

Baptist News

A quarterly news letter of the
COUNCIL OF BAPTIST CHURCHES IN NORTH EAST INDIA

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Editorial



Greetings in the name of Christ from the Council of Baptist Churches in North East India.

In the midst and unabated Covid Pandemic situation, the Lord has been sustaining us and keeping us safe and sound. The pandemic has come and will be there with us but for how long is our concern. Let us pray for the discovery of medicine to treat the covid-19 virus. Because of the pandemic, all our activities and programmes are curtailed and in a stand-still in most cases. There are changes in our working system, for example, physical meeting is replaced by virtual meeting. Movements and travels are restricted. Social mobility is restricted to social distancing. The hand of a 'Good Samaritan' is found short to reach out to people in distress due to pandemic stigmatization and judgemental attitude. Partly due to fear, timidity and lack of rationality.

These are some of the challenges we face today. But we are not dishearten and helpless. Physically, emotionally and relationally disturbed but not out of control. Spiritually under trials and testings but not giving up as long as we hold on the Anchor, that is, Jesus Christ.

As believers of Christ, we are going through this unexpected situation. We feel that we are going through the valley of darkness but

having our faith on God we will rise up, soaring high like the wings of an eagle in God's own time and purpose. Therefore, let us not give-up our hope in the Lord for better days and environment soon.

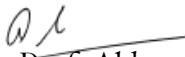
In this 'Baptist News' issue, we have tried to high-light the activities and programmes under the Council. The contributors of articles reflect on the prevalent covid pandemic. Thanks to all our contributors. In the photo sections, special attention is given to the new administrative blocks which is made possible through the generous contributions of Shri Losü Dikho, Honorable Minister of P.H.E. & Stationary & Printing, Govt. of Manipur and his family. The new Administrative block is dedicated to his father, Late Pastor Dikho Mao. May the Lord continue to bless our brother and his family now and always.

The 'Baptist News' issues are for disseminating information and activities of the Council as well as from our denominational partners. In this issue, we have introduced the 'India Baptist Herald' news letter to keep abreast the activities/programmes of our Baptist brothers and sisters in India.

The Lord bless all our readers and please do keep each other in prayer.

Take care and keep safe! Shalom!

Yours in Christ


Rev. Prof. Akheto Sema
General Secretary, CBCNEI

REMINISCING CBCNEI

Interview at CBCNEI Office: During one of the cold winter mornings in February 1996, the then General Secretary of CBCNEI, Rev Dr L. J. Sangma informed me of an interview for the position of Associate General Secretary of the Council. This was unexpected news. After spending 10 years as a Student Chaplain in Shillong, I was content with the students' ministry. So, for the next few weeks, Lucy and I prayed for God's will.

On reaching Guwahati, I went straight to the interview room at the CBCNEI campus. There were five interviewers including Rev Sangma. After few conversations related to the roles and responsibilities of the position, I replied saying, "I'm humbled and feel unworthy to be sitting before all of you. The Lord has blessed the ministry over in Shillong, and I've come to inform you that with deep respect and gratitude I'm declining to take the offer."

Hearing this, Mr O. D. Shira asked, "Dr Pau, tell me what is your vision for your future ministry?" I responded, saying that I have three things on my mind. Firstly, to launch basic missionary training. Secondly, to focus on strengthening family and



Rev Dr. J. M. Ngul Khan Pau
former General Secretary, CBCNEI

marriage and lastly to organize Pastoral refresher course. On this, Mr Shira responded, “CBCNEI is in need of a fresh vision. Pray about it and come to fulfill those visions.” His respond caught my attention. I began to wonder if the Lord had laid these burdens in my heart so that I may be able to fulfill them in the Council. The search committee unanimously said, “Take a month and pray about it. After that, let us know your response.”

As I reflected and searched for God’s leading, my burden for people perishing without encountering the Lord became very heavy in my heart. Looking at the horizon from CBCNEI campus, I saw the Brahmaputra valley and how fertile it was for agriculture. Yet Churches were not growing and multiplying in the same way. During that time, many theological institutions were producing graduates that immediately take up pastoral or leadership role in churches. But, there was still a lack of men and women that were mightily used by the Lord for the transformation of our region. Seeing this situation, I asked the Lord, what I could do for Him. After praying and waiting on the Lord, I heard a confirmation in His voice to take up the position. I responded immediately to the search committee saying, “I will join the Council.”

On April 1, 1996 I joined the office as the Associate General Secretary along with Mr R. K. Raychawdhuri, who joined as the Treasurer designed. As part of the office infrastructure, there were eight typewriters and one desktop computer in the office. Personal computers were still very new at that time. So, the desktop was placed inside an air-condition room. To use it, we had to remove our shoes before entering the room. The office staff treated it as if it was sacred. Fortunately, I returned from the US with a laptop, so I was able to use it for my official work.

Shuttling between Shillong and Guwahati: The purpose of my early induction into the ministry of the Council was to be mentored and work alongside Rev Dr L. J. Sangma until he completed his term. So during April 1996 to January 1997, I would travel back and forth between Guwahati and Shillong to spend the weekends with my family who were still living in Shillong.

Lucy was working at NEICORD as a Project Assistant and our two sons, Daniel and Toshi, were in Class III and KG II. Every Friday afternoon around 4:00 P.M, I would go to Paltan Bazar and buy Meghalaya State Transport bus ticket to return to Shillong. And, every Monday, I would come from Shillong by the first bus and reach Guwahati around 9:00 A.M and head straight to office for devotions.

Morning Devotions: As I look back over the years, one of the joy as a staff of the Council was our time of singing, reading the Bible and praying together. For 12 years, I always made it a necessity to be present in the office for morning devotions. I believe the staff devotional time must have a special place for many of retired CBCNEI workers now. We all have our favorite song or style when it comes to worship.

Recalling her time of the devotion (Late) Miss Kalyani Seal told me that she always treasured the hymn “There shall be shower of blessing.” Rev M. Haokhothong favorite song, given the choice he always choose the revival song, “Revive us again”. Often, Rev L. J. Sangma would recount his struggles as a young man from a poor background. He talked about the “thrills and ills” of serving the Lord. Rev B. N. Ganguly would recount the days when he served the Council as a young clerk under the three General Secretaries and was finally promoted as the Property Secretary because he has proved his credibility.

“Beneath the Cross of Jesus” is a favourite of Mr R. K. Raychawdhuri and Rev Dr Dusanu Venyu’s life scripture verse is Matthew 24:14, “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then, the end will come.”

During the devotions, Rev Taku Longkumer would sing bass with his lively voice and select “O God our help in ages past.” On asking the late B. K. Ghosh what his favorite hymn was, he replied, “Count your blessings name them one by one.” In our staff retreat at the Pastoral Center in Shillong, I was able to share with him that “Jesus is the only way.”

Milton Terang would lead the devotions with his guitar; Rabin Basumatary enjoyed the mass prayer time; Jatin Gogoi was always ready to read a passage from the scripture, if anyone failed to show up, and Biren Saikia, often preached to us during the devotional hour. Meera Areng always had a written note for our sharing and meditation while Musa Chutia would always compare Christian life as vehicle driving or journey. Allen Iswari would always come with two hymns to sing and a Bible passage and Marshal Murmu, who spoke very less except when he had to lead the devotion, was a sincere trustworthy worker. Pawan Bhuyan used to read long passages and make passing comments on the verses.

The staff devotion was a time of committing our concerns to the Lord. More importantly, it was a time of friendship and fellowship. After the devotions, the secretaries would usually stay back to discuss any urgent matters and have a cup of Assam tea. It would be impossible to count how many important matters were resolved over a cup of tea. I treasure those days when we were all in the same page to lead the Council. May His name be glorified.



Introducing the New Mission Secretary, CBCNEI

Brief Resume:

Full Name:

Rev. Paoneikhup Serto (nickname: Boipu)

Parents:

- 1) Late Rev. Romeo Serto (Former Executive Secretary, KRBCA, MBC)
- 2) Mrs. Tinkhochong Serto (Retired Govt. Nurse from JN Hospital, Imphal & former Nursing Superintendent of Kangpokpi Mission Hospital, Manipur)

Siblings:

- 1) Mrs. Stella Sanjenbam (Eldest sister) – School teacher
- 2) Mrs. Irene Hmangte (Second elder sister) – School teacher
- 3) Mrs. Roselyn Karong (Younger sister) – Former W/ Secy., MBC & presently the Junior Pastor, Kom Rem

- Baptist Fellowship Church, Game Village, Imphal
- 4) Mr. Boite Serto, MFS (Younger brother) – Manipur State Civil Service (presently Finance Controller, SSA, Govt. of Manipur)

Marital Status: Married Ms. Ramram Kopo (a Tangkhul tribe) on 06 January, 2017 in MBC Centre Church ministered by Rev. Dr. Jolly Rimai, former Mission Secretary, CBCNEI

Children: Esther Leishiwon Serto, a beautiful daughter born on the 10 December, 2019

Secular & Theological Education:

- 1) Bachelor of Arts (BA) - History honours from Presidency College, Motbung under the Manipur University
- 2) Master of Divinity (M. Div.) from Calcutta Bible College (Graduated in May 1999) under ATA
- 3) Master of Theology (M. Th. in Missiology - ICS) from Torch Trinity Graduate School of Theology, Seoul, South Korea (2006-2008) under ATA – Awarded the Suma Cumlaude

Ministry Experienced:

- 1) Mission Secretary, Kom Rem Baptist Churches Association (KRBCA): 1999 December – 2003 September
- 2) Coordinator, Institute of Community Transformation (ICT) under the Mission Department, MBC: 2004 May – April 2006
- 3) Youth Pastor of the English Ministry, On Chun Ha Church, Anyang City, South Korea: 2007 July – 2009 November
- 4) Youth Pastor/Director, Manipur Baptist Convention Centre Church (MBCCC): January 2010 – December

2013

- 5) Adjunct Faculty of Chil-Chil Baptist Theological Seminary (CCBTS), Manipur: January 2011 till December 2015
- 6) Pastor of the Aimol Baptist Centre Church Imphal (ABCCI): January 2015 till December 2015
- 7) Secretary, Youth & Education, Manipur Baptist Convention (MBC): February 2016 till May 2020
- 8) Presently, he also serves as a member in the Commission on Evangelism, Baptist World Alliance (BWA) for 2020 – 2025 term.

Short Term Training & Other Related Experiences:

- 1) Cross-Cultural Missionary Training (August – November 1999) at the Joshua Vision of India, Secunderabad delegated by the KRBCA
- 2) Haggai Institute, Singapore (October 2001)
- 3) “My Hope India” – Voluntary ministry where I worked from July 2005 till June 2006 as the Manipur trainer and translator of “My Hope India,” which is a Billy Graham Ministry to reach our non-Christian friends and neighbours by inviting them to our home, and sharing our faith in Jesus.

Local Church & Association Affiliation:

Aimol Tampak Baptist Church, Aimol Baptist Association (ABA) affiliated to MBC

Ordination:

Ordained by the Aimol Baptist Association (ABA) on 18 December, 2009 in the MBC Centre Church and administered by (L) Rev. S. K. Hokey, Former General Secretary of MBC





Uniqueness of Christian Healing Ministry

Dr. Bamin Tada, Medical Secretary CBCNEI, Guwahati

SARS-CoV-2, commonly known as COVID-19 Pandemic, originated in Wuhan city of China which was reported to have detected by Chinese doctor on 17 December 2019, spread all over the world like wild fire, affected more than 292 countries. The number of COVID-19 positive cases and death due to COVID-19 are increasing day by day. Taken the toll of few million people across the world and millions of them are infected. In recent memory of medical history, this is one worst Pandemic. The normal health care delivery system of all the countries in the world could not cope up with the disease. Even the most advanced countries are facing unprecedented crisis.

The man kind is struggling to find out suitable medicines and vaccine to contain COVID-19 Pandemic. The COVID-19 Pandemic has halted the entire world system of developmental process and taken the world back steps. Many countries in the world including India will take many years to rebuild and recover the economic lost. It not sure how long COVID-19 Pandemic is going to continue.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has also put normal process of

health delivery system into crisis. India with 1.3 billion populations also going through tremendous hardship in providing normal health care services and also to contains the ever-increasing COVID-19 cases. Nationwide Lockdown clamped from 6pm 24th March 2020, the movement of man, material and all kinds of transportations restriction was imposed. Owing to which Hospitals all over India started to feel less inflow of patients. The patients with non-COVID could not seek medical help. During month of April, May and June 2020 there had massive movements of migrant laborers, which might have facilitated spread of virus.

Today India has touched almost 7 million cases and 1 million death with COVID-19 positivity rate 8.8 which will be the largest in the world and very soon India might emerge as COVID-19 case highest in the world. It has impacted even hospitals across the countries and most of the hospitals in private or government had to be closed or partially closed due to COVID-10 Pandemic. Even in Guwahati city and also many states, because of non-availability of facilities, many non-Covid patients found no place to go for treatment.

During such situation the responds of our CBCNEI Hospitals, Jorhat Christian Medical Centre, Satribari Christian Hospital both in Assam, Tura Christian Hospital, Babupara Christian Hospital both in Meghalaya, Kangpokpi Christian Hospital in Manipur and even Impur in Nagaland are laudable and commendable. The hospitals could not close like other hospital but compel to render services to the poor and needy patients who were running around for health care. That has made our Hospitals unique. The reason is very clear, because all these hospitals are founded in Christian faith by American Mission-

aries way back in 1908. Most of them have crossed 100 years of services to the people of North East India. A few more will be celebration centenary in 4, 5 years time. As Medical Secretary of the council, I was in constant touch with them during Lockdown Time. True to the faith and commitment, our doctors and nurses did not sway away from duties and responsibilities, risking own life. That has exhibited true spirit of Jesus life and teaching of compassion. All I have to tell you is that our CBCNEI Hospitals rendering services almost like normal time. The sick people come to our hospitals with faith and trust.

Ever since Christianity originated with the ministry of Jesus in the 1st century in Roman Province of Judea, Jesus Christ was recognized as Jewish teacher and healer, who proclaimed the imminent Kingdom of God and He was crucified at 30-33AD and resurrected. Christians do belief that God heals people through the power of the Holy Spirit. It associates with various modes of healing. Faith healing is the practice of prayer and gestures such as laying of hands that are believed by some to elicit divine intervention in spiritual and physical healing. It is also called supernatural healing. It is for believers to thinks that the healing of diseases and disability can be brought about by through prayers and faith in Christ. In the Bible, the word heal occurs 40 times. Although, in the Gospel according to Matthew, Mark and Luke, Jesus refuses to give a miraculous sign to prove his authority. In the Gospel of John, Jesus is said to have performed seven miraculous signs that characterize hi ministry, from changing water into wine at the start of his ministry to raising Lazarus from the dead at the end. At the same time, Jesus healed different types of sickness in many occasions such the Leprosy, the blind, the paralyzed, casted out the evil spirit; the bleeding and dead people were raised. There are many

more, mostly unaccountable for the Bible records simply says things like, “And he healed them all”.

The Bible tells us that God can heal, and that when Jesus was on earth, he healed a lot of people. Lord Jesus had the power over death, power over demonic forces, and power over sins. The Bible also states that God cannot change and that Jesus is “*the same yesterday, today and forever*” (Heb 13:8). Therefore, it is clear that Jesus can still heal people, those who believe in Him. At Mount Arbel, Jesus Christ gave His great commission to his disciples. Matthew 28: 19-20 “*Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatever I have commanded you.*”

The Baptist faith do, strongly believe in Trinity- that is God the Father, the Son Jesus and ever presence of Holy spirit. The trinity reflexes three in one. The power of God is immeasurable, and cannot be quantified; because God is Omni Potent, Omni present and Omniscient. Therefore, healing power of God cannot be undermined. The healing power of Jesus do not confined to only healing of physical sickness but healing of mind and soul. Divine healing in power of Lord Jesus Christ has strong elements of an unseen power to heal body, mind and soul. The divine healing offers unique opportunities to expand your consciousness and deepen your knowledge of your reality as a spiritual being having a human experience. In other words, it is called miracle healing. The prerequisite for faith healing is the faith in Lord Jesus Christ and on power of Holy Spirit.

Another dimension of healing is physical healing for which there are sets of professionally trained people who are called medical team comprising of doctors, nurses,

medical technical personnel. The profession involving in healing is also part of Christian ministry. Very often, the importance of healing ministry has been undermined. The concept of Christian evangelical works confined to the church bases activities and at the most other outreach activities. The great deal of the life of Jesus Christ was dedicated to healing the sick. He healed all kinds of people both physically and spiritually. He healed the blind, the paralyzed, the lame, the deaf, Lepers and the lame. He also spiritually healed by forgiving their sins.

Isaiah 53:5 “*But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the Chastisement for our peace was upon Him. And by His strips we are healed*”.

In Jesus Christ our Lord, we see him as:

- (1) A great physical healers of the body
- (2) A great spiritual healers of the soul. 1 Peter 2:24, which plainly attests to Jesus healing out spiritual lives.
- (3) Jesus is the great healers of relationship
- (4) Jesus is the healers of broken hearts and wounded spirit.

Proverbs 18:14

“The human spirit can endure in sickness, but a crushed spirit who can heal it?” Psalm 34:18 “The Lord is near to those who a broken heart and saves such as have a contrite spirit.” Psalm 147:3 “He heals the broken hearted and binds up their wounds. (Psalm 147:3)

5. Jesus is the healers of the weak: Isaiah 41:10 “Fear not for I am with you; be not discouraged, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

6. Jesus is the healer of those who fear: John 14:27 “Peace

I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”

7. Jesus is the healer of the fatherless, the orphan, the widows and the lonely:

2 Corinthian 6:18&2 Samuel 7:14.”I will be a Father to you and you will be my son and daughter, says the Lord Almighty. A father of the fatherless, a defender of Widow is God in His holy habitation. (Psalm 68:5). “I will not leave you orphan; I will come to you.” John 14:18

Those of us who are in the healing ministry, we must serve the humanity as Christ did for the people with great compassion. We need to emulate the healing qualities of Jesus Christ. The most holistic approach of healing ministry is Christ model of healing. Our works in healing ministry is more powerful than preaching in the churches and evangelical crushed. This is because; we not only heal physical sickness but also spiritual, mental and emotional aspect of sick people. Our action reflects Christ’s compassion as action speaks lauder than talking. We need to understand the deeper theological understanding of health and healing, pain and suffering, governance, management, patient care not the least by the pastoral care. Hence segregating physical healing from the rest components of health, such mental, spiritual and social aspect of a sick people is does make total health care. Jesus practiced all the components of the health care. God became flesh and dwelt among us. He communicated and worked through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. The current practice of medical education and the practices of medicine confined to healing of physical sickness, tend to turns a blind eye to the spirited aspects of holistic healing. It is, therefore, high time for us to revisit mission and vision of healing Minis-

try in Christian prospective. During the most trying situation the responds to health care offered by our Christian hospitals are commendable especially our CBCNEI run hospital. Why our hospitals responded to the need of the people is our hospital serves our Lord Jesus Christ as well as our fellow human being. Secondly, our hospitals are not only earning revenue but motto is service to man and God. Thirdly our hospital offer services at lower cost compared to other private hospitals. As we see , due to COVID-19 Pandemic, the resources of many countries have been drained, world economy, education, industries an farming and all aspects of developmental activities has been halted. The disease is most unlikely to go away so soon. Amidst the chaos and confusion with surge COVID-19, the almost health care delivery also faced challenges but our CBCNEI hospitals in six different places responded well in rendering yeoman services. Our doctors, nurses and staffs were sincere enough to maintain the spirit of Mission Hospital. None of our hospital was shut down because of the Lockdown whereas other private hospitals even some of the government hospitals had to close down due to Lockdown. During five month of Lockdown from April 2020 to August 2020, our CBCNEI Hospitals total OPD patients were 25000 and Indoor Patients were almost 7000. Hospitals showed average bed occupancy rate 35 to 55 percent which is quite satisfactory during peak crisis time. If not for God, our services would have broken down but God kept the alive and active. It convinced that if God be with us we face any challenges. I place my record to all our doctors, nurse and staffs for their untiring dedication in the spirit of Christ and His ministry of compassion.

Sl. No.	Name of Hospital	OPD & IP	Apr, 2020	Apr, 2019	May, 2020	May, 2019	Jun, 2020	Jun, 2019	Jul, 2020	Jul, 2019	Aug, 2020	Aug, 2019	Sep, 2020	Sep, 2019	Total	
															2020	2019
1	SCH (A)	OPD	786	1563	1055	2027	1029	1996	975	2310	1264	2186	1450	1521	6559	11603
		IP	208	287	261	335	188	356	207	377	240	345	316	320	1420	2020
2	KCH (B)	OPD	371	366	402	509	401	430	553	443	703	710	869	452	3299	2910
		IP	28	51	40	65	50	45	73	50	63	103	100	44	354	358
3	JCMC	OPD	1459	2483	1990	2351	2301	2418	1760	2757	2377	2651	3039	2190	12926	14850
		IP	287	548	402	519	547	570	322	670	522	598	672	472	2752	3377
4	TCH	OPD	1058	2111	1677	2453	1851	2749	1830	2500	1717	2560	1469	2120	9602	14493
		IP	235	359	282	427	346	502	245	446	338	436	279	400	1725	2570
5	BCH	OPD	36	460	60	631	70	476	38	541	92	430	119	462	415	3000
		IP	6	47	3	70	3	56	4	67	5	41	5	61	26	342
6	ICH	NOT AVAILABLE MONTHWISE														NA
		OPD														
(In 2020)	Total	A+B+C+D+E+F: OPD =	32801											IP	6277	
(In 2019)	Total	A+B+C+D+E+F: OPD =	46856											IP	8667	

Table showing OPD & IP during Peak COVID-19 Pandemic period from 1st April 2020 to 30 September 2020 comparing corresponding period in previous year, impact not very much in our CBCNEI Hospitals.

What make our CBCNEI Hospitals Unique is although our hospitals are very old founded by American Missionaries about 95 – 110 years back, with limited modern facilities, there had been constant patient flow, though the number of patients might have been reduced during active Lockdown period. Our doctors and nurses did not sway away from the responsibility but yet served people with passion in the true spirit of dedications

Since the very nature of the virus and pathogenesis is still yet to be understood fully by the scientific community, proper medicines and vaccine yet to be developed, the disease will continue to be there. In that case Christian hospitals responds should be always available and our hospital will continue to play a pivotal role in health care delivery, especially to the poor and marginalized people. It is learning experiences for our hospitals and has given us ample of opportunity to prepare for better services in comings days. All we need is trusting in God's powerful hand to guide our doctors and nurses, so that can prepare better for future eventuality.

The Christians across the world have to prepare ourselves for all time challenges of any eventuality. We must bring our prayers and supplication; before our Lord Jesus Chris for His Divine Healing and shower with His saving grace. But we as believers in Lord Jesus Christ; must be very firm in faith and prayers. Our hope is in the Rock of all ages and Jesus as the Rock and foundation. Let us all pray together in unison and AMEN.

As Christmas 2020 in the air, I along with my family wish you all Happy Christmas and Joyous New Year 2021.

AMEN



Incorporating Different Types of Prayers for Enriching Worship Service

Dr. Eyingbeni Humtsoe-Nieniu serves at Baptist Theological College, Pfutsero, Nagaland. She is the author of the liturgical book Prayers and Litanies for all Occasions (Delhi: Christian World Imprints, 2017).

I. Introduction

We all know that prayer is a conversation between God and the individual or the community on whose behalf one or more people pray. It is also a way of seeking communion with God in personal as well as corporate level. It plays a crucial role in worship. Different prayers have meaningful significance and could either reflect our understanding of God or play a vital part in shaping the congregant's idea of God. In a typical Baptist worship service, prayers are usually limited to Invocation, Intercession, Offertory and Benediction. Some churches are content with clubbing together different forms, e.g. invocation with Intercession or more at one go. However, there are several other forms of prayers with deep meaning and incorporating them separately at different phases into our worship service could enrich our worship and provide wholesome nourishment to the worshippers.

II. Forms of Prayers and their Significance

The following are some of the forms of their prayers and their importance in brief.

1. Invocation: An opening prayer that signifies

that all our worship begins with God and he is the object of our corporate faith. It said or sung (yes, prayers can be sung too) at the beginning of service or meeting to:

- i. Acknowledge God's majesty and,
- ii. Acknowledge or call upon his presence and blessings in the service.

2. **Thanksgiving:** Prayer that renders recognition of his Providence in every aspect of life; including the sorrows and the joys of life (1Thess 5:18)
3. **Confession:** Prayer declaring one's transgression, whether of omission or commission (Ps. 51). In worship, there is corporate confession of one's collective sinfulness and the admission of needing God's grace of forgiveness in Jesus Christ. It is also a reminder of the need to forgive one another among the worshippers (can be followed by shaking of hands in the congregation to symbolize harmony among the members).
4. **Dedication or Commitment:** It is prayer that expresses a personal or corporate devotion to God, not only in a moment but in everyday living. It usually follows a confession and seeks to forge deeper relationship with God. A renewed effort to live as becoming of the children of God is made in such a prayer.
5. **Litany:** It is a prayer said by the leader and congregation responsively; ensuring that worshippers are not passive but active participants in the worship. The leader/pastor spells out a series of petition and the worshippers respond after each, usually, with same phrases.

For e.g., Leader: We pray almighty God for those

in need of your salvation, Worshipper: And that your name may be glorified;

Leader: We also pray that the poor may be fed and the naked clothed,

Worshipper: And that your name may be glorified;

All: Amen [meaning: ‘so be it’ or ‘we agree’].

6. **(Individual) Supplication:** It is a request for divine favors, which is normally personal. It implores God to fulfil an individual’s concerns. It is an act of our absolute dependence on God for all our needs, worries, and burdens. Having a personal space within a corporate worship is very powerful in reminding the church of God’s concern for the ‘person’ in the crowd.
7. **Intercession:** It is a request for favors for others or on behalf for others or on behalf of others. It is an act of outward focus that pleads god for the interest of other fellow human beings. Intercessory prayers ensure a community growth while imitating Christ’s overflowing love and mercy for the world. It is also an affirmation of the church’s unity and our collective care for the other.
8. **Collect:** Literally means “to gather” the people to focus on worship or to any part in the service, e.g., Holy Communion. There is a structure comprising of –

- i. Address to God
- ii. Petition
- iii. Praise
- iv. Amen

A sample of a collect would look like this: i) Almighty God, who is eternally good ii) help us to know your holy ways and to love others as ourselves iii) so that we may ever reflect your goodness everyday

through Jesus Christ, who was obedient to you even unto death iv) Amen. The collect above is aimed to enable the Communion partakers to remember that any goodness in them is based on the work of Christ. The emphasis of a collect is dependent on the place and time it is said.

- 9. Psalm:** Prayers that refer to a sacred song and/or a poem read in worship or sung with musical accompaniment. Normally, it is normally extracted from the book of Psalms, which contain the praises of God (Ps 150) but also heartfelt laments (Ps 13) and imprecations (Ps 69) that are expressed in exquisite language. It directs the worshipers towards God and also towards their inner battles, particularly as they are caused by external forces of ungodliness and injustices. Praying from the Psalms reconnects us to the Word of God, and guides us to act in faith in all circumstances as did the faithfuls of old.
- 10. Doxology:** A prayer that represents a worshipful expression of praise sung to the Triune God (From Greek: Doxa+logy- ‘word of glory/praise’). A classic example is that of “Praise God from who all blessings flow...” (Thomas Ken, 1674). In many Baptist Churches, it is sung as an offertory prayer as a way of giving back to God a token of all blessings that have flowed down from him, including financial resources and food products. This valuable traditional prayer can never go out of style and it is the worship leader’s duty to ensure that it remains an indispensable element of our worship service.
- 11. Benediction:** A pronouncement of blessing to conclude a worship service or Christian gathering (from Latin: bene ‘well’-diction ‘to speak’). It seeks God’s help and blessing upon the congregants by the pastor/

preacher or any Christian ‘elder’ entrusted with that part. Leaving the service with the blessing of God is a way of continuing our worship beyond the church and onto the world.

III. Right Attitude in Prayer

Keeping the following three theological thoughts in mind before saying any prayer is essential.

1. **The omniscience of God:** Oftentimes, those who pray have the habit of explaining or informing one’s circumstances to god, as if presenting a report. For instance, it is not necessary to give statistics to God of how many people died or are in poverty while praying for peace in Assam. We must approach god with an understanding that God’s knowledge escapes nothing and that he knows each detail of our reality.
2. **The Holiness of God:** St Basil (330-379 CE) rightly calls prayer as “an appeal for good things made to God by devout people”. Since God is holy, those who pray must go to him in holiness. This means that one must be purged from all kinds of malice. It is wrong to presume that we can pray to God anyhow even if that implies using dishonourable languages and making requests that contradict god’s just and holy nature.
3. **The Mercy of God:** In prayer we appeal to God for his favour, which is to say that we live and move by his grace. His mercy alone can grant us the requests and not by any individual or collective merit. Our dependence on his generosity allows us to humble ourselves and to cling more tightly to his grace and yield more fully to his will. The arrogance of presuming that our prayers are answered according

to one's level of righteousness is to deny our imperfection and to discount God's treatment of us in kindness despite our failings (Ps 103:10; Lam 3:22).

IV. Conclusion

The list of prayers above is not necessarily to be followed in order neither is it to be incorporated in its entirety in a service. It can be woven tastefully into the whole service so that worshippers are constantly drawn to intentional moments of encounter with God. As a caution, prayer leaders must intentionally avoid redundancy by not repeating the same form of prayer by different persons in the same service. For example, when the Invocation and Intercession both do confessional prayer it is an unnecessary repetition. It is important that a service planner or leader remind the participant not to repeat what has been prayed for by the earlier participant.

Usually, advance preparation helps to avoid prayer becoming meaningless lengthy utterance and, at times, common sense aided by the Holy Spirit's wisdom, is helpful in discerning which forms will comprise one's public prayer. One must not be afraid to listen to those before him/her and make necessary changes; not for one's sake but for the sake of the worshippers. Words of prayers are important for its transformative effect on the hearer and so must not be uttered thoughtlessly or repeated needlessly. Any conversation with God in public is a serious business and must be well rehearsed and the cause of the community represented with sincerity and utmost respect to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think (Eph 3:20). Amen.



Oriental Theological Seminary, Dimapur, converted into a **Quarantine Center**

By: The Faculty at OTS



As the Government announced a lightning lockdown on March 23, 2020, thousands of Northeasterners, those who were either studying or earning a living in mainland India returned home. Like in other states of the Northeast and as a standard protocol, the Government of Nagaland also made it mandatory for all returnees to undergo a quarantine period of 14 days in government designated quarantine centers, but more centers were designated in Dimapur as it being the entry point for most travelers from other states in India. Poor quality of public healthcare in Nagaland has been a sore point way prior to the outbreak of the global pandemic. Now given the magnitude of the challenge posed by the expected returnees to Nagaland, the state was already reeling under enormous pressure in

setting up sufficient quarantine facility for the thousands of people returning home, let alone the scarcity of resources for testing and treatment of the positive cases.

Weighing the enormous need of the context, Oriental Theological Seminary (OTS) of the Nagaland Baptist Church Council, offered the government of Nagaland its two most significant spaces- the chapel and the administrative complex- to host the returnees for observation under quarantine. Within a fortnight, the Seminary community converted our campus into a hundred bedded institutional quarantine facility. For a little over a month, from 22nd May to 18th June 2020, we took care of 83 persons. The entire OTS community, including 20 stranded students sacrificially took turns round the clock to serve the quarantined inmates at OTS.

The decision to temporarily convert the facility at OTS as a quarantine center is an extraordinary step taken by the seminary community. Given the fear and stigma of the pandemic of Covid- 19, our first challenge was from our well-wishers who termed our decision as impulsive, even foolish. Furthermore, our limited resources (financial,





human, infrastructure) and lack of professional training in managing a pandemic situation offered us many convincing reasons to opt out of this situational calling. We knew that we were risking ourselves, our families, and even the extended members of the community by becoming vulnerable and exposed to the probability of the infection. Despite these risk factors, our faith in God called out loudly to respond and serve our people during this difficult time. The need for faith-based institutions like OTS to serve as transforming agents and become contextually relevant to the changing realities around us has been an ongoing concern. The OTS faculty in particular, have been talking, studying and writing about it, yet often not daring enough to take the leap of actually “doing/living out” our theologies. But when the new reality of COVID-19 hit home, it finally gave us the push to become what we were called out to be – a Christian community open to embrace, engage, support and care for one another. In particular, our decision to convert OTS into a place of refuge, safety and heal-

ing was guided by our Lord's command to, *go and do likewise* (Luke 10:37).

For a small community like ours, responding to such a colossal task provided us experiences of setbacks, challenges and lessons on a daily basis. Moreover, despite the government's efforts in providing needed support their assistance did not add up to half of the requirement for running the quarantine center. The faculty, staff, and our own families solicited help from our personal social circles to provide gloves, masks, sanitizers, toiletries etc. The Churches and villagers from the vicinity of OTS also provided us with vegetables and dry rations on several occasions to aid our food supply. All these acts of generosity boosted the morale of our community and enabled us to see the visible hand of God at work in our midst.

A crisis has the capacity to bring about a defining moment. This is especially true in the case of OTS and her experience of serving as a quarantine center. The world of theology and the lived experiences of people are most often treated in separate compartments. But the current crisis of COVID-19 provided OTS an opportunity to realign herself to the experience of isolation, uncertainty and pain of the people of God, by becoming fully aware and rooted to the reality of suffering caused by the pandemic, being present to respond to the needs of the returnees and journeying deep into their interior world now fragmented as a result of the pandemic. In brief, OTS was able to bridge the gap between taught theology and lived experiences. These are testing times for Christian faith-based communities and we hope that our actions will inspire Christian communities in this part of the world to step forward and reach out to the people beyond the four walls of the church building.





A brief report of LM Students' Ministry

M. Talimoa Ao, Chaplain, Lewis Memorial (LM) Student Ministry

Greetings from LM Student's ministry to all the readers.

The year 2019-2020 academic year starts with 57 students from 33 communities of NE region. But unfortunately the year went through a very tough time due to CAA agitations and the Covid -19 pandemic which affects the student's community and their academic. However, presently they are doing online classes, and by God's grace they are all safe and sound. Hopefully, academic session of 2020-2021 will be fully functioning from the month of October. And here is a brief report of 2019-20 academic session.

ACADEMIC STATUS: 2019-2020

Higher Secondary first year students	=	05
Higher Secondary second year students	=	07
TDC first year students	=	12
TDC second year students	=	06
TDC final year students	=	08
Graphic Design student	=	01
Banking (Coaching) student	=	01
Medical (Coaching) students	=	08
CAT (Coaching) students	=	04
LL.B students	=	04
Ph. D scholar	=	01

2020 FINAL EXAM

7 students appeared HS, and all passed in good positions. 8 Medical and 4 CAT coaching students successfully completed their studies.

8 TDC and 1 LL.B students will be writing final exam starting from October 2020.

PROGRAM AND ACTIVITIES:

1. Fresher's Social
2. Retreat
3. Sports
4. Mission trip

Besides hostel activities and program students were also actively involved and participated in their local Churches and Fellowships program.

Lastly but not the least, I express my thanks to CBNCEI Office on behalf of all the 5 students of LM Student Ministry from granting scholarship a sum of Rs 30,000 /- each. Continue to pray and support LM Student's Ministry for God's glory.





Greetings from Shillong Tyrannus Hall

*Dr. Kansinlung Kamei, Chaplain, Shillong Tyrannus Hall
Shillong*

I bring warm Christian greetings from Shillong Tyrannus Hall (STH) Shillong, in the matchless name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In this page I would like to introduce you about Shillong Tyrannus Hall, CBCNEI Students Ministry. STH has been around for more than 30 years and has been actively involved in shaping the lives of young people for that many years. Tyrannus hall is not just a hostel. It is a home, rather, where young men are trained, disciple and nurtured to be effective people of God able to make a change wherever they go. The main goal of STH is to train and disciple the students in bringing up well qualified scholars and Spirit filled Christian's in our society. We emphasize on well rounded developments of a person physically, mentally, academically and spiritually. To this end, we have vespers, lectures, Library and sports facilities, spiritual events and more. We have had students from all seven states of north east India. The hall is multicultural setting where people from different tribes, cultures and languages come together to live as brothers. This gives students a chance to share the beauty of diversity. For these reasons STH is unique for its unity

and diversities. This is a hostel with a difference and students are trained here to make a difference in the world that they are going to interact. Since its inception STH has made tremendous strides in all fields and is consistently looking forward to greater achievements in producing well qualified scholars with academic excellence.

Yes the Covid 19 pandemic has totally affected the whole world. We are in the trying times. Since all the universities and colleges are closed until further notice due to this pandemic, most of our students have gone home. Only five of them are in the hostel now. Yet, discipleship work is going on for those students residing in the campus. We have four students who will be graduating this year and their 6th semester final exam is due on 7th – 14th October, 2020. For the new students, online classes have begun by 1st September, 2020 for this new academic session 2020-2021. And regarding our Hall, 12 seats are vacant for this new academic session. Out of which eight seats have already filled so far and another four seats are yet to fill. Please do continue to pray for the CBCNEI student's ministry.

Thank you.





Status of White Memorial Students Ministry, CBCNEI (Hostel for girls)

*A Heritage Bungalow of the Baptist women folk in
North East India.*

N.Siria, Chaplain

Built in 1937 by the American Baptist Mission with a generous donation of Rs.50,000/- from a visionary lady called Sarah E.White. A big bungalow was built exclusively for the young college going girls where they can stay safely in Christian environment with proper guidance of moral values and discipline to pursue their career.

Ministry and its objectives:

- Ø This is the only Christian hostel for girls and one of the oldest projects existing in Guwahati city run by CBCNEI.
- Ø Guwahati being the metropolitan city as well as an education hub to the North east, we have so many young immature girls who has come out from their homes and away from parents supervision and finding their way in this city to pursue their education, career and dreams where they are faced with tremendous challenges and distractions from other faith and ever enticing liberal modern worldly living which has a very strong impact in their life. Therefore this hostel ministry was established under the umbrella of CBCNEI with a concern and motive to shelter these young college going girls in order to guide and nurture them with religious instructions, spiritual guidance and educational career counselling for character building and explore opportunities according

to their capabilities.

- Ø Discipleship making is one of the key roles in this ministry. It becomes a part of their daily activity. They are train with Christian doctrines and moral values.
- Ø The ministry also focus on nurturing them to attain spiritual maturity as they go along with their lives in the secular world.
- Ø Providing safe and secure shelter to these young girls, wards off the vulnerabilities and insecure living in rented houses in this big city. Many girls stayed in rented house with no proper guardian which in turn led to many undesirable instances taking place.
- Ø Besides educational and professional career guidance, the ministry endeavour to guide and nurture them to grow spiritually so that they become a mature and responsible person. Accommodating girls from different regions with different cultures and background comes with its own challenges. Therefore, they are encouraged to recognise and respect each other differences and motivate them to come up with the good innovative ideas and qualities so that they bring a life transformation to our NE region.

Past glories:

- Ø Thousands of young girls took shelter in this hostel and achieved their career. They return home with a transform life and with deeper visions and dreams. Many young girls became a successful business women, entrepreneurs, administrators, church ministers, directors, journalists, doctors, engineers etc.
- Ø Twenty, thirty years ago this establishment was the best and finest and the only hostel for girls and to secure a seat was an achievement in itself. Interview day for selection was one of the hardest jobs for the hostel board due to heavy applicants for hostel seats. More than 70% of the students are from high class/aristocrat background.

Present status:

- Ø At present we can accommodate only 43 students due to congestion. The (TDC) three years degree course students have returned from home after lockdown relaxation only to write their final online exam. After their exam 8 students will be leaving for good after October 2020. Due to COVID 19 pandemic, 2020-21 academic year plans is unsuccessful. Regular students as well as new students are still reluctant to return.
- Ø Admission is open for the new academic year. However, due to the prevailing Covid19 Pandemic situation, last date of admission cannot be determined at present.

Facts about the hostel:

- Ø Every academic year boarders come from all over NE states, mostly Tribal. Every year 2 to 3 candidates join the hostel from other faith. By God grace they willingly take part diligently in our spiritual activities without fail. They are more disciplined and well mannered than our Christian girls.
- Ø The hostel is in a prime locations for reputed Institutes like: Cotton College, K.C.Das Commerce College, Pragjyotish, Arya Vidyapeeth, Handique Girls College, Aakash Coaching Paltan and Ullubari, B. Borooah College, S.B.Deora College, and other private coaching centres.

Concern for the hostel:

- Ø Undoubtedly this hostel is one of the finest and the best hostel from its inception till the turn of this 21st century. The building is 83 years now and all its amenities in the building are very old due wear and tear and required an overhaul. Therefore, need of the hour is immediate complete renovation of the building.
- Ø Preserving a historic property and a Heritage Bungalow which was constructed during British Raj will be a feather

in the cap. The foundation is still standing strong which will last for many more years to come.

The Challenge :

Ø Guwahati is now a fast developing metropolitan city. Many institutes, individual and private parties are developing facilities like well furnished house rent, hostels and PG's with all the modern amenities at competitive prices started flourishing in the city. Parent as well as the children looks for better facilities. Therefore in order to compete with others, we need immediate major renovation of this old building and begin planning for better establishment for the future.

My appeal and challenge to all my fellow believers of CBCNEI, especially women folk is that, long ago a single American lady funded to build a big bungalow for us, like wise let us also follow her example and lift up this project for our future generations. By God's grace we are thousand and thousand times more potential today than eighty years ago. Therefore, why not we unite and rebuilt the only existing shelter in this metro city of our region for our girls and daughters today for their tomorrow.

Our best and finest hostel White Memorial Hostel a "Heritage Bungalow" and its properties are in a state of disrepair, growing old and wearing off due to long neglect and it looks like we are still in the 19th century. Come let us join hands once again and lift this mission project for our daughters.

We need your prayer support, suggestion, collective wisdom and financial contribution to uplift this project.

Contact add:

White Memorial Student Ministry (Girls Hostel)

Ph: 9957339613.





A brief sketch on the life of Rev Dr K. Imotemjen Aier

During one of my many meetings and conversations with Shri Chubatemjen, former Minister Nagaland, I expressed my desire and eagerness to meet Rev Dr K. Imotemjen Aier one day if God willing. Shri Chubatemjen is the co-brother in law of Rev Dr K. Imotemjen Aier and he willingly made arrangements for our meeting.

As planned, one day I went along with my son to visit the wonderful family of Rev Dr Aier and were warmly welcomed by his wife Mrs Arenmongla Jamitsur of Ungma village. As we were pleasantly led inside the comfortable sitting room, Dr Aier also joined us from the adjoining room and we warmly shook hands for the first time. After exchanging some pleasantries, he started narrating about many

things that I had never heard of earlier or learnt about and was surprised at his vast knowledge and experience. We continued our discussion over tea & snacks, then after praying together, decided to meet again.

On my second visit, he gave me many invaluable documents and manuscripts collected from different sources. While reading through these, I found him to be a very sincere, sharp and hard-working gentleman. As I learnt more about him, I found him to be an extremely meticulous person, who bestowed everything upon God, and this led me to be even more interested to know further about this man of God. He is truly a God chosen leader for the Nagas and a great man who is immensely blessed by God. Therefore, I decided that I should write an article on him so that others may also be blessed.

Rev Dr K. Imotemjen Aier, son of Kariyongdang Aier and Tsuknungchila was born on 5th May, 1931 at Longjang village. After doing his early schooling in his village, he completed his Matriculation from Mokokchung in 1952. He then went on to study B.Th at the then Jorhat Bible College, presently the Eastern Theological College and later completed B.D at Serampore, Kolkata in 1961. The same year, he began teaching at the Bible School and High School, Impur. From 1963 January, he served as the Field Evangelist and also Chairman of the ABAM Executive Committee. During January and June 1963, he also served as the Acting Executive Secretary ABAM during the absence of Rev Kijung. The same year in the month of December, he married Miss Arenmongla Jamitsur at the Ungma Baptist Church.

After obtaining World Council of Churches Scholarship, he went for further studies at the Colgate Rochester Divinity School, New York (USA) in 1964, and returned to India in 1965 after completion. While serving in Impur

thereafter, upon the request of CBCNEI to ABAM for his services, he began serving as the Associate Executive Secretary, CBCNEI Guwahati. Later on, he continued serving in the CBCNEI as the General Secretary from 1968 to 1988. During these years, there happened a great transformation and revival in North-East India and thus resulted in many new Churches being established under the banner of CBCNEI.

One of the most significant records during his 21 years of service at the CBCNEI was his appointment as the Vice President from India at the Baptist World Alliance. His leadership at the highest pedestal in the white men's world was an achievement not only for the Nagas but Indians as well because Western world began to recognize the importance of CBCNEI at the Baptist International Ministry (BIM). Two major international events were celebrated during his tenure at the CBCNEI – the Centennial celebration of ABAM, Impur in 1972 where more than 40,000 delegates converged together to celebrate the 100 years of Christianity for the Ao-Nagas and Nagaland during which he was also the President of the Centennial Celebration. The second big event was the successful celebration of CBCNEI Sesquicentennial in Dimapur where more than 50,000 gathered to glorify His name.

During his services with the CBCNEI, he also represented and served in the following organizations:

1. North East India Christian Council
2. Baptist Union of India
3. National Christian Council of India
4. Asian Baptist Federation
5. American Baptist Foreign Mission society (the present Baptist International Ministry)
6. Baptist World Alliance
7. Baptist Council of World Nation.

After retirement from CBCNEI, his family was again invited by the Board of International Ministry (BIM) to serve as Missionary to the United States of America. As a Missionary for a couple of years in USA, he preached and travelled all across, reviving the people to Christ where the Churches were decaying. Thereafter, the BIM again commissioned him as India's Residential Cross Cultural Missionary. His family was then based at Balasore Town, Orissa and administered in the BIM Mission fields of Bengal, Orissa, Bihar Baptist Church Association (BOBBCA). The American Baptist Foreign Mission Society which had established these mission fields hundreds of years ago, were unfortunately declining but he successfully introduced great revival to these areas and strengthened the Churches. After his services in these 3 Indian states, and as he was about to go for retirement, the erstwhile Baptist World Alliance, the present BIM, appreciating his sincerity, honesty and hard-work requested him to be the Power of Attorney to BIM properties in India. He said that this assignment was the biggest challenge in his life because he had to protect and preserve all movable and immovable assets of the BIM against all odds, including intimidation, wrong and willful accusations, insults and even court litigations. But with his prayers and strong faith in God, he was successful in the protection of properties worth crores of Rupees for the BIM and for which he was again highly appreciated and respected worldwide.

And after serving God for all his life, he retired from the BIM Power of Attorney in 2018. And at his ripe age of 90 years, he is still physically strong without any major health issues, nor is his clear eye sight, ears, teeth and his mind affected and he is as young and healthy as any able-bodied person. It should be our prayer that our Almighty grants him a long life for the glory of His name and as a

blessing to our people. He is not only a living legend and a very important personality for the Nagas or Indians but a very indispensable figure at the international level of BIM. He is the first person from NEI to reach such a level of recognition, respect and honor, and I would like to request and advice younger generation to emulate and follow his footsteps.

I am sharing this brief account of his life because I believe that we have much to learn from this great leader, and it is high time that we should make efforts to take advice and blessings from him and also acknowledge his selfless contributions.

He and his wife have been blessed with 3 very successful children. Their daughter Dr Limatula is the District Immunization Officer at Mokokchung, son Er Lanusungkum is the Principal System Analyst at the NIC Kohima and youngest son Bendangyanger is a successful businessman at BBA CISCPO, California, USA.

An autobiography of Gods' warrior Rev Dr K. Imotemjen. Aier is being written by renowned author Tiala Imchen, and we hope to learn and benefit much more after the book is released. May God bless you all.



Church's Leaders extends emergency relief, generates awareness - COVID-19 in Northeast region of India



Zeleiangrong Baptist Church's Leaders (ZBA) distributes emergency relief and awareness to poor villages during Covid-19 lockdown, Manipur

The total lockdown in India as a measure to contain the spread of the Corona virus pandemic for months altogether, has adversely affected the lives of many families especially the rural poor in the northeastern part of India. The COVID-19 pandemic has created an uncertain future for several groups of people especially the rural poor, migrant workers and daily wage laborers, due to their limited access to their day-to-day earning activity. Hence, with no other source of income due to the nationwide lockdown, the impacted families are in an increasingly vulnerable situation and subject to hunger, malnutrition, starvation, discrimination and exploitation. The impact of the Corona virus pandemic towards the lives of the weaker section of the larger society becomes a matter of concern for Church Auxiliary for Social Action.

Therefore, regional field office of CASA, Guwahati has reinforced awareness message dissemination with local church's organizations and local government institutions through engaging Church's leaders for promoting the urgency of social distancing, personal hygiene and healthy

behaviors’, protecting and caring for the most vulnerable, encouraging positive parenting, preventing violence against weaker section and reducing stigma and discrimination. With CASA support, more than hundred pastors and other Church’s leaders are disseminating COVID-19 awareness messages through their regular religious preaching at churches in ten districts and twenty blocks of five states in Northeast India. The Church’s leaders have found expressively talked about coughing and sneezing etiquette, social distancing and messages on quarantine and isolation in COVID-19 situation. The Church’s mikes have used for COVID-19 message dissemination in the villages. CASA regional office sent out appeal letters to the Church’s organizations on “Do’s and Don’ts” and the Church’s leaders spread the messages to their respective local Churches across the states.



Phom Baptist Church Association Leaders giving orientation to local Church’s Volunteers for Covid-19 awareness campaign, Nagaland



Assam Baptist Convention-Women leaders creating awareness, Assam

than adult population, this is important that parents play a role in teaching children to wash their hands and helping them cope with stress in COVID-19 situation. The negative impact of this pandemic is pushing more families into poverty and children are at higher risk of violence and exploitation. Under these circumstances, CASA regional field office encourages hundreds of Church-based educational leaders to reach thousands of under-privileged children and their parents for promoting positive parenting, and preventing violence against children and reducing stigma and discrimination.

Therefore, with CASA support, the Church’s leaders extended humanitarian aid to 20,790 families covering villages who are victims of Covid-19 crisis in 162 rural villages across twenty blocks of NE India (*Table-I-*

Below). The primary beneficiaries are widows, differently disabled, daily laborers, stranded migrants and the most marginalized families. The ration kits/items distributed to each family are; Rice-10kg, Pulses-1kg, Mustard Oil-1Litre, Potatoes-2Kg, Onion-2Kg, Salt-1kg, Face Mask, Hygiene Kit containing; Sanitary Napkins, Soaps, Detergent Powder, Phenyl and hand sanitizer etc. In addition, Church's leaders mobilized locally available resources such as food and some amount of cash distributed to daily laborers, orphans, old ages, widows, and physically challenged families. Besides generous humanitarian aid, Church's leaders translated posters and leaflets in their own vernacular as per the World Health Organization (WHO) and Government of India (GOI) guidelines and share to the community for dissemination. They also demonstrated via social media platform to create mass awareness on Corona virus preventive measures and making sure that not only extending relief but also contribute to the prevention of Corona virus in the villages to protect their health and maintain safe social distancing practices.

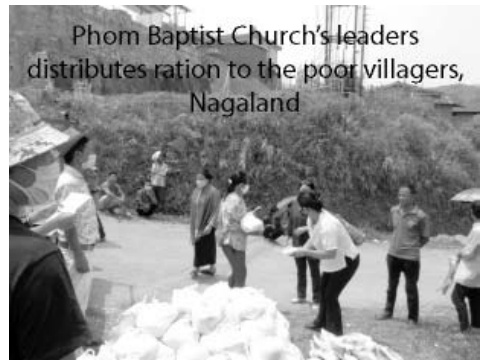
Table-I. CASA supported Church's Organizations in Five States of Northeast

State	Church's Organization	District/s	Block/s	Villages	Families
Assam	Sonitpur Baptist Christian Association	Sonitpur	Chaiduar	7	1750
	Karbi Anglong Baptist Convention	Karbi Anglong	Diphu /Rongheang/ Chinthong/West Karbi Anglong& Amri	17	2850
Manipur	Zeliangrong Baptist Association	Tamenlong	Tousen	7	1238
	Tanrui Baptist Church under Tangkhul Baptist Christian Association	Ukhrul	Ukhrul central	1	202
Meghalaya	KJP Synod Presbyterian Church of India	East/West Khasi Hills	Mawlai/Melim/ Mawlang/Mairang	40	2200
	Garo Baptist Convention	Tura	Gamdegre/Rongram /Gadetasing	30	2400
Mizoram	Relief & Dev Baptist Church of Mizoram	kolasib	kolasib	15	2500
	Social Mission Lairam Jesus Christ Baptist Church	Lawngtlai	Lawngtlai/Bungtlai	15	1700
Nagaland	Pochury Baptist Church Council	Phek	Meluri & wezihu	19	3600
	Phom Baptist Christian Association	Longleng	Longleng	11	2350



tral and State Government), Frontline workers (Doctors, Nurses, Police Forces, Volunteers) and the patients who are suffering from the Covid-19 pandemic. CASA has been working with Church's Council and Association in five States in association with other voluntary or-

ganizations for the wellbeing of the weaker sections especially women and children in the region for the last many years. When social distancing and lock down situation during COVID-19 makes it difficult to reach community with awareness messages, about hundreds of Church's



leaders have stepped up in disseminating information about COVID-19 in the region. Pastors and other Church's leaders are very influential and play a constructive role in communicating people in the region. They can help as the first comforter, teacher and counselor through providing right information and moral motivation in any pandemic situation. Church's leaders are recognize as a positive force that strengthen the capacity of the community and empower the weaker section to respond to the COVID- 19 pandemic with hope and dignity in the Northeast region of India.



Mr. Phungreiso Varu, CASA Regional Field Office, Satribari-Guwahati



RACISM - A THREAT TO PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE: COVID-19

Rev. Dr. Wati Longchar

We have witnessed the police brutality and murders of George Floyd in Minneapolis, followed by the destructive acts of protesters in different parts of the world. According to the UN News, more than 600 rights groups called for an investigation into police violence after the murder of George Floyd. The white Minneapolis police officer, Mr Derek Chauvin, who knelt on George Floyd's neck for almost nine minutes faces charges of second-degree murder and human slaughter. The other three officers have been charged with aiding and abetting murder. Denouncing racism, the UN Human Rights Council President, Elisabeth Tichy-Fisslberger, said that the issue of Floyd's killing is not just one isolated killing in one country, but it goes beyond, and it is a crucial universal concern that needs to be seriously addressed. The British Crime Survey reveals that in 2004, around 87,000 people from black or minority ethnic communities said they had been victims of a racially motivated crime. They had suffered 49,000 violent attacks, with 4,000 being wounded. The practice of racism is indeed sin and crime against humanity.

The gruesome murder of Ahmad Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd and many others reveals how deep the racial mind-set are in our society. This is just one episode, but the black, the indigenous people and many racial minorities have

been facing discrimination, both individually and collectively, for centuries. During the colonial era, millions of Africans were captured, purchased, transported and enslaved in Europe and in North America. They were forced to work in railways construction, sugar plantations, cotton, tobacco, tea, rice and many other plantations, and development works. They were considered as properties and chattels for sale; they were brought to market places and sold along with animals and goods and frequently sold at auctions. If the buyers were not willing to buy, the whole family members were broken up for sale. The slave trade lasted for 400 years. It is said that about 40,000,000 Africans were transported from Africa to the U.S. Dunbar estimated that 900,000 slaves were imported in the sixteenth century, 2,750,000 in the seventeenth century, over 7,000,000 in the eighteenth century, over 4,000,000 in the nineteenth century, and about 15,000,000 in all. Even some of the Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian ministers owned slaves without realizing that it is sin and denial of human rights who are created in God's image.

The slave trade was closely connected with the concept of white superiority. The blacks (and also brown) were considered not fully human beings, but seen as people with lesser brains and not created in the image of God. The white colour is always understood as superior; the black is the colour of inferiority and blackness is a sign of curse from God. The white race is mentally, physically, morally, or culturally superior to other races. It is not only the blacks who were brought as slaves, the white colonizers also assumed that the Native Americans and other indigenous people in different parts of the world were inferior in all human aspects. The Native Americans were merely described as "lying, thieving, murdering savages, pagan in religion, and racially stupid except for their animalistic cunning." Some Europeans thought that because the blacks and indigenous

were pagans, it was the responsibility of the white people to Christianize and civilize them. They thought that they were the chosen by God to teach, dominate, rule over other nations, and that “Africans were destined for perpetual slavery because of the curse of Canaan.” Sadly, the blacks, Asians, and indigenous people lives are still valued less than the white lives. This is what is happening today in the US and other parts of the world.

Many tragic wars and killings have taken place due to racism in many parts of the world. Claiming their racial superiority, Germans slaughtered about 6 million Jews during the Holocaust under Hitler. Asserting the White race as superior, it is sad that about 80 million American Indians were killed and thousands of people were made disabled in the U.S. In Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it is said that about 209 thousand Japanese were killed in a single day when the Americans dropped two atom bombs. In December 1937, Japanese troops massacred 200,000 to 300,000 people in Nanjing, China. Taiwan still remembers the massacre of more than 30,000 Taiwanese on 29 February, 1947 by the Koumintang-led Republic of China Government. The U.S invasion of Iraq has claimed more than 180,000 innocent lives and more than 500,000 soldiers. Sporadic killings have become an everyday affair in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria and many other countries. We can add many more sad stories of genocide and mass destruction that has occurred in the past and happening till today. All the wars are an integral part of racism and economic interest. After the land is conquered, its people have been forced to abandon their mother tongue, culture and religion. The conquerors instill inferiority unto the conquered that they are backward, savage, inferior and demonic. This is called racism. The denial of diversity and prejudice towards others’ races have caused much destruction all over the world.

The Covid-19 pandemic is fuelling discrimination and racist

attacks against Chinese and Asian communities are increasing all over the world. Racial superiority of the white is in the psyche of many people even today. The blacks though are free now; they are still slaves in the eyes of racist whites just because they are blacks. After the outbreak of Covid-19, racial attacks on Asian-Americans and Blacks have testified to that fact. They face not just a pandemic of health, but also a pandemic of hate. Asians are targeted not only in the U.S, but also in Australia and Europe. Many Asians are feeling more vulnerable than ever before on roads, schools, elevators, and market places and even in their own neighbourhood. According to a recent report from the Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council's Stop AAPI Hate, Asian-Americans in California have reported 832 incidents of discrimination in the past three months. Of those, 81 were incidents of assault while 64 were potential civil rights violations. Nation-wide, there have been nearly 20,000 reported incidences of discrimination and hate speech against the Asia and Pacific communities during the crisis (July 21, 2020 report). President Trump continues to call coronavirus as "Chinese Virus" and "Kung Flu" in the press briefings and rallies. Asian-Americans, second-third generations living in the U.S are being asked "to go back to China", "go back to wherever – Asian country you belong to", "you started the corona", "Chinaman, you need to go home", "This f— virus came from your mother country – you nasty as roaches", "take your disease that's ruining our county". Likewise, many have been abused, attacked and many continue to live in fear of being attacked due to the surge of racism against Asian. Similarly, the Australian think tank Per Capita released a survey which shows that 81 percent of the respondents experienced attacks related to the coronavirus, among which 61 percent of the incidents included racist insults and abuse. The words "CHINA = COVID" were found written on the wall of a house on Sunday in a Chinese community in Sydney. Indeed, Covid-19 has

exposed how racism creates violence and divides the people on the basis of race and color.

Coming to Indian context, many people have been experiencing racial discrimination for centuries. Indian society is based on caste system and it is deeply rooted on the practice of pollution. Deenabandhu Manchala, a Dalit scholar, said that, “Having lived in Europe for more than a decade and in the US for the last six years, from my experience, I can say that India is one of the most racist societies in the world.”

India’s caste system is widely acknowledged as the world’s largest systemic violation of human rights, as it continues to deny dignity and justice to over 201 million Dalits – the most discriminated sections of the society. According to India’s National Crime Records Bureau’s 2018 Report, around 42,793 cases of assaults, 821 murders, and 2957 rapes involving Dalits were recorded. In other words, every day 117 Dalits were assaulted, two murdered, and eight women raped. Sadly, the conviction rate is barely 28%. Therefore, as a person from there, I was very sad but not shocked.

The dalits, who are outside of the caste structure, are considered to be the lowliest people and typically associated with the occupations which are regarded as ritually impure, such as those involving waste or carcasses. They are a people traditionally regarded as “untouchable.” Contact with them pollutes the high caste. Socialization and intermarriage are restricted with the higher caste. During the Covid-19, the high caste refused to stay together with dalits in the quarantine centres. Some high caste even refused to eat food cooked by the dalits. In the past, the Dalits were also not allowed to read the scripture. Caste system is also religiously sanctioned; it prescribes the occupation of each caste. Change of function is forbidden in principle to all castes. The dalits are not allowed to enter the temples as their presence would

pollute the sacred places and higher castes. “The Vedas learning was out of bounds for the dalits, the hearing of which was to be punished with pouring molten lead into the ears and the reciting of which to be punished by cutting off the tongue.” Therefore, the caste system is worse, or the same as racism in Indian context.

In the context of caste ridden society like India, adivasi/tribals are looked down upon as inferior and discriminated in many fronts. Many incidents of racial discrimination have been reported against the Northeasterners in many cities, especially in the metro cities. Seeing their mongoloid physical features, the mainlanders called them “corona”, “chinky”, “momo”. This is nothing but hate speech. Some were asked to vacate their rented residence by the landlords, some were not allowed to enter grocery shops, some were denied boarding of public buses, and many were asked to leave the neighbourhood. Many online harassment, filthy language and abusive comments have been reported. Thus, many people continue to live in fear of being abused and attacked. In some cases, with the promise of recruiting in modeling industry and lucrative jobs, many young girls and children have been lured into sex industry and some alleged to be have trafficked to foreign countries. Racism, objectification, commodification of humans go hand and hand. There is no respect for humanity.

Internalization of inferiority of the Blacks and Asians, while the Whites as superior is very strong in our society today. I had the privilege of facilitating Training in Mission (TIM), a youth empowerment program of the Council for World Mission (CWM), both in India and Taiwan. Student attendance is mostly from Asia, Africa and the Caribbean countries. Once I asked them to define “beauty” and their answers were – fair, slim, long hair, long leg, good breast, pointed nose, etc. I told them that they had excluded half of humanity – the black. Once I also posed a question “Slaves

were taken out from Africa”, “True or False”? All TIM students including those from Africa said, “True”. Then, I reversed the quote, “Good and innocent people were forcefully kidnapped from Africa and made into slaves by the white colonizer.” They said the reverse one is right. We have several books entitled From Darkness to Light or From False Religion to True Religion, which depict internalization of racial inferiority of African, Asian, dalit and indigenous people. Racial superiority and inferiority mindset have taken deep root in our way of thinking and perception. It is hard to come out from racial mindset. Racism thus denies justice and perpetuates violence.

The issue of racism/casteism is intentionally promoted by political parties for their vested interest. We see the right-wing populist politicians capturing power in the USA, Eastern Europe, Philippines, Russia, India, China and some countries in Africa and Latin America. All of them advocate the ideologies of hyper-nationalism, cultural and religious conservatism. All those populist political leaders advocate the ideology of protectionism - our country, race, culture, and religion are superior. They even go to the extent of branding other communities/nations as terrorists, killers, criminals, drug pushers and also demonize other religions, particularly Islam. We often hear “India and Nepal are Hindu countries”; “Pakistan, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Iran are Islamic countries”; “Thailand, Myanmar are Buddhist countries”. The “others” are branded as foreign religions and the adherents of other faiths are considered as second-class citizens. We hear the populist leaders speaking racist, sexist and exclusivist language. In India, some politicians have said, “Christians should go back to the West”, and the cow has been made more valuable than a human. The populist politicians try to project that people are poor because of immigration, corruption, and wrong policy of the government. People are jobless because the immigrants have taken over

the jobs, denying the rights of locals. The populist right-wing political leaders project themselves as the “Messiah”. Exploiting and abusing the religious sentiment of the “others”, they project themselves as saviors who will fix all the problems of society. There is a deliberate denial of diversity, freedom of speech, violation of human rights and manipulation of truth on the basis of race, colour, religion and caste (and even on the basis of regions). It is a threat for future humanity.

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Cal. 3:28

In Paul’s theology, the gospel of Jesus transcends all racial barriers. All are the same and they all must be protected and respected. We need to realize that those who attack people on the basis of color/race are striking against God who created all human beings in the image of God. There is a divine presence in each person. They are created by God and that demands respect for their dignity and integrity regardless of colour, ethnicity, national origin, or social status. Following Jesus should transcend our narrow perception of nationalism, regionalism, racism and protectionism. God loves diversity; it is a blessing to humanity. In diversity, we discover God’s richness. Exclusive attitude towards other races is dangerous. It will lead to violence. Such an attitude and action will make our world a place of hatred and mistrust. Recognition of God’s active presence in all life, and respecting and upholding the value of respect, openness, solidarity, caring and loving for others are the foundation of peaceful coexistence.



Is God silent in the Pandemic?

Bishop (Dr) P. R. Parichha, DD

The world is undergoing indescribable crises: economically, socially and politically. There seems to be no sign of containment of Coronavirus pandemic. Covid-19 cases are rapidly rising daily all over the world. Worldwide, 30,406,813 people were infected, and 951,434 people died. Hospitals have become a place of mourning as people die daily. Millions have lost their jobs and do not know where to go and what to do. The future is bleak. Politicians are giving false promises and false hopes. However, the reality is that people have no money, no job, and no food. The economic climate of every country has plunged into a new low, facing a recession, forcing people into insecurity, fear and anxiety.

On the other hand, God's people are praying all over the world, crying unto God for help in terms of security, protection and a better life. In most countries, Church buildings remain closed for almost six months. People are longing to go to church services, but restrictions prevail. All over the world, every Christian household has turned into a home church. We are using modern technologies as never before to communicate with each other. Pastors and Church leaders are trying to reach their congregations through Zoom, whatsapp, Facebook, etc., on Sundays to keep their folks intact.

Where is God, while humanity is suffering beyond description? Why is God silent? Is not God listening to the prayer and cry of His people? Is God not concerned about the suf-

ferings of people around the world? These are the questions bothering millions of minds. What is the Biblical answer? Has there been any moment that God was silent? The answer is very much, YES.

God remained silent for 400 years while people of Israel were suffering slavery under Pharaoh. God remained silent when Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem and destroyed the magnificent temple built by King Solomon and took away the gold, silver and all valuable articles. God remained silent for 400 years between Old Testament and New Testament times until the angel Gabriel was sent to Mary to convey the news that she was going to give birth to Jesus the Saviour of the world. God remained silent when Jesus was hanging on the Cross for the remissions of the sins of the world.

Further, God was silent when Joseph was kept in a pit and was sold to the Midianites and then to Potiphar, a Captain of Pharaoh's guards. God was silent when Joseph was falsely accused and put in prison by Potiphar. God was silent when Shadrach, Meshach, and Obed-nego were cast into the burning fire. God was silent when Daniel was thrown into the lion's den for his religious belief and discipline. It appeared as if everything reached the dead end. However, God has His way. Was it a dead end? Certainly not, they came out victorious. God's silence has a purpose. His ways are not our ways, nor His thoughts, our thoughts. His ways are much higher than ours. It takes enormous patience to wait and see its fulfilment. Isaiah 55:8-9 says, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts".

The Bible says, God remembered the people of Israel and His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, that He has established with them after 400 years. He appeared to Moses in the burning bush, while grazing sheep. In Exodus 3:7-8, the Lord said, "I have seen the affliction of my people which

are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmaster; for I know their sorrow; And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land, and a large, unto the land flowing with milk and honey....”

The Bible teaches that God comes to the rescue when a man reaches his dead end and is in an absolutely helpless condition. After 400 long years, God remembered the fate of the people of Israel in Egypt. God said to Moses, “I have seen the affliction of my people, have heard their cry and know their sorrow”. It is fascinating that God can SEE, HEAR and FEEL. God saw their affliction, heard their cry and felt the situation the children Israel were in Egypt. Then God says, I have come down to deliver and take you to a better place. God’s timing is different from ours. God’s plan is high above ours.

God is not subject to any power on earth. He is sovereign and self-existent. He acts according to His own will, plan and pleasure. In the Coronavirus pandemic people across the world irrespective of nationality, culture, languages and religion are suffering beyond description. Poor and rich, black and white, educated and uneducated, all are on the same boat today. Is God looking at and hearing their cry? God has His timing and ways to act and deliver people from the suffering of the Pandemic. So don’t lose faith in Him. He will indeed act and deliver you and me from this dreadful situation called Coronavirus pandemic. So, let us continue to wait and trust on the God Jehovah the deliverer of Israel. We have no other choice!

Jeremiah 17:7, “Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is”.

Bishop (Dr) P. R. Parichha, DD, is the Founder of India Evangelistic Association and Community Church of India. He is the Former Chairman of India Missions Association.



ARE WE READY?

*#Reopening of Churches
#Discrimination #Racism #Injustice*

Adv Pulotoli Sumi, Assistant to Justice and Peace Secretary

As world engaged in battle with COVID-19 pandemic which emerged in early December, 2019 in Wuhan since then globally corona virus outbreak has infected millions of people and caused death of hundreds of thousands followed by a nationwide lockdown and implementing an initial widespread educational campaign through public service announcements promoting maintaining highly hygiene norms outlined in the guidelines/signage. COVID-19 became a threat to humanity reconstructing rooms for communal maelstrom, and superstitious beliefs. In this crucial time, our brothers and sisters residing in different parts of India were subjected to different kinds of discrimination, humiliation, abused and forced to vacant their houses and jobs. While the virus discriminates against no one. I am now more afraid of my own fellow citizens then I am of corona virus.

ARE WE READY? We, the Church, are called to live biblical principles of Christ, to be the voice in the society against this #discrimination #injustice #racism. We need to serve the purpose for which God has chosen us. Scripture encourages us to take up this task with hope and cour-

age. Deuteronomy 31: 6 says “Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them: for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.”

It is remarkable that even during the time of lockdown the churches were really never closed, even though the buildings were shut down. The body of Christ continued to worship, pray and study together online. With the creativity of God at work through His people, the church went online. Thousands of people were connected, not only needs but reaching out through phone calls to discern and meet the needs of the community. Thus, impacting those who lost their jobs and were unable to pay their rent and procure essentials needs. Church has been a blessing to many during this time. As we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corns 5:7.

Article 25, Constitution of India “Subject to public order, morality and health,... all, persons are equally entitled to the freedom of conscience and the right freely to practice, profess and propagate the religion of one’s choice.” The church has the constitutional right to meet. But it needs to act wisely to be source of blessing rather than jeopardizing the health and well-being of their members and the community at large.

Churches must very cautiously work to maintain the required stipulations such as keeping physical space as restricted. Some places of worship reopened based on the Central Govt. and State Govt. guidelines and some states choose to keep places of worship closed: Maharashtra, Odisha, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Assam, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu.

Every individual has the right to pray in their homes without interference from the State police or administration.

No permission is required from any authority, for assembling and conducting any prayers in one's dwelling place per se, without causing nuisance or disturbance to others and without causing hindrance to the general public of the locality. E.g.: Case against pastor in Indore. In our enthusiastic we should not make foolish steps. Each church pastor should evaluate and examine themselves, asking that "**ARE WE READY?** As we properly prepared, and be able to cope with and adhere to all the requirements mandated? Have we taken every possible action to try and make gathering for worship safe for our congregation.

The guideline very clearly outlined that we have to maintain minimum distance of 6 feet and encourage the churches to run at 1/3 capacity, maintaining highly hygiene norms, with the removal of items that can be shared such as Bibles, hymnals, mats, information sheets, loud singing etc. and not permitting any person with cold, cough or other symptoms at any cost.

As I conclude, my dear fellow being, at this pandemic let us spread Gospel, not germs, hatred, discrimination. As though relaxation is given by the Government but Corona hasn't given relaxation. So be careful and be safe.

And now these remain: faith, hope and love. But greatest of these is love. (1 Corinthians 13:13)





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By Mr. P. Emmanuel Sugyanam; Secretary, Baptist Church, Paravada, Visakhapatnam, A. P.

"COVID-19 AND RECLAIMING OUR INDEGENOUS HERITAGE"

INTRODUCTION

"COVID-19 and Reclaiming Our Indigenous Heritage" is an attempt to lift up the many nuances in this situation, presenting both a call to repentance for casting our lot with the oppressor (both actively and in connivance through remaining silent), and a conviction to affirm identities, histories, cultures of all people. As we pray together and ponder over our role in reclaiming **our** heritage, the heritage of the indigenous people and communities, may God open our eyes and hearts to the 'beauty of divine holiness' manifested in **Sabbath, sustainability** and recognition of **shared heritage of all people, groups, communities and all of creation** (all existentialist core values of indigenous communities) vis-à-vis the sin of insatiable greed and delusions of grandeur.

Bible Reading: Revelation 7:9-10

"After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and people and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

Reflection:

A close reading of the verses opens our eyes to a great multitude representing every tribe, nation, people, language, colour and gender standing before the throne. The multitude is so enormous that it cannot be numbered. Those for whom Christ shed His blood, whom He justifies, called by His grace make up such a number as no human can count. This shows how mighty is God's saving plan that we humans are not in control of who qualifies for that privilege. The multitude here comprising of not only one ethnic race, language, colour etc. But they have come from all corners of the earth making up the body that stood before the Throne of God. The throng of people demonstrates unity; there is no stain of selfishness, discord or distinctions based on caste or class or status. These people showed that they have gotten the victory over those causes that destroyed Unity. All is harmonious amidst diversity, and all gave glory to God. Once strangers, but now they are fellow citizens of the household of God.

They all ascribed Glory to God and the Lamb setting off a crescendo of praise in the heavens. Their praise was accompanied by acknowledgement that "salvation belonged to our God, who sits on the throne and to the Lamb". They who worshipped were robed in white, holding palm branches, this means the righteous multitude have exchanged their filthy rags of selfishness and unrighteousness. They are freed from such guilt and now there is joy. It means victory, triumph, joy of being free and most of all being healed.

The joyous character of the praise and worship finds its fullest expression in their acknowledgement (vs 10). It also reminds us the joyous expressions of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate, who was there daily with a different intention. Upon receiving healing, he began to walk, leap and started praising God, and eventually he was among the worshipping community inside the temple (Acts 3:1-11). Praise and adoration can be experienced in different circumstances; it can be post liberation, or preparation for healing, which can be related to the praise of Jonah from the fish's belly (Jonah 2:9). In fact, it amazes us how in our weakness and helplessness God intervened out of his love to save and heal us (Rom. 5:6).

COVID-19 has exposed our vulnerability and inadequacies. The vulnerability of humans is that richness, power, authority; none could save a person from being infected by the virus. In India, the worst affected were the people whose economy depended on movement, particularly the poor and migrant community. To curb the fast growing COVID-19 pandemic, the Prime Minister on 24th March 2020 declared a 21-day lockdown. The sudden announcement of lockdown brought our country almost to a standstill, triggering massive movements of migrants from cities to their towns and villages. For many, no movement meant no earning, the most affected ones are the daily labourers, workers in small scale private sectors, businesses.

Our country has indeed witnessed tragic and deadly exodus of migrant workers. Let us also not forget that prior to this India was burning with massive violent uprisings protesting the anti-minority Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). This series of events has left the people in the margins wounded, hurt and marred with fear. Also, we cannot ignore the fact that caste hatred and poverty has threatened and marred the existence of the marginalized. Hence, it is anticipated that these aided by the ongoing virus will valorize the very idea and practice of segregation.

While the virus does not discriminate, nor differentiate between race, nationality, or ethnicity, it is evident that stigma does. A cure may come for the virus, but the hurt caused by stigma stays on. More than the virus, people fear stigma, hunger, harassment. Another challenging aspect is food insecurity, economic, social, and psychological crises. Such experience during the time of heightened anxiety and fear can take significant tolls on mental and spiritual health.

What the Christian Community, the Church, can do is to become innovative by initiating recovery programs, with an emphasis on sustainability and engage with the people affected. Post COVID-19 will be so different that churches should be prepared to play a crucial role in its service to the suffering people and community. In this situation, the church must serve as a beacon of hope and compassion. It must redefine and reposition its role in a changing context.

In such uncertain times, the societal upheaval, the threat of poverty, sickness and death naturally leads to fear. In situations like these, one of the best things we can do is remember just how great, strong and mighty, faithful and compassionate our God truly is. Corona must have affected many, yet amid such troubles let our fortitude, faith and hope in God's unwavering assurance give us the encouragement to find reasons to glorify God.

The liberating message is that struggles, and difficulties are part of our life. The present COVID-19 situation in which, we are bombarded with distressing news reports may create anxiety and worry for the future and our well-being. But it is important to remember and be assured that God who is seated on the throne, the one who created us and gave his Son for the salvation of the world, will not leave us and he cares about our challenges and struggles. With that faith and hope, let us journey together as one united in Christ.

EAST INDIA

By Ms. Soma Chakraborty with Rev. Sukamal Mohapatra

WEST BENGAL

- a) The total COVID-19 positive cases stand at 1,93,754 and death toll at 3073
- b) In the Rural churches, the ministry among the youth and children are very much affected due to this pandemic situation.
- c) In the rural areas, children are not able to match up with the present education system due to the lack of electronic devices, disrupting their course and exams.
- d) Private schools have issued notice to clear the school fees but, parents are expecting the state government to issue relaxation in fee payments as it will help reduce financial burden for them.
- e) Terror networks spread their tentacles across borders, threatening peace and stability. Children are worst affected as they live with a looming sense of fear and uncertainty and are often deprived of their right to education.

- f) Small church fellowships have started opening and conducting services maintaining social distance and proper sanitisation.
- g) Churches are also helping in the distribution of dry ration to the slum dwellers in the city and rural population.
- h) Churches are coming up with food being served to numerous people like beggars, widows, poor and elderly, and in some locations grocery items are also being distributed among those who struggle to make their ends meet.
- i) Amid COVID-19 crisis that has rendered many jobless, across the world and led to spurt in human trafficking, the Border Security Force (BSF) at India-Bangladesh border turned 'saviour' for 17 people being trafficked to India with lucrative job offers. Of the 17 Bangladeshis rescued by the alert BSF troops, 10 were women, seven men and 2 children - including one female child. Eight of these Bangladeshis were held while entering Indian territory.

JHARKHAND

- a) Religious fanatics use Facebook to defame and falsely accuse pastors in Jharkhand.
- b) The believers in rural churches, who depended on the daily wages, are finding it difficult to manage their livelihood.
- c) The lockdown measures are forcing millions of households into poverty and contributing to a long-running tragedy: farmer suicides, farm bankruptcies and debts have increased.
- d) The total positive cases stand at 60460 and death toll at 542

CHHATTISGARH

- a) There are reports of a Christian family from Chhattisgarh state of India being harassed, beaten, excommunicated. Their house has been vandalized twice and false complaints have been filed again them.
- b) The total positive cases stand at 61763 and death toll at 539.

ODISHA

- a) According to reports, a few more believers of Orissa are added to the Positive Cases of COVID-19 and now they are under treatment at their respective homes.
- b) This week one believer from Cuttack has succumbed to COVID-19. Pray for his family.
- c) Church services in church buildings in Orissa are restricted. In the urban churches they are organizing online services, but in the rural areas only family prayers are arranged by the pastors and church leaders.
- d) The believers of rural churches who depended on daily wages are not finding any jobs in their area and are finding it very difficult to manage their livelihood.
- e) After finding no work in their areas, twenty-five youths in Mayurbhanj district of Orissa have gone to Chennai for their livelihood.
- f) Over 1,800 of them today started their journey back to their workplaces in Gujarat and Chhattisgarh after Indian Railway decided to run five special trains for them.
- g) In Berhampur town of Ganjam district, a COVID-19 hotspot till last month, over 1,400 migrant workers queued up to board the Khurda Road-Ahmedabad express.
- h) The total number of COVID-19 positive cases in Orissa surged to 1,50,807 and 679 have died. At present there is a regular hike of about 4000 cases in the state. Khurda, Ganjam, Jharsuguda, Cuttack, Bhadrak, Balasore, Puri, Kandhamal, Sundargarh and Rayagada districts of Orissa are the main hotspot districts.
- i) The incessant rainfall and consequential floods during the last week of August have caused extensive damage to the standing crops in the coastal belt of Odisha. Chief minister Naveen Patnaik on Friday announced a special package of Rs 300 crore livelihood support for the farmers affected by recent floods.

BIHAR

- a) Total number of corona patients in Bihar rose to 1,56,866 and 808 have succumbed to the virus. Patna, Gaya, Nalanda, Gopalganj, Muzaffarpur, West Champaran and Madhubani districts are the most affected districts of the state and from these districts the maximum positive cases are coming.

- b) In the "Unlock 4" also the restriction on the religious activities is still in force in the state. But in rural areas, the believers assemble group wise to have spiritual fellowship.
- c) All the schools, colleges and other educational institutions will remain closed till September 30.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray for the healing of those who are affected by the virus and are under treatment.
2. Pray for grieving families who have lost their loved ones to the coronavirus. Even as their hearts are breaking, pray they would experience the comfort of the Holy Spirit.
3. Pray for all the pastors and their families that God may provide all their needs and protect them from this Corona virus. Pray for the protection of all the believers and their family members.
4. Since in many places, church services have not resumed physically, pray for the spiritual life and growth of believers. Pray that God will raise up men and women who will be faithful in praying daily for our nation and for the church. Pray for ourselves, that each of us would be a warrior.
5. Pray for the believers who are persecuted for their faith. Pray for the protection of Christians. Pray that the police, the judiciary and the public will stand up for the minority rights and constitutional rights of all Christians.

WEST INDIA

By Rev. John Christopher; Maharashtra Baptist Society

As we praise our Almighty God for His continual favour, grace, presence and protection upon us as an organization, in the midst of the rising cases in the state of Maharashtra, we would like to share some prayer requests from the different districts of Maharashtra.

Prayers for God's healing touch on our Missionaries serving the Lord in villages

Parbhani: Pastor Lahu Dahiphale, is a first-generation Christian from the Vanjare people group and serving the Lord in the district of Parbhani, which is a part of Central Maharashtra. In December 2013, he was badly beaten by some religion fanatics after he finished a worship service in his house with some of the new believers in the village called Gangakhed. By the grace of God, he recovered and we requested him to shift from the village in Gangakhed and come to the town of Parbhani. Here, God in His own providence, gave him a piece of land, where he has built a house with tin-sheets and is serving the Lord in the nearby villages.

Recently, he had some problems with his eye sight and consulted a doctor who advised an MRI, which showed that the nerve that is connected with the eye sight is causing problem and so he has been given medicines.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. *Kindly keep Pastor Lahu Dahiphale in your prayers.*
2. *Continue to pray for the Vanjare people group, among whom Pastor Lahu Dahiphale is ministering God's word, this is a very challenging group, resistant to accepting the Gospel.*

Raigarh: As mentioned in our last report regarding Pastor Ramesh Tukaram Pol, serving the Lord in a village called Morbhe, kindly uphold Br. Ramesh T Pol also in your prayers, as he has hurt his leg and the x-ray shows a fracture, for which the doctors have advised surgery. Br. Ramesh T Pol, believes that God would touch him and heal him. Even with in this condition, and with his polio problem, he continues to serve the Lord, going to different villages and sharing the love of Christ.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. *Continue to keep Pastor Ramesh Tukaram Pol's health in your prayers.*
2. *Also do pray for the Kathkari Tribal people group among whom Pastor. Ramesh T Pol is ministering God's Word. These Kathkari's are the most oppressed people group by the high caste people. They are mainly laborers either in someone else's field or in the brick kilns.*

Prayers for God's word to reach to many more people in Western India

Nandurbar: This is the Northern most district of Maharashtra bordering Gujarat. Our missionary Pastor Amarsing Vasave, is ministering God's word among the Vasave people group. The Vasave people are a tribal Adivasi group who have a mixture of Maharashtra and Gujarat in their culture and language. Pastor Amarsing V is also a first generation Christian from this group and is now serving the Lord among his own people, in a village called Laboni in this district of Maharashtra. Recently during heavy storms and rains, the roof of his house was blown away and the whole house was inundated by the rain and flooded.

By God's grace, we were able to give him the required expenses to fix the roof of his house.

Do keep Pastor Amarsing Vasave in your prayers as he serves the Lord in this part of the state of Maharashtra.

Mumbai: Continue to uphold the churches in the slums of Mumbai, as we fight the rising number of COVID-19 cases. Churches in Mumbai continue to remain closed through the month of September. Churches continue to meet virtually and our pastors are in touch with the members online through phone and social media.

All our Day Care Centers and Tailoring Classes for the children and women in the slums have also come to a standstill.

We continue to support those in need and network with organizations in helping those in need of provisions and health aides in the different slums of Mumbai.

The Lord has led us as Maharashtra Baptist Society to support the independent pastors serving the Lord faithfully in the state of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Rajasthan. So we have been able to conduct regular Church Based Theological classes for these independent pastors for the past 3 years. We have seen a great change in the teaching and preaching of these independent pastors and many people are coming to know the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

These independent pastors have been able to also train and disciple leaders in the different places of these 3 states in Western India.

As we work in collaboration with Operation Agape in giving the BILD training to these pastors, we are thankful to God for using us as instruments in His Kingdom for His name glory.

Continue to uphold the ministry of the Lord through MBS in reaching to all the Western States of India, with the Gospel and bring many more to the Kingdom of God.

NORTH EAST INDIA

- Reports compiled by Monjison Teron (Assam), Associate Director, IMCC Youth Forum.

ASSAM:

With a total detection of 1292 fresh COVID-19 cases in the state, Assam's overall tally rose to 1,42,763 on Sunday. Of the new cases, 422 cases were reported from Kamrup (Metro), 134 from Jorhat and 107 from Lakhimpur.



MIZORAM:

Total Case - 1428,
Discharged - 830

Active Case - 598
Death - 0

Mizoram with a population of around 1.12 million, has not recorded a single death among more than 1400 coronavirus infections till today. "What we have achieved is the result of a concerted effort from all corners of the state, whether it is governmental, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or church-based organizations," said Dr. Pachuau Lalmalsawma, the spokesman and state nodal officer for COVID-19. Dr. B.D. Chakma, the member of Mizoram State Legislative Assembly, is one of the newly tested positives.

International borders are currently sealed and those coming in via the state borders are being tested with rapid antigen test kits.

Churches come to government help in offering their halls as COVID Care Centres:

Amid the shortage of hospitals in Aizawl, two local Presbyterian churches and a Young Mizo Association (YMA) branch have come to the help of the government in offering their halls to be used as COVID-19 care centers (CCC) where the infected people will be treated. The Tuikhuahtlang and Venghnual Presbyterian churches have offered their halls to be used as CCC at a time when the government is facing a shortage of facilities.

Apart from them, Electric Veng YMA branch has also donated their hall to be used as CCC. "The church leaders, community leaders and the people as a whole are very open-hearted to help the government. They set a good example in helping the government in time of needs," a leader said. The leader also said that they have urged churches through a church committee, Mizoram Kohran Hruaitute Committee (MKHC), to offer their halls as COVID-19 Care Centres as the government was facing facility crunch especially in Aizawl.

TRIPURA:

(From IBH Correspondence)

In view of the deteriorating situation of COVID-19 in the state, the Hon'ble High Court of Tripura considered suo-moto to register a public interest litigation [WP(C)(PIL) No. 09 of 2020] taking into account of the reported news in the local dailies on certain shortcomings in public healthcare system towards management of COVID-19 patients and also taking account of the concern of number of deaths to novel corona virus on the rise in the state. The Hon'ble High Court of Tripura has served a notice on 11/09/2020 to the State Government for submission of affidavit on certain listed issues in the court on 18th September, 2020 to make inquiries from the Government with respect to the issues revolving around the handling of corona virus spread in the State and more particularly of providing health care to those who are tested positive.

Meanwhile, as requested by the State Government, a three-member Medical Team from the Central Government is on tour in the state from 12th September, 2020 to assist and suggest the state government the means and ways of management for combating the deteriorating situation of COVID-19 in the state.

Till Sunday night (13/09/2020), out of the reported 19,184 COVID-19 positive cases (as per State COVID-19 Portal), 11,536 patients have recovered while six more patients died in the last 24 hours, taking death toll to 200 since June 9, 2020 when the first death was reported. The fatality rate of 1.67% of Tripura, as reported in the local dailies, is the highest in North Eastern States of the country.

The Tripura Assembly of Journalists, a joint forum of media workers and journalists, in a meeting at Agartala Press Club on 13/09/2020 have condemned the Chief Minister's remarks to journalists and news outlets of some newspapers of the state and urged to withdraw his remarks within three days. The Chief Minister of Tripura, in an official function at Sabroom on 11th September, 2020, was reported to have made remarks of taking action against some newspapers/reporters for alleged reporting of distorted news on management of Covid-19 in the state.

Tripura Baptist Christian Union (TBCU) bid final farewell to their beloved colleague and servant of God late Reverend Dakshina Ranjan Reang who died of stroke in the morning on 12/09/2020. He was also reported to have tested COVID-19 positive later. Late Reverend Reang was the first among Reang tribe to become Secretary and two times Associate General Secretary of TBCU. He was a faithful servant of God, known as a calm and quiet person and regarded as a father figure amongst Christians of the Reang tribe. He left three daughters, one son and wife. May God abound his children and family with His everlasting peace and comfort.

'Yaphang Gospel TV Channel' of Sadar North Baptist Association (SNBA), in a ceremony on 13th September, 2020 at Mandal, distributed prizes to the winners of solo song competition (in local dialogue-'Kokborok') chosen online through YouTube by viewers' choice. Rev Kishore Kumar Debbarma, senior pastor of SNBA was the chief guest in the ceremony and it was chaired by Mr. Chitta Ranjan Debbarma, chairman, 'Yaphang Gospel TV Channel' Management Committee. As per the viewers' choice, Miss Langma Debbarma of Ujanfatikcherra Baptist Church, Abhicharan Baptist Pastoral Circle (ABPC) received the 1st prize of Rs. 10,000/-, Miss Manu Debbarma of Sipai Baptist Church and Miss Puja Debbarma of Bagbari Baptist Church, Jamilwng Baptist Pastoral Circle (JBPC) received the 2nd prize of Rs. 7000/- and the 3rd prize of Rs. 5000/- respectively. This was the first of its kind organized by 'Yaphang Gospel TV Channel' and it was widely appreciated by the viewers. May God continue to guide and bless the 'Yaphang Gospel TV Channel' in accomplishing the motto of 'Win Tripura for Christ' for His glory in days to come.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

- Pray that God may guide and bless TBCU to stand united for His purpose and in outreaching His gospel to the people of Tripura even in this time of crisis.
- God may control the spread of COVID-19 and heal the infected persons.



MEGHALAYA:

Thirty staff of the Raj Bhavan in Shillong have tested positive for COVID-19. Meghalaya Governor Satya Pal Malik, however, tested negative. The Governor is in self-isolation even though tested negative. The swab samples of Pravin Bakshi, Secretary to the Governor had also tested positive for the viral infection through RT-PCR on Friday. Sources said that the official has tested negative on a second re-test conducted through a CBNAAT at Nazareth Hospital in the city on Sunday. Sources said that the Governor and his two personal staff, besides one of the ADCs (Aides-de-Camp) to the Governor have tested negative.

Meghalaya has so far recorded a total of 3,447 COVID 19 cases of which, 1534 are active cases, 24 deaths and 1,889 persons have recovered. "Out of the 151 new cases, 98 are from East Khasi Hills district, 27 from East Jaintia Hills district, 17 from West Garo Hills, three each from North Garo Hills district and South West Garo Hills district one from West Jaintia Hills and two from West Khasi Hills districts," a medical official said. "Of the 47 persons who recovered, seven are from West Garo Hills district, six from East Garo Hills district, three from Ri-Bhoi district, one from South West Garo Hills district and 30 from East Khasi Hills district bringing the number of recoveries to 1,889," the report added.

MANIPUR:

COVID-19 Statistics: Confirmed cases are 7875, active cases 1683, recovered cases 6191, and total deaths 46.

By Kanghujam Biren Meetei, Mission Secretary, MBA

Ministry under Meitei Baptist Association (MBA) during Lockdown and Pandemic



1. The Meitei Baptist Association distributed relief to the members of MBA in three phases during lockdown.
2. Since gathering is restricted, the churches of MBA conducted worship through Zoom connection.
3. The MBA also conducted Leadership Training in 3 phases to different groups by maintaining SOP.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Please pray for the front-line workers.
2. Pray for the COVID positive patients for healing.
3. Pray for Pastors and Mission workers to be able to care and nurture its members in such a time as this despite the challenges.
4. Pray for the state and district administrators to be able to run the system properly and provide the needs of the people.

DELHI

By Advocate Loreign Oving

On September 9, Delhi became the first city in the country to cross 200,000 cases of COVID-19 infection after recording over 4,000 cases. The very next day on the 10th of September, the country's capital went on to record 4,308 new coronavirus cases, its highest single-day spike so far.

According to a report by the Hindustan Times (HT), there could be five key reasons why the number of cases in Delhi are suddenly increasing again. The five reasons in brief are as below:

1. POOR MASK DISCIPLINE

Experts have repeatedly pointed out the laxity across the city when it comes to people wearing masks. While the police have started enforcement of masks inside cars, mask discipline and enforcement remain an area where the Capital leaves a lot of room for improvement.

Data accessed by HT shows that nearly 175,000 people have been fined by Delhi Police for not wearing masks till August 23. "It is good that the people of Delhi have become confident, but it shouldn't lead to complacency. People should always wear masks," Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal said.



2. REOPENING OF THE CITY

On top of the list of guidelines by World Health Organization for control of Covid-19, is the request to people against going to crowded places. "Where people come together in crowds, you are more likely to come into close contact with someone that has Covid-19 and it is more difficult to maintain physical distance of 1 metre," the advisory states. This formed the backbone of argument in favour of hundreds of lockdowns enacted across the world.

The rise in cases in Delhi has coincided with the gradual reopening of the city- workplaces, markets, malls, restaurants, hotels and weekly markets. The last two have been opened just last week. There are also talks underway to open the Delhi Metro, which carries around 2.5 million people every day.

3. PLATEAU IN TESTING

The rise in cases has corresponded with the number of daily tests being on a near-steady drop from peak levels. The seven-day average for tests stands at 17,924 — significantly off the peak of 21,660, which was for the week ending July 9. HT first reported this plateau in a report on August 15 when experts raised questions about whether the Capital is getting complacent in its testing strategy.

Another issue with Delhi's testing has been the heavy reliance on antigen, or rapid tests, which are not as reliable as the gold-standard RT-PCR tests. While ICMR says that at an average, around 30-40% of tests across India are antigen tests, which give out a higher number of false positives. In Delhi, this number has averaged around 70%.

4. STATISTICAL VARIATION

A common occurrence among all Covid-19 statistical analysis across the world has been that infections can rise and drop in spurts. Several factors such as incubation period, delay/lag in test results, and age of infected patients can heavily influence the daily (and by extension, weekly) numbers emerging out of any area. For instance, the incubation period for Covid-19 can vary between one to 12 days, so the same people who got infected on a day can test positive as much as 11 days apart.

5. SECOND WAVE COMING?

Although the government and experts still say there is no second wave Covid-19 in Delhi, the chances of that happening in the not-too-distant future remains high.

The full report along with suggestions the people and Government can implement together to control the increase of cases can be accessed through the link;

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/five-reasons-why-delhi-s-covid-19-cases-spiked/story-uvqYQX8q1KzgvKQGdQLQJO.html>

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray for the improvement of the Covid-19 status in Delhi even as data points to increased cases.
2. Pray for healing for all the people who have tested positive for the virus and for strength for their families during these trying times.
3. Pray for the health care professionals who are discharging their duties to keep everyone else safe.
4. Pray for the scientists and researchers involved in finding a vaccine for the virus.
5. Pray for wisdom for the Governments in dealing with the pandemic.

SOUTH INDIA

By D. Robert Surya Prakash, Hyderabad

With 48.50 lakh cumulatively cases in India, there are 18.18 lakh cumulatively cases in south India. Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka are very vulnerable to the virus and have steep increase in the fresh cases.

States	Total cases	Active	Recovery	Deaths
Andhra Pradesh	5,67,123	95,072	4,67,139	4,912
Tamil Nadu	5,02,759	47,012	4,47,366	8,381
Karnataka	4,59,445	99,203	3,52,958	7,265
Telangana	1,57,096	31,607	1,24,528	961
Kerala	1,08,279	30,074	77,699	440
Puducherry	19,833	4,878	14,570	385
Andaman & Nicobar	3,521	268	3,202	51
Total as on Sept. 13	18,18,056	3,08,114	14,87,462	22,395

ANDAMAN & NICOBAR UNION TERRITORY:

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands, which has a population of over 430,000, has so far reported over 3,521 COVID-19 cases, including over 51 deaths. Following the outbreak among indigenous tribes the authorities ramped up testing.

The uncounted Sentinelese tribe, are always vulnerable to all outside diseases, given that they are the most isolated people on the planet and are unlikely to have immunity to any outside diseases. Poachers and trespassers can risk passing on the disease to the isolated tribes.

Pray for Pastor Saytha, missionary on behalf of Karen Baptist Convention, to effectively spread the word of our Lord in this tribal area. Pray for the Christian populations here, who, as per 2011 census are 21.7% in the UT.

PUDUCHERRY UNION TERRITORY:

This week the Union Territory has again seen a huge spike in positive cases. 2,801 fresh cases were reported in the UT and 56 patients succumbed to the virus during the week. As per official records, only 6.6% of the population has been tested so far. The recovery rate in the UT is a little above 73% and mortality rate at 1.94%. As reported in the last issue of IBH, the four districts are spread out in the coastal belt of three southern states, the presence of Christian Community is 11% and Muslim 5%. There are few Baptists Churches spread out in the four districts.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Pray for the Doctors and the medical fraternity serving in this UT

Pray for the missionary workers, Pastors and the Evangelist in the UT

Pray that the spike in the positive cases is controlled.

ANDHRA PRADESH:

With the unabated increase in the positive cases, the state of Andhra Pradesh is still in the second spot in the list of most positive cases in India. As many as 69,000 fresh cases are recorded as on Sunday night. The caste ridden state, has a Herculean task fighting the virus.

Updates from Dr. John V.K Gandhi Penumudi. CBCNC, Kakinada

Andhra Pradesh reported a single day highest rate of new Covid-19 cases with 10,175 last Thursday. This brings the cumulative caseload to 5,67,123. The death toll rose to 4,912 as 495 more people succumbed to the virus last week. On the positive side, the recovery rate has gone up to 90% (Anathapur and Kurnool) where as Prakasam has the lowest recovery rate of 59%. A Sero Surveillance study revealed that 20% of Andhra Pradesh have acquired immunity to COVID-19. People are co-existing with corona virus. Andhra Pradesh on Thursday became first state in the country to test 82,041 people for COVID-19 per every One Million population. Interestingly, the survey has revealed that more than 90% of positive cases are Asymptomatic.

There seems to be no respite for East Godavari, the epicentre of COVID-19 out-break in the state, as the District reported 1,499 fresh cases on Friday followed by West Godavari 1,081. Where as Krishna district was the last District to cross the 20,000 mark on Friday. Nellore, West Godavari and Prakasam Districts have been witnessing a steep rise in COVID-19 cases over the past few days.

We hope that the virus spread will decelerate in these Districts where the population showed higher growth of antibodies. This survey will help us understand the spread of the infection and it also indicated that Andhra Pradesh have tested 8 persons in every 100 people for COVID-19.

East Godavari is the state topper with over 72,000 cases and is one of the highest infected districts in the country with a Seroprevalence of 14.4%. According to the survey report the District has been adding cases in excess of 1000 per day for the past few weeks where as Vizianagaram which was the

last District in the State to report a COVID-19 case had the highest 30.6% Seroprevalence. Kurnool, once the major hot bed in the state showed a prevalence of 28.1%.

Even though East Godavari is very badly affected, not only Church Worship Services on Sundays, but Bible studies, Webinars and prayer meetings are also being held every day on digital platforms like Zoom.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Pray for the Doctors, Nurses, paramedical staff and the frontline workers.

Pray for the healing of Pastors, Evangelists and mission workers who are infected with the virus

Pray for the Chief Minister and his team who are under constant attack for their favourable approach to Christian community.

Pray for the poor, homeless and the migrants unable to find a source of daily living.

KARNATAKA:

With little over 61,000 fresh positive cases reported during the week, Karnataka is under the strict observance of the central government for the huge spike in the virus. Karnataka stands fourth in the over all tally in the country. 875 patients succumbed during the week.

A sad story emerged from Bangalore. A COVID positive woman in Bengaluru went missing after an ambulance picked her up on 09 September 2020. A 28-year-old resident of Bommanahalli, Sangeetha (name changed), who had allegedly given her samples to a door-to-door testing team from the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagar Palike, has gone missing for the last four days after she was picked up by an ambulance, stating that she was COVID positive. Sangeetha's brother-in-law Vikas said that on September 3rd afternoon, four people in PPE kits came to their house saying that they were conducting Covid testing. "They took samples of our family members and also the neighbourhood. But the next day, two men came in an ambulance, saying my sister-in-law was COVID positive and she had to be shifted to Prashanth Hospital. They didn't allow her to take her phone, saying it was not allowed inside the hospital. They asked me and my brother-in-law to come to the hospital later," he said. But when they went to the hospital, they were told that there was no patient named Sangeetha. BBMP officials denied collecting swab test from residences and they are not aware of any such positive patient under their care. The family members fear that this is an ingenious mind behind the act and could very well become a practice to enable kidnapping or trafficking. The public needs to be alert and aware of the situation.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Pray for such victims who are kidnapped under the guise of COVID

Pray for the Doctors and Medical care givers who are in the front line.

Pray for the Pastors, Evangelist, Missionaries and other church workers

Pray for the unity of Baptist Churches in Karnataka.

KERALA:

The cumulative case burden of the State now stands at 1,08,279 as on Sunday night. Having reported 77,699 recoveries till date, the number of COVID-19 patients currently undergoing treatment in hospitals across the State now is 30,074. The State's COVID toll reached 425, with the Health Department adding 15 more deaths which have occurred in the State between August 22 and September 8 to the provisional COVID death list of the State on Saturday. Six of these deaths were reported from Thiruvananthapuram, three from Kozhikode, two each from Thrissur and Palakkad and one each from Malappuram and Ernakulam.

Thiruvananthapuram continues to report the maximum number of cases in the State, reporting 566 new cases on Saturday, of which except for seven cases, the rest were all locally transmitted infections. The district also tops others when it comes to the number of active cases, with 5,094 people currently admitted in hospitals or COVID first-line treatment centres. Ernakulam comes second with 3,037 cases.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Let's continue to pray for the infected patients.

Pray for the Doctors, Nurses, Medical staff and frontline workers

Pray for the Churches in Kerala, to extend helping hand to the needy

Pray for the Baptist Churches, Pastors and the Missionaries

TAMIL NADU:

With 5,02,759 positive cases Tamil Nadu stands second in the spot in South India and third in over all cumulative cases in India. There has been no let up as a little over 39,000 fresh cases were reported during the week and about 550 succumbed.

Monday 14/9/20, for the first time in 10 years, Tamil Nadu's Legislative assembly session is taking place outside the historic Fort St. George in Chennai, which is often described as the seat of power. Officials had said that the decision was taken as physical distancing cannot be achieved in the available space at Fort St. George. Ahead of the assembly session, the Tamil Nadu government had directed all the legislative members to take a COVID-19 test 72 hours prior to the meet. The tests were scheduled to be carried out at the assembly campus and the MLA hostel. All the members, including department officials, assembly workers, security personnel and journalists among others who will be entering the assembly premises were directed to undergo testing in their areas from September 11 through the health officials in each district. The government had made arrangements in the respective areas for the same.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Pray for the effective control of the pandemic in the state.

Pray for the policy makers to take the right decision to help the infected, homeless, and migrant workers.

Pray for various missionary head quarters that operate from Tamil Nadu

Pray for the efforts of the Tamil Nadu Baptist Convention to unify the Baptist Churches together

Pray for the Pastors, Evangelist and mission workers.

TELANGANA:

At least 600 teachers in Telangana were infected with coronavirus after the academic year for schools began on September 1, according to the Telangana Progressive Teachers' Federation (TPTF), an association of government school teachers.

The teachers claimed that they are being exposed to the virus and that their safety has been compromised due to the Telangana government's education policy, which mandates that all school teachers attend school regularly. In Telangana, in view of the coronavirus pandemic, education for school children is imparted digitally, through computer, mobile and TV. Teachers are expected to attend schools regularly and occasionally monitor the students at their residence, to see if they are facing any problem with e-learning. These surprise visits to the residence of children is almost like violating their personal space at home, and it is very awkward to meet their parents at home.

The churches are bracing to open up post Unlock 4.0, but many church goers are apprehensive as the spike in the pandemic is yet to be controlled in the state. Telangana is the least in our country as per tests are concerned and there is concern about under reporting of positive cases.

The Baptist ministry among the Youth and women fellowship is regularly conducted on the Zoom platform by the Deccan Baptist Women's Association, coordinated by Bro. Selvaraj Kodamala. More than 175 women across the state are gathering to pray and be strengthened by the word of God every week. About 85 youth have attended the virtual Youth meet on Saturday, in the Mother's Heart program. Rev. Dr. Mohanan Unni from Boston USA challenged the young people on the theme "Dealing with Difficult People and Problems" and how to make an impact in the present situation.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Pray for the Teaching staff who are vulnerable to the virus.

Pray for the students as the academic years opens up post Unlock 4.0

Pray for the Doctors, Nurses, Paramedical staff and the frontline care givers.

Pray for the Pastors, Evangelists and the church staff as the most of the Baptist Churches open for worship post Unlock 4.0

Pray for the efforts of unity among the Telugu Baptist.



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Baptist Youth Fellowship North East India (BYFNEI)

The Baptist Youth Fellowship of North East India for the past seven months, like many other organizations, could not carry out its planned programs like exchange visits among conventions, seminar and also had to postpone few more programs that could have taken place in the near future, due to the un-warned outbreak of the Coronavirus. The exchange program, the 'New Horizon' module training, regular meetings and Youth Fest programs had to be postponed to very far distanced dates to 2022, fearing possible infection of the pandemic among participants.

The BYFNEI, all its members were involved in various relief programs in their respective convention.

BYFNEI resolved to conduct a 'New Horizon' training program on 5th October, 2020.

The meeting also selected new president of BYFNEI in the person of Rev. Vikuo Rhi, Youth Secretary of NBCC vacated by the completion of the second term of Mr. Bikash G. Momin from GBC. However, the Secretary, Mr. Monison Teron, who completed one term of office was retained to continue for the second term.

The present members of BYFNEI are as below:

1. Rev. Vikuo Rhi, NBCC, President.
2. Mr. Monison Teron, KABC, Secretary.
3. Mr. Bikash G. Momin, GBC, member.
4. Mr. Jaywant Raj, ABC, member.
5. Mr. Litem Eshi Ori, ABCC, member.
6. Rev. Raimi Rimai, MBC, member.
7. Advocate Malthys D. Sangma, Youth I/c, CBCNEI.



Justice and Peace Department

Justice and peace department of CBCNEI endeavors a faithful response to God's call for justice and peace. We envision a just society where peace and harmony will prevail under the rule of law.

Our mission is to effectively engage in ushering of justice and peace in the North East region by creating awareness through seminars, workshops, campaign, advocacy, research and analysis and legal consultancy/assistance.

Present activity of the department:

1. Legal seminar or workshop for the church leaders/elders etc.
2. Human trafficking awareness
3. Peace training
4. Income tax
5. Registration of churches/ pastor wedding licence

Mr Malthus D. Sangma is heading this department at present.



Seven sisters Home

Seven Sisters Children Home for girls is a Home for girls subjected to child trafficking, sexual abuse and those at risk. It is registered under the Juvenile Justice Act holding the registration number 98/2018 having an efficient staff comprising of 1 Officer in-charge, 1 Child welfare officer, 1 Counsellor, 2 Social/Case Workers, 9 Care coordinators, 1 Cook, 1 House Keeper, 1 Para-Medical staff, 1 Admin Assistant, 1 Accountant, 2 Drivers, 8 full time teachers and 3 Watchmen. Most of the staffs are trained to take care of minor girls who have been trafficked and sexually abused. All the staffs are given training in behavior management and counselling principles. Seven Sisters Home mandate is to take care of the rehabilitation of the children sent to the Home as per the Child Welfare Committee's direction and the decision that helps to nurture and empower the girls towards independence. The Home submits reports to the Child Welfare Committee, Kamrup (M) and to various other Government Departments as and when required. Every girl who is referred by the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) or District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) has their Cases registered with the Child Welfare Committee.

Seven Sisters Home's overall goal is to give exposures to the girls to a complete life as far as possible, which helps them to move forward towards independence. Girls who are restored to their family are doing quite well. Some of them are working and earning too. We have found job placements for them. Till date, four (6) of our major girls are employed in different institutions/ organisations as found by us. We keep close contact with them and their families. Those who are orphan come to stay with us during their holidays from work.



Activites



Updates on CBCNEI building construction:

It has been CBCNEI's long-time ambition to be self-reliant based ministry and in spite of outbreak of the global pandemic. The Council under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Akheto Sema, General Secretary would manage to start constructing building for self-

reliance to the extent possible so that the Council can be self-reliant in near future and support as well as expand ministries as corona outbreak had shown us the importance of local market and local supply chains. Therefore, the reforms over the past years have to be taken forward to build a self-reliant council.



Foundation Stone of CLC, Guwahati (extension project):

The laying of the cornerstone for the new building (extension project) of CLC, Guwahati ceremony was held on August 18th, 2020 at the auspicious time 9:30 am. The General Secretary Rev. Dr. Akheto Sema, Property Secretary Mr. Rajib Zillie,

CBCNEI staffs and CLC staffs and families were present for this ceremony and a short service was taken by Mr. Manab Gohain, Manager CLC Guwahati. Rev T.P. Mordecai CLC Director laid the foundation as a Ministry and he prayed for foundation stone laid for the new building (extension project) of CLC, Guwahati.



Construction work for the “Mission Home” started

74th Independence Day celebration:

In commemorating the nation's Independence, CBCNEI celebrated 74th Independence Day at CBCNEI office Head Quarter. 74th Independence Day was observed with flag-hosting by the Chief Guest Dr. Rev Akheto sema, General Secretary, the entire event was

led by Rev. T. P. Mordecai, Director CLC, and the Bible verse on Ephesians 6: 10-18 was read by Adv. Pulotoli Sumi. Families residing inside the CBCNEI campus were present for this auspicious celebration and the program was concluded with a blessing prayer by Mr. Talimoa, LM Hostel Chaplain.



North East Christian University (NECU) News

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in educational institutions all across the world to physically shut down, but millions of students globally have continued to avail online educa-

tion through different modes of technology available. North East Christian University (NECU) has been working relentlessly to provide continuous learning and online education to its students who are located in different parts of the

North Eastern states during this pandemic. In order to adapt to the new system of functioning and knowledge delivery, NECU organised a **'2-Day Faculty Training Programme on Online Education'** on the 22nd and 24th July 2020 in collaboration with the Christian Institute of Management (CIM), Chennai. The training was attended by all the faculty members of the University.

NECU has also recruited four new faculty members from different streams to join its team; Dr. Bendangienla Aier (Management), Dr. Ningsangrenla Longkumer (Psychology), Dr. Pfockrelo Kapesa (International Relations) and Dr. T Cholicchem Sangtam (Political Science). The new Autumn Semester classes 2020 started for the existing batches on the 10th of August and the for the newly admitted Under-Graduate students, classes started on the 14th of September. For the Academic year

2020-2021, NECU is offering Under Graduate Degrees in the Areas of English, Political Science, International Relations, Management, Psychology and Computer Science. For Post Graduate Degrees, **admissions are open for MA in English (TESL), Political Science and International Relations**. As per the UGC guidelines, admissions for new batches will be open till the 31st of October 2020, including provisional admissions for students waiting for their final results. Scholarships for students under different schemes are still open for fresh admissions and those interested can get in touch with the NECU office or look up in the website 'www.necu.ac.in' for details. **Admissions for limited seats are also open for those interested to enrol in Certificate Programs in 'TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)' and 'Enterprise Manage-**

ment' which will be held in November 2020 through online mode. For details, please contact the Capacity Training Centre- NECU, details will also be given in the university website.

The North East Christian University as a Personnel Certification Body (PrCB) for Traditional Community Healthcare Providers (TCHPs) has also recently achieved **National and International recognition by being accredited by the NACCB (National Accreditation Board of Certification Bodies) under the provisions of ISO/IEC 17024:2012 and the International Accreditation Forum.** NECU is the first University in the country to get this recognition and even in the world, in the category of TCHPs, NECU is the first and only one. NECU can now use the International Accreditation Forum logo on its Certificates and can certify a Traditional healer

as competent in his/her trade, and this certification will be recognised worldwide.

The above indicates not only the achievement of international recognition that NECU has obtained, but also reflects the high benchmarks that NECU strives for and has in its quality of manpower. NECU started its classes only in 2018 but always strives to maintain a high standard of staff and teachers, with all the regular faculty having completed their PhDs. NECU has brought laurels to Nagaland and the North East by its distinct achievement, and strives to excel and grow on all fronts in all its future endeavours. NECU looks forward to work in collaboration with any individuals, churches, government organisations or civil societies who would like to contribute and partner in the dissemination of knowledge and empowering the people of the region.



Relief and Development activities

The Relief and Development Department of the Council of Baptist Churches in North East India was established in the year 2018 with the primary aim to cater the needs of doing charitable/humanitarian works and also taking up development projects under the umbrella of the Council.

The department was able to raise fund within itself to provide help to the worst affected 15 families by the

floods in Baksa, Barpeta, Bongaigaon and Dhubri districts in 2019 Monsoon by providing 3 bundles tin sheets to each family.

This year as the Coronavirus pandemic hit hard across the nation followed by nationwide lockdown to curb the spread of the disease, hundreds of thousands have been impacted because of it. During these challenging times, the



Council was able to provide help in collaboration with Baptist World Alliance (BWA), Church's Auxiliary on Social Actions (CASA) and Assam Christian Forum (ACF) to 691 families with 10 kilograms of rice, 1 kilogram dal, half a kilogram of salt, 1 litre mustard oil, Sanitary kits (containing a bathing bar, 250 ml phenyl, 100 ml hand sanitizer, and a face mask), and

a Sanitary Pads for women to each family.

The Council is currently implementing a collaboration project with CASA and Bread for the World (BftW) Germany on livelihood development for 15 targeted villages in Goalpara district of Assam since June 2018. The project period is a ten year long divided into 3 phases of 3 years, 4 years and 3 years respectively.



Harding Theological College Tura, Meghalaya

Report on Celebration of Centenary

Harding Theological College Affiliated to Senate of Serampore under Garo Baptist Convention which is one of the colleges recognised by CBCNEI has celebrated centenary on 6th and 7th December 2019. Based on the centenary theme “*Let us rise and build*” (Nehemiah 2:18), the two days celebration has given enormous retrospection and introspection to the ministry of American Baptist Church Mission activities at Garo soil and its contribution towards promoting theological education.

The 100th year thrilling program has showcased beautiful warm fellowship of believers represented by partners, sponsoring bodies, well wishers from international, national and regional communities.

Prominent dignitaries visited the celebration.





God always Answers to the Humbled

Naturally Garos or A'chik people are from a very humbled community and they normally speak less and we can understand them from their action. It was long cherished prayer for the Garo Baptist Convention from 1954 that Harding Theological College can be shifted to Edenbari (A village which was first inhabited by Windham Saheb in early 1950s). The Amazing Grace started pouring in when ABDK delegate decided to contribute Rs. 100 from each Baptised members towards Harding Theological College New Campus development in the year 2013. Every believer intensified their offering for the ministry of the Lord and ultimately the college was shifted to Edenbari in 2017. Early shifting has given a complete one year to prepare to host college centenary with some concrete plans.

All Glory and Honour to God who strengthens His faithful to "Remember the past, celebrate the present and live by the future" The Garo Baptist Convention, 17 Krimas and one Centre, 240 Mondolis along with all believers had given their best effort to reshape the spiritual,

physical, academic standard of the college within few years of roaring times. I remember it was not easy challenge for the college to promote faculty, building church relation, establishing partners, along with heavy construction activities. My special thanks goes to elected members, officers, contractors, entrepreneurs, public leaders, every single members under Garo Baptist Convention for their relentless cooperation and unflinching support towards promoting theological education in our region and beyond. "Wisdom comes from the elderly", that is how my strength was directly outsourced from all the senior citizens. Harding Universal Trust, HTC Governing Board, and other committee members have tremendously supported the celebration and all credit goes to the whole college community.

The Garo churches now need to promote their church leaders with much sound teaching and theologically contextual. Therefore, the college is now getting ready to upgrade with Master of Theology program by 2022, academic year. This proposal was accepted in Garo Baptist Convention delegate meetings and churches are excited to journey along with the ministry of the college. This M. Th program will mark the commemoration of centenary celebration. At the moment, the college has 218 B D students and 54 BCS students representing from many parts of the country. We offer both integrated B D (5 Years) and regular B D (4 Years) programs.

I thank CBCNEI General Secretary for requesting me to give a brief report of centenary celebration of Harding Theological College. God bless CBCNEI ministry.

Principal
Harding Theological College
Edenbari Tura





Photograph

THE EASTERN THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

RAJABARI, JORHAT – 785 014, ASSAM, INDIA

Affiliated to Serampore College (University) Telephone Nos.: (0376) 2360853

E-mail: etcollege@yahoo.co.in

APPLICATION FORM

THE BACHELOR OF DIVINITY (B.D.) DEGREE COURSE

(Please read carefully the Form and the Note overleaf before filling in)

Last date of completed application form to reach the office on or before 20th March

1. Full Name _____

(Write in Block letters, exactly as it appears in the HSLC Certificate)

2. Sex: Male/Female _____

3. Date of Birth (as in HSLC Certificate) _____

4. Place of Birth _____ Village _____ State _____

5. Mother tongue _____
Other languages you can read, write and speak _____

6. Fathers' Name _____ Occupation _____

7. Mothers' Name _____ Occupation _____

8. Name of your tribe/community/sub-tribe _____

9. Your Postal Address for Communication (including Pin Code) _____

Contact Cell Phone No. _____ Police Station _____

E-mail: _____

10. Name, occupation and address of your guardian (including pin code & e-mail) _____

11. Marital Status: (Married / Unmarried) _____

If married, Number of children with age _____

12. Are you ordained (Yes/No)? If yes, name of the Church and year _____

13. Name and complete address of your Church _____

14. Are you under the care of a distant doctor who you require to visit frequently? Yes / No If yes, what is the reason? _____

15. Who will support you financially? _____

_____ (Enclose a sponsorship certificate with proper address, signature and seal of the sponsoring official)

16. A medical fitness Certificate by a qualified medical doctor should be produced.

17. The Eastern Theological College does not permit distant medical consultation/treatment which would mean physically unfit to study theology. Do you agree? YES / NO

16. Educational Qualifications (All applicable columns must be completed)

Examination Passed	Name of College	University / Board	Year of Passing	Class or Division	Registration Number
B. Th.					
B.A. / B.Sc. / B. Com.					
M.A. / M.Sc. / M.Com.					
Others					

17. I _____ hereby solemnly declare that all the statements given above are true. _____

Date & Place _____

Signature of the Applicant

RECOMMENDATION OF THE CHURCH AUTHORITY: An official Church Authority should endorse this Application Form for Admission after having done the necessary screening or evaluation of the candidate. An appropriate Seal of the Authority should also accompany this endorsement. Please see that a responsible and honest endorsement is provided. I have read the Application Form of Mr. / Ms / Rev. _____ for admission to your College and found to be all accurate. I recommend / recommend with reservation / do not recommend the applicant for the admission to your College.

Name _____ Signature _____

Designation _____ Date _____

Official Seal

NOTE: The following documents should be submitted along with this form:

- i. Two Passport size recent photographs of the applicant.
 - ii. Admit Card of HSLC
 - iii. School Leaving Certificate
 - iv. Mark Sheet in support of Educational Qualification
 - v. Required Passed Certificate of B.A./B.Com./B.Sc./M.A.
 - vi. Required Original Migration Certificate
 - vii. A testimonial certificate from the pastor.
 - viii. A character / testimonial certificate from the principal of the previous institution.
 - ix. Two sets of Photocopy of all educational documents with due Attestation. (Original copies are to be produced at the time of Interview/Registration)
 - x. The names and addresses of two persons as referees (not ETC teachers) on a Separate sheet One of them must be the pastor of your local Church, and the other one must be a responsible person in your village / community. Their Contact number and e-mail ID are required.
 - xi. A Demand Draft for Rs. 500/- in favour of "Eastern Theological College, Jorhat".
2. Any incomplete / wrong statement (s) in this form would disqualify the person for admission to this institution.
3. The complete Application Form along with the required documents should be sent by Registered Post: **The Vice Principal Eastern Theological College, Rajabari, JORHAT – 785014 Assam, INDIA**

Receipt No. _____

EASTERN THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

Affiliated to Serampore College (University)

Rajabari, Jorhat 785014

Assam, INDIA

Phone: 0376-2932045 (Office)

Email: etcollege@yahoo.co.in

Website: <http://etcollege.in/>



APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION TO
THE MASTER OF THEOLOGY (MTH) DEGREE
20....-20....

Submit application to:

Principal
Eastern Theological College
Rajabari, Jorhat 785014
Assam, INDIA

J N I T Y

F A I T H

S E R V I C E

July - September 2020

89

APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION

Affix a recent pass-
port size photo-
graph

Application for admission to Master of Theology (MTh) in (Branch of Study)

SECTION A: PARTICULARS OF THE APPLICANT

1. Name of the Applicant (In CAPITAL letters)

2. Gender (Tick one) Male Female

3. Date of Birth (Day)..... (Month)..... (Year).....

4. Place of Birth (Town/City)..... (Dist).....

(Pin Code)..... (State)..... (Country).....

5. Mother Tongue..... 6. Marital Status (Tick one) Married Not Married

Name of Spouse (If married)..... No. of Children (If any).....

Do you plan to apply for student housing? (Tick one) Yes No

7. Father's Name..... 8. Mother's Name.....

9. Present Address

(Town/City)..... (Dist).....

(Pin Code)..... (State)..... (Country).....

10. Permanent Address

(Town/City)..... (Dist).....

(Pin Code)..... (State)..... (Country).....

11. Phone No..... 12. Email.....

13. Tribe/Community..... 14. Nationality.....

15. Church Membership

a) Specific Denomination.....

b) Name of Church.....

c) Name of Association.....

16. Are you applying for admission to any other institution/seminary/college? (Tick one) Yes No

If yes, where?.....

SECTION B: ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

17. Educational Qualifications

<i>Examination Passed</i>	<i>School/College</i>	<i>University</i>	<i>Year of Passing</i>	<i>Class/Division</i>	<i>Reg. No.</i>
HSLC					
BTh					
BA/MA Or Equivalent					
BD					
Any Other					

18. Papers Completed in the Branch of Study for Which Admission is Sought

<i>Paper Code</i>	<i>Name of Paper</i>	<i>Marks Obtained</i>

19. Language/Exegetical paper/s completed

<i>Paper Code</i>	<i>Name of Paper</i>	<i>Marks Obtained</i>

20. Books and Articles Published

<i>No.</i>	<i>Title of Book/Article</i>	<i>Publisher and Year of Publication</i>	<i>Language</i>

SECTION C: MINISTERIAL OR OTHER WORK EXPERIENCES

21. Experience in Ministry (The most recent)

- a) Nature of Work.....
- b) Position..... c) Ordination (Tick one) Ordained Not Ordained
- d) Name and Address of Employer.....
- e) Duration of Service (specify day or month and year) From..... till.....

SECTION D: SPONSORSHIP

22. How will your study be funded?.....

23. Name and Address of Sponsor (If you are sponsored)

-
- 24. **Nature of Sponsorship** (Tick one) Full Partial

25. Have you applied for any scholarship? (Tick one) Yes No

26. If yes, name the organization/agency/body/source to which you have applied

.....

SECTION E: REFERENCES

27. Give the name, address, phone number and email ID of two referees. One referee must be your pastor, spiritual mentor or a pastoral colleague, and another must be a theological teacher who taught you during your BD or equivalent studies who can assess your academic ability. Give a copy of the appropriate Reference Form to the referees and instruct them to return the references directly to: The Principal, Eastern Theological College.

a) Pastoral Referee

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Phone No..... Email.....

b) Academic Referee

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Phone No..... Email.....

SECTION F: DECLARATION

I..... do hereby declare that all the information given above is true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any false information given above may lead to disqualification for admission. If granted admission, I agree to observe all rules and regulations of Eastern Theological College and maintain good Christian conduct on and off campus.

Date.....

.....
Signature of the Applicant

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Please fill out this form completely and legibly. If something does not apply, write "N/A" on the line.
2. Distribute the Pastoral Reference and Academic Reference forms, provided with this admission form, to the appropriate referees, requesting them to return the references directly to Eastern Theological College.
3. Provide the following documents along with this form:
 - a) Two recent passport size photos
 - b) A copy of 10th class Admit Card and Mark Sheet, 12th class mark sheet, Bachelors (BA/BCom/BSc) and Masters (MA/MCom/MSc) Mark Sheet (or BTh Transcript if you did BTh studies) and two copies of BD Transcript.
 - c) Migration Certificate if you are coming from a university or college outside the ambit of the Senate of Serampore College/ University. Original documents must be produced at the time of admission and registration.
 - d) Character certificate or letter of recommendation from your church pastor.
 - e) Your personal testimony about your faith in 1-2 pages.
 - f) A Demand Draft of ₹ 500 for the application form in favour of **Eastern Theological College, Jorhat**.
4. The date of the Entrance Examination will be notified to all the candidates who are selected by email and/or SMS. Letters may also be sent but candidates should not wait for an official letter as postal services are not very reliable. The list of department-recommended books for the Entrance Examination and guidelines for the examination will be provided on a separate sheet and will also be published on the college website: <http://etcollege.in/>
5. The completed Application Form for Admission, along with all the required academic documents, Medical Fitness Certificate and Demand Draft, must be sent to the office of the Principal, Eastern Theological College, Rajabari, Jorhat 785014, Assam, INDIA, on or before 15th December.
6. A non-refundable fee of ₹ 5000 will be charged from applicants who are granted admission. This amount will be adjusted with college fees during admission, but those applicants who do not join the college will forfeit the amount.



MEDICAL FITNESS CERTIFICATE

For candidates seeking admission to Master of Theology

(To be signed by a registered medical practitioner holding a degree not below that of M.B.B.S.)

I do hereby certify that I have examined Miss/Mr/Mrs/Ms/Rev*
son/daughter of whose signature is given below. Based on
the examination, I certify that he/she is not suffering from any disease, communicable or otherwise, constitutional weakness
or physical or mental infirmity which may interfere with his/her studies including the physical activities required of a college
student.

1) Blood Group

2) Height ft in

3) Weight kg

4) Marks of Identification

.....
Signature of the Applicant

.....
Signature of the Medical Officer

(Seal)

Name of the Doctor:

Registration No:

Address:

* Strike whichever is not applicable

PASTORAL REFERENCE

▶ Please return this form directly to:

Principal
Eastern Theological College
Rajabari, Jorhat 785014
Assam, India

Phone: 08011117820



Section 1: To be completed by applicant

Miss/Mr/Mrs/Ms/Rev (name of applicant)..... has applied for admission to the Master of Theology in the field of..... at Eastern Theological College, Jorhat, Assam.

Section 2: To be completed by referee

The above named applicant is seeking admission to the Master of Theology programme at ETC, and has nominated you as a pastoral referee. Thank you for your assistance in this important phase of the applicant's life.

How long have you known the applicant?

In what capacity have you known the applicant?

Please give your evaluation of the applicant by ticking to the right of each characteristic listed:

	Characteristics	Fair	Good	Excellent	Outstanding
A	Commitment to Christ				
B	Christian character				
C	Moral Integrity				
D	Dependability				
E	Leadership				
F	Creativity/Imagination				
G	Ability to accept criticism				
H	Friendliness/Compatibility with peers				
I	Emotional Stability				
J	Interpersonal relationship				

How do you recommend this applicant to Eastern Theological College? (Tick one)

Do not recommend

Recommend with reservations

Strongly recommend

Your Name..... Date.....

Title or Designation.....

Address.....

(Town/City)..... (Dist).....

(Pin Code)..... (State)..... (Country).....

Date.....

Signature

ACADEMIC REFERENCE

▶ Please return this form directly to:

Principal
Eastern Theological College
Rajabari, Jorhat 785014
Assam, India

Phone: 08011117820



Section 1: To be completed by applicant

Miss/Mr/Mrs/Ms/Rev (name of applicant)..... has applied for admission to the Master of Theology in the field of.....at Eastern Theological College, Jorhat, Assam.

Section 2: To be completed by referee

The above named applicant is seeking admission to the Master of Theology programme at ETC, and has nominated you as a pastoral referee. Thank you for your assistance in this important phase of the applicant's life.

How long have you known the applicant?

In what capacity have you known the applicant?

Please give your evaluation of the applicant by ticking to the right of each characteristic listed:

	Characteristics	Fair	Good	Excellent	Outstanding
A	Academic aptitude				
B	Written communication in English				
C	Oral communication in English				
D	Diligence in study				
E	Leadership				
F	Creativity/Imagination				
G	Ability to accept criticism				
H	Friendliness/Compatibility with peers				
I	Emotional Stability				
J	Interpersonal relationship				

How do you recommend this applicant to Eastern Theological College? (Tick one)

Do not recommend

Recommend with reservations

Strongly recommend

Your Name..... Date.....

Title or Designation.....

Address.....

(Town/City)..... (Dist).....

(Pin Code)..... (State)..... (Country).....

Date.....

Signature

PREScribed BOOKS FOR MTH ENTRANCE EXAMINATION, 2020

New Testament

Angami, Zhodi. *Tribals, Empire and God: A Tribal Reading of the Birth of Jesus in Matthew's Gospel*. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. (pp. 1-22)

Jamir, Lima. *Revisiting Paul's Ministry*. Mokokchung: Tribal Development and Communication Centre Publications, 2017. (pp. 51-80)

Lasetso, Razouselie. "Luke's Approach to Wealth and Poverty in Luke-Acts and Its Implication for the Tribals of North East India: A Socio-economic Perspective." In *Voices from the North East: Postmodern Reflections on Issues Confronting North East India*. Edited by Razouselie Lasetso & Lovely Awomi James. Jorhat, Assam: ILEMA-ETC, 2018. (pp. 1-33)

Malina, Bruce J. *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981.

Moysie, Steve. *Jesus and Scripture: Studying the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI : Baker Academic, 2011).

Translation: Gospel of John, Chapters 1-4.

Christian Theology

Boyd, Robin H. S. *An Introduction to Indian Christian Theology*. Delhi: ISPCCK, 2000. (pp. 144-164)

Grenz, Stanley J. and Roger E. Olson. *20th Century Theology: God and the World in a Transitional Age*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992. (pp. 65-77; 114-130)

James, Lovely Awomi. *Tribal Theology: Revisiting the Naga Traditional Worldview* New, Christian Heritage Rediscovered, 48. Delhi: Christian World Imprints, 2017. (pp. 1-28)

Longchar, Wati. *Returning to Mother Earth: Theology, Christian Witness and Theological Education – an Indigenous Perspective*, PTCA Series, 4. Tainan: PTCA/SCEPTRE, 2012. (pp. 69-128)

Vashum, Yangkabao. *Christology in Context: A Tribal-Indigenous Appraisal of North East India*, Christian Heritage Rediscovered, 49. New Delhi: Christian World Imprints 2017. (pp. 101-130)

Select Any One from the Following:

1. Gutiérrez, Gustavo. *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*. Trans. Caridad Inda and John Eagleson. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988.

2. Pui-lan, Kwok. *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006.

3. Thanzauva, K. *Theology of Community: Tribal Theology in the Making*. Bangalore: Asian Trading Corporation, 2004.

4. Wilfred, Felix. *Margins: Site of Asian Theologies*. Delhi: ISPCCK, 2008.

History of Christianity

Carr, E. H. *What is History?* London: Penguin Books, 1990.

Imchen, Narola. *Issues in Modern Historiography*. Delhi: ISPCCK, 2012.

James, Woba. *Major Issues in the History of Christianity in India: A Postcolonial Reading*. Mokokchung: Tribal Development and Communication Centre Publications, 2013. (pp. 1-50)

Stephen, M. *Introducing Post Modernism and Post Colonialism*. New Delhi: Concept Pub. Co., 2013.

Thomas, V. V. *Dalit and Tribal Christians of India: Issues and Challenges*. Malapuram, Kerala: Focus India Trust, 2014. (pp. 207-47)

Christian Ministry (Counselling)

Clinebell, Howard. *Basic Types of Pastoral Care & Counseling: Resources for the Ministry of Healing and Growth*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998.

Murry, Ezamo. *Pastoral Care and Counselling: Indigenous Perspective*. Dimapur: Heritage Publishing House, 2019.

Varghese, George ed. *A Study Book on Counselling*. Tiruvalla: Christava Sahitya Samithi & TMA Institute of Counselling, 2014.



Dear Readers,
Please send your stories, testimonies, reports, articles and Church News.

You can mail to:

**The Editor Baptist News
CBCNEI, Panbazar
Guwahati, Assam-781001, India
email: editor@cbcnei.in**

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If you want to contribute towards the CBCNEI ministries please send it to the following address:

*The Finance Secretary
CBCNEI, Panbazar,
Guwahati, Assam 781001 India*

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Send your article or letter to:

*The Editor, Baptist News
CBCNEI Mission Compound
H. B. Road Panbazar, Guwahati
Assam-781001, India
email: editor@cbcnei.in*

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NAME (IN BLOCK LETTERS) _____

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PIN _____

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please send this form to:

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H. B. Road, Panbazar
Guwahati - 781001, Assam, India

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