



neiadvl

NEWSLETTER

Official mouthpiece of N.E. States Branch of IADVL



NEWSLETTER EDITORIAL

Dr. Pranjali Jyoti Dutta

Respected Members

A very warm Good morning,

As a specialized branch of medical science, Dermatology has evolved over the years. We have learnt to provide more sophisticated service to our patients in a better way than before. Dermato-surgery and modern therapeutic technologies have brought fresh air to clinical dermatological practice. Peoples awareness and inclination towards Dermatology has become stronger day by day. In the same time Dermatology has become a luring subject to those newer generation of doctors. It is good to have more and more doctors getting involved in Dermatology. It may be the answer to ever rising patient number with skin diseases, and perhaps an antidote to those malpractices on skin diseases. We need dedicated, honest and quality doctors in our field. Fortunately we have a lot of its kind. But, we have observed a trend of rising numbers of nonqualified, even fake people coming to our fraternity, only with a desire for money making and exploitation. In a highly populated area with mixed and floating population, they silently or with paid advertisement through print and vidual media, start exploiting people and endanger their health. This has spread to small towns and rural areas too. We need to fight with this more collectively and in a much stronger way, to prevent influx of these nuisance to our beloved subject. For us, Dermatology is not merely a means of bread earning, it has a wider dimension beyond that. It is the mirror of our self respect, identity, social expression and pride. Above all we beautify humanity in our own ways with our very own subject. We have to lift up Dermatology to a newer heights by our constant good effort and wisdom, breaking through all narrowness of mind. That is greatest challenge to us. I am sure, we can win.

This is my fourth and last issue, as the Editor of NE-IADVL mouth piece, the NEWS-LETTER. During my period, I am not sure if it could go even nearer to its expected standard, as It has always been a very magnificent piece of work over the years, under the expert editorship of my previous, more capable and qualified editors. But I tried my best to deliver, from my heart.

In the same time, I felt that collection of material for our Newsletter is a really tough for the editor. I know, busy working hours and lack of spare time of our members may be the reason behind it. But to produce our newsletter, we need to fully depend upon our members and their participation by offering articles, both academic and non academic as well as News and informations. I do hope, our next editor will be lucky enough to get overwhelming contribution from our members. I wish him or her good luck.

I honestly offer my gratitude to all the members for their constant support and encouragement in my effort. Specially I would like to thank respected Dr. Nasir Rehman, Dr. Kanak Chandra Talukdar, Dr. Anal jyoti Bordoloi, Dr. Chayanika Kalita, Mr. Sauranga Dey and his wife(Publisher) and all the contributors for their timely help and advice. I do accept all the errors and faults occurred during the publication of all four issues of the NewsLetter and very sincerely apologise for them. Also I would like to thank you all for giving me the opportunity to edit such an important component of NE-IADVL, the NEWSLETTER. At last I wish a grand success of our CUTICON annual conference at Guwahati, under the brilliant organisation by our respected Dr. Anita Baruah and her enthusiastic team. At last wishing you all the best in life. Be happy and healthy forever.

Long live NE-IADVL. Long live NEWS-LETTER.

Pranjali Jyoti Dutta

Editor

NE-IADVL, Newsletter



MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT, NORTH EAST STATES BRANCH, IADVL

Dear friends

It gives me extreme satisfaction to know that Cuticon, Annual conference is being organized in the capital city of Assam, on 11th and 12th November, 2016. I do hope, there will be a huge participation in the conference this time and it will be a great opportunity to all the members to exchange their views as well as a platform for interaction.

I am sure, The Newsletter, going to be released on the occasion will be once again a very good one, as earlier, enlightening the intellectual corners of mind with its contents. I offer my heartiest good wishes to the News-letter.

Long live NE -IADVL

S.K. Bhattacharya

DR.S.K.BHATTACHARYA

PRESIDENT, N.E. STATES BRANCH OF IADVL



neiadvl NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY, CUTICON, 2016, NORTH-EAST STATE BRANCH IADVL




It is a matter of great pleasure to present before you yet another edition of the NEIADVL Newsletter, the coveted mouthpiece of the North East States Branch of IADVL at the CUTICON NEIADVL 2016, Guwahati.

The newsletter has served as a coveted platform for the exchange of views & knowledge amongst the members of the NEIADVL and I am sure it will be another masterpiece at the hands of its Editor, Dr. Pranjal Jyoti Dutta who has not left a single stone unturned in giving it the shape of a befitting gift to the Conference.

Wishing all success to the Newsletter as well as the CUTICON NEIADVL 2016.

With Warm Regards



Dr. Anal Jyoti Bordoloi
Secretary, NEIADVL

MESSAGE FROM ORGANISING SECRETARY, CUTICON, 2016, NORTH-EAST STATE BRANCH IADVL



I feel honoured to write this message in this Newsletter, as the organising secretary of CUTICON, NE states 2016, 27th annual conference of North East States branch of IADVL going to be held at Guwahati on 11th and 12th, November, 2016. It gives me immense pleasure to welcome you all at Guwahati, the capital of Assam, to attend this event. I do hope, this issue of our Newsletter will also be a very informative and good one, as ever before and I extend my all best wishes for it.

Long Live IADVL



Dr. Anita Baruah
Organising secretary
CUTICON, NE States Branch, 2016, IADVL

Quack advertisements



Dr. Kanak Ch. Talukdar

Advertising is a form of marketing communication that employs an openly sponsored message to promote or sell a product, service or idea. Sponsors of advertising are often businesses who desire to promote their products, services or idea. It is heard that mobile companies earn more money by promoting idea of "caller tune" than the Recording companies of Origin songs.

In the 18th century advertisements in weekly newspapers in England were used mainly to promote books and newspapers, which became increasingly affordable with advances in the printing press. Another advertisement was of medicines, which were increasingly sought after a disease ravaged Europe. However, false advertising and so-called "quack" advertisements became a problem, during that period.

Criticism of advertising:-

As advertisements are for business, the advertisers never bother about the harm, if not controlled by Rules and regulations. Every coin has two sides; therefore advertisement is useful because it provides information about the product, service or idea and increases the living standard but the same may be harmful as some of the content is not suitable for general public or a particular age group. Unsolicited advertisements have become so prevalent as to have become a major nuisance in all media.

As in 18th century even now false advertising and so-called "quack" advertisements in the Cosmetic and health industries are the one which are creating reasons of concern.

One harmful advertisement is of food and drink with high in sugar, fat, salts and other unnecessary or harmful ingredients in a beautiful and attractive packet. Many times Food and drink advertisements are not sufficiently balanced with proper nutritional education and dietary guidelines to help public understand the consequences of their choices.

Celebrities are doing advertisements about health product and Herbal medicines. The companies and the celebrities are earning but it is doubtful if those products are beneficial to the users. Some people may not understand about it and they use to buy all the products which may be harmful to them.

Some advertisements try to make people feel inferior if they don't have the product, or if they have something which the new product would change towards betterment. Perceptions of beauty and fashion in particular have been terribly distorted by advertisements. Many young people have low-self esteem, and lead unhealthy lifestyles because they feel they should be more attractive like the models they see in advertisement. This leads to serious problem like eating-disorders and self-harm.

The same harm is going on in the society in the name of so called Health education programs by TV Channels as "talk show" by unqualified or half qualified persons or professionals of different systems giving advises in the motive to grab patients (Customers) to their own chambers. Even beauticians try to give treatment advices in this type of talk show! Can we term these "Talk Show" as another new form of modern quack advertisement?

Pitfalls:-

1. Advertise like "pehle istemal koro fir biswas koro" is sufficient to do business in India.
2. To my opinion one of the corrupt advertisements in India is asking people to buy product at lower price than the Maximum retail price (MRP). 80% of population are not able to buy a product in lesser prices than MRP. 'Law maker can say -all is well!'
3. Probably Celebrities are ready for any advertisements if they are paid sufficiently.



Activity Report NEIADVL

(May '16 – November '16)

Compiled by **Dr. Anal Jyoti Bordoloi**

Membership drive: At present the current strength of the NEIADVL sits at 136 members of which 99 are Life members & 37 are Provisional life members.

Out of 37 PLMs 18 are pursuing their PG courses
2 PLMs have transferred to other branches & 5 new PGTs were inducted as PLMs (3 GMCH & 2 AMCH)
4 PLMs were converted to LMs

Chapter Activities:

• **Guwahati Chapter:** The Guwahati City Chapter met thrice during this period.

21st May 2016: A CME on "Chronic Urticaria & Omalizumab" was presented by Dr. Shekhar Neema from Command Hospital, Kolkata which dealt on the latest guidelines for Urticaria management & the role of Omalizumab in the management.

16th July 2016 : A CME consisting of a case discussion titled "Pustular Psoriasis complicated by Norwegian scabies" was presented by Dr. Deepak Agarwal, 2nd year PGT from Gauhati Medical College. A new executive committee was formed with Dr. Anita Baruah as the President, Dr. Aruna Devi as the Secretary, Dr. Smrity Borgohain as the Joint secretary & Dr. Hiranya Talukdar as the Treasurer.

24th September 2016: The first meeting of the newly appointed EC of the Guwahati Chapter met on 24th September. A CME on "Glutathione as a potent antioxidant" was presented by Dr. Ashi, PGT, Gauhati Medical College and was Chaired by Dr. Anita Baruah & Dr. Debeeka Hazarika.

• **Dibrugarh Chapter :** The Dibrugarh Chapter met twice during this period

30th of July, 2016 : There were three scientific sessions

- The story beneath the wheals presented by Dr. Siva Subramaniam, PGT, Dibrugarh Medical College
- Paget's Disease of the nipple presented by Dr. Ellis Khawbung, PGT, Dibrugarh Medical College
- Management of Acne presented by Dr. Swapan Mazumdar, PGT, Dibrugarh Medical College

20th October, 2016 : The activities included –

- Penoscrotal porokeratosis – a case report by Dr. Ellis Khawbung
- Management of Urticaria – by Dr. Maitryee Sengupta
- Panel discussion on Management of Difficult Dermatophytic Infections Moderated by Dr. Anupam Agarwal & consisting of Dr. Pawan Bajaj, Dr. Shyamanta Barua and Dr. Ronjon Bhattacharya as the panelists

MID-CUTICON 2016 :

The MIDCUTICON North East States Branch IADVL 2016 was held at the Prasanti Lodge, Barpeta Road on 28th May 2016 with Dr. Barnali Rai Baruah as the Organizing President & Dr. Sofiul Islam as the Organizing Secretary. The programme flagged off at 3.00pm with short Inaugural Ceremony hosted by Dr. Bobita Boro. Dr. Sofiul Islam gave the welcome address which was followed by address from the President elect Dr. Pankaj Adhicari. This was followed by lightening of the ceremonial lamp by the seniormost members of the NEIADVL, Prof. Jogesh Das, Prof. K.K.Das & Prof. K.N.Barua. Prof. Jyoti Nath did the honours of releasing the Newsletter of the NEIADVL. The Inaugural Ceremony concluded with a vote of thanks from Dr. Barnali Rai Baruah.

The Scientific session started with a Guest Lecture On "Management of Systemic Sclerosis" by Dr. Padmaja Saikia, Associate Professor, Deptt. of Dermatology, Gauhati Medical College dealing with the treatment options available for this condition & few of the latest treatment modalities. This was followed by a Panel Discussion moderated by Dr. Rajib Kr. Gogoi. The panellists included Prof. Jogesh Das, Prof. K.K.Das, Prof. K.N.Barua, Prof. Jyoti Nath, Dr. Kanak Ch. Talukdar & Dr. Pankaj Adhicari. There were four topics which were taken up for discussion –

- Rapidly Progressive Alopecia Areata
- Childhood Molluscum Contagiosum
- Periorbital Hyperpigmentation
- Prurigo Nodularis

The discussions mainly concentrated on practical problems in the management of these conditions & how best to manage them. The questions were meticulously planned & aptly taken by the panellists.

The Scientific Session was followed by the General Body Meeting. The programme concluded at about 7.00pm which was followed by dinner.

Observation of World Vitiligo Day :

• **Guwahati City Chapter :** The Guwahati City Chapter held a Press conference on the 24th of June, 2016 at the Guwahati Press Club in an attempt to raise public awareness on the myths surrounding vitiligo. The meet was attended by correspondents from all the leading news channels & newspapers. The news channels aired the meet on the evening of the very same day while the newspapers published it the next day i.e. 25th June. Besides pamphlets highlighting the myths & realities on vitiligo were distributed amongst the public in the Gauhati Medical College as well as the various private health establishments & clinics.

A public awareness campaign was also organised at the Dermatology OPD, Gauhati Medical College on the 25th June.

Besides patients with vitiligo were given free consultations at the various private clinics.

• **Dibrugarh Chapter :** A patient awareness camp was conducted at the Dermatology OPD of the Dibrugarh Medical College to debunk the common myths associated with vitiligo. Awareness leaflets were distributed in the medical college, private hospitals & chemist stores. A short video highlighting the myths and facts about vitiligo was aired in a local TV Channel every half hourly both in Assamese & English.

Likewise public awareness campaigns were conducted in various places of Assam as well as other states of the branch to raise awareness on this condition.

Pearls in Medical peeling

Dr. Pawan Bajaj

Rejuvenation of Photo damaged skin with Ferulac Peel System

Ferulac peel is a US FDA patented peel based on Ferulic Acid and fruit acids and retinoids. Ferulic acid has a strong antioxidants properties and its depigmenting effects is due to non competitive inhibitor of tyrosinase. Other contents like malic acid citric and lactic acid adds in exfoliation. Retinol adds in anti aging and anti acne effects.

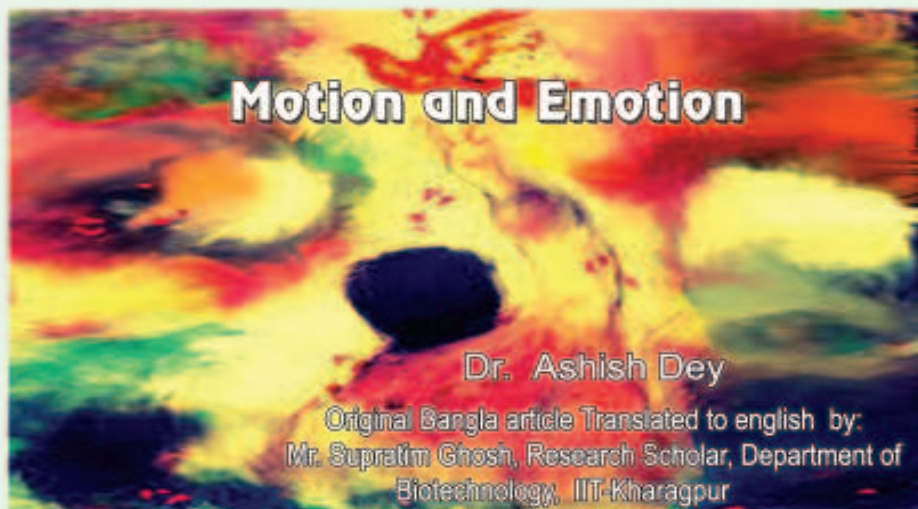


Ferulac peel works in two steps

Step 1- Ferulac classic is comprised of Ferulic acid 12% mainly and step 2 Ferulac plus contains Ferulic acid 8% and mix of fruit acids.

Ferulac peel system is a very potent and safe peel. With this peel from first session patient feels smoother and tighter skin and skin strata to look lighter with glow. This peel causes skin colour improvement making this peel one of the most valuable product on the shelf of any aesthetics practitioner. The best part is this peel could be used in all seasons and in all skin type. It doesn't produce any burning and itching during applications and client friendly. It can be applied every 15 days and 6-8 sessions needed for best results.

It is a wonderful peel and should be in the procedure room of all the dermatologist.



The words of the great poet Rabindranath Tagore still enlighten my mind deeply.....,"Science has provided us with motion but it has stolen our emotions".

The contribution of science to human life is immense which has led to the well being of humanity. These range from a safety pin to a smart phone, from a telegram (which is almost extinct today) to Whatsapp. But slowly we have lost our emotions. I am in my mid 40s now. During our childhood, we did not have a television, let alone an array of channels. But we had true friends like Katiya, Ramu and Pandav. They have flown away in the sands of time. Even if I want to

catch them now, I cannot. Do they still think me as their childhood friend who used to climb mango trees with them? Am I the same child who used to play to our hearts content in the vast fields? Today I have a position in the society with all my achievements. But still my mind seeks something which is missing in life. Time has flown away and now I have learnt that emotions are scarce in daily life. I am an established medical practitioner today with a handsome salary. I also have interactions with the societal elite who respect me a lot. But those respects lack a touch of belonging. Even wishing someone Good Morning or Good Night feels too mechanical in day to day life. The bygone era was far better where the informal conversation between childhood friends had a sense of warmth and intimacy.

When we go to our workplace, we are greeted by the words "Good Morning Sir". We may or may not like the person but still we follow it as a routine. But did we ever try to find an answer as to why we are doing so? Because we think that not doing according to the norms of the society make us socially and mentally backward.

When we meet somebody, we often ask about their wellbeing. Do we really want to know the real situation of the person? We just want to hear from that person that he is all right. Even if we come to know about his/her problem, we just let out a sigh in anguish and move on.

This artificial behaviour has slowly crept into our own families. After a long day's work when I return home, my daughter asks me what I have brought for her. Instead of a packet of chips or chocolate, I tell her I shall love you to my heart's content. She immediately runs away and watches her favourite cartoons on television. Just think what we had done during our days. We longed for the warm embrace and the cosy lap of our father. That was our happiness. But we should not blame our children for this. This is the societal evolution which is upon us.

If we dwell a bit more into this societal change, we can easily understand it. We used to send our greetings for the New Year or Bijoya through letters and post cards. But do we do that in this current age? Yes we still send greetings in the age of Facebook and Whatsapp. We connect with our friends and relatives in distant foreign lands though social media but forget about the sorrows and problems of our next door neighbours. I was unable to know about the welfare of my neighbour when she was hospitalized. I came to know about this from my wife and the ever useful household help. When she was fighting for her life in the hospital, I was busy connecting with those people on social media whom I will not meet my entire life. The social media platforms have so many groups of which we are members. When a member of the group dies, we start writing "Rest in Peace" in English. The so called Hip generation may write "RIP" just to save their precious time. But a couple of questions still linger in my mind. Firstly, writing "RIP" for someone who has just passed away, are we actually respecting them? Secondly, if we are writing this for the recently deceased, he/she is not able to see that post. So for whom are we writing this? Just to show the other members of the group that I still respect the person? The real respect would have been if we could provide a message of condolence for the family of the deceased and stand by them in their times of distress.

This is the reason why I believe that science should pursue progress with a mix of emotions for the development of the society. This is my firm belief and contrary to societal norms I am backward and I intend to be so.

neivadi NEWSLETTER

THE BLACK HOLE

Dr. Pranjali Jyoti Dutta

It was a sunny morning. We the doctors are bound to start our days listening to the patient's sufferings. Starting my daily round, I entered in to a cabin for daily update of one of our aged patient. An old lady was lying on her bed covered with woody lesions spreaded almost whole of her body. Gentian violet paint gave her an uncomfortable look. She was thin built, apparently very weak and depressed. She was looking to the intravenous line with her darkened eyes. As if every drop of the intravenous fluid was giving her an extra single beat to her life. Her eyelids were partly covered by the discharge. I put my palm over her head and asked how she felt. She remained silent. I tried to assure her of cure with some conversation. She kept quiet for few moment. Then very slowly she started saying-“ bupai(son), why you are trying to save my

life. Give me a peaceful death, if you can rather than trying to lengthen my life. I can bear no more Bopai, why I should be alive and for whom. I do not want to be a burden any more.” She started crying like a small girl. I felt an bouncing ache inside. But without showing my emotions, I still tried to encourage her with few more words. I kept saying that, very soon she would be able to play with her grand children, laugh and do whatever she wished. I told it was a matter of few days, everything would be perfect as ever it was. She had the saddest fraction of a smile on her face. I knew she was very much upset. After the necessary direction in the patients file, I came out of the cabin. Just at the moment, I turned to the next room, a very smartly dressed young lady came towards me. She stood right in front of me and told to me-“ Sir, I am the daughter in law of that patient, you just saw. How is her condition now?”

I was sure she was very anxious of the condition of her mother in law. I consoled her and told that though she has been brought very late, she would be perfect again, but she must assure me to bring her for regular check up and admission for at least one year. I looked her expecting a beam of satisfaction sparkling on her face, but to my surprise she was looked calm. She started with a very cold voice -“

Sir can I ask something?” I replied “ ok” She told- : sir, we stay at the other end of the town. My son is preparing for the coming board examination, to be held next month. He does not study, if I am away. Besides my husband needs to be very busy with his office burden. So sir it becomes very tough to look after Maa here in hospital. Sir can she be shifted to Guwahati in two or three days?. Her elder son stays there with family and they can take better care of her there. Sir please do something. You understand na sir? “ I could not find a single word to answer her instantly. I looked straight to her eyes like a monster of pre-historic era. Then gradually, I explained the severity of the condition of that unfortunate lady and asked her how she could think of such a cruel proposal. She was looking in to somewhere after my answer and got blackened in gross dis-satisfaction. Her husband standing by her side, was gazing to the ground like a dethorned king in utter helplessness. I left away soon. I knew, I was leaving behind an innocent old women, who had lost all her dreams and desire to live, a women denied of her existence and importance by her very own, a women pierced by time over and again.

Later on I came to know the old women passed away. She was kept in a rented room near to the hospital under the supervision of a paid care-taker. The younger son, staying in the other side of the city used to come at the weekend with

Treasurer's Report N. E. states branch, IADVL (from May 2016 to Nov. 2016)

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FROM MAY 2016 TO NOVEMBER 2016

TOTAL COLLECTION	AMOUNTS	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	AMOUNTS
Collected money (remaining money from provisional life membership fees)	2,800/-	Money sent to Central Committee as provisional life membership fees	13,200/-
Surplus money from CUTICON November 2015, Agartala	5,04,578/-	To Dr. Anita Baruah for CUTICON 2016, Guwahati expenses	1,00,000/-
Amount returned from ACDIMEET 2016, Guwahati	2,00,000/-	Travelling expenses for Mid Dermazone to Dr. Analjyoti Bordoloi	14,407/-
Interest credit	24,848/-	To Avishek Media (for newsletter printing)	28,000/-
TOTAL INCOME	7,32,226/-	Total expenditure	1,55,607/-

Surplus amount = Rs. 7,32,226 – Rs.1,55,607 = Rs.5,76,619/-

In our General Savings A/ C till 1st May 2016 there was Rs.9,66,181/-

Now the amount in the same A/C is Rs.9,66,181+ Rs.5,76,619 = Rs.15,42,800 /-

- Fixed deposits
1. Rs. 15,500/- (Matured in July 2014)
 2. Rs.1,30,000/- (Matured in Sept. 2014)
 3. Rs.1,08,605/- (Matured in July 2014)
 4. Rs. 45,158 /- (Matured in August 2015)

Total Rs.2,99,263/-

Amount of money in the name of association Rs.2,99,263/- + Rs. 15,42,800/- = Rs.18,42,063 /-

Dr. Chayanika Kalita
Treasurer,
N.E.States Branch, IADVL

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THE BLACK HOLE

food stuff and medicines to meet her. Perhaps the old mother did not deserve a space in his home, perhaps his wife was reluctant to accept her, because the kid might get disturbed and distracted from his studies due to her presence at their home, perhaps the old woman whom he called as Maa was no more considered as a part of his life. Whatever may be the reason, the old woman departed with clotted tears in her eyes. On getting the news of her death, I looked back in imagination how she might be jubilant on her son's marriage. She was probably wearing her best sarees that day going to put sindoor into her daughter in law in Juron. She was in the seventh sky, when she gave blessings to her son, the slice of her soul. She might have many dreams. But that woman died silently, away from her own home, away from her family. She lived alone, she fought alone, she left alone.

Nobody knows why these things happen? How we can get detached from our root and soil, where once we grew. We learn to forget so easily, those people, who lay down their whole life and comfort on our behalf. Flying in the sky, why we do forget that we have to land where we have started. On the roads when we cross by the old age home, have we ever thought of those sad story glimpsing through the burnt out faces of the old people. Why we deny them their portion of peace, little warmth and comfort. Our existence by their side is everything for them. But we choose to sink into our self alone. We learn cleverly to escape, like the young lady. We forget to look up to the sky and feel its divinity and width. This is the greatest tragedy of modern society and lifestyle. We must remember on our path of life, we too, are going through the same cascade. Black hole pulls everything to it and time stands still in that hole forever. Before getting drowned in that black hole, can not we enlighten our mind and soul in wisdom and values?



DR. AVINAB DEY,

What makes you happy? No seriously, bear with me for a moment here, what makes you happy? Happiness that seems to transcend all barriers and seeks to engulf you into a tiny, little ball of contentment. Much like the smell of freshly fallen moss or the feel of first dew on a chilly winter morning. Or like the pitter patter of raindrops against the window, as you curl up with a pot of freshly brewed coffee and absorb yourself in the varied translations of the myriad of intricacies of the world, and of life in general. The mind conjures up a pretty picture, doesn't it?

As he walks down the desolated road, marred by numerous potholes of varying shapes and sizes and broken road signs, he cut quite a sorry figure. His last vestiges of modesty lay in tatters, their condition only augmented by the state they were in, suggesting a clumsy struggle with a swamp or bog in the not too distant past. A struggle lost. His hairs were long, askew, unkempt and matted and resembled more the roots of an old tree. He walks with a limp, accentuated more by his dishevelled state and a dulled sense of defeat and resignation, the result of a long lost battle with providence. A providence that imposed upon him an eternal lack of food and an abundance of apathy. To the victor, goes the spoils of war, if you please. If only appearances could speak, his spoke of dashed hopes and broken dreams.

He trudges along, lost in his meandering thoughts, stopping only occasionally to peer

into the distance, shielding his weak eyes against the unrelenting rays. A gaze that promised a glimpse of a motored vehicle or more importantly, its owner, the very apotheosis of everything he longed for, aspired for, prayed for. A gaze that bespoke of a good Samaritan heading his way, for it isn't wrong to hope, is it? It isn't a crime to hope for a shred of sympathy or pity because as they say, hope is a good thing and no good things ever dies. And for the umpteenth time, the marvel of engineering and that symbol of aristocracy, ignores his silent pleas for help as it speeds on, in search of greener pastures, hopefully bereft of

hungry, homeless vagrants. He walks on. Clutched in his hands is package wrapped with white paper. White with a sickly yellow tinge to it. Inside the yellowed ensemble, there are three rotis and two spoonfuls of cooked vegetables, glorious, glorious leftovers from a stranger's plate. He looks at that packet fondly, an almost wistful smile playing on his lips; eventually he shakes his head and puts it back inside his layer of tatters. He bow his head and pulls his rags closer to his body, for in spite of the sun, it was the month of December and there was a fair amount of breeze blowing, heralding the impending cold, harsh night. As he nears his destination, his pace quickens almost as if in eager anticipation. He stops outside a makeshift hut, or rather a glorification of the word hut, as instead of the thatched roof all it has is just one wooden plank that is well short of covering the inhabitants underneath. The floor is cracked mud, as are the boundaries, who had long ago given themselves up to the litany of abuses from nature. On the floor lies a plethora of warm, soaked pieces of cloth. A

solitary, broken hearth does little to dispel the stench of pallid squallor and a bunch of gold medals strewn angrily on the floor only adds to the cacophony of hard, cold irony. On the floor, upon a bedsheet, lies an old and a very sick woman. Her skin was wizened akin

to the fissures found on ancient rocks and her face and entire body was pockmarked, the signs of a malady that was slowly but surely, draining away her life's essence. On her head, a few strands remain of her once luscious hair. Only her eyes regale us with tales of her youth, of days filled with laughter, sans worry, sans anxiety and above all sans maladies. A stark contrast to the rest of her body, her hazel eyes with just a fleck of brown in them, are still playful, bright, intelligent and full of hope. It is with these eyes that she beholds him as he enters and crouches beside her - her one link to the outside world and so by default, her sanity. He bents over her, removes the jolpotti (warm, soaked cloth) and kisses her on her forehead. The eyes smile. He then puts a fresh new jolpotti on her forehead and rubs her hands and legs with one of the many warm, soaked pieces of cloth lying about. All these he does while humming softly to himself. He then takes out that package, opens up the wrapped paper and with almost a boyish expression on his face says, "Maa, ajke ratri khawar bondobosto hoye geche." (Mom, tonight's food has been arranged). Maa smiles, a toothless smile, the intensity of affection and ardour in that smile unparalleled. He smiles back and lies by her side and places her hand over his chest, drifting off to a dreamless sleep, the days' troubles long forgotten, the harsh circumstances happily forgiven, the lines of the unforgiving battle drawn. Paradise lost? He has just found his. And happiness you ask? His happiness lies in those laughing eyes and the toothless smiles and the contentment that wraps around him like a cocoon, whetting his hunger and thirst alike, for as a certain romanticist would say, "If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?"

Do not go gentle into the good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day,
Rage, rage against the dying of light.



Dr. Nazneen Jahan

It was a busy summer day in the hospital, with patients pouring in like the incessant rain, who added to the overcrowding, heat and humidity. There was a constant buzz. It all seemed to tease our level of patience. In short, there was enough of clamour to drown the emotional components of any worried patient into the humdrum. But this patient managed to create an indelible impact on me.

The young lady came to me for treatment, with anxiety and worry leaving intelligible marks on her face, and with a barely detectable small white patch hidden behind her ear, which was the cause for such magnified concern.

The disease was trivial from the medical point of view. There was a single white patch, in medical terms known as "vitiligo" or "leucoderma" that nature had deftly hidden behind her ear. It was not even progressing. It simply lay there, silent and unnoticed by the patient herself since years. But this young lady was seriously worried. I tried to pacify her by explaining that it was curable, and that it would not cause her any health problem other than the cosmetic issue. I presumed that like majority of our people, a white patch was a matter of great concern for her too. It is surprising that people with dark patches on face walk around confidently, while those with white ones are embarrassed, worried, and regarded it as a social stigma. A racist society, so fond of the white skin is inexplicably worried about any stray white patches! While trying to reassure her, answering to her flow of questions, I also started judging her; almost despising her for losing composure over such a trivial issue. After some probing, the real story dawned...

She was accompanied by her worried parents. They explained to me about the gravity of the whole situation. That the girl, belonging to a middle class family was recently married and her white lesion was discovered by her husband, who sounded the alarm to the whole family of prejudiced in-laws. Some ignorant quack added to the spark by saying that it can affect her general health and future childbirth. Moreover, they were worried about passing it on to the next generation. They were now thinking about dissolution of the marriage.

I was left speechless by the impact a single white patch could create. The poor girl's parents showed me copies of her ultrasonography report, x-ray, blood investigation reports etc that were done just to prove to the husband's family that she was otherwise healthy. They wanted me to speak to her husband who would come to me in her next visit. Although economically constrained, they wanted me to suggest a few more investigations that would prove her healthy state. They wanted immediate respite from the disease, but I explained to them that, it would take some time. Already burdened economically with the recent wedding, they were ready to do anything to save their daughter's marriage.

As the family left with the promise of returning with her husband for counselling, I wondered how much I could do to save her marriage. I wonder how many more lives are socially jeopardised just because of one innocent white patch!!

Poem

FOR WHAT, YOU ARE TOO BORN

Dr. Pranjal Jyoti Dutta

You told to look in to the blue sky, and snatch its endlessness
You told to behold the mighty ocean, and breathe its deep fragrance
Through your all divinity, you showed to afresh the soul only

To blossom in the flowers, to be reddened in evening sun
To get stronger in all hurricane and soothe the wound
With rosy petals of love and love



Oh, felt alone in the drunken world
Ashes are all around, faces so distorted,
Humanity at gun point, tears with no voice

In search of you, in no light
In search of you, in silence alone,
Graves dug in darkened nights,

Blood shedded in newer heights,
You still never mind, remain so untouched
Calm in tranquillity, when cries all around,



When mourning marches, all around
You so privileged and quite,
We call you, the way you wish



With a candle in hand,
Walk in the gloom,
Forgive me, if am wrong, would like to see you

Amidst tears and hunger,
Along us to live, fight and conquer
In the fearful nights, through the villages

Burning in fire and fumes,
In the ugly hours, hand in hands with us
Oh, forgive me, for my unreligious bravery



What can I do, what can I do,
You taught me to believe in you
You taught me to look for you,

With no name, with no image
Come to this desert land,
To put us in a single frame,



Can,t wait till the dawn, so late
Come to this, world of tears,
For what, you are too born

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Glimpses of MID - CUTICON, Barpeta

