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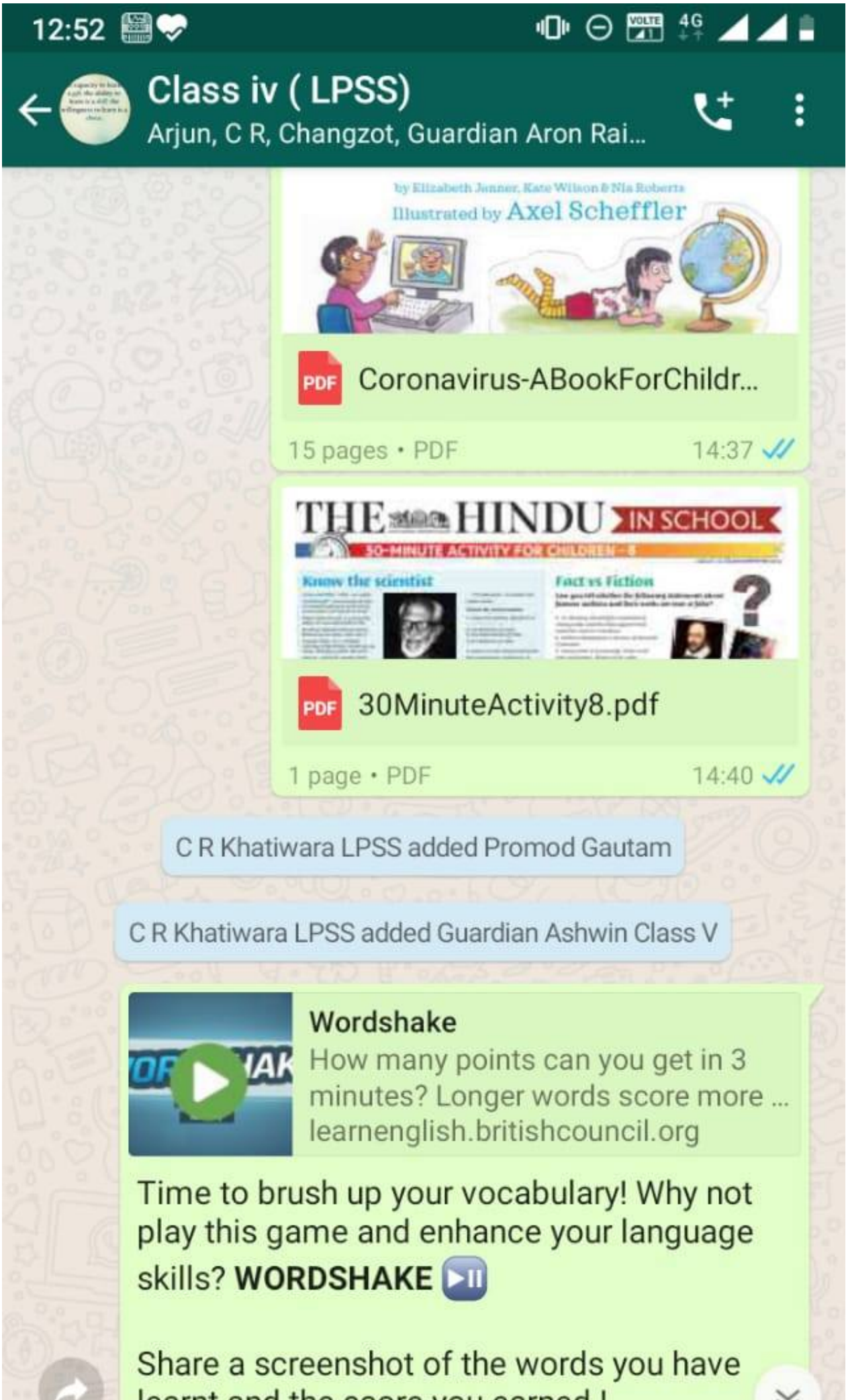🏠 (/home/index)   👤 Sign In (/account/login)

Press Release Details

COVID-19 and how it is transforming the Education Sector in Sikkim

Information & Public Relations Department

Date: 17-Apr-2020

12:52

Class iv (LPSS)
Arjun, C R, Changzot, Guardian Aron Rai...

by Elizabeth Jenner, Kate Wilson & Nia Roberts
Illustrated by Axel Scheffler

PDF Coronavirus-ABookForChildr...

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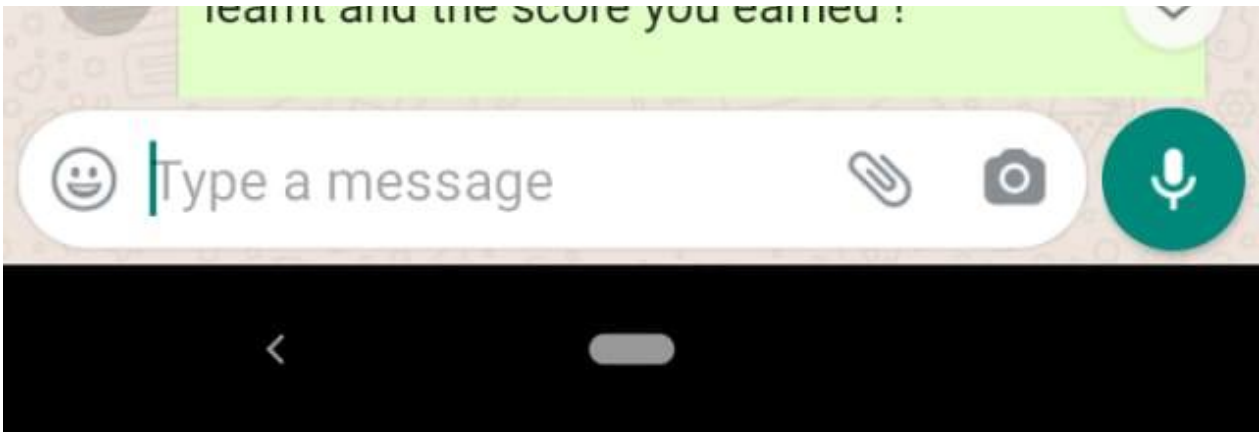C R Khatiwara LPSS added Promod Gautam

C R Khatiwara LPSS added Guardian Ashwin Class V

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The novel coronavirus pandemic is completely altering the way education is imparted, it's challenging the functions of a traditional classroom thereby compelling the Education Department in Sikkim to take an appropriate strategy and embrace along with utilising the different types of media available at the moment. Now it can be safely said that there are two forms of media which is traditional as well as non traditional. Television, Radio and newspapers are the major part of traditional media and non-traditional mostly comprises of digital or new media.

It is pretty admirable of Sikkim's officials in the education department, they are trying to incorporate these traditional and non-traditional media to it's fullest in order to provide an uninterrupted network wherein the students can continue with their lessons. They are conducting classes through platforms such as All India Radio, Cable Television, online platforms like Facebook, applications like ZOOM, Sikkim edutech, WhatsApp and many more. Similarly, in South District these kind of classes has commenced in all the 227 schools including that of Primary, Junior High School, Secondary and Senior Secondary Schools located in the district.

Government Secondary School Lingi Payong

One such school which has consistently tried to make an optimum advantage of e-learning is Government Secondary School Lingi Payong. This school has a total enrolment of 130 students from places such as Kaw, Darakharka, Lower, Middle and Upper Payong. The Facebook page of this school is currently filled with videos, post and messages for online classes, students speaking about awareness, videos of basic hand washing techniques which has been shot and uploaded by school representatives and various other guidelines to avoid the spread of COVID-19.

Headmaster Suraj Kumar Sharma and his army of teachers and staff has played a big role in assisting to develop an e-learning system for the school. For starters class wise WatsApp group for primary classes has been created wherein assignments, feedback are conducted in a coordinated manner. A subject wise WatsApp group for upper primary and secondary level has been fashioned so that the students can get proper attention specifically for subjects such as Mathematics, Science, Nepali and many more. The school also has a Facebook page in which teachers has made and uploaded video lessons as it was evident that a number of parents, guardians and students were listed on the most popular social media page. These educational videos were developed in a bid for the students to comfortably access the study materials. The headmaster, staff and students regularly also uses other digital platforms such as YouTube for learning purpose and other educational applications such as Gurushaalaa and BYJU's. Television, Radio especially AIR Gangtok is also being utilised by the students, they are duly informed about any live classes concerning CBSE and NCERT. Suraj also believes that the teachers should upgrade themselves in terms of educating and with regards to the same they use a variety of online resources like DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing), SWAYAM and many more. While, he maintains that the students should use smartphone and other social media platforms with due supervision from their parents. However, the headmaster has observed that when it comes to e-learning most of the students do not have internet connectivity and equipment's in the form of smartphones, laptops and other apparatus. Interestingly, among parents as well there is a divide as he observed that younger couples had a basic knowledge as how to manoeuvre with a smartphone containing social media platforms and other applications as compared to older aged parents they tend to operate more of radio and television concluding that even the guardians required basic digital literacy so that they could actively take part in

coaching their children. Nevertheless, this kind of approach that the education department is currently adopting is learning centric and will help the students as well as their parents due to the effective use of different types of media.

Speaking, to Sneha Rai a class 10 student of Lingi paiyong school said that they have a subject wise whatsApp group where the subject teacher shares a video of the lesson and if they have any problem with certain lessons or in basic arithmetic problem then they can get back to the teacher and discuss with them. As for homework the subject instructor explains a problem in detail and gives the pupil an assignment they then have to work out the project, take a picture and submit. Sneha also says that she misses school and now that the schools have been closed for valid reason she reminisces her studies, school and classmates which were outside of the current wired world.

Overall it can be said that with changing times our perspective towards education system should also be modified, the stakeholders need to acquire and absorb the newer technology and virtual learning should be promoted. This kind of hosted learning also enables the authorities to practise social distancing amongst the students which is crucial and needed at this hour

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