

# دستک | DASTAK | दस्तक

## Knocking the door of your conscience

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### From the editor's desk:

Dear Reader,

As the world transitions from "hand-shakes" to "elbow-shakes", moving towards a new normal, we have come a long way, from struggling to manage our lives in the initial pandemic days, to being substantially productive on online platforms. The global pandemic has ensured that, we displayed exceptional resilience and readiness to adapt to innovation on the technological front, and has transformed us into more empathetic and grateful beings. As the new semester commences on online platforms, Dastak is back with its fifth edition, which is also the first issue for the 2020-21 session. This edition stands as a proof that, we as a community of social workers, refuse to give up on our principles, which guide us towards being the frontrunners, harnessing the silver lining through our innovative practices and creative abilities in the most dire circumstances.

While you patiently wait for the contagion to recede, we've compiled pieces on different issues of societal and literary importance, excellent pieces of poetry that aim at knocking the doors of our consciences, a book review and reports on the two webinars that were organised by the department to keep you company during this tumultuous phase. Also, remember to follow social distancing and the advisories mandated by the local civic bodies in your area until the virus is dealt with completely. Stay healthy and stay safe!

Happy Reading!

Literary Society, Department of Social Work, JMI

## The curious case of epistemic dignity

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**Saiyed Raihan Rahi (M.S.W.-Final)**

Every evening as the smell of incense sticks and a consistent rhythm of the ringing bells drafts into the room of Meera, who identifies herself as a “Transgender person” living in an unkempt clustered setting besides the oldest temple of the city, she gets up and lights a diya in the remembrance of Shalini, who used to be her Guru, and who was shot by unidentified miscreants in the late hours and then left to rot in the city’s dumping grounds, as a result of what was a supposed deal that didn’t go well with her clients.



Life for the one of the oldest Transgender communities in the world has been a living hell, facing years of systemic ostracisation and seclusion, and being pushed over the edges of marginalisation, as the society conveniently turns a blind eye in the light of normalisation. The grim picture that lights up every time the word “transgender” is mentioned, can very well be used to describe the state of a community that has been mostly struggling overtime, for securing the basic dignity everyone deserves by the virtue of being humans in the eyes of the State. From serving as courtiers and mediators for age old monarchs, to being reduced to mere beggars and sex workers, dignity is a far reaching privilege for most who identify as the third gender in the current context. The word “Trans people,” at times, is the only respite for the members of the community, who are at the face of vile insults and public shaming with their vibrant identities being reduced to “Kinnars, Gurs, Hijras or Chakkas”, demeaning their worth, and stripping them of the courage they muster up everyday.

The word Hijra stems from the Persian origin of “Hijr,” which means, “a state of transition in the search of truth,” which is a stark precedent for the modern day deliberations on gender identity, and the failure of the society to differentiate between sex and gender. Far from the original context, the word now serves a vile purpose sadly as a slang, of which the community members are primary recipients. That coupled with a system which stigmatises the participation of Trans people in the respected spheres of human interaction, has furthered the dilemma of pursuing the idea of achieving a dignified life. A lifetime of rebuke splattered with occasional episodes of sexual and

physical violence, has become the reality for the members who are forced to vehemently curse themselves instead of celebrating their existences. In a bid to feed their starving stomachs, they're forced to paint a picture of a normalcy, which is riddled with abuse, begging and solicitation with dignity being reduced to a fictional idea which shouldn't be pursued in the first place.

The societal sphere for members of the Transgender Community is one that exploits, and the legal framework is one that conveniently ignores, and often colludes with the perpetrators for further exploitation. Such is the situation that members often stop reporting the exploitation to the local police, as their callous calls are termed as annoying and the offences instead being a result of the victims going out in the public sphere. Their calls are usually ignored and action is initiated against the Trans People themselves, for soliciting supposedly "unsuspecting" men into the flesh trade. The greatest irony, as Meera points out, lies in the fact that the same men who call them into their houses for blessing their religious occasions during the daytime, are usually the main perpetrators of sexual and physical violence by night. It isn't a surprise that the silence which is almost deafening for the Trans People often preludes the loud assertion of their identities in a violent mannerism at times, something which again is used as a tool for furthering systemic oppression.

Over the years, there has been a vocal advocacy for change by activists from within the community and outside, who have been pressing for acceptance and dignified existence. The changing atmosphere has ensured that the documentation of these lived experiences has begun, though in meagre and vague interventions usually from members, who again aren't a part of the community which usually tones down the generated literature, to the conventionally accepted degree of political correctness.

Laxmi Narayan Tripathy, who is regarded as one of the most influential figures of the Transgender Community in India, points out the sheer surprise when she started talking about her rights as an individual back in the day, when the prime concern for the public present was a "Kinner" speaking out her mind in English, instead of focusing on the issues she was advocating for. The failure of the masses to acknowledge her angst and the chatter about a language, which seemingly was reserved for only the selectively accepted genders, only multiplied to her suffering, which had already been subjected to a struggle for being accepted over





decades. The first Transgender Mayor of the Raigarh Municipal Corporation in Chhattisgarh, Madhu Bai Kinner struggled to be accepted into the working sphere, despite being elected with an overwhelming majority and was the recipient of incessant death threats by people who considered her as a supposed blot to the position she worked hard for. The society conveniently conforms to be a vehement opposer, when posed with the thought of a Trans-inclusive Culture.

In 2014, the Supreme Court of India in a landmark decision, declared Trans People to be a third gender, affirming that the fundamental rights granted under the Constitution of India will be equally applicable to Trans People, while giving them the right to self-identification of their gender as male, female, or third-gender. This was widely celebrated in the Trans Community, as a major step towards inclusion and acceptance in the social sphere, while acknowledging their struggles and the ostracisation they've been subjected to over centuries, and treating them as



socially and economically backward classes, which would pave way for reservations in educational institutions and jobs. However ludicrous the idea might have seemed to the prejudice-engulfed society, it sure served as a beacon of hope in times, when Trans-activists were fighting for equality and representation and more importantly, a secure sense of dignity.

Hope was however a short lived dream for the Trans Community, as the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act was brought into effect in 2019, callously ignoring the directive of the highest court and it put forth a veiled attack, on what was the most regarded virtue that the community had ever fought for — dignity. The most serious of them all is probably the procedure, which mandates for legal gender recognition. The process by which individuals can effectively change their documents, to reflect their identity is a two step process. First, it requires an individual to apply for a “Transgender Certificate” from the District Magistrate where they live. This can be done on the basis of a person’s self-declared identity. Then, a certificate holder can apply for a “change in gender certificate”, which signals the authorities to change their legal gender to male or female. However, this second step requires the person to provide proof of surgery, issued by a hospital official, to the District Magistrate for a second evaluation, and the official must be “satisfied with the correctness of such certificate.” The amount of power that has been vested in a government office, arbitrating which Trans People qualify to be recognised as who they are, is appalling and reeks of a system which strips individuals of the right to assert their own identity. It then coerces people to mandatory medical

procedures which they might not want, which is a fundamental rights violation that the Indian and the International Jurisprudence condemn. The very fact that the members do not get to choose their identity on their own terms is a blatant violation of what the courts have stood for since long. Justice K.S.Radhakrishnan, writing for the bench in the 2014 judgement, ordered that “Transgender person’s right to decide their self-identified gender should be recognised by state and federal authorities.” The court made it clear that, “any insistence for [sex reassignment surgery] for declaring one’s gender is immoral and illegal.”

The members of the Trans-community now find themselves in a situation, where escaping abusive preconditions comes with an even humiliating struggle to deal with a flawed bureaucratic precedent, whom they’ve to persuade that they belong to a certain identity. This places them in a flux, which reverberates between the knowledge of what dignified living means, while struggling to assert its entire existence in the first place. This furthers their struggle as a paradigm shift from mere acceptance, towards a more dignified inclusion which is separate from the outright whims and fancies of the privileged bureaucrats.

As a part of the society, the onus is on us to admit that for many like Meera, the theatre of life is devoid of the attribute of an identity with dignity, which effectively means that despite being in the limelight or the centre stage, the likes of her will be characterised as “spineless”, or a “lesser being” by the privileged folk, resorting to discrimination on the basis of gender, while denying them an equitable structure. Recognition of



one’s gender expression lies at the core of the Fundamental Right to Dignity, and it should be the root of all the developments, towards creating a safe and inclusive sphere for development. The way ahead is long, yet one that should startle our consciousness towards realising what has been the unjust social norm since centuries now. Countless Shalinis have been shot dead and are being exploited everyday at our apathetic expense which refuses to acknowledge the fact that the perpetration is real and it stems from the mere ridicule that we blatantly ignore every other day.

For Trans people, however, the question remains — What is dignity sans a clause?

\* Names have been changed to withhold identity.

## What colour is your soul?

**Habib Raihan Choudhury (M.S.W.-Final)**

She died in her stupor of unbelief, almost a drunken stupor, unconscious of all that transcends her life, oblivious to all that she could not logically deduce. She died in her own reductionist mayhem, unconscious and unaccepted into the hereafter. And out beyond in the highest heavens of unaccustomed Earth, falls onto the grassy green ground, a leaf corrugated by the will of God, seventy-eight years in the falling, orchestrated by a God she has denied all her life, a God she has for perpetuity left relegated to the alleyways of superstition. And now, a shadowy hand picks the leaf up, looks at the inscription and wonders what took it so long. What caricature is more wrinkled up than the other? Is it the leaf or is it the hand of an angel shaped like those of a grandmother?



Seventy-eight years too soon and now she felt her soul scraping against her innards on its way out — she is conscious all over again, for she sees a pair of wings spring out like the doors of a barn kept closed for centuries, 70 feet wide, gleaming in shades of white and grey; she sees a tall man, taller than perhaps any other man she has ever seen, with hands like those of older grandmothers, and yet a face like that of Jesus in those French movies about redemption. Is it my hand I am seeing? Or is my hand so old as to be indistinguishable from any other hand? A terrific lock of hair flying like armies of arctic albatrosses, its shadow almost rivalling the loom of revelation hovering over her.

And my goodness! Are those eyes?! Why are they so bright? And why is no-one else seeing what I am seeing? What sane man has seven billion and a few other million hands? What hillbilly imagination is a dying woman conjuring?

An audible gasp, the relatives unfailingly wail, a whisper of silvery air, the relatives now berserk animals, a flutter of the wrinkled lips; the relatives now finally quietened by the wave of the hand of some other shaped like her grandmother as eyes brighter than a thousand suns blind her to their paranoia; as hair darker than the darkest night plunge her into optical hypothermia; as wings wider than the widest embrace cloud her into



perceptual submission; for yes the Archangel Azrael swoops down onto her as the corners of her mouth contract, as the pupils of her eyes blacken to accommodate for the ferocious brightness and as she prepares to leave behind seventy-eight years of drunken ignorance. She is aware of it, it is her voice speaking to her, it is her life shoving the banality of death and the reality of afterlife into her mind, inebriated by knowledge, and hence devoid of knowledge. Yes, she realises this.

And the son is crammed up in his own dingy attic of subaltern agony, for he cannot bring himself to elevate his agony to heights hitherto unaccomplished. When he hears the wailing of the one-hundred wailers down under in the other room, he knows Azrael is here, and so, unguarded feet forget to click against expensive sandals; unguarded feet fly against the succession of stairs; hands reach out to separate curtains from doorways to flock to the bedside of a dying woman. And what creature with wings so wide looks sideways and excuses the eyes of a grieving son gone mad? And what creature fails to keep at bay the screeching of a family not yet willing to let go of a woman too old to stay?



But now she is gone. From perceptible reality into imperceptible unreality, the wailers and the watchers and the sons and the daughters dote upon a mute body with watchful gazes as the soul leaps up into air propped up by the hands of the angel sent down to rescue her. I have not believed in you all my life, and now I have to endure you. What destiny have you fabricated for me? And he replies, "O' doubtful woman of earthly pleasures, I am but a psychopomp, merely sent down to escort you, and want as I may, I do not have the power to judge you." The angel leaps up into air, a blue cold north pole air, swooping up like the ascent of a crane, onto his chariot of golden wheels: there are no potholes in empty space and yet, the soul jerks against colours both black and white. White, the abundance of colours, and as black signifies, the absence of it. For when they reach God in his almighty throne, He asks her the same question that has eluded himself on account of her unbelief— "What colour is your dastardly soul?"

Simultaneously in the world of mortals galore, shines a light brighter than the brightest star, over the mute body of a woman who just departed, and an agony laden son in unguarded feet leaps onto air to watch the light float up across the roof and onto the blue sky where it meets a chariot of golden wheels preparing for potholes in empty space smoother than the smoothest silken sheet. It is an abundance of colours, almost too many colours, for it is white and it is grey and it is shiny and it is translucent,

unfailingly shining, till the wailers and the watchers have discarded the body into the six-foot long hole dug in haste so that the light doesn't blind them. When it does wither away, after the son has landed onto his dingy attic back into his subaltern agony, in the evening when they have returned from the customary prayer for the soul's peaceful resting, it withers without a fizzle or a sputter, as if it were never there at all, and the wailers and the watches quieten into hastened submission, without food or water heated for four days, all for peaceful resting and painless passage.

But up above in the abode of golden chariots, she is resting peacefully nonetheless, for God has found his answer — God the shapeless and God the benevolent, for her soul is white and full of life.



## Labour welfare & social work

Vipul Chandra Jha (M.S.W.-Final)

*We were packed in our homes in fear of our possible death;  
They were stranded on the roads in fear of their inevitable death.  
Same mission, different reasons; Fearful minds, trapped in a prison.  
God knows what will happen next, Save our country from an unnatural death!*

24th March 2020, the Prime Minister announced a sudden nationwide lockdown which led to one of the biggest migration crises since partition. We saw millions of workers and their families on roads, no jobs, no food, completely bankrupt pleading with the media persons to send them to their respective native places. The first time, the middle class came to know about the plight of blue-collar employees. The day when thousands of workers gathered at Anand Vihar Bus Station, "Don't they fear dying from the deadly Virus?, Well, that's why education is necessary (nodding my head), they're surely going to spread the virus!, Does my area have a good hospital?", I was wondering. Suddenly, the doorbell rang which brought me out of my thoughts. It was our newspaper delivery man. "Sir, your bill", he said. "Uncle, the month is not over yet", I quizzed.



"Sir, I am leaving for my hometown, Boss needs some urgent money, therefore he sent me early to do the collections." he said and handed me the bill.

While looking for the wallet, "Leaving, why? There is a lockdown, Uncle!", I replied.

"No option, son, I am being fired by my boss, and your aunt is sick from the last two months. Leaving is the best option now.", he explained.

"Is she all right?" , I enquired while thinking of inviting him inside unable to find my wallet.

"Not really, working in the Salt factory made her sick." he said.

But going back to Bihar, won't be a good option. What if you're affected by the virus? You should stay here for at least a month, till that time, I think cases will come down to zero.", I advised and gestured him to come inside.

"I don't have any savings, and the rent is quite high in Ghaziabad. Going back is the only option." he silently said and sat on the only available chair in the living room.

My brother intervened while taking out his earphone, "You don't have a bank account, do you? Last time you told me.", he laughed.

I handed the bill to my mother.

"I don't understand why you haven't saved money like us, in banks; if you had, you could have survived a month or two, at least." he blamed.

The old man kept quiet for a while. I gave a sharp look at my brother. He again got busy with his phone.

"Actually, sir, I fear going to the bank. I fear that the guard won't let me enter, the clerk might scold me and customers would laugh at me because I don't know how to read. Your Aunt was once scolded by the Cashier, she cried all day." he explained to me.

I handed him the money and was nodding my head to the validation of his story.

"What is your salary, uncle?" I inquired.

"6500 rupees per month." he answered. "Earlier your aunt used to earn around 5000 rupees but now that income is dead too."

I silently listened.

"I will never come back, my brother has a small agricultural land in Bhagalpur, I will help him there." he said with his moist eyes and shaky voice. He then stood up and left.

It is a 4-month-old (real) story. But why am I narrating this story to you! Well, apart from the usual barrage of emotions, a budding Social worker can learn a lot from it.

There are violations of a couple of Labour laws here.

- Uncle is paid 6500 rupees per month and the Aunt gets 5000 rupees per month. Violation of the Minimum Wages Act, 1948. (In UP, Minimum Wage is 318 rupees per day).
- Along with that, his wife was not paid equal to her male counterpart of 7000 rupees per month. Violation of the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976.



- The Aunt in concern, fell sick while working in a Salt factory, where dangerous chemicals are used; a serious case of Occupational Safety. Violation of Factories Act, 1948.
- Uncle does not have a bank account, leave insurance. He is out of the social security bracket. Not even getting benefitted from Employee State Insurance Act, 1948.

In the last one year, I have gotten quite sensitive to the Labour issues. My fieldwork was in Jhilmil Industrial Area (Rajiv Camp), Delhi, where I have met a lot of labourers; believe me, they were exploited to the fullest. Low & unequal wage, zero occupational safety, no facilities like shelter, drinking water, no separate toilets, no Insurance, Gratuity, Bonus, etc, even though there are full-fledged Acts to curb these issues like Bonus Act, 1965, Gratuity Act, 1972, etc but they're never seriously implemented and Labour Unions are bribed to keep quiet, and guess what, all of this happening in the capital city. In a few factories, I even saw underaged children working (Violation of Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986.

When I visited the Deputy Labour Commissioner's Office during my fieldwork, I was shocked to see the humongous crowd of labourers gathered there to seek justice. Almost everyone was paid lower than the minimum wage and all-male workers admitted that their female counterparts are paid lower than them.



As a budding professional social worker, I believe without uplifting them economically, we can never empower them truly. Distributing free food, clothes, and other items won't serve the purpose. They don't want free stuff, they just want the things they deserve, which is a Right, like being paid fair, above minimum wages, on time.

Right now, the majority of workers along with their families are in their respective native places, and when they will come back, the exploitation may quadruple. Therefore, it is important to make them aware of their rights, about Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, Industrial Tribunals, Labour Courts, Bipartism, Tripartism, promoting Worker's participation in Management via Joint Management Councils, etc. Labour legislations are the biggest weapon for securing justice and employers exploit the ignorance of workers. The humongous gap needs to be bridged.

After the liberalisation of the Indian economy, the trade unions have weakened, lost their sharpness, and have failed to respond to the recent sudden changes. Therefore, Professional Social workers can see Labour Welfare as a possible career option and can

help 400+ million labourers of this mammoth nation. In the coming years, labor unrest is definitely going to rise, with rising unemployment, decreasing labour participation rate, and speedy disinvestment will make PSU's workers fall out of govt security net as well which going to make their trade unions irrelevant. The scope of work is humongous. Innovation in rethinking and re-designing labour welfare is the dire need of the hour.

Possible career options are:

- Working as Welfare Officers, Safety Officers in Factories, Mines, Plantations, Construction Sites etc. (Paid quite well) · Working in Trade Unions like INTUC, HMS, BMS, etc. (1/3 of outside members allowed). (Powerful positions)
- Working as Labour Rights Activist in NGOs. (Social Action can be practiced)
- Labour Research Officers in International Organisations like ILO.

Unfortunately, Labour Welfare is one of the neglected fields by Professional Social Workers and they are reasons for it as well. Like being highly political, big names involved, etc. But the rewards are huge as well like the chance of becoming a nationwide figure like Jimmy Hoffa, one of the most powerful men of 1960s America (those who don't know him, kindly watch Irishman, on Netflix).

I have a theory. Everything is connected to Labour welfare. Improve the conditions of workers; all other fields will see drastic improvement. Examples are listed below:

- Suppose a woman/man earns 10,000 rupees. Help him get the minimum wage, like in Delhi, it is 14,842 rupees per month; that additional 4842 rupees can pay the school fees of their children or help in procuring medicines.
- Help the Women workers, getting the 'Equal Remuneration Act' implemented, empower them; that substantial economic push would help improve their family structures and child welfare. Bangladesh is a successful model for reference.



- Help the workers get yearly Bonus, Gratuity, timely wages, etc. There are labour laws for all three mentioned subjects. It will financially help the family. Timely wages can help them plan their finances and gratuity can help in their post-retirement life.
- Labour Welfare is divided into two parts: Intra-mural (inside the organisation/factory) and Extramural (outside the factory); help them get these deserved facilities like



Crèches, Recreational facilities, Occupational Safety, Transport facility, etc; which will improve their both physical and mental status.

- Happy-satisfied worker means better productivity. An increase in production will help the employers garner more profit which inevitably mean more taxes thus, being beneficial to the economy at large.

Now, it's time for you to think.

Do you have the required skills? Do you have the negotiation skills? The patience? And most importantly the zeal to uplift the deplorable conditions of our blue-collar workers. After reading the above 1500 words, even if a single person thinks of taking up "Labour Welfare' as their possible career, my target is achieved.

## Dose of self-positivity for better management of corporate affairs

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Mansi Sharma (M.H.R.M. - Final)

The unprecedented time has called for a revolution in how things were carried out in our professional spheres. These transitions have not only demanded the organisations to change their style of working but also the employees to become more adaptive and show positive dynamism. However, there is a question that all the professionals should ask themselves — “Is this change a feeling of positivity or negativity for me?” Reflecting on this, many of us might realise that in many ways, this constant spree of changes is taking a toll on our mental health. Unable to see an end to uncertain times, though at some level our brain is accepting these hazy times, but at the same time it is not very sure of what clear course of action one should take. Other than this, the locus of control of majority events being external, and so, no matter how much you or me think about it, little can we do to change these.



This calls for a Dose of Self-positivity, especially for the people operating in highly demanding corporate environments. There are some ways we can walk ourselves through this path of positivity.

- **Positive Suggestive Affirmations:** Suggestive affirmations can be of any kind, but what we have to feed our unconscious with, is positive affirmations. So, at times of feelings of extreme pressure, sit with yourself and affirm yourself with sentences like: “I have confidence in myself to successfully handle this difficult task”; “I am a go-getter”; or any other affirmation you know which you think might help you feel better.
- **Silence Therapy:** There is a constant hustle of thoughts inside our brains throughout the day, which should be put to rest every now and then. In order to do so, take out 20 minutes (or more, if you like), lie down in some calm place at your home, without your phone or laptop (or any unnecessary noises/distractions). Try to focus on some natural sounds around you like sound of the fan or AC , etc., and try to enjoy the silence.
- **Mental Visualisation:** Many times, due to stress of some work, assignment, or an important upcoming meeting, we might not be able to put our minds to rest and sleep. This is something I really count on for myself. Think of some scenic beauty you came across on your last vacation, or some very vivid childhood memory that never

fails to bring a smile on your face. Mentally visualise these vacation or childhood memories, which give your brain something positive to focus on, helping you come at ease in stressful situations.

- **Speech Reframing:** Negative or positive beliefs become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Putting across extremely negative beliefs in your speeches, especially in reference to the self, directs our unconscious mind to focus on them. To feel positive, we need to start by speaking positive. Also, a very interesting fact is that our unconscious mind is inherently positive and does not process negatives like “no” or “not”. So, even when we say we are not troubled, it will process the word “troubled” but not the word “not”. So, reframing this sentence would be “I am happy”.
- **Communicating Concerns:** Sharing our concerns with people around us is a great way to give a let-out window to the negative feelings. Sometimes, it's not necessary to fight with these troubled thoughts alone. Reaching out and talking to people you love and who love you back about a bad presentation, or a negative remark from your boss, can give a vent to all these pent-up feelings. If you don't feel like telling anyone, tell your diary, it is always eager to listen.
- **Spiritual Turn:** Spirituality is not religion. Spirituality is a way of finding ways to connect to your soul and inner energies. For some, their spiritual journey is aided by religious teachings. Wherever you lie, it's fine, but take these times to harness your spiritual growth. Enrol yourself to that meditation session you always wanted to, or that Chakra Therapy, or the happiness support group. For me personally, believing that a higher power exists and remembering Him in unprecedented times, or taking out few minutes a day to chant His name, helps. Take a spiritual turn on this journey of yours.



These are some small doses of self positivity which all of us can give to ourselves. These practices, if done consistently, will bring small and steady, yet very significant positive changes for all the professionals facing multiple stressors simultaneously.

## Love, hope & companionship

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### Anonymous

*“Yun toh har shaam ummidon mein guzar jaati hai  
Aaj kuch baat hai jo shaam pe rona aaya”*

My late father had a particular liking to this ghazal when I was a child, to the extent that it would sometimes suffice for the background score for all our routined activities. The lyrics held no significance to a docile 9 year old, but Begum Akhter’s melodious voice kept me enthralled for most of my time. 15 odd years later, posed with the challenge of penning down my take on the idea of romantic love and companionship, I find myself turning back in time to substantiate the opinions in the current context.

It is true that romantic love has been sought, glorified and dished with multiple permutations and combinations remunerating around its existence. To seek companionship is an idea which has been subjected to extreme dilution over the years. Our generation is one that is the most perplexed at the thought of romantic endeavours. To keep our vulnerable selves in full public display is a virtue, which is greatly rejected by most across, who prefer the anonymity and seclusion, while carefully treading on what seemingly are temporary engagements for the sake of preserving our sanity. The mystery which accompanies the idea of love, is a subject of disregard in the current context, with an overwhelming majority conforming to the idea of practically driven decisions, which often takes out the adventure which used to precede the idea of companionship. The replacement is often scary with prioritised calculations succeeding unrealistic expectations across participating spectrums.



The lack of a sphere which promotes healthy conversations and budding companionships, coupled with the technological advancements in a world where judgements are made in a matter of seconds, with individuals swiping to make their choices known, has led to the spike in the cases of mistrust often leading to anxiety, while initiating long term engagements. To understand where things went downhill, we’ll have to simplify the idea of expressing emotions. “Mindscapes of Love and Longing” a documentary on specially-abled people expressing their opinions on love and companionship, is probably one the best pieces on YouTube that explores our disgruntlements and portrays an alternative image of the voices, which go unheard in



the din and bustle of our ignorance. The documentary features people who have shown the world, that despite the labelling they've been subjected to their entire lives, they've kept the ability of loving wholeheartedly intact.

There has been overwhelming advocacy on accepting love as it is in the last few years, bereft of the prejudices and biases of the generations, with the de-establishment of unfair articles in our legal and social structures. Ms. Trisha in the documentary, does an exceptional job of keeping the innocence of the idea intact, by stating that she likes female companionship shattering the pre-existing structure which claims that love can be quantified into a definite



structure and pattern of engagement. In a societal structure which effortlessly sidelines the views of the seemingly different, it becomes more necessary to promote the preservation of ideas which would pave way for a more inclusive culture.

A distinct increase in the marketing of beauty and cosmetic products, has led to the popular belief that romantic endeavours are limited to able-bodied individuals, with blatant body shaming and racial discrimination promoting the negative connotation of having well chiseled and graceful individuals as the sole idea of effective partnership, conveniently reducing the entire existences of many to a disgraceful state of disregard for their intellectual abilities.

Mr. Alok Sikka despite having many challenges arising from Cerebral palsy aims at dismantling this structure by putting forth the idea of his love for a popular Bollywood actress Ameesha Patel's character, having the ability to look beyond the existing norms to celebrate and stand by the lead actor's simplicity as the real deal. "Expanding horizons of thought" is what Mr. Sikka claims should be the precedent to the process of acceptance, and cherishing what seemingly is a companionship for lifetime. Be it the heartwarming story of Mr. Samuel and Ms. Meenu, or the inspiring one of Mr. Vipul and Ms. Sangeeta; the underlying thought remains the same across tales, that puts forth the unchallenged idea of companionship being the survival strategy of humans through the torments of time.

Being members of the human race, we bond over common aspirations and the idea of peaceful existence begins in the nature of our shared identity. Sue Johnson in her essay "Real love stories", tries to encapsulate her experience over the years working towards conflict resolution and promotion of healthy relationships, in the form of "Emotionally Focused Therapy" for troubled couples.

The idea that she put forth in the statement, "ARE you there for me?" is one that answers most of the troubles that we encounter, as a fast paced and largely, an emotionally challenged generation. Attachment being one of the most comprehensive, biologically based developmental theories of personality ever formulated, is also one that integrates inner realities with relational dramas. The justification lies in our existences as social-bonding mammals, who crave for effective connections to shape our neural architecture, responses to stress and interpersonal dramas and dilemmas. This is extremely vital for our survival, and isolation or loss of close attachment figures is inherently traumatising.



Accessibility, Responsiveness and Emotional engagement set the wheels running for any long term bond and the misinterpretation of any, can lead to negative reinforcement of behaviour in the participating individuals. Johnson also talks about the three types of attachment, which she describes as, "Avoidant; anxious/preoccupied; and abused/traumatised", with the response mechanisms being characterised as, "Ghosting; demanding or a situation which has the intermittent mix and match of the two responses; arising out of a history of believing and being let down on countless instances respectively."

The confusions are many, yet the subtlety with which reciprocating companionships engage their cherishing participants is a journey, which calls for celebrating differences and diversified responses by the promotion of healthy engagements, while setting the footing of the idea of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam", or "One family under God." While it instills a sense of hope for our generation, the idea brings out the innate goodness we all preserve in ourselves overwhelming us with pangs of sadness and hope, as the legendary Begum Akhter from my childhood popularly sings—

*"Ae mohabbat tere anjaam pe rona aaya,  
Jaane kyun tere naam pe rona aaya"*

**Mindscapes of Love and Longing :** <https://youtu.be/J1HGzxP4Nr4>

## माँ मैं वापिस आना चाहता हूँ !

Ajay Kumar Chitransh (M.S.W.-Final)

लौ के ऊपर मिर्च के पड़ते,  
गर्म तेल से उठते वो छींट जला देती वह जब तक, मैं लेता  
अपने हाथों को खींच।

तब पता चला कि माँ सारा दिन कैसे उन बूंदो से लड़ती  
उसी लौ के सामने वह निडर हमारे लिए खड़ी रहती।।  
गूथते आटो से पड़ते उंगलियों पर जोर का आभास होता है,  
हमें खाना परोसते वक्त उन उंगलियों पर सूजन का आज  
एहसास होता है।  
किसी ने सही कहा है, कि माँ खुदा के रूप में ममता की  
लिबास होती है।

माँ आज मीलों दूर है,  
फिर भी कहती है ,  
कि बेटा काश होती तो रोटियां सेक देती मैं,  
ये जो गर्म तेल की छींटे हैं ना, वो दर्द भी ले लेती मैं ।

माँ तुम यहां नहीं हो अच्छा है,  
यह आभास होता है कि तुम कितना लड़ती हो उन चार  
दीवारों में ,  
दबा खुद के सपनों को अंधियारों में।  
कोई माँ और भी होगी जो तपती होगी,  
उपलों के अंगारों में ।

माँ याद है ...  
जब घूम घूम कर दो कौर खिला देती थी तुम,  
तेरे हाथों से खाने का स्पर्श ऐसा मानो हर रोज़ अमृत पिला  
देती थी तुम।  
मेरे दिन भर के हज़ारों नखरो से जीतकर, हर रात सिर पर  
हाथ फेर नींद से सुला देती थी तुम।

मुझे याद है बचपन के वे दिन ,  
देख अपने अंश को होते गुम।  
जब तुम हमें दरवाज़े पर छोड़ने आती,

तब आंचल पकड़ लेते हम तुम्हारा जोरों से ,  
माँ समंदर के लहरों सा, रो देती तुम।।।

आज जब शहर वीरान - सुनसान पड़े हैं।  
गलियारों में दिन - रात , चीखते - बिलखते कुत्ते खड़े हैं।।  
उसी अंधेरे में लगा कि जैसे चारदीवारी मुझमें सिमट रही  
हो,  
रात के उस पहर में मानो कोई साया आवाज़ देती हुई,  
बगल से गुज़र रही हो।  
फिर माँ तुम्हारे हाथों का वह स्पर्श समेट, मैं सो जाता हूँ।

ऐसा लगता है हज़ारों मील चलना है मुझे,  
उन हज़ारों सपनों में गुम होकर माँ मैं तुम्हें ढूँढने निकल  
जाता हूँ।  
मगर माँ यह मेरा दुर्भाग्य है कि पौ फटते सूरज की,  
रातों को चले हज़ारों मील कैसे मैं पीछे लौट आता हूँ।  
मगर माँ तुमसे मैं मिल क्यों नहीं पाता हूँ ?

माँ मैं अब वापिस आना चाहता हूँ ,वह स्पर्श फिर से  
महसूस करना चाहता हूँ।  
पता नहीं जब भी निकलता हूँ मैं घर ओर , क्यों पहुंच नहीं  
पाता हूँ ।  
माँ अब मैं जिम्मेदार हो गया हूँ, तुम्हारे पास लौटना चाहता  
हूँ ।

**माँ मैं वापिस आना चाहता हूँ !**

## Bitter sweet experiences

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**Akshara Mehra (M.S.W.-Final)**

Conditioned to so many binaries,  
 That put my thought process at ease  
 I wonder who said experiences were —  
 Either good or bad  
 And made people happy and sad  
 Like a well lit day and the dark black  
 night,  
 Offering no respite.

I wonder sometimes  
 If they were grey,  
 Like the ashen face of my grandmother.  
 Where hazy reflections were present  
 Of my own persona decades later.

Or were they like a painting  
 Full of colours  
 Kept in the museum .  
 Representing the amalgamation  
 Of every other lost soul  
 In the chaos of this brutal world.

Understanding their form, my time went,  
 My heart blooms still with their scent.  
 Deciphering them was tough,  
 And yet every experience

Was always fresh,  
 In my thoughts  
 In my words  
 Echoing even in my laughter.  
 Unanswered were my questions,  
 For the most of time.  
 But now when boundaries are blurred,  
 Time and space have become absurd.  
 Dry sand near the shore adorn my feet  
 Celebrating the powerless seawater's  
 defeat.  
 I realise I exist,  
 Simultaneously at many places.  
 And it dawned immediately  
 I was never in search of answers,  
 But more questions.

And I found another question.  
 Experiences are perhaps bittersweet,  
 Laced with the sweet candy  
 And ground with bitter gourds.  
 Is that true?



## धर्म

Saifi Hashmi (M.S.W.-Final)

कुछ लोग कहते हैं  
संसार में बढ़ने लगते हैं जब  
अहंकारियों के पाप  
जलने लगती है पृथ्वी  
अपने आप,  
छाने लगते हैं  
प्रकोप के घनघोर बादल  
और विनाश की होती है वर्षा  
चारों ओर,  
ईश्वर के क्रोध में  
हो लाचार  
हर मनुष्य रोता है ।  
पर आपकी इन बातों पर  
मुझे विश्वास नहीं होता है!

क्योंकि मैंने देखा है हमेशा  
प्रकोप के उन बादलों को  
मंडराते हुए  
उपर,  
मात्र एक वर्ग विशेष के  
मैंने देखें है  
आत्मसम्मान को खूँटी पर टांगे  
अधपके खाने के लिए  
कतारों में खड़े लोग,  
फैले हुए हाथ  
और गिड़गिड़ाते मुंह,  
मैंने देखीं हैं  
मृत जानवर के शव से  
विटामिन नोचती उंगलियां  
और कूड़े के ढेर में  
प्रोटीन तलाशती आखें ।

मैंने देखा है  
मेहनत करने वाले लोगों को  
जीवन में आखिरी बार परिश्रम करते हुए,  
सैकड़ों मील नंगे पांव चलते हुए  
निराशा में लिप्त शरीरों को  
अंतिम यात्रा पे जाते हुए ।  
मैंने देखीं हैं  
खून से सनी हुई पटरियां  
बिछी हुई लाशें,  
और उन ठंडी लाशों से लिपट के  
बिलखते हुए बच्चे ।

मैंने देखें है  
अपने सम्पूर्ण जीवन में  
केवल दो ही धर्म,  
एक पकोड़े चाट का  
दूसरा सूखे भात का ।  
वे सभी लोग जो ईश्वर के  
दिए इन कष्टों की करते भरपाई हैं,  
एक विशेष धर्म (गुरबत) के अनुयाई है ।  
कुछ लोग कहते हैं  
व्यक्ति वही काटता है जो बोता है,  
पर आपकी इन बातों पर  
मुझे विश्वास नहीं होता है!

## Book review : The 7 hidden reasons employees leave by Leigh Branham

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Arpit Das (M.H.R.M.-Final)

**“Without doubt, there are lots of ways to measure the pulse of a business. But if you have employee engagement, customer satisfaction, and cash flow right, you can be sure your company is healthy and on the way to winning.”**

- Jack Welch, Ex-Chairman and CEO, GE.

In one of the surveys published in *Harvard Management Update*, 89% of the managers believed that most of the employees that leave are enticed by “high package” whereas Saratoga Institute’s survey highlighted that around 88% of the employees left a company because of factors other than their salary – the manager, the job and the work environment. Although this has been widely discussed among the scholarly circles, its rectification in the corporate web seems to be a distant truth even today.

The acknowledgement of largely disengaged employees, staggering turnover rate and consequent drastic financial losses, present in contemporary workplaces does not bring any fruitful change if the stubborn stalwarts of data and profits do not emphasise enough, on the non-monetary and behavioural needs of their stakeholders. The implementation of effective employee centred policies and activities is the axis of continuous, unwavering economic growth. It is therefore crucial to identify the “push-and-pull” factors affecting the engagement of employees and work towards bridging the gaps.



Leigh Branham, a leadership coach for over 20 years, comprehensively discusses the reasons behind employees’ dissatisfaction and attrition. The author, in collaboration with Saratoga Institute of California, analyses the database of 19,700 exit and current employee surveys that had been conducted for organisations in 18 different industries from 1999 through 2003 while writing the book. He strongly believes that the management has been focused too much on its business interests, handling its workforce with insincerity and leniency. He has been generous while quoting various exit interviews and formulates basic categories which form the primary causes of high

attrition. These are briefly discussed with some of the author's proposed solutions as follows:

- **The workplace is not as expected:** The employees often observe that the workplace they signed up for was not as per their expectations. The HR personnel are often accused of showing a distorted job description which create unrealistic prospects for the new hires. Often, instead of finding the "best fit" for their positions, companies tend to hire people who are "the best"; this often results in the intellectual cohort dismissing the job in no time. Creation of realistic job descriptions with a short list of most critical competencies and holding realistic and detailed interviews are seen as efficient solutions by the author.
- **The mismatch between job and person hired:** Research conducted over the last twenty-five years has shown that 80% of workers feel they are not using their strengths on a daily basis. The key missing ingredient in many companies is management's lack of passion for getting the right people in the right jobs. This also includes the typical American approach which advocates "adequate training improves performance" model that negates natural talents and inclinations of the employees. The author suggests holding "entrance interviews" and delegation of challenging and enriching tasks to mitigate the setback.
- **Too little coaching and feedback:** A survey of 1,149 people at seventy-nine different companies found that manager feedback and coaching skills were consistently rated as mediocre. Basic expectations and changes in work procedures are not being communicated and employee criticism supersedes the praise. Making performance management process less controlling and more of an accountable partnership is advocated to address the issue.
- **Too few growth and advancement options:** This includes lack of opportunities to move up the hierarchical ladder, inefficient and unfair selection practices, favouritism in promotional decisions, not hiring from within the organisation, insufficient training, etc. The author proposes provision of self-assessment tools and career self-management training for all employees to overcome the problem.
- **Feeling devalued and unrecognised:** There are countless parameters on which employees feel devalued - inequality of pay for similar work, not being acknowledged for a job well done, being treated with disrespect, having their differences regarded as negative rather than prized, not receiving the right resources, and having to work in an unacceptable physical work environment. Unfortunately, all these are symptomatic of viewing employees as interchangeable, disposable, and easily replaceable, which is still very prevalent in global business. The author suggests high levels of rewards and on-spot continuous recognition to diminish the issue.

- **Stress from overwork and work-life imbalance:** The fact of stress in corporate world is no surprise, but it is sobering to consider all the things there are to be stressed about—overwork, personality conflicts, forced overtime, disorganised supervisors, gossip, harassment, prejudice, poor teamwork, manager abuse and insensitivity, other employees who don't pull their weight, inflexible work hours, illness in the family, child care, elder care, long commutes, sacrificing family dinners to stay late, and the list goes on. The company culture plays a definitive part in employee retention. The author advocates inculcation of "Culture of Giving, Caring and Fun" at the workplace.
- **Loss of trust in senior management:** Around 50% of the Americans see the upper management as insensitive, short-term focused, ego-driven and self-interested. The mantra of increasing shareholder value has dominated the spirit of empathy and collaboration with the employees. If the employee does not identify himself with the vision and mission of the organisation due to the senior management, he is bound to leave the organisation. The author suggests the management to inspire confidence with clear vision and actionable plan to tackle this.

While discussing the above reasons, the author provides corporate case studies where application of changes within particular domains have brought about significant retention potential within organisations. He has elaborated on 54 Employer-Of-Choice Engagement Practices which are innovatively designed solutions that prominently stand out from currently common HR practices. Basing his approach in gaining the **trust, worth, competency** and **value** of the employees, he has curated a commendable set of 4<sup>th</sup> Generation HR Proactive Solutions to retain employees through intangible drivers – like Work Climate, Supervisor Behaviour, etc. – as opposed to the redundant tangible drivers like insurance schemes and health incentives. The book is rich in data and relevant references, adding to the credibility of the author. A good amount of theory, cases and recommendations is embedded in each and every chapter that would be resourceful for employees and employers alike. The author's diligence in carving out a thorough, well-researched and coherent book is praiseworthy! Even though the author writes primarily from the American perspective, it is equally pertinent to the Indian context which has been aping the former's style for years.

This book is strongly recommended for management students, professors and professionals who are keen to know the strategic and practical aspects of modern HR practices relevant to retention and engagement. A must buy for bibliophiles and book collectors!

**Amazon:** [https://www.amazon.in/dp/0814438512/ref=cm\\_sw\\_em\\_r\\_mt\\_dp\\_Y2JuFbPSB06SE](https://www.amazon.in/dp/0814438512/ref=cm_sw_em_r_mt_dp_Y2JuFbPSB06SE)



## Happenings in the department

### Editorial

Department of Social Work, Jamia Millia Islamia has always been on the forefront, whenever a crisis situation poses to put at threat any section of the society, given it's vibrant mechanism of developing holistic responses through discussions and deliberations. In a period when the entire country was undergoing an unprecedented scale of devastation suffering from a pandemic, the social aspects of the new found reality of people being tucked away inside their homes, was constantly being monitored by the expertise in the Department. A dire situation which saw a sudden spike in the number of domestic violence reports being made over the initial few months, was a matter of grave concern to be deliberated upon.

The pandemic exposed the frail structure of our domestic households, wherein, perpetration of violence is either callously ignored or forcefully silenced. In a bid to help the students to learn from the expertise in the field, the Department organised a National Webinar on **"Domestic violence during Covid-19 pandemic and solution based interventions"**. This time the students had the honour of attending a webinar under the patronage of **Prof. Najma Akhtar, Vice-Chancellor, Jamia Millia Islamia** wherein the main speakers were, **Ms. Urvashi Gandhi, Director, Global Advocacy, Breakthrough India** & **Dr. Sanghamitra Dhar, Consultant, EVAW Unit, UN Women**.

The session was extremely insightful and a revelation for the students, as the speakers spoke at great length to bring forth the latent elements of the reality in most Indian households, which helped in connecting the dots as to how the violence is meted out in most circumstances. The fact that the lockdown coupled with a virulent contagion, had forced the victims to be crammed up in the same space as their abusers, made the situation even worse. The gender roles which are assumed as, "a handout of a patriarchal setup" was discussed, and it enabled better clarity about the root causes of the emboldenment of the concerned offenders.

The multiple discussions and the Q&A session that ensued through the course of the webinar, had the students engaging in a learning process which discussed the key



trigger points that were necessary to be identified, and recognised the underlying oppression that is being meted out on the survivors. The students regularly cleared their doubts, and the speakers also enlightened the students about the necessity of speaking up, and being sensitive towards the survivors.

The webinar which was an extremely fruitful and an engaging one, also depicted the innovative response of the Department, to keep the learning process intact for the students even during a pandemic. The students were delighted and thanked the speakers and the department univocally for their efforts, into turning a challenging situation into a learning experience. That the patriarchal setup leaves no stones unturned, in being absolutely undignified in their treatment of unsuspecting women and children, owing to the selective gender roles armoured with sheer privilege, is one, that should be met with the promotion of a stern response, while challenging the flawed beginnings through sensitisation and awareness, was the greatest takeaway for the students diligently participating in the webinar.

## Happenings in the department

### Editorial

The Department of Social Work, in association with the Centre For Early Childhood Development and Research, at Jamia Millia Islamia, conducted a national webinar on the topic, **“Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Marginalised Children and the Way Forward”** on August 28, 2020. The webinar was conducted under the Patronage of **Prof. Najma Akhtar, Vice-Chancellor, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.**

For the webinar, esteemed speakers who work actively in children-oriented sectors were invited. The main four speakers were **Dr. Rita Panicker, Founder & Director, Butterflies NGO, India, Mr. Aftab Mohammad, Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF, Dr. Kiran Modi, Founder & Managing Trustee, Udayan Care, and Mr. Prabhat Kumar, National Thematic Manager-Child Protection, Save the Children.**

The webinar saw more than 150 participants throughout the running time period of three hours. **Dr. Archana Dassi (HoD and Prof. at Department of Social Work, Jamia Millia Islamia), and Dr. Zubair Meenai, Director at Centre for Early Childhood Development and Research, Jamia Millia Islamia)** were the webinar moderators throughout.

It is no surprise that the advent of the pandemic has left millions on the dark end of the spectrum where survival alone, has become a daily battle. The restricted movements have drastically increased the risk factors for violence, exploitation, and abuse of all, and in all this, the children take the worst brunt. This further reigns heavy for children who belong to socio-economically backward and marginalised communities, and the impact of all these on the children is likely to be life-long. The children on the streets, of migrant parents, and homeless children, all are prone to being recipients of various degrees of human rights violations, and often unable to keep up with the government protocols of social/physical distancing. Although quite unfortunately, these difficulties are often deemed as a part of their daily lifestyle, they tend to multiply by huge leaps when in the context of a pandemic. However, enough attention has not been diverted to look after the children— whether in the marginalised communities, those traveling with migrant parents, homeless children, children on the streets, or even with children in various child-

The poster is for a national webinar organized by the Department of Social Work and Centre for Early Childhood Development and Research at Jamia Millia Islamia. It features the following text and graphics:

- Department of Social Work & Centre For Early Childhood Development and Research, Jamia Millia Islamia (A Central University)**
- ( NAAC ACCREDITED 'A' GRADE, 10TH RANK IN NRF )**
- NATIONAL WEBINAR ON**
- IMPACT OF COVID 19 PANDEMIC ON MARGINALISED CHILDREN AND THE WAY FORWARD**
- Under the Patronage of**
- Prof. Najma Akhtar, Vice-Chancellor, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi** (with a circular portrait)
- SPEAKERS**
- Four circular portraits of speakers with their names and titles:
  - Dr. Rita Panicker, Founder & Director, Butterflies, India**
  - Aftab Mohammad, Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF**
  - Dr. Kiran Modi, Founder & Managing Trustee, Udayan Care**
  - Prabhat Kumar, National Thematic Manager-Child Protection, Save the Children**
- FRIDAY, AUGUST 28, 2020**
- 11:00AM TO 1:00 PM**
- GOOGLE MEET**
- RSVP: Prof Archana Dassi | Prof Zubair Meenai**
- Email: stomar@jmi.ac.in**

care institutions. The need of the hour, thus, presents itself in the form of questions that need a dialogue as an answer between various stakeholders, and to anticipate and further implore the possible issues, as well as solutions and options to understand the lives of these young ones.

The webinar put forth various evidences of harm that have surfaced in face of this pandemic. The children helpline numbers have seen a 30% rise in their calls in the initial period of lockdown itself. What's shocking is that the rate of online child pornography consumption has shot up by 95%, likely to result in more child abuse cases. There have been reports of increase in child-



marriages, child labour, child trafficking, along with newer forms of exploitation and abuse against the children that have been taking place. All these have led to the undoing of the progress achieved over the last decades, and will leave unprecedented child rights crisis with long-term consequences. The pandemic has led a helping hand in pushing the already marginalised into becoming more marginalised, and inevitably expanding the equity divide. Furthermore, the lockdown has witnessed huge number of children landing up in child-care institutions across India.

In the context of Child-Care Institutions (CCIs) in particular, the care is not guaranteed during these times as well. Because of the uncertainty that the pandemic brought with itself, no one — not even an institutional body like the various CCIs — was ready. Everything had to be learnt from the scratch, keeping in mind the safety, security, health, education, recreation, and development of children. Dr. Kiran Modi, who spoke exclusively on the cases and conditions of the CCIs elaborated how in the face of material and human resource crunch, running a CCI has been more challenging than ever. Several advisories from various government bodies as well as the Supreme Court are released with instructions on the pandemic and safeguarding the practices, yet, no clarity on their sides ensues as well. The pandemic also has shaken the core of time and management in the CCIs for various activities, services, and interventions. In cases of children with special needs, the negligence caused to them due to shortage of staff and inaccessibility to specialised support has come across as another cause of concern. Dr. Modi aptly puts it together to say that in order to deliver a coordinated approach to caring and protecting the children in the CCIs during a lockdown, it was imperative to impart training and safety measures to not only the children, but the residential and

working staff as well. The pandemic has also affected the mental health of various children who were already undergoing some form of trauma, by leading up to self-harm, suicide attempts, and other symptoms that are a clear-cut sign of deteriorating mental health.

In order to cope up with these challenges, the workers try to engage with children in more creative ways, as well as addressing their mental health concerns using creative outlets. The Child Protection Functionaries have now started to connect with the children and staff through video calls to keep the morale high and understand the children's perspectives better. However, the regular and continuous monitoring of care and protection of these kids has now become a task important more than ever.

The pandemic, has surely and sadly, brought about the worst for us all, but the children on the sidelines happen to be the biggest victims. Besides the impact on health and socio-economic conditions, the education and skill development amongst these kids is at an all time low. The webinar served as an alarm to what has been happening to one of the most important population group of the nation, and how conveniently, their stories and struggles are left out. It thus, stands still at a point where, in the face of economic and medical catastrophe, the minimum care and survival for these children is now a dream, further than ever.



# Off-Beat

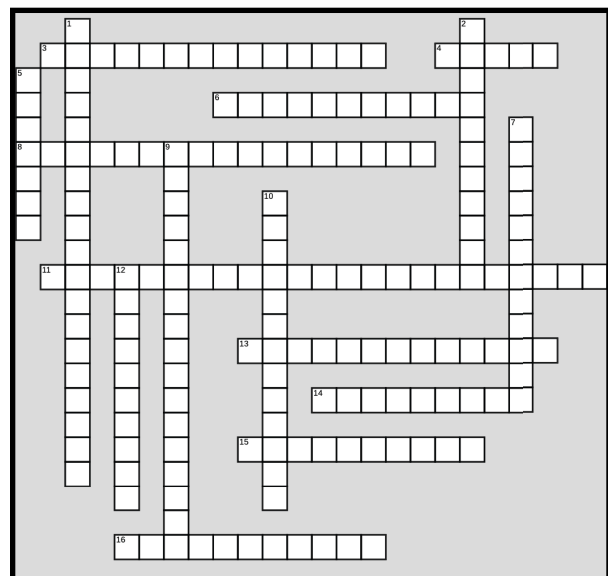
## The Samaaj Kar(ya)-toon.



## Feature: Photography day



Zoha Kazmi  
M.H.R.M.-Final



### Crossword:

#### Across

- 3 Refers to the way people form social bonds, relate to each other and get along(2words)
- 4 Do not accept the goals of society or the means of achieving them, so they create their own goals using new meaning
- 6 Don't accept the goals of the society or the means of achieving those goals
- 8 Give up life for fellow mates or team
- 11 Particular point of view of social structure(2words)
- 13 Set of mechanisms that create normative compliance in individuals(2words)
- 14 The study of human society
- 15 Aren't interested in goals of society but they do accept the means of achieving those goals
- 16 Accept the goal of society and means of achieving those goals

#### Down

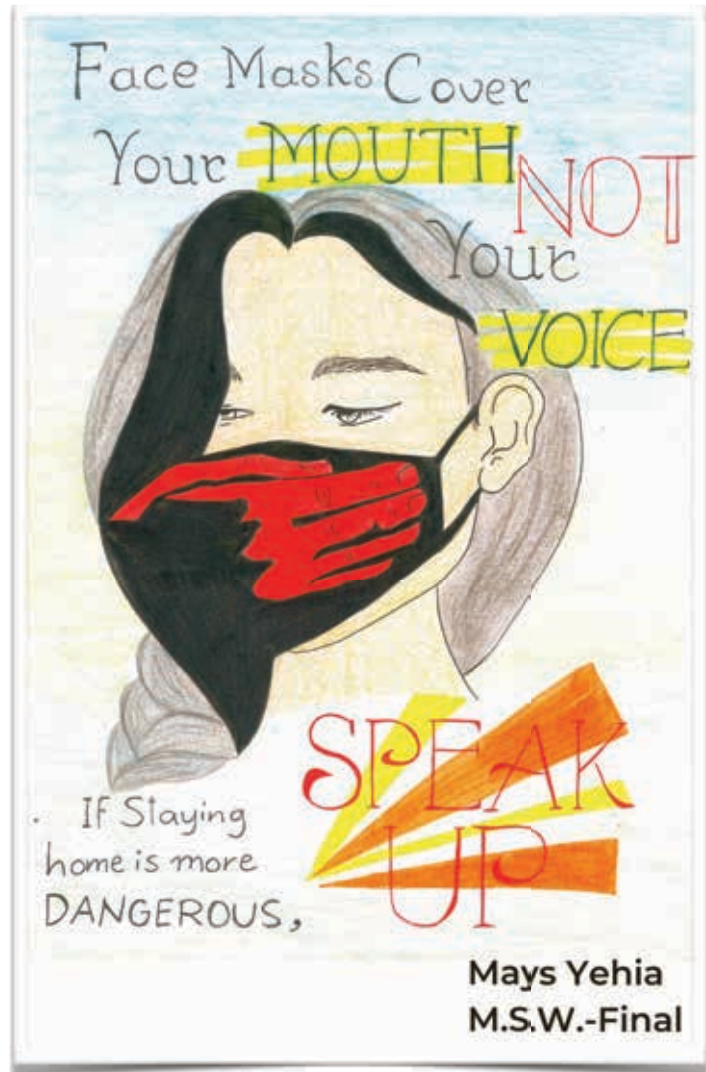
- 1 Act of abiding by social norms or simply following group life(2words)
- 2 A particular point of view
- 5 A proposition that contains statements that are contradicting but reveal a deeper truth
- 7 Deviance occurs when a society does not give all members equal ability to achieve goals(2words)
- 9 The ability to see the connection between the larger world and ones personal life (2words)
- 10 Is something exists in society it must have a purpose
- 12 Accept the goals of society but look for new or innovative ways of achieving those goals

### Sudoku:

	3	4		6			7
		7	8	1			6
1	8	6	3		2	4	5
		9	6	8			2
6							4
7				9	5	6	
	9	2	5		7	1	4
	7			3	8	9	
8			2			3	7

**Fun Facts :**

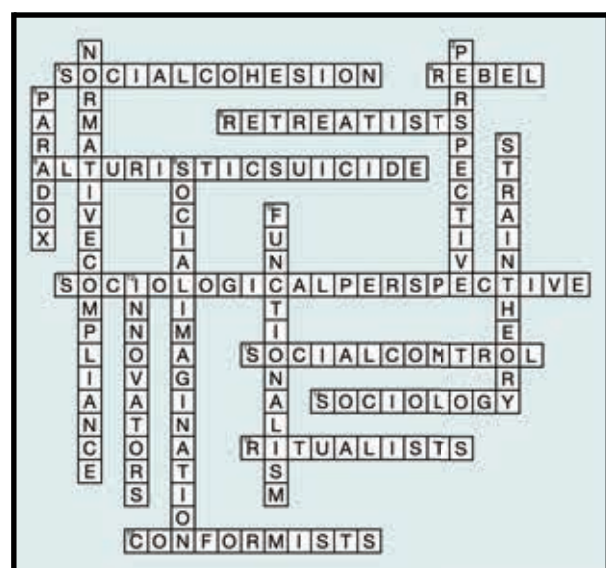
- The word "sneeze" came about through a misspelling of the original word "fneze" or "fnese."
- It's against the law to die in the town of Longyearbyen, Norway.
- If you were to write out every number (one, two, three, etc.), you wouldn't use the letter "b" until you reached one billion.
- "Witzelsucht" is a condition that causes people to have an uncontrollable urge to make jokes.
- In Medieval Europe, a moment was exactly 90 seconds.
- "Overmorrow" is the day after tomorrow.
- Ocean-dwelling species are disappearing twice as quickly as land animals.
- It's a myth that we only use 10 percent of our brains.
- Gmail was originally called Garfield Mail (as in the cartoon cat).
- Nutella was invented to extend chocolate rations.



**Domestic violence helpline : 1091/1291, (011)-23317004**

**Solutions:**

2	3	4	9	5	6	8	1	7
9	5	7	8	1	4	2	6	3
1	8	6	3	7	2	4	5	9
5	4	9	6	8	1	7	3	2
6	1	8	7	2	3	5	9	4
7	2	3	4	9	5	6	8	1
3	9	2	5	6	7	1	4	8
4	7	5	1	3	8	9	2	6
8	6	1	2	4	9	3	7	5



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