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and Fr. George Mathew

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How effective is Homework and more



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Editor-in-chief's note



Recently, President Ramnath Kovind tweeted “Happy to experience the evolving Digital Payment culture in our country”, after buying books for his grandchildren from a shop at Shimla.

Digital payments, going cashless and demonetization have been the talk of the town after the government annulled 86% of the country’s currency in November 2016. Since then, every industry, company and individual has been trying to understand and adopt different forms of digital payments. Education represents an extensive sector that could contribute significantly in the making of cashless economy. Last year, the government directed educational institutes to discourage cash payments for fees. CBSE schools have been advised to accept only online and non-cash modes of payment and pay salaries/wages and vendors through digital means.

Increasingly, educational institutions are recognizing the advantages of automating processes to reduce manual labour and paperwork, saving the time and effort of the administration. Moving to digital mechanisms in non-teaching administration activities, improves efficiency and effectiveness allowing the stakeholders to focus on higher value activities, in particular enabling teachers to spend more time on improving learning outcomes in the classroom.

Making schools efficient has always been our single obsessive goal. We have seen many schools around us benefit by going digital this year. Digital payments infrastructure is flexible and can be adapted to each school in its own customisable fashion.

The increasing influence of technology in education is, thus, offering us a glimpse into a gradually evolving realm of unconstrained learning. Today, if we are able to deliver, despite an outmoded education system, imagine what wonders the next generation will accomplish, once it has been trained with advanced methods. Since these systems are witnessing increased adoption with every passing year, we won’t have to wait much longer to see the results.

This month marks the 72nd year of independence. As this rolls, I am reminded of the saying “You have to dream before your dreams can come true.” So, let us dare to dream, dream big and sow seeds for a better tomorrow for our children.

Jai Hind!

Shankar Jambulingam

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SECRET BEHIND NORWAY'S WINTER OLYMPIC SUCCESS

Norway Crushed the Competition at the Winter Olympics. Here Is the Tiny Country's Secret - How they teach sports and fun to kids Norway, a nation made up of only 5.2 million people, but as far as the Winter Olympics goes Norway is on top of the world. Norway has dominated not only PyeongChang 2018, but has also won more medals than any other nation since the first Winter Olympics in 1924 -- with 330 in total according to data compiled by Sports Reference.







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Norway Crushed the Competition at the Winter Olympics. Here Is the Tiny Country's Secret - How they teach sports and fun to kids

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But that's not all. Norway won a staggering 39 medals -- 14 of those being gold in Pyeongchang -- as it topped the overall medal table. It has far more medals than any

other country at the Winter Games. Germany is second; with 30 medals. The United States is currently fourth, with 23 Olympic medals. Norway's final medal tally breaks the record for a single nation at a Winter Olympics set by the U.S. at Vancouver in 2010.

Norway's Olympic success is more impressive when you consider the team's size. While the U.S. sent 242 athletes -- the most in Winter Olympic history -- to PyeongChang, Norway sent just 109. A team with less than half of America's Olympic workforce won almost twice the number of medals.

Born with skis on their feet?

Norway is definitely blessed with many advantages for Winter Olympics dominance, like snow, a

history of excellence in sports like biathlon and cross-country skiing, and free health care, which helps keep young athletic talent in good shape. But is that all?

Secret revealed - Winning by focusing on not winning

However, developing talent is never an easy process -- often children can be pressured by coaches and parents and sometimes fail to realize their early promise.

In Norway, children are encouraged to join local sport clubs to help with their social development but there's strict rules which prevents anyone from keeping score -- no one can be ranked first to last until they turn 13. The motto of the culture is -- We want them to be in sports because they want to be. The focus is on other



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aspects, not the competitive side.

The Nordic nation's focus is to let children create and navigate their own path. The point is to ask what is in a sport for kids. They believe that they have a responsibility to give kids a nice sport to develop and not the other way around – not in the sense that we need so many kids to make a national team.'

Is it really strategic competing?

"It's an organic system because we're doing what we like to do and we're doing it well."

At PyeongChang 2018, Norway has dominated cross-country skiing and won medals in alpine skiing, biathlon, curling, freestyle skiing, ski jumping and speed skating.

Many Team Norway athletes have also competed in more than just one event.

While that can be seen as a strategic way of competing -- and paves way for the country to earn more medals, but the bottom line truth is, this is the most popular sport in Norway. The team admits that they have mastered the sport that they were already in love with, which makes the recruitment process quite easy.

Investment – acting upon a crisis

Despite being the current leader in Winter Olympic medals, there have been times when Norway suffered dismal results -- notably at the Calgary 1988 Winter Olympics. Here, it failed to win even a single gold.

They realized that the sporting systems in the rest of the world were more professionalized. That's when Norway's sporting body restructured and before hosting the Winter Games in Lillehammer in 1994, it established a national elite sports center -- the Olympiatoppen – to train and develop Norway's best athletes. When there was a crisis something had to happen, the authorities explain.

Norway's high standard of living also plays a part in creating world-class athletes, notably in offering free healthcare and education. According to the World

Economic Forum, Norway “is a star performer across almost every one of the OECD’s (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) indicators both for material conditions and quality of life.”

What does this mean?

It means they can follow their interests – a very humanistic approach. As a result, many choose to play sport. This ensures that the athletes are already healthy and well taken care of.

Pressure off

The Norwegians make extra effort to protect their young stars from pressure. The handsome, top-ranked World Cup cross-country skier Johannes Hoesflot Klæbo, for example, was a media and medal favourite before Pyeongchang. Norwegian officials say they went

Norway’s strength lies in its team spirit. The athletes go to eat tacos (a Mexican fast food) together on Friday nights after training, and inflated egos are not tolerated.

out of their way to make sure the 21-year-old skier wasn’t feeling an undue burden.

“That’s an extra level of pressure,” they said. “We don’t discuss medals with them. We don’t go: ‘Tonight the Norwegian people want you to perform.’” However, Klæbo made Norwegians proud: He went out and won two gold medals.

The entire Norway delegation believes that this is the best strategy. They have a common space with

everything from TV screens to jigsaw puzzles where the Olympians are encouraged to not talk about the Olympics. The ski jumpers prepared their team event while playing FIFA matches on PlayStation that kept them up till 3 in the morning and had them sleeping past noon every day. The team believes there have been many good nights up in the social space, thinking about anything else but sports. They’re also firm believers in taking some time off. It worked for the ski-jumping team: The Norwegians skipped the last training session on Sunday before they struck gold on Monday.

On the free days, they are 100% free,” authorities say. “It’s important that in big competitions like the Olympics they can turn off their minds.”

On Tacos night – No jerks allowed

Norway’s strength lies in its team spirit. The athletes go to eat tacos (a Mexican fast food) together on Friday nights after training, and inflated egos are not tolerated. “No jerks allowed!” said Ovrebo, the team’s manager and coach. “There’s no good explanation for why you have to be a jerk to be a good athlete. We just won’t have that kind of thing on our team. That kind of culture develops true leadership.”

So, what’s in it for us?

Think of when you were a kid, playing in your backyard, shooting hoops with an older sibling, Saturday morning games at the playground, playing with your neighbours until the sun went down. Gone are the days when sports were not considered as a main stream career option in India. People (especially parents) were very apprehensive regarding this and not encouraging when kids wanted to be in this field. Sports remain a high risk and high

reward career for people pursuing it. It requires a lot of support from parents to groom their children for a career in sports as it requires identification of the potential at a very early stage.

Tell your child this - a funny thing happens when you play with a love of the game: you play better. When you focus less on results, and more on the process of playing and your love for the game, nerves disappear, the weight of expectations falls away, and the burden of playing for a scholarship ceases to be an issue. We call it “taking the backpack” off. The backpack of all these unnecessary emotions and thoughts comes off and you play free and light and have more fun than you ever thought possible. Just like you played as a little kid in your backyard. Let us encourage our children only in one spirit – FOR THE LOVE OF THE GAME.

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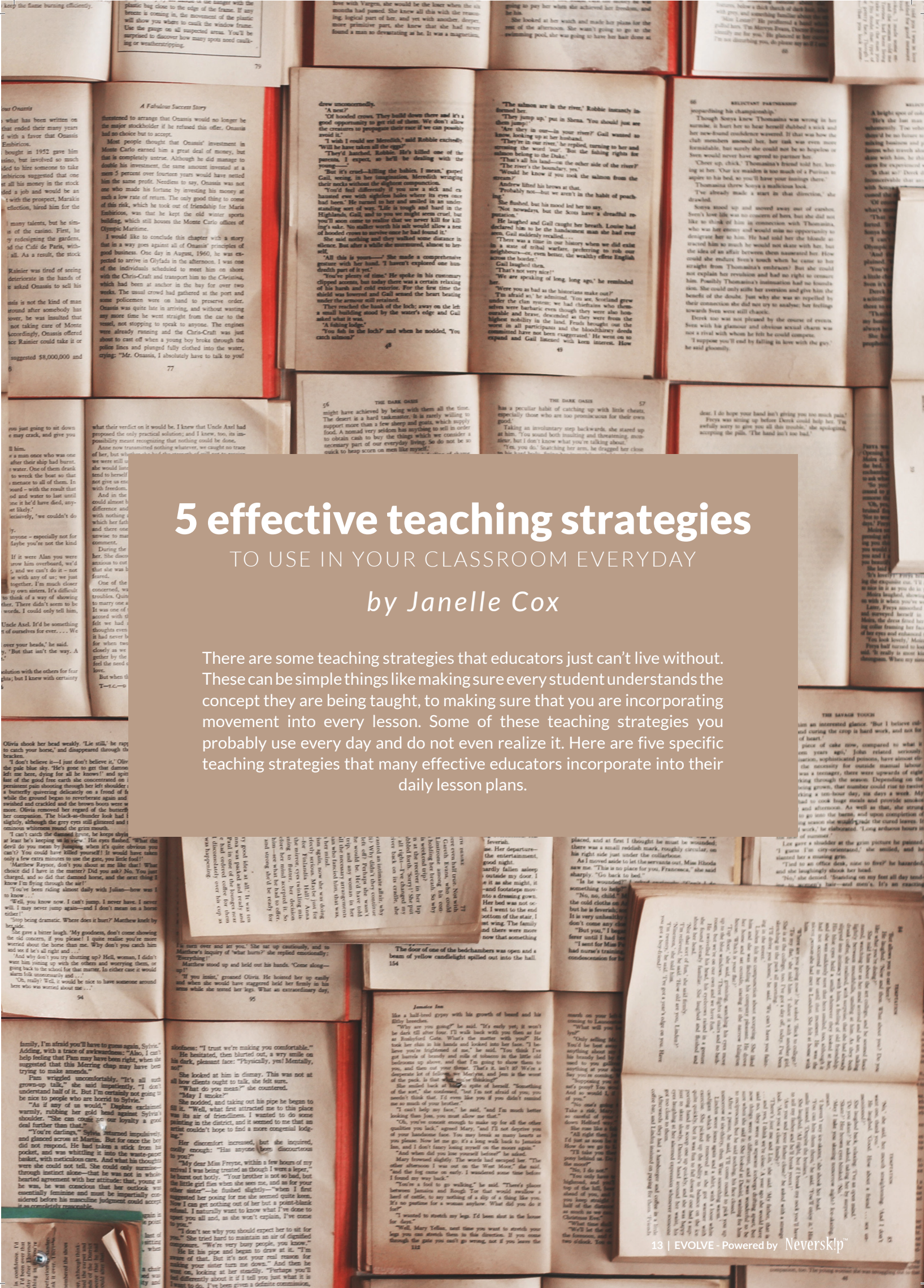
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5 effective teaching strategies to use in your classroom everyday

by Janelle Cox

There are some teaching strategies that educators just can't live without. These can be simple things like making sure every student understands the concept they are being taught, to making sure that you are incorporating movement into every lesson. Some of these teaching strategies you probably use every day and do not even realize it. Here are five specific teaching strategies that many effective educators incorporate into their daily lesson plans.



1. Teaching strategies that make sure students comprehend the information.

It is extremely important to make sure that all students have a firm grasp of the information that is being taught before you move on to the lesson. The last thing that you want to do is to move forward with the lesson with some of your students still in question. An easy way to make sure that all students get it is to give them a red and green card to place on their desk. If they understand and are ready to move on, then they place the green card facing up. If they still do not understand, then they place the red card face up. The students who have their green card facing up can move on to independent practice

and the students who have the red card facing up meet you at the back table for further explanation. These cards will be an interesting take over monotonous 'yes' or 'no' from them. A quick true or false question on the topic and raising the cards to that (Green for True, Red for False) will also prove to be a good tool to gauge the impact of understanding.

2. Implementing Movement into All Lessons

Long gone are the days that students would sit still for lessons. After many studies were conducted on students being sedentary for long periods of time, we now know that we need to incorporate movement to keep children engaged longer.

Effective teachers get their students up and moving and learning by making sure that every lesson has some sort of way students can move their bodies. From rotating learning stations to brain breaks that require students to do yoga poses, educators know that the more their students move, the longer they will stay engaged in their lesson.

3. Constantly Scanning the Classroom

As a teacher, one of your many jobs is to make sure that all of your students are staying on task. This requires you to constantly keep your eye on every child. When you do catch a student who is off task, a simple tap on the shoulder or a glare



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from across the room should suffice. Public humiliation and calling that student's name aloud is unnecessary. It's important to let your students know that when you do these two things, this means they are off task and now it's their job to correct their behaviour. If you have to continue to glare or tap their shoulder, then they will be further repercussions.

4. Students Working with their Peers

An effective way to get children talking is to have them work with their peers. Peer partnering has many benefits, from teaching children socialization skills to participating in activities where students can learn from one another. Working collaboratively with others helps students learn to give and receive feedback, as well

as learn how to evaluate their own learning. A great way to make sure peer partnering works effectively is to teach students how to interact while in the group. Here are a few helpful prompts to keep posted for all students to reference.

- I agree with you because ...
- I disagree with you because ...
- I like what you said about ...
- I would like to add ...
- I heard you say ...

5. Scaffolding Questions

What is scaffolding? In the field of education, the term scaffolding refers to a process in which teachers model or demonstrate how to solve a problem and then step back, offering support as needed. Most of you may not realize it, but when you ask your students

different-levelled questions, you are in fact scaffolding. A great way to make sure that all students are using their higher-order thinking skills is to scaffold the guided practice so that the difficulty will increase with each question. All students start with the same question, but the difficulty gets harder as the questions increase. This is a great strategy to use with all of your students to see where each student may struggle with the concept.

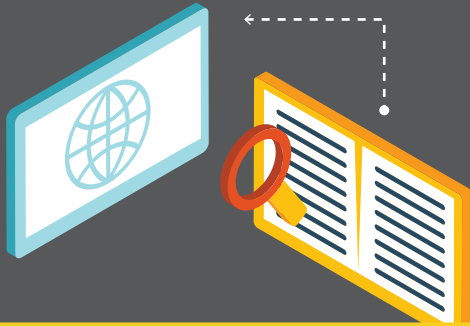
These are just five of many daily teaching strategies effective teachers use to make sure their classroom is a productive one. What are your favourite go-to teaching strategies to use in the classroom?

Please share your favourite daily strategies to xxx@neverskip.com; we would love to hear all about them.

01

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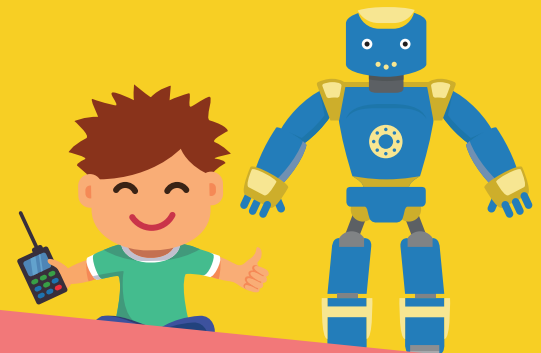
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02

03

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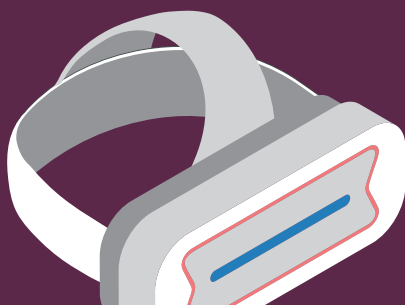
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04

05

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IN CONVERSATION WITH FR. ANTONY RAJ

What are some ways that you connect with your school community?

It basically depends on one's attitude towards this magnificent aura of learning. Every day is a new learning experience or it opens new vistas of utmost possibility to bring changes which really help the teaching-learning process. One must develop a concise methodology to execute one's vision.

2. What are the positive attributes of an effective teacher?

Room for improvement, to listen, to have a proper plan and effective execution of a strategy

3. What safety nets do you have for struggling students?

Identifying at a very early stage, catering to their needs, specific time table or extra time whenever necessary - these are usually provided as early safe net strategies.

“Technology is a very effective tool as it helps to get connected to the world.”

Successively, making them sit together in small groups where children discuss and learn with the able guidance of the teacher. Parents' play a vital role in this scenario – they must augment this process by providing more ideas and information about the likes and dislikes of the child.

4. How do you see technology as a tool to showcase/ provide information about your school?

Technology is a very effective tool as it helps to get connected to the world. Exchange programs, seminars (via tele-conference) are really helpful as it doesn't waste time. Links to the world are made rather fast. Reports and presentations with statistical data have improved the outlook of the school.

5. How would you describe an ideal classroom management style?

To promote, motivate, positive reinforcement and freedom

to express these are principle ingredients of an effective classroom. To allow them to talk, help them ward off inhibition will providing a great experience in class. It should be a comfortable and conducive environment for both the teacher and student.

“To promote, motivate, positive reinforcement and freedom to express these are principle ingredients”

6. What is your take on students not embracing failure?

It is an issue that is found everywhere among the students. They often seem vulnerable and fragile. It is necessary that they be motivated continuously. As a coin

has two sides, the child should be taught that life has twists and turns too.

7. What advice would you give to a new teacher on his or her first year?

Never to only see through only his/her view but also to consider the child's requirements, this will give them a perspective.

8. What are the two things you would never tell a student?

You are a disgrace or you are good for nothing. This will kill the child's spirit forever.

9. What is your advice to parents on media and gadget regulation?

As it's a fast moving, techno-centered world, we better embrace such changes gracefully by making sure the child understands boundaries especially where to start and when to stop.

**N CONVERSATION WITH
FR. GEORGE MATHEW**

What would be your ideal school environment, and how would you encourage that kind of culture?

An ideal school culture would be motivational, positive and healthily competitive. This could attribute to the internal environment and external environment to add by being lush green.

2. What is your philosophy of teaching?

It is difficult to have children be inspired by teachers if they don't practice what they preach. Experiential learning is the best form of learning and that is my philosophy.

3. Could you give us some examples of how you have communicated with

parents of challenging students?

The healthy way to announce this to parents is to gently communicate with them on the child's performance at school. It is necessary not to label the child incapable but promote a healthy conversation between parents and teachers and understand where each of them can contribute in motivating the child to perform better.

4. Your position must require intense time-management. Please give examples of how you organize your day to meet the various demands and commitments required as a school principal.

As popular leaders around the globe do, it is necessary to delegate as much work ahead so people are efficiently performing and deadlines are met on time.

“Experiential learning is the best form of learning and that is my philosophy.”



5. How important is technology for students in effective learning?

Technology is not good to have anymore. It is an integral part of the learning environment. It is growing at a rapid pace and one cannot stay out of the system.

6. If there was one tool you would give to every teacher in this world, what would be it?

A good teacher nowadays needs only a good book and laptop.

7. How would you describe your leadership style?

I am a disciplinarian and humanitarian at the same time.

8. Data is a large part of determining student and teacher success. By partnering with Neverskip how has this improved the success of your school?

Data which is not reported or accessible timely is of no use. We today have accurate and transparent representation of our data which is very helpful.

9. What is your dream for students of tomorrow?

A student, who is happy, has a safe and empowering environment for him/her to nurture their skills – all this leading to a successful future India.

“...It is necessary to delegate as much work ahead so people are efficiently performing and deadlines are met on time.”



HOW EFFECTIVE IS HOMEWORK?

Homework – an eight letter word likely to spark an immediate and impassioned response.

As students, we've all had to do it. We've handed it in on time, late, or not at all (sometimes offering up creative and amusing excuses into the bargain).

Most of you reading this will have set homework, marked it and, at one time or another, questioned whether it's worth the time and effort ... for you and for your students.

It continues to be a hotly debated topic, not just among those in the school community, but in the academic community too.



'The debate about the effectiveness of homework as a tool of learning has continued for more than a century. There have been more than 130 studies published related to the subject and these have reached different and, at times, quite contradictory conclusions,' a report from the Inquiry into the approaches to homework in Victorian schools points out.

The no-homework policy of a second-grade teacher in America went viral a few years ago, earning praise from parents across countries who lament the heavy workload

often assigned to young students. The teacher told parents she would not formally assign any homework this year, asking students instead to eat dinner with their families, play outside and go to bed early.

But the question of how much work children should be doing outside of school remains controversial, and plenty of parents take issue with no-homework policies, worried their kids are losing a potential academic advantage.

If you spend a large chunk of your week helping your children with

their homework, you're not alone. A new global education survey by the UK-based not-for-profit organisation Varkey Foundation has revealed that 95% of Indian parents help their children with their studies. They also devote longer hours to this – nearly 62% of Indian parents spend over 7 hours per week helping their children.

In contrast, parents in developed economies such as Finland, France, Japan and the UK were much less likely to spend time helping their kids, with only 5% spending 7 or more hours a week in Finland.

“Parents with lower income and emerging economies are more likely to spend a significant amount of time with children outside the classroom than those in established economies,” the survey concluded.

In fact, parents in India spent an average of 12 hours a week assisting their children’s education outside the classroom, as compared to the country that ranked the lowest, Japan at 2.6 hours.

The Global Parents survey interviewed 27,830 parents of kids between the ages of 4 and 18 in 29 countries to find out what they thought of their children’s schools and education. Besides India, the countries included Australia, Singapore, Russia, US, China, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia and the UK. In India, 1,000 parents took part in the survey between December 2017 and January 2018. Indian parents were the most optimistic in the world about their children’s school preparing them for the future.

Why homework?

The subject of whether children should have homework at all has been contentious in recent years, with many parents complaining that homework causes stress for both them and their children and interferes with family activities.

Some schools have implemented homework-free weekends; others have done away with it altogether, and some ask their students to read for 20 minutes each evening.

In fact, the culture of homework and its necessity varies by nation, which may help to explain the foundation’s findings about parental involvement.

In Finland, where parents spend only 3.1 hours helping each week,





students only did about three hours of homework each week in 2012, according to the Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation.

In the 1990s, educators and parents became concerned that homework was crowding out social experience, outdoor recreation and creative activities. A decade later, in the 2000s, homework again came back into favour as it came to be viewed as one way to stem a rising tide of mediocrity in Indian education system. Some authorities claim homework is good for children because it helps them learn how to study and manage time. Also, it can foster positive character traits such as independence and responsibility.

Parents can help their children by making sure they have a quiet place to study and all the materials they need, such as stationery, calculator and dictionary. The key is to provide only guidance, not answers.

Proficient academician's tips also stress that parents should not say anything negative about the child's

assignments and not instruct them to do something in a different way.

The importance of family learning

The psychologist and parenting columnist John Rosemond argues against parental assistance except for occasional feedback or answering a rare question. "The operative word is and should always be 'occasional,'" he has written, saying the child needs to understand that she alone is responsible for her schoolwork.

Nearly 1 in 5 parents the Varkey Foundation surveyed said homework is the child's job, not theirs. For some parents, this position is likely a relief.

It is crucial to understand that it's not individual assignments that matter most, but the emphasis on learning that helps children succeed.

If parents struggle with the subject matter, or if homework is assigned "for homework's sake," there isn't much value a parent can add, which is why the schools must focus on continual learning for both parents and students.

The bottom line

We don't think there's a magic number (of hours), but we know that when parents show that they value education and learning and create that academic habit in the home, this can help improve academic achievement.

Parents can show learning is important not only by being interested in a child's homework, but also by making learning part of everyday life, whether in the car, at a supermarket or in the backyard, Cramer said. Homework can be a gathering point for that kind of learning, but what's most important is having a daily habit of learning, which can also just be reading to your child, or having your child read to you.

A good way to think about homework is the way you think about medications or dietary supplements. If you take too little, they'll have no effect. If you take too much, they can kill you. If you take the right amount, you'll get better.

An illustration at the top of the page shows three hands holding different payment methods: a blue credit card, a red credit card, and a smartphone displaying a payment interface. Below this is a large, light blue rectangular box with a dashed border containing the main title. At the bottom of the page, there is another illustration showing two hands holding credit cards, one blue and one black.

Why are Indian schools moving to ONLINE PAYMENT SYSTEMS?

Just think of all the things schools have to collect money for: books, uniforms, stationery, events, school field trips etc.

The sheer amount of time and effort needed from a school management team to handle all these cash payments can be overwhelming. Not to mention the trouble parents have to go to when getting the right amount of money, pick the appropriate challan for a particular category of fees, remembering the correct amount to fill-in, and then reminding kids to actually pass on to the challan to their teacher – the trouble goes on.

For any other kind of organisation around the world, this kind of inefficiency would be unacceptable. Consider the fast paced world we live in, where over half of all our transactions are now carried out without the transfer of cash, there aren't many excuses left for using outdated and frustrating methods of payment.

Going cashless – if not totally then at least partially. Online payments make life easier for schools, parents and students, and the initial setup costs can quickly be recouped by improved efficiency. Efficient onboarding takes less than 24 hours,

the entire existing system can be migrated less than a week's time. Schools that have switched to these cashless payment systems have seen savings of up to 20% in their administration time and costs.

For many parents, the option to pay for school expenses online using a debit, credit card or net banking in the same way they pay for many other bills and purchases would be the ideal solution to the stressful work morning treasure hunt.

Here are some endorsements from popular schools across India using cashless payment systems

01

We are glad that we needn't employ extra security force to manage the crowd on fee payment days which in turn reduces the administrative expense as well. The ROI for installing an online payment system was redeemed in less than one year.

02

The most challenging part was handling multiple challans and directing parents to fill in the correct amount under each fee category. Reconciliation took several days and this reconciled amount would lead to a few lakh rupees and collecting this in turn would be a whole new process.

03

As an accountant, I usually go sleepless for a week during fee collection week. I have a newly found work-life balance and the room for error has tremendously decreased.

04

The application allows us to distribute money to different bank accounts automatically for easy account management. While the parents pay one totalled amount via a single portal, at the backend this allocation is seamlessly handled. Because of this yearend audit process is effortless.

05

Huge sums of cash, counting them with numerous machines, measures to hours and days of mundane work. When transactions happen online, there's always a clear audit trail. In this case it means both school and parents can see exactly what has been paid for when and an immediate receipt is shared with the parent.

This doesn't just improve transparency, but it also makes reporting vastly easier for the school team. Manual Excel reports have become a thing of the past. Information now, can be quickly filtered and acted upon.



A culture change

We are moving into a culture now where banking and financial transactions are carried out electronically. While some schools have to retain options partly for cash payments, it is possible to integrate only a selected part of the entire system seamlessly online. Online fees payments are a proven way of taking hard costs out of the system while bringing added convenience to parents trying to juggle busy lives.

Does your school use an e-payment system? How positive an effect does it have on parents?

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“The use of technology coupled with bold decisions can help India leapfrog into inclusive growth and improve the quality of health and education.” – Bill Gates

With the advent of technology and its surging acceptability in society at large, there is a huge scope to take education to the remotest part of the country, for enhancing awareness and improving understanding.

The statement by the founder of one of the world’s largest technology companies indicates that the use of technology may help India to get placed among top countries of the world in terms of education.

India’s education sector is witnessing the increased use of technology such as Cloud Computing, Artificial Intelligence and Virtual Reality in day-to-day practices related to education sector. The Government is also focusing on greater use of technology as it looks to implement largescale reforms such as Revitalising Infrastructure and Systems in Education (RISE) scheme.

Growth plans

India as a nation is on a growth path in education sector and digitisation is supporting the collective efforts of public and private sector to realise the dream of becoming the education hub of the world. Along with other States of India, educationally backward States are also focusing on improving the education scenario.

The two States – Bihar and Chhattisgarh are adopting the digital educational

practices rapidly. Bihar which may be considered as the educational hub for Eastern and North-Eastern India, Chhattisgarh is gradually gaining popularity as the educational destination for Central India. Educationists opine that the two States are leveraging the technology to improve the education sector from primary to higher level.

How Education Sector Is Leveraging Digital

Do you remember when you last carried a wallet stuffed with cash? Ours is an age where we do not even need to be physically present to complete a purchase. Technology has made our lives simpler by making payments easier. So pervasive has been technology’s impact that even the smallest of businesses today are betting big on tech. So why should the education sector be left behind?

“Going cashless” has become the norm post-demonetization. Virtually every sector has been active in assessing and adopting different forms of digital payments. Sectors like transport, entertainment, and retail have proactively adopted digital payment mechanisms even beyond the traditional credit and debit cards. The education sector, given its sheer size, can also be a huge driver of this cashless economy.

Let’s take a look at some numbers to set this in context. According to data from the Ministry of Human Resource Development



Department of Higher Education, there are approximately 1.3 million schools in India. India also has the world's largest higher education system with over 750 universities. These institutions represent a substantial financial footprint. ASSOCHAM estimates that the average cost of education in India for a single child in a private school is approximately INR1, 25,000 per annum. The expenses for pre-school education are no less, amounting to anywhere from INR 35,000 to INR 75,000 a term. Modern schooling goes well beyond the traditional books and sports and this means schools feel the need to charge many ad-hoc fees as well. Fees for campus development, school picnics, annual events, sports, transport, nutrition, and other extracurricular activities are quite commonplace.

The traditional modes of payments accepted by schools are cash, cheques or demand drafts drawn out in the name of the school. Another alternative is to deposit cash at the school-designated bank branches. These are all quite inconvenient for parents as they need to make a specific trip to complete the payments.

Challenges

The government has been imploring schools to go cashless for a while now. They have issued strict directives to CBSE schools to accept only online or non-cash modes of payments. The NCPCR has recommended to the states a slew of measures like use of digital technology for regulation and collection of school fees.

They have also been asked to make wages and salaries and vendor payments through digital means. The value proposition is clear enough. Apart from the convenience to the fee-paying parents, the adoption of digital payments can help educational institutions address some pressing challenges such as:



High administrative costs to manage fees collections



Use of excel based or file-based systems for calculation of fees and raising fee invoices increases resource burdens, is time-consuming and also prone to errors



Resource intensive, manual and error-prone reconciliations



Lack of a consolidated view of collections versus outstanding



Complexity of reporting



Lack of clarity of financial transactions owing to manual processes

Going Digital to Overcome Challenges

Given that the cost of non-compliance and financial errors can be huge, not just in terms of money but also in terms of social respect and trust, introducing and implementing digital payments should be a priority for this sector. This move would provide transparency, convenience, and efficiency while aiding the cashless economy.

The good news is many schools have adopted technology in other spheres of their operations. Doing away with the excel based or file-

based systems for calculation of fees and raising fee invoices and adopting technology and investing in automated fee management has now become quite feasible. There are several methods in which digital payments can be enabled in the education sector. Parents can make payments using cards, net banking, NEFT or the latest entrants like UPI and BharatQR.

Schools will benefit by investing in automating fee management process. Fee collection is the last leg of the overall fee management. Frictionless digital payments can be beneficial for both schools and

parents as they enable easy, timely payments and make record keeping easier. For schools, this alleviates the burden of chasing payments, makes accounting and compliance easier and more manageable, reduces risks, drives efficiencies, and helps them focus on what matters the most - education.

Digitising education has been imperative keeping in mind the affordability, accessibility, inclusiveness of the large trainable youth population. Technology may be used to reach the diverse population at the remotest corners.





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NEWS CORNER

Integrated Scheme for School Education

On 23 July, the Ministry of Human Resource Development released a press statement saying that the Government of India has launched an Integrated Scheme for School Education- Holistic Education (Samagra Shiksha) that includes three previously Centrally-Sponsored Schemes- Education For All Campaign (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan), the National Secondary Education Campaign (Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan) and the Teacher Education initiative, from 2018-19. This intends to cover all government and government-aided schools from grades 6 to 12, subject to the availability of financial provision

Raghuram Rajan, former RBI Governor on education

According to Raghuram Rajan, former RBI Governor, “India has to think of new ways to improve its education system and come up with its own model of improving quality in education.” Adding to that, he said “The private sector definitely has a major role to play in this, as the government alone will not be able to overcome the huge challenges faced by the education sector”, at an event hosted by Taj Coromandel.

WHO’s research on childhood inequality and immunisation

The study titled ‘Explorations of Inequality: Childhood Immunisation’ was launched by the World Health Organization (WHO) on July 1, 2018. Its aim was to examine how socioeconomic, demographic and geographic factors affect a child’s likelihood of being vaccinated.

NEWS CORNER

“Happiness” a new subject in Delhi schools

Under the aegis of Delhi Government and under the leadership of Education Minister, Mr. Manish Sisodia; Delhi schools have started a new class called “Happiness Class”, where the first half hour of each school day is spent without textbooks, learning through activities, stories and other exercises.

France bans smartphones and tablets in schools

France has passed a legislation which would require students to keep their smart-phones and tablets at home only, or if they are bringing the devices on campus, then they have to turn it off.

Mary Kom on the current status of Indian Sports Education

Indian boxer Mary Kom said that sports education in India is transforming and in the next few years world-class athletes will be produced in the country. The infrastructure has been developed and more facilities are being provided to budding sportspersons in various sports centres across the country and MHRD initiatives will help the sports fraternity, says Mary.

TRAIN PLATFORM SCHOOL

WHERE SCHOOL
GOES TO CHILDREN



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It all began when Inderjit had her own private school for rich children in Bhubaneswar. Sometimes she saw poor children stop outside the school gates. They were dirty and dressed in rags and looked longingly at the pupils in their crisp and clean school uniforms playing in the schoolyard. They themselves had neither the money nor the time to go to school. It was the same all over India, hundreds of thousands of children work on trains and at railway stations. There are lots of people moving around and

opportunities to make money. For these children, the platform schools are their only hope of an education.

When Inderjit used to take the train from the central station, she met many working children of school age. "Why aren't you in school?" Inderjit once asked a little boy who was sweeping the floor in her train carriage. "My father is no more and my mother can't manage without my help," the boy explained. Inderjit knew that many people tried to help poor children in India. But that

help didn't reach the poorest children at the station. They have to follow the train schedules to survive. In rush hour, and when the large express trains come in, the stations fill up with people. And that's when there's money to be earned.

She knew that these children wouldn't let go off their money earning avenues to attend school and without education they would not be able to elevate themselves from poverty. "All children have a right to education,"

thought Inderjit, “but how can these children get to go to school?” She could only think of one solution: “If the children can’t come to the school, we have to bring the school to them. I have to open a school at the station!”

Inderjit’s teaching plan integrated entertainment into the curriculum to attract children’s attention, leading field trips, using simple flashcards to teach reading, and allowing the children to come and go when they need to.

As the Ashoka India puts it, within a few months the platform school had over 100 students sitting within its chalk-drawn boundaries, all absorbed in the song, dance, drama, music and puppetry that was helping make them literate. The idea was to provide basic literacy to them and not to make academicians out of them.

But as Inderjit encountered children pained by hunger, deprived of medical care, or lapsing into drug use, she realized that one cannot educate children who are not healthy enough to learn. Education for these destitute children must be accompanied by a program of medical aid, counselling, basic job training, recreational activities, and for some even shelter. So she integrated these elements as needed into her informal educational centers and expanded into the slums. She also gradually extended her work backward from the platforms to the children in the slums and their families.

She started special training for children who could not continue formal schooling for jobs like home office lunch serving positions (as cooks and delivery boys), hotel work (as laundry men, porters, bellboys, waiters) tailoring, cooking and jobs and other

income-generating schemes for slum children. Additional vocational training programs are refrigeration, plumbing, printing press operators and car repair training.

Inderjit received the National Award for Child Welfare for the years 2003 and 2004. She was elected to the Ashoka Fellowship in 2003 and was awarded the World Children’s Honorary Award, in 2007. Inderjit passed away on 26th October 2010. But the organization she left as her legacy continues to work towards educating children through the train platform schools.



SOURCE: WORLDSCHILDRENSPRIZE.ORG/INDERJIT-KHURANA

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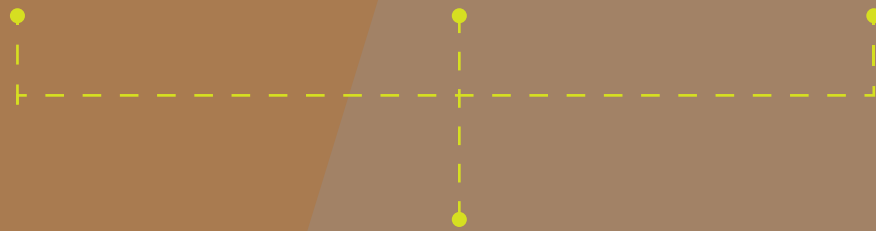
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of our freedom struggle

The remembrance of our freedom struggle involves a lot of nostalgia – romanticized and commemorated by the country as best as possible. The tale of India's struggle for freedom is a feisty one that we have heard of many times. The freedom movement is synonymous with the freedom fighters who were revolutionary in their approaches towards looking at independence. We all know how Mahatma Gandhi, Bhagat Singh, Rani Laxmi Bai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Sukhdev, etc, paved the way of independence for us. But there are a few names which have been lost over the years. Here are some lesser-known but equally valorous leaders who made a mark in history.



Kodi Kaatha Kumaran

In 1932, Kumaran organised a protest march against the British. He was carrying the Indian National Flag, which was banned by the British. This enraged British officials who then began assaulting the protesters, including Kumaran, insisting he put the flag down. Kumaran held on to the Indian Flag even after being repeatedly beaten. He was mortally wounded and even when he fell into a faint before dying, he clung on to the Indian flag ensuring it did not fall to the ground. This incident gained him the title Kodi Kaatha Kumaran – Kumaran, the saviour of the national flag.

Khudiram Bose

Bose was 18 years old, when he was sentenced to death for his role in the country's freedom struggle.

In 1908, Bose was appointed to kill Muzzaffarpur district magistrate Kingsford, the Chief Magistrate of Calcutta Presidency. Kingsford was notorious for inflicting corporal punishment on them. On April 20, 1908, Bose threw a bomb at a carriage, believed to be carrying Kingsford, outside the European club. But the carriage was occupied by the wife and daughter of barrister Pringle Kennedy. Bose, in the meantime, had walked 25 miles and reached Vaini railway station. He was arrested by two officers there and hanged to death on August 11, 1908.





Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay

Married at 20, she was in London when she heard of Mahatma Gandhi's Non-Cooperation Movement in 1923. She promptly returned to India, to join the Seva Dal, a Gandhian organisation set up to promote social uplifting. She was best known for being the driving force behind the renaissance of Indian handicraft, hand loom, and theatre. She also fought for the upliftment of the socio-economic standard of Indian women by pioneering the co-operative movement. In 1926, she met Margaret E. Cousins, the founder of All India Women's Conference (AIWC), and was inspired to run for the Madras Provincial Legislative Assembly. She was also the first Indian woman to be arrested, when she entered the Bombay Stock Exchange to sell packets of salt. She spent close to a year in prison

Matangini Hazra

Born on October 19, 1870 to poor parents, Matangini Hazra had no formal education. She was married early and was widowed at 18. In 1905, Hazra became actively interested in the independence movement. In 1932, she took part in the Civil Disobedience Movement and was arrested for participating in the Dandi March led by Mahatma Gandhi and breaking the Salt Act. A decade later, in 1942, she was a part of the Quit India Movement launched by Gandhiji, asking the British to put an end to their reign in India and leave. Hazra, who was 71 years at the time, led a procession of 6,000 supporters, mostly women volunteers, to take over the Tamluk police station. As she stepped forward, she was shot. She eventually died from bullet wounds.



Peer Ali Khan

Peer Ali Khan was part of the 1857 rebellion against the British. He was born in Muhammadpur, in Azamgarh district of Uttar Pradesh. When he was seven he ran away, and arrived in Patna where he was given shelter and refuge by a zamindar who brought him up along with his son and educated him. Peer opened a book shop in Patna, which became the meeting point for freedom fighters to make plans to overthrow the British. Ali conducted regular campaigns against the British, and became an integral part of the rebellion of 1857. While he was plotting with the soldiers of the Danapur Cantonment, two letters from them fell into British hands. They became aware of Peer Ali's involvement. Ali realised what had happened, planned to attack the British. He collected 50 guns with the help of his co-worker, Maulvi Mehdi and distributed them among his group members. On July 4, 1857, Ali and 33 followers were arrested. Most of them were hanged the next day without a hearing. Peer Ali was brutally tortured and cross-examined. On July 7, he was hanged.



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