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President's Desk

Dear members,

Hope you and your family are doing well.

Past few months have been very challenging for all of us as we cope with the limitations in our 'new normal' lives. I would like to take this opportunity to thank each one of you for your understanding and continued support at this unprecedented time.

Many of our members are involved in helping the wider community, including joining the Food Army, liaising with international guests, supporting the need of international students and donating funds to different organizations who are working with the COVID-19 victims. My sincere thanks to the members involved in spreading positivity and helping others.

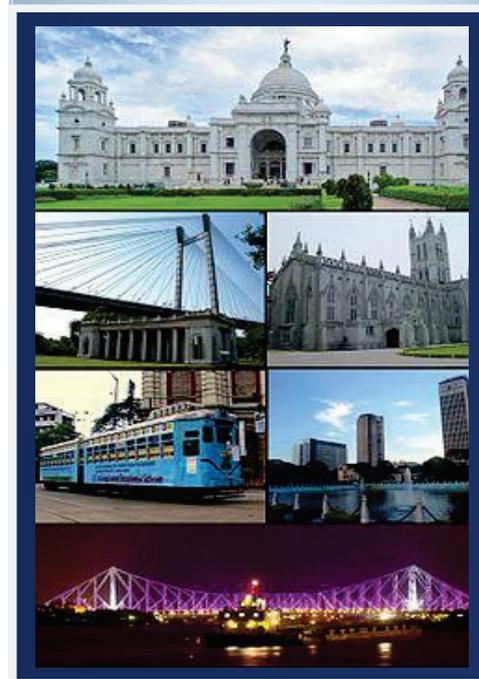
I would also like to take this opportunity to extend my sincere thanks to all our members of the medical fraternity, including healthcare workers for their commitment and tremendous work in this critical time, saving the humanity.

I know many of us are starting to feel the impacts of social distancing and missing the joy of being surrounded by happy smiling faces of friends and family. But let's not allow this 'social distancing' create 'distances in our hearts'. Let us be connected through our creative pursuits, including literary work, art, craft, music and storytelling. I look forward to hearing from you as you continue to discover some of the positive outcomes presented by this unique situation.

BSQ executive team seeks your continued support and active participation to create a positive experience for you, your family, and the wider community. So please keep sending your contributions for sharing with the members in our upcoming newsletters. Please continue to look after yourself, your family and we will meet again soon.

Thanks

Meghamala



Around our Brisbane in 90 Days



Saraswati Puja

This year BSQ commenced its socio-cultural journey by celebrating the Saraswati Puja at Aspley State School on 1st February. BSQ volunteers' enthusiasm and creativity helped us to put together a gorgeous yellow decor to host Devi Saraswati (look out for the fabulous Mandap in the pictures). The day started with Devi Aradhana (offering prayers to Devi Saraswati) and was followed by the Hatekhori ceremony of the BSQ's tiny tots. After a sumptuous lunch in the afternoon, the members reconvened in the evening to enjoy a grand cultural Bonanza adorned by the graceful performances of our esteemed BSQ members and amazing child performers. The show ended with a spectacular dance drama "Teen Kanya" which had a large ensemble cast. We wined up by having a delectable dinner and a lot of chatter. We all had an excellent time and hope to see each other soon, until then take care and stay safe.



Around our Brisbane in 90 Days

International Mother Language & Harmony Day



Brisbane Bangla Language School organized an event on 8th of March 2020 at Robelle Domain to celebrate International Mother Language Day (traditionally on 21st February) and Harmony Day (traditionally on 21st March).

BSQ members were invited to pay respect at the Shahid Bedi and put up a performance to commemorate the occasion. Our members celebrated two of the greatest Bengali poets - 'Kobiguru' Rabindranath Thakur and 'Bidrohi-kobi' Kazi Nazrul Islam by performing their masterpieces on stage through a recitation and a group-song.

It was an honour for BSQ members to be part of such an occasion.



Republic Day

Consulate of India in Brisbane celebrated the Republic Day 2020 on the 26th January of this year. The event was graced by The Honorable Indian consul Mrs. Archana Singh.

See if you can spot our own Madhu di and Indrani di in the picture.

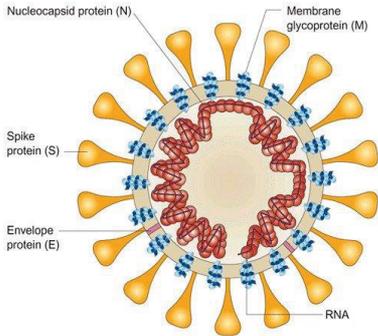
Lona live India and Australia.





Doctor OZ

COVID-19 – A Public Health Perspective Time to count the silver lining?



A pandemic, defined as a worldwide spread of a new disease crossing geographical borders and affecting large populations, is not a common occurrence. The Spanish flu in 1918 was a pandemic of comparable magnitude to this corona virus outbreak. So, what is this corona virus?

Corona viruses are a group of spherical viruses classified on the basis of their spokes that resemble the crown (corona) and characteristic features of their RNA genetic material. While corona virus is less unstable than the influenza virus, genetic recombination can happen across the animal and human serotypes, giving rise to new or 'novel' species. Transmission is usually via droplets in the air produced when a diseased person coughs, sneezes or talks loudly.

Personal hygiene measures are paramount including frequent hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, not touching the face, coughing into the sleeves. If feeling sick, please seek health advice. Telehealth services and fever clinics support clinical assessment and testing as required.

With the multi-pronged public health measures, Australia has shown a remarkable decline in the numbers of cases and has been successful in flattening the curve. However, one cannot be blind to the inconveniences, the stresses and pains that social isolation and the 'lockdown' is causing to the mental health and physical health of people.

A word of appreciation for the people of Australia, Queensland and Brisbane in general. They have shown excellent resilience, patience and tolerance to the strong public policies meted out.

Let us look at the bigger picture and notice the silver lining behind this dark cloud. It has shifted human thinking to a new normal and slowed down the pace of life. People are more creative, more innovative, spending time with family, indulging in yoga and meditation, picking up skills through online training and even sitting back to reflect on, *what is the meaning of life?*

Appreciate what you have, hope for the best and prepare for the worst, always with a smile. We never know what is round the bend!

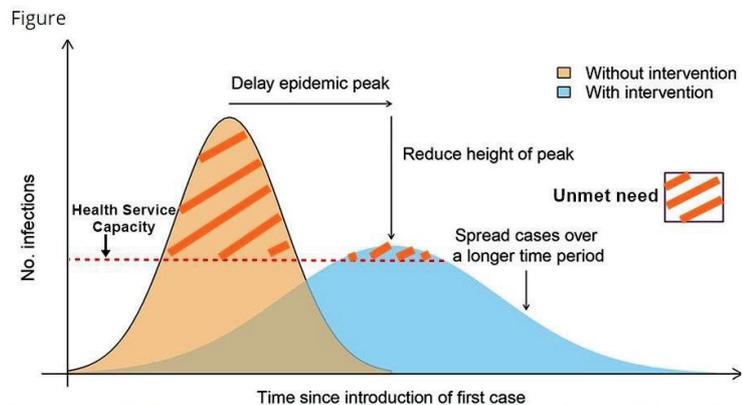


Figure. Intended impact of social distancing measures as nonpharmaceutical interventions for an influenza pandemic. Adapted from similar diagrams in the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control Technical Report (2) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Guidance Report (3).

Author:
Dr Madhumati Chatterji, FAFPHM,
Consultant Queensland Health

Unity in Adversity – A Citizen's View of the Corona virus Pandemic

*Rock bottom became the solid bottom in
which I rebuilt my life;*
J.K.Rowling

A young woman in a supermarket spots an elderly man who is looking very stressed. He tells her he arrived too late to get any rice. She reaches into her trolley, puts the packet she's just picked up into his basket and hurries away without taking any money.

While panic and pandemonium dominate the news, every so often I hear of the little ways in which people are banding together to help not just other people but animals as well.

To me corona virus spells many things.

C is for calm, buying just what we need.
O is for optimism, we will learn new ways to survive.
R is for responsibility, we each have to do our bit.
O is for the openhearted helping others to live.
N is for nurturing mind, body and soul in a 100 little ways.
A is for the awesome frontline folks, undaunted by fears.
V is for versatile; Bundaberg Rum now becomes Bundaberg sanitizers.
I is for innovative ways to exercise, much better than tears.
R is for resilience which is a good half of the art of living.
U is for uplifting, we rise by lifting others.
S is for social solidarity without breaching social distancing.

And remember, humour can often be the best medicine!
Have you heard this one: **Twitter invents Hindi word for social distancing, Tan-Doori** (Tan means body and doori means distance)

Author:

**Dr Indrani Ganguly,
Ph.D. Writer, Traveller, Adventurer**

Cross-cultural capers: When ANZACS dunked chapattis in dal and curry

"Sing me to sleep, the bullets fall
Let me forget the war & all
Damp is my dugout, cold is my feet
Nothing but biscuits & bully to eat. "

Popular soldier's song, circa 1918, recorded in the diary of Archie A. Barwick.

"The Digger sniffed the savoury Sikh curry, and longed to taste it, but it was no go. One night a few of the boys got into the Sikh lines, and in some way or other the fingers of one of them were found in the pot. That settled it. Johnny Sikh gave the whole pot full to the Anzacs, who didn't forget the good taste for a long time".

Source:

<https://www.sbs.com.au/language/english/chapattis-with-a-sprinkle-of-anzac-spirit?>

When we think of food in times of war, we usually think of food shortages and rationing. Sometimes we remember how wartime creates new national icons like the ANZAC biscuit in Australia. We don't always think about how food can bring people of diverse backgrounds together.

April is the month for commemorating the spirit of the ANZACs. Not many people in Australia and New Zealand know about the role of the Indian soldiers in World War 1 both on the battlefield and off it.

Letters from Australian soldiers which are now beginning to come into the public domain reveal a very unexpected side to the war. The Australians were often hungry and tired of the monotonous diet of hard biscuits and bully beef. Some of them found a way to relieve this by developing a taste for the Indian soldiers' rations of roti or chapatti (flatbread) and daal (lentils), both of which were freshly cooked and far more flavoursome than their own rations.

There is some anecdotal evidence that even the legendary Australian Anzac John Simpson Kirkpatrick, used to stay with the Indian mule drivers in the battlefields of Gallipoli and enjoying "chapattis" and freshly cooked curries or stews flavoured with spices by the Indian cooks.

Some Australian cooks learnt to cook bully beef with curry powder obtained from the Indian cooks which they served up as curried goose!

We don't know if the culinary camaraderie ever went the other way. There are stories of an Indian soldier being offered something in exchange (we don't know what) but refusing to take anything, simply saying 'No, Australian very good'.

We can guess the Indians of diverse religions (Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Gurkha) would not eat beef, but it would be interesting to know if they ever tried the ANZAC biscuits!

Finding inner freedom in the lockdown

By Sarbani Sur

Hello everyone!! Today is Poila Baishakh or Bangla Nobobarsho, the first day of Bengali Calendar. This day brings back to me fond memories of the fragrance of Belphul, Rajnigandha, the warm touch of my mother's hand on my head when I'd touch her feet first thing in the morning, the decorated shops in our para (area), the delightful taste of Bengali sweets and 'Halkhata'.

When I was very young I remember my mother taking me to the shops that would invite us to celebrate 'Halkhata' in the evening. Living so far away from Kolkata it has become a sort of a ritual now, wishing Shubho Nobobarsho to my family, relatives and friends all around the world over texts and phone calls and looking back down memory lane.

Like any other year, I wished all my loved ones a safe and fun filled Nobobarsha. However, unlike any other year, this year's celebrations have been imprisoned by the invisible lines of the lockdown.

In these trying times, many of us must be finding it really hard to get through the next day and waiting for the lockdown to be lifted so we can get back to our normal lives and mingle more, celebrate with others, grasp every opportunity to do the things outside we didn't before, go to places we didn't before and if nothing else just enjoy sitting in the sun.

It pains and worries me to know the kind of devastation this disease is causing in lives around the

world but, we live in extraordinary times in history that truly allows humans to thrive. We are at stage where we can use this time to mould ourselves and fall back in love with the things that once made us unique or find things that make us unique. We can use this time to find the things we love and the things that bring us joy.

I am taking this time as an opportunity to find my own inner self, to find the musician who was lost quite a while ago. I feel that I have grown as a person so much in these last few weeks and realize how blessed we all have been with the freedoms that we had. I am enjoying listening to music, writing, playing instruments, gardening, cooking new dishes, reconnecting with friends, getting back into yoga and learning how to take care of my mental health. One of the biggest things I have learnt over the last few weeks is asking for help when and where necessary, be it my emotional self or my physical one. Also, having a routine is really helping me make the best of my day. I am connecting with people more than I have ever before and this has made me realize how important our connections are for us to thrive as people.

I hope we keep taking this time to encourage ourselves and others to be their best selves. And if it is a break we need, then not be afraid to take just that.



Captain Cook's Corner

by Brinda Dutta

Ginger Fish



Servings: 4 | Prep Time: 20 mins | Total Time: 30 mins

SHOPPING LIST

- Basa (or any white fish)
- Ginger
- Garlic
- White onion
- Button mushroom
- Spring onion
- Green chili paste
- Dried red chillies
- Salt
- Ground white pepper
- Oyster sauce
- Light soya sauce
- Corn flour
- All-purpose flour
- Oil

Ingredients

For the marination:

- Basa (or any white fish) – 500 gms cut into medium sized pieces
- Corn flour – 2 tbsp
- All-purpose flour – 2 tbsp
- Ginger grated – 2 tbsp
- Garlic grated – 1 tbsp
- Green chili paste – according to taste
- Salt – according to taste
- Water – just enough to make a paste

For Sauce mix:

- Oyster sauce – 3 tbsp
- Light soya sauce – 3 tbsp
- Salt – according to taste
- Ground white pepper

Other ingredients required:

- Oil for deep frying the fish
- Oil (for cooking the sauce) – 2 tbsp
- Garlic crushed – 2 medium cloves
- Dried red chillies – 2-3 (cut into small pieces)
- White onion – 1 medium size cut into 8 pieces and then separated
- Button mushroom halved– 1 tin (remove from the brine and wash thoroughly)
- Warm water – 1 cup
- Ginger julienne – 1 inch
- Corn flour slurry – 1 tsp corn flour mixed in 2 tsp cold water
- Spring onion (green)

Directions

Step 1 – marinating the fish

- First mix the fish with grated ginger, grated garlic, green chili paste, salt and pepper.
- Then add the corn flour and all-purpose flour and rub them thoroughly on the fish. Then add a lit bit of water so that the flour stuck to the fish pieces nice and evenly.

Step 2 – Getting the fish ready

- Keep aside the marinated fish for 10 minutes and then deep fry the fish in hot oil. Fry the fish in small batches and do not overcrowd the pan. Keep aside the fried fish.

Step 3 – Getting the sauce mix ready

- Get the sauce mix ready by mixing the sauces, salt and pepper.
- Now add the ginger julienne and cook for a minute.
- Add in the corn flour slurry slowly.
- Once the sauce thickens a little bit, add the fried fish pieces and toss well in the sauce.
- If the gravy looks thin add in some more corn flour slurry.
- Taste the salt and adjust

Step 4 – Get cooking

- In a wok/deep kadai, heat up 2 tbsp of oil.
- Add garlic and cut red chillies and stir fry for a minute.
- Next add in the onion and the mushroom and stir fry on high heat for 2 minutes.
- Pour the sauce mixture and mix well.
- Add in the warm water and let the mixture come to a boil.

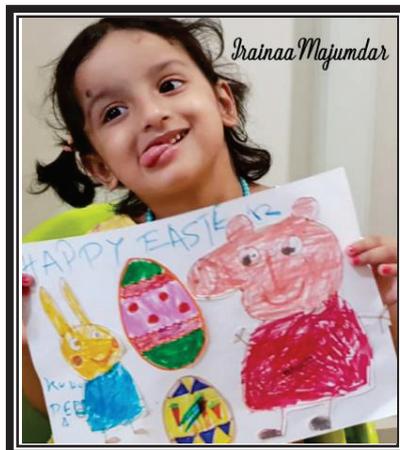
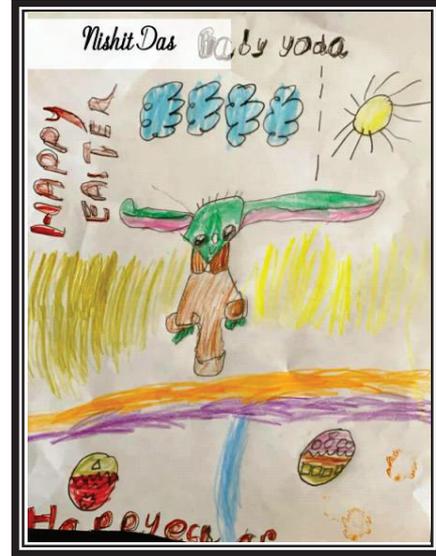
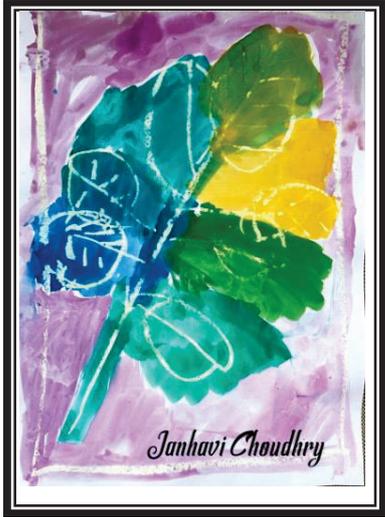
Step 5 – Serve and enjoy

- Take the fish off the gas and place in a serving bowl.
- Garnish with spring onion and serve with hot steamed



Playhouse

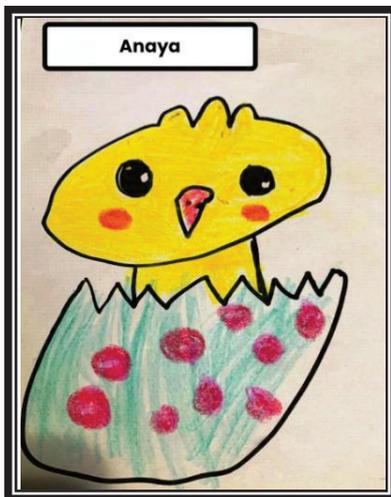
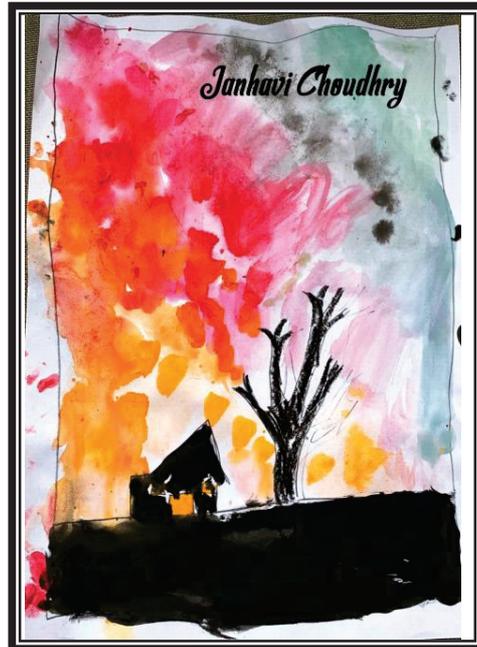
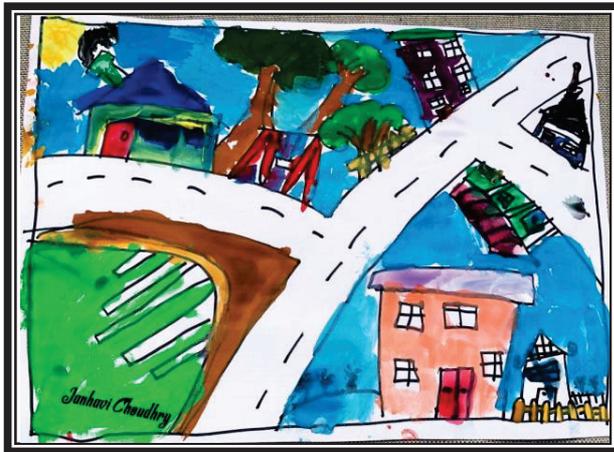
দেখো আমি বাড়ছি মাঝি!!





Playhouse

দেখো আমি বাড়ছি মাঝি!!



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- Mr. Sunil Mukherjee
- Mr. Manab Kar
- Dr. Ashish Das

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Brisbane Betty



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