teledensity of the country, India always lives in her villages (not stereotyping). India is the second largest in the world by number of telephone users-both fixed and mobile phone. In rural areas of Manipur, large chunks of tribal populations are still yet to own a smart phone for the entire family. They can barely afford to pay off their children's admission fees. For them, a Smart phone is a nightmare. These *Have-nots* will always fall prey to technological disruptions. This apart, virtual pedagogy has social and political ramifications. In protection of interests of minorities, the Constitution of India under Article 29 (1) says thus: "Any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same". Unfortunately, none of the above mentioned privately owned firms conduct their online teaching in a *lingua franca* that can be understood by all students. Here, especially, rural tribal students of elementary and primary class miss the opportunity of learning in their own mother tongue. Therefore, there is great likelihood that the new system of online teaching ends up in infringing upon the right of minority communities. Even among the *Haves*, the benefits will not be shared evenly. Somewhere or the other, a skewed sharing is bound to

creep in. This is a travesty of justice. **Efficiency and Economics**
Education is a comprehensive term, which imparts all round-developments to students. In a discourse of teaching, efficiency merits attention. Online teaching does not give as much needed education as a conventional classroom teaching and, vice versa. The former is lacking in influencing students in ways like personality development, interaction and the like, while the latter can have a tremendous behavioral and psychological impacts on students. Doubts can be cleared at the moment in the class, hence raised efficiency in teaching and learning. Teacher-student bond will be strengthened. Most of the technological platforms run by private enterprises are prone to profit motives. Besides its operating complexities, a student cannot afford and is forced to be deprived of a learning opportunity. A teacher might not be willing to be employed in this online teaching, given its huge sums of money he earns through private tuition or coaching. In such instances, he may be roped in with a tall promise of high remunerations. The cascading effect will be suffered by students in purchasing online teachings. Hence, there are nuances and subtle differences in online and conventional teachings. State has to involve in this exercise at this moment of COVID-19 pandemic. Private undertakings in this field may be strictly regulated so that no monopoly on education is in the hands of private entities. Kudos to Mr. Th. Radheshyam State Education Minister, Government of Manipur for his proactive initiative in launching the electronic format of comic textbooks for Class II, III, IV and V respectively. This is the mother of invention. This will go a long way even after the pandemic is over. (The views expressed are personal. For any queries: 6009962948; guitepaajakhpup9@gmail.com)