

15th November 2022

# GOONJ THE RESURGENCE

REFRESH, RECHARGE, REJUVENATE

LIMITED  
EDITION  
**2K22**

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A NEWSLETTER INITIATIVE BY SAMSA

# Introducing the Goonj Committee



With another edition of Goonj, without further ado we present the Goonj Committee, the SAMSA members who worked day and night amidst tight schedules, semester examinations and the lure of procrastination (some of us lost sleep, I kid you not), to complete the production of *Goonj 2022: The Resurgence*.

Our sincerest gratitude goes to the Directors of SAMSA, whose encouragement drives us to go further. We also extend our deepest thanks to our excellent guest writers for taking time out of their busy schedules to write some truly scintillating pieces for this newsletter.

-Sneha Das

*Editor-in-Chief (Goonj)*

*Secretariat of Promotions and Marketing*

## **Editorial Team**

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# 1 The Collaborative Research Network- Opening New Horizons

**Nidhi Agarwal**

**ESIC Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Science  
and Research, Kolkata**

**Second year MBBS**

The South Asian Medical Students' Association has always believed in expanding and exploring new and unknown ventures. We believe in teaching ourselves and improving each day to keep up with the ever-changing world of medical sciences and dream towards the future of medicine. With this in mind, SAMSA launched its new wing, the SAMSA CRN- Collaborative Research Network with the hopes of bringing together like-minded individuals who are enthusiastic about research.

Every medical student is acquainted with the role that research plays in the field of

medical sciences. Each and every day, older facts and techniques get outdated and one must tap into research from the very beginning to provide the best possible healthcare. To make this happen, SAMSA aims to construct a research network and create possibilities and research opportunities for its members.

With its certified trainings and workshops, we plan to focus on providing the base one needs for successfully venturing into the madness that is CRN.

The online launch event of SAMSA CRN took place on 5th June, 2022 and was graced by the



presence of eminent doctors, researchers and very enthusiastic medical students followed by an overwhelming response for the CRN registrations. Currently with six ongoing projects under SAMSA CRN, we are aiming to launch more projects and activities in the near future.

And....that's not all and we don't plan on stopping there.

SAMSA CRN will also have its very own journal- JSAMSA. The first edition of JSAMSA will be launched at SAMSACON' 23. Under the supervision of our very own director and Editor-in-Chief of JSAMSA, Dr Priyadarshini Bhattacharjee we hope for this journal to contribute to medical literature and bring out meaningful research into the forefront.

With great vision comes great responsibility. Over the years, with the constant support from our

directors, mentors and members, we have been able to constantly try new things and leave our mark in every field that we venture into. With the vision to promote research aptitude among Indian Medical graduates, we hope to inspire others and get inspired in turn. Since growth is the only constant that exists, let us all learn together and never let our inquisitive minds rest.



**COLLABORATIVE  
RESEARCH NETWORK**

# 2 Goonj 2022 : The Resurgence

**Sneha Das**

**Editor-in-Chief (Goonj)**

**Secretariat of Promotions and Marketing, SAMSA**



*“When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful.”*

*~ Malala Yousafzai*

South Asian Medical Students' Association is an apolitical, non-profit, non-governmental organization registered with the government of India under Section 8 of the Companies Act 2013 (Reg. no. 221376). Our organization believes in its motto of “Service with Conscience, Knowledge With Purpose”. The organization aims to promote scientific temper, research aptitude, personality and leadership skill development and selfless service for the cause of humanity.

The organization arranges for health camps, academic workshops, exchange programs for medical students, research aptitude, personality and leadership skill development. We strive for selfless service for the cause of humanity. Through its activities, the organization aims to bring about a positive change in the healthcare and medical education system.

To join SAMSA, please contact your College Representative of SAMSA or the Secretary of Membership.

Goonj, the SAMSA Newsletter, is an echo of all the voices representing the South Asian Medical Students' Association. It is a reflection of our hopes, our aspirations and our ambitions to create a better and brighter world while working from the grassroot levels.

Barely a year ago, the world was in the throes of a recurring pandemic with no known end in sight. The lockdown had a severe impact on all of SAMSA's offline welfare activities, though we did our best to contribute to the fight against COVID-19. Moreover, we successfully diversified our online presence with a highly successful and completely online national conference, an international hackathon and so much more. We were down, but not out.

Goonj-2022-The Resurgence celebrates SAMSA's return in 2022 with multiple on-field projects highlighting both our goals of

carrying out impactful social activities and furthering medical education, a following a nearly two-year long hiatus in offline activities. In this edition we bring to you the past year of SAMSA, packed with impactful online events and multiple collaborations with NGOs working at the grassroot levels, as SAMSA rises like a phoenix from its ashes, doing what we do best, striving for- 'Service with Conscience, Knowledge with Purpose'. This edition also has some excellent guest pieces and some truly stimulating works of art and creativity to present to you all. We sincerely hope that this initiative echoes all the good work that SAMSA has done in 2022 and inspires more students to join our family.

And last but not the least, I would like to thank the members of my Newsletter Team for their hard work and dedication to see this initiative through to the end.





Dr Priyadarshini Bhattacharjee is a Clinical Supervisor at the University of Cambridge and Internal Medicine Trainee at the Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, alongside being a Mentor at the University of South Wales. Her 5-year goal is to establish SAMSA CRN across the globe.

She can be found reading almost anything under the sun, has a penchant for art and always keeps a bag packed for her impromptu nomadic ventures.

Dear colleagues,

I am writing to you whilst working in a healthcare system that is thought to be a benchmark for many nations, the NHS. And akin to NHS, no healthcare system can function without networks of steering groups and forward-thinking bodies. There are plenty of unions and peer groups for medical students and practising healthcare professionals in the UK, but none that is as close to my heart, as SAMSA which I had the honour of spearheading since its inception. It has been a joyous privilege to work with friends sharing a similar ideology as mine to construct SAMSA and to represent our colleagues and juniors, throughout some extraordinarily eventful years: from international exchange programmes, national conferences, striving through COVID-19 pandemic amidst academic struggles of lockdown; from the PPE campaign through efforts to improve the wellbeing of ourselves and our colleagues via webinars and health camps. I wish to summarise few recent updates and highlight them for your future reference.

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### **Executive Board changes:**

I have been fortunate to work with groups of hugely dedicated college representatives up and down the organisation, and with the EB's immensely talented and knowledgeable members. We now

have Ipshita Prosad as our new General Secretary who I believe will carry the baton of responsibility with the same zeal as her predecessors. I believe it is pertinent that the senior leadership in an organisation be flexible and encourage its junior

members to take up responsible roles that not only helps an organisation such as ours move forward but also inculcates confidence and helps them carve into professionals of the future with finesse. It is only through their efforts that we can continue to stand up for and protect our purpose, across such a wide range of factors affecting all aspects of our working lives.

### **New ventures: SAMSA CRN and JSAMSA**

I am happy to be able to initiate a Collaborative Research Network (CRN) within SAMSA that I believe would continue to strive through the coming years, alongside the journal JSAMSA with your highly commendable contributions and cooperation. The editorial board for the JSAMSA has been finalised and will be released shortly. I also hope that in the coming years, we develop a robust 'medical

research-minded' edifice within the organisation that will resonate throughout India and beyond. The members and advisory board of the CRN will not be limited to SAMSA members alone as it is for the behest of medical science that we'd mutually enable ourselves to move forward. The research projects within the SAMSA CRN so far include a West Bengal wide COVID-19 study that is at its data analysis stage, an Alzheimer's study-based manuscript which is currently undergoing revisions, an article related to HIV that is prepared for submission, an article on monkey pox that has been submitted, and finally an original research in rheumatology which is ongoing. There will be future projects, and the project leads would try to prioritize inclusion of teams that have not worked on the projects mentioned. Regarding the responses to your messages, it



is my request that you understand we all are working professionals with examinations and other commitments, previously. hence time for the CRN is not equally distributed and maintaining the same level of motivation within a group is often a challenge. Albeit slowly, I believe together as a team, we will be able to progress better in the days to come.

### **SAMSA - Wellbeing support:**

We, medical professionals, are often silent patients, reluctant to seek help when needed. But we must aim to rise above this common practice. As with our physical health, we must all take care of our mental health and practise to prioritise our wellbeing. Many people are afraid of the repercussions of admitting they have mental health issues. I wish to dispel these misconceptions to the best of my abilities, and hence I am offering my time for the SAMSA wellbeing

support. It is pertinent that you feel safe to ask for assistance without the fear of repercussions. As a result, I am encouraging you to get in touch with us should a situation arise. The information you share with any of us will be treated confidentially. It can only be shared with another professional with your informed consent, if required. This implies that before deciding to share the information, you will get to see it first. Clinical information about the diagnosis, course of treatment, or symptoms will not mandatorily be included. You simply don't have to 'just get on with it', as all of us who take care of others should be able to recognise our limitations and understand its importance to practise safely.

Our current successful events and ongoing encouragement from our passionate members continue to demonstrate the vital importance of SAMSA's unity; we are resilient when we stand together.



**Dr. Rishav Mukherjee, MBBS, MD GENERAL MEDICINE, is a consultant physician at the Medical College and Hospital, Kolkata and a Director of the South Asian Medical Students' Association.**

**The need to be relevant.**

The dynamism in the medical fraternity is unparalleled, and it is not surprising to find medical professionals evolve, in their quest to learn, tackle health challenges, and above all - staying relevant. SAMSA addressed an unmet need among aspiring medical students, by providing a platform, to further the development of a medico beyond the realms of the lecture theatre & hospital ward. The organisation identifies & nurtures the soul of every medical student, to gain knowledge with purpose, to serve with conscience. Since inception, a lot has changed, and the organisation has not been spared of it either. Motives have wavered, competition has tremendously increased, albeit restricted to entrance examinations, followed by a ragged journey through the medical curriculum, wherein a student finds scant time to spare for self. SAMSA is a living network- of friendship, partnership, mutual benefits & progress. The organisation shall flourish only when its essence is understood and nurtured by the members. Any organisation goes through transition, & it's natural to experience phases of irrelevance & decadence. But I am filled with hope & trust in my fraternity, since the foundations of SAMSA was based on a revolutionary approach to experience the beauty of medical sciences, hence in this era of doubt & cut throat competition, SAMSA keeps its relevance, for it is an extension of what each one of us believes in & the changes that we yearn to see. Take pride in the organisation and for what it stands for, & it shall never fail you.





**3 c.** The following is an interview featuring Dr. Rupesh Pakrasi, Director of the South Asian Medical Students' Association and one of our founding members. Dr. Pakrasi is an MBBS , MS (Gold Medalist), a Senior Resident at Calcutta National medical college and hospital and an aspiring Trauma Surgeon. His goal is to change the face of trauma management in India. He states that Trauma surgery requires one to be a leader capable of making decisions within seconds and believes that SAMSA definitely played a role in developing his leadership qualities and crisis management skills.

## Q1 | How did you come to start the 'South Asian Medical Students' Association' ? How did the idea of SAMSACON first come into being?

When I first started medical college, the idea of undergraduate educational conferences, mixing with students from other medical colleges to discuss topics related to medical education was not that popular. So, in 2nd year, I came across news of a students' conference on Facebook that was going to be held in Seoul, South Korea and I decided to just go for it. There were many obstacles ( I needed parental permission...etc.) but everything worked out at the end and right after my Second MB exams, the very same day itself, I caught a flight and was off to Seoul.

There I got to experience how

medical students in other countries work together to organise conferences and social activities. I really found that entire idea attractive and always thought that it would be great to bring that concept back to my homeland and perhaps we could build something new over here. That conference was a turning point in my life and the idea of medical students working towards a common goal, organising educational events and healthcare activities, was a concept I really wanted to bring back to my city, my state and perhaps even my country. And that is how SAMSA came into being. This was also the genesis of SAMSACON, now one of the biggest UG Medical conferences in the country.

## Q2 What was your biggest aspiration in the early days of SAMSA?

Initially my biggest aspiration was to make people realise that the concept of an organisation like SAMSA was a good thing and even helps in the overall development of a student in this profession. I was focused on establishing SAMSA as a medical students' organisation. At that time I was student myself and initially rather than focussing on the healthcare aspect, we were all working towards establishing a team under a banner and then expanding from there.

## Q3 Tell us something about SAMSA in its initial form (many of our newer members would really love to know that).

SAMSA in its initial form was just a group of 5-6 people gathered in the college canteen talking about ideas that we could act upon and bring about necessary changes. At that time we never knew that this whole idea would get such a massive expansion in a few years' time. But, well, everything starts in somebody's garage and so did SAMSA, in a way.

## Q4 With the gradual widening of SAMSA's sphere of influence, how did you go about diversifying our activities and enriching upon the initial vision of SAMSA?

As we finished MBBS and moved onto our internship years, we got exposed to our healthcare system and witnessed first-hand how we have to deal with patients with limited infrastructure in places. The front-seat view of how both doctors and patients work hand-in-hand in this environment to give and get the best possible healthcare really changed our outlook and pushed us to implement projects that would benefit the community. This diversification into social welfare activities was a turning point for SAMSA.

### Q5 What was the thought process behind developing SAMSA's motto?

Our motto 'Service with Conscience, Knowledge with Purpose' was built with the goal of presenting our vision in a single sentence. The knowledge that we build during our student years (and in Medical sciences, we all have to study so much) will one day help us to save lives. SAMSA was focussed on enriching this experience and at this juncture in my own life, I feel that all the knowledge I acquired in my student years is finally coming together and helping patients. And nothing comes close to the absolute bliss of saving a patient's life. 'Service with Conscience' encompasses our aim to inculcate a sense of responsibility and leadership qualities in all our members and we believe that it will come in good stead once you all take the Hippocrates' Oath.



## Q6 Could you share your experience regarding SAMSACON '19?

As our ambitions expanded, we planned to organise a National Undergraduate Medical Conference here in West Bengal, as such events were fairly rare in our state at that time. What was different about this conference was that we planned to unite all the Medical Colleges under one banner with our teams having people from different colleges. Our goal was to create meaningful connections between medical students across the state and the country as these were the future of our healthcare system after all. This idea turned out excellently well and SAMSACON, one of India's first UG medical conferences was born. The hard-work that our teams put into the event was also extremely commendable.

## Q7 What has been your most favourite SAMSA project till date?

Out of all our projects, my General Surgery, I am still favourite ones were the ones engaged with them. Initially, at related to community service, those camps, I was helping the especially the health camps were doctors on duty and this we could talk to and examine experience taught me how to patients and diagnose the various communicate with people with issues they had. My first health empathy. Learning to speak with camp was in Third year and as kindness is a vital aspect in a someone who has passed MS medical student's life.

Q8

Dada, you have been one of our founders and one of the oldest members of SAMSA. How has your time in SAMSA helped you to grow into your own career as a surgeon?

Even as a first year Post-Graduate trainee, I used to find time to join the various medical camps organised by SAMSA as they made a very real difference to many lives. I remember diagnosing a breast lump in a far-off community that was ignored initially by the patient. However, after this camp, she was admitted to my hospital and was ultimately diagnosed with breast cancer. She

later underwent surgery and is now completely fine. I believe, all of this immensely helped me to develop into a complete doctor and a complete person. Even today, the way I interact with my patients is very much a reflection of my background of attending SAMSA's health camps as a student. Those times in my MBBS days have now made all the difference in my life.



Ms. Ipshita Prosad, the General Secretary of SAMSA, is a woman of many talents. A 3rd Year MBBS student of R.G Kar Medical College, Kolkata, her accolades include being an entrepreneur and a patent holder for a new drug target for Alzheimer's Disease, to name a few. In her free time, she likes illustrating international research journals, constructive conversations with friends (read gossiping) and wondering how to fit her enormous workload within 24 hours.

We enter medical school with hope. High hopes. Of becoming a doctor, saving lives, contributing to society, making our parents proud. Then a couple of months pass and so does the beginner's zeal. We hope to find an amazing mentor who would turn our concept of medicine around and make it fun. Sometimes, that does happen. Mostly, it doesn't. Friends and Fests take over, and we focus on the fun outside the classroom.

I joined SAMSA for fun. Not because I wanted to excel at academics or do voluntary work. I joined because my friends did. Participated in a research presentation because my friends wanted to. Then we landed up with COVID. After helping out my seniors with mask and PPE kit distributions all over Bengal, Dr. Aayush Bhadani, the then General Secretary, asked me to join the Executive Board (EB) as an Human Resources Secretary. It was thrilling to talk to different people, come up with ideas, and organize events with other EB members. I probably didn't even realize I was growing as a person, and learning new skills, all thanks to my delightful peers and influential seniors.

We pulled off the first online medical hackathon of Eastern India, DecodingCOVID, which lasted for 72 hours and saw contributions from many internationally renowned mentors. The online SAMSA CON 2.0 was a massive success, and we haven't looked back since. Over the last few years, in spite of the ongoing pandemic, we organized over 70 events online, including quizzes, webinars, trainings, classroom to clinics, and others. Earlier this year, First Year Bonanza, an event exclusively for first year students, was further added to the list. COVID-19 curtailed our offline programs. However, it also diversified our digital outreach and



promoted growth on all fronts.

Since the reopening of colleges, we resumed health camps, probably the most impactful among all things a medical student can experience. As of this December, we have successfully organized 16 health camps this year, and will continue the trend during the upcoming year.

We have been making our presence known nationally and internationally, and it has been possible only because of an amazing team working tirelessly behind the scenes. With the launch of the Collaborative Research Network, we hope to welcome your research ideas and provide you with the opportunity to turn them into impactful projects.

As the new General Secretary, I will do my best to keep the flame burning bright. I look forward to many academically enriching seminars, classroom to clinics sessions, and research oriented certified trainings. We also hope to re-introduce organ donation programs, awareness drives and campaigns similar to the Donor Cup of 2018. Among many other major events, we have SAMSACON 2023 and an international medical student exchange program coming up. The first edition of the Journal of SAMSA will also be released soon. As we walk into this new year with high ambition, we hope for your continued support and eager participation.

I joined SAMSA 3 years ago, and haven't regretted it even for a single moment. To all my peers reading this now, I would just like you to remember:

**“If you wait to be inspired, you'll never start.  
You've got nothing to lose anyway.”**



# ACTIVITIES SHOWCASE

**SAMSA through its various activities aims at developing a scientific temper and bringing about a positive change in the healthcare and medical education system.**

*Adas*

Illustration by Ananya Das

# 5 | Online Overtures

*With the pandemic shutting down most of our on-field projects over the last two years, SAMSA has successfully diversified it's activities into the online arena and made real impact possible through the power of the internet. With the aid of a very strong team and highly enthusiastic members, we have successfully organised one of the largest online undergraduate medical conferences in the country as well as a host of other equally impactful events. In this edition of Goonj 2022, we bring to you some of our most significant online events from January 2022 onwards.*

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## a. The First Year Bonanza

**Sneha Das**

**IPGME&R and SSKM Medical College and Hospital  
Final Year MBBS**

The dream of being a doctor is one that most of us have chased for a very long time. However, once we get into medical college, we all discover that the distance between our First year selves and the prefix of a 'Doctor' is nearly five years of hard-work away. To help First Year MBBS students successfully negotiate the first step on this hugely fulfilling journey, the South Asian Medical Students' Association, in collaboration with Unacademy, organised the 'First Year Bonanza', a week-long educational extravaganza especially for first year medical students.

For ten days, from the 11th to the 20th of January, 2022, nearly 700 students across the country took part in three academic quizzes on first year subjects and an

anatomy webinar, brushing up on their pre-clinical subjects and having loads of fun in the process. The mentors for these events were all giants in their respective fields of study; Dr. C. Shanmugapriya, Dr. Reena Kaur and Dr. Pradeep Pawar were the mentors for the Biochemistry (Krebs Questions), the Physiology (Cerebrate) and the Anatomy (Gyrus) quizzes respectively. The quizzes consisted of a preliminary round during the day, followed by an online final event that was held between the top five national finalists and streamed on Zoom and YouTube Live. The highlights of these events were the rapid-fire questions between the quiz-masters and the finalists, the intensity of which sent pulses soaring for everyone in the audience.



“

*“The best way to make your dreams come true is to start early”*

*~ Paul Valery*

”

The quizzes were followed by Overall, through an entire 10 'Anastomoses- the Anatomy days of studies combined with webinar', officiated by the fun, SAMSA hoped to inculcate legendary Dr. Pradeep Pawar the notion of 'Knowledge and joy himself. His lucid teaching of going hand-in-hand' to a huge important topics and hacks on multitude of students and from tackling the huge subject-matter their response, it appears that of anatomy made the audience this goal was emphatically highly-motivated to properly achieved. tackle this dreaded subject.



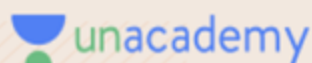
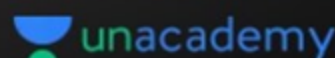
We had an amazing time, did you?  
For more such events, join us today!

*Thank You for  
600 +  
Registrations*

## FIRST YEAR BONANZA



in collaboration with



SAMSAINDIAOFFICIAL

### FIRST-YEAR-BONANZA BIOCHEMISTRY QUIZ

## KREB'S QUESTIONS

PRELIMS | FINALS  
TUE. 5PM | WED. 7PM  
11th JAN | 12th JAN

Learn from the best!

**REGISTER NOW!**

[www.samsa.org.in/first-year-bonanza](http://www.samsa.org.in/first-year-bonanza)



### • DR. C. SHANMUGAPRIYA

The earliest nightmare for a medical student was learning up the Krebs Cycle and remembering the 100 different mnemonics which existed. However, Dr Shanmugapriya Chandrasekaran has never made her students feel intimidated by the vastness of the subject and instead gave ways to make it more interesting and appealing for PG entrance preparations. The Professor and HOD of Biochemistry at Government Thoothukudi Medical College Hospital, ma'am is an alumni of Madurai Medical College and has been teaching Biochemistry and Physiology for Medical postgraduation aspirants since 2006.



# CEREBRATE DR. REENA KAUR

Dr Reena Kaur, fondly called by her students as Rupi ma'am is a faculty in the Department of Physiology in Government Medical College, Nagpur and the Physiology Mentor in Unacademy. You're just one lesson away from finding out how charming and amiable ma'am is and she'll ensure that you never go back home with your doubts, trying to be as comprehensive as possible with even some of the most difficult topics of Physiology. A co-ordinator of the Student's body of her college, she's the John Keatings for her students who'd never let the fire of curiosity and learning die down.



REGISTER NOW



WWW.SAMSA.ORG.IN/FIRST-YEAR-BONANZA

PRELIMS  
JAN 14TH  
AT 05:00 PM

FINALS  
JAN 15TH  
AT 05:30 PM

## FIRST YEAR BONANZA

- South Asian Medical Students Association
- Unacademy Live-NEET PG



## ANASTOMOSES THE ANATOMY WEBINAR

Hacks to score well in your  
First Professional exams

- 17th JAN
- 05:00 PM IST
- ZOOM



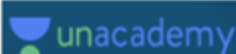
DR. PRADEEP  
PAWAR

An Alumni of LTMMC Mymba, Dr Pradeep Pawar has been a known faculty in the world of PG entrance for the last 25 years, travelling around the country, taking classes in some of the largest lecture theatres and auditorium, empowering students with the ability to tackle any anatomy question while making them feel less and less intimidated by entrance exams and the world of medicine. When he's not busy teaching, he adorns the quiz master hat, throwing some interesting clinical questions and trivias to keep the brain ticking.

Register @

www.samsa.org.in/first-year-bonanza/

Sneha: 8240900180 | Iphita: 8777592400



## GYRUS The Anatomy Quiz

### Dr. Pradeep Pawar

An Alumni of LTMMC Mymba, Dr. Pradeep Pawar has been a known faculty in the world of PG entrance for the last 25 years, travelling around the country, taking classes in some of the largest lecture theatres and auditorium, empowering students with the ability to tackle any anatomy question while making them feel less and less intimidated by entrance exams and the world of medicine. When he's not busy teaching, he adorns the quiz master hat, throwing some interesting clinical questions and trivias to keep the brain ticking.



"Wednesday,  
19th January"

05:00 PM  
Unacademy Learners' App

samsaindia@gmail.com  
@samsaindiaofficial

SouthAsianMedicalStudents'Association  
Unacademy Live NEET-PG



“

Research plays a  
pivotal role in  
modern medicine.

”



## b. The ICMR Arena- webinar on the ICMR-STs Programme

**Mahima Barua**

**IPGME&R and SSKM Medical College and Hospital**

**Third Year MBBS**

The South Asian Medical Students' Association (SAMSA) in collaboration with Aspire - Division of Medical Research and Innovation, Seth GS Medical College and KEM Hospital, Mumbai organised a webinar "The ICMR Arena" on 25th January 2022 at 6 pm IST on Zoom and YouTube Live. The webinar mainly focused on guiding students towards original research work under the ICMR - STS (Short Term Studentship) Programme which provides opportunities to undergraduate medical students to familiarise with research methodology by being associated with their seniors on ongoing research programmes. The webinar was hosted by Souryadipta Majumdar and we had two speakers - Shirish Rao from Seth GS Medical College and KEM Hospital, Mumbai and Sumanta Majumdar from ESIC Post Graduate Institute of Medical Science and Research, Joka, Kolkata. The speakers discussed in general about research, the thought process behind finding a good topic and how to expand it. They also elaborated on the procedure of application to the STS Programme and the nitty-gritties of the whole process. Research plays a pivotal role in modern medicine and this initiative by SAMSA was a successful endeavour towards sensitising the future clinicians and medical researchers about research.

# THE ICMR ARENA



**A giant leap towards STS,  
A small step towards Original Research**

## **SPEAKERS :**



**Sumanta  
Majumdar**

Final Year MBBS student, ESIC Post Graduate Institute of Medical Science and Research, Joka, Kolkata  
Ex- IT Secretary, SAMSA, STS  
Recipient of 2019 and MedTech enthusiast, Co-investigator in 6 Research Papers.



**Shirish Rao**

3rd Year MBBS Student,  
Ex-Sr. Secretary, ASPIRE  
Seth GS Medical College and KEM Hospital, Mumbai  
Co-investigator in 16 Research Projects



**25 th January**



**6 PM**

**Platforms:**

**zoom**



**YouTube**

## c. Case of the Week Series

**Mahima Barua**

**IPGME&R and SSKM Medical College and Hospital**

**Third Year MBBS**

The South Asian Medical Students' Association (SAMSA) through its Case of the Week, popularly known as the COTW series aims to bring about a revolutionary change in the way medical undergraduates approach their studies. We at SAMSA aim to propagate a holistic clinic-based pedagogy, which shall benefit students in their understanding and application of knowledge in their day to day practice.

The COTW series involves collection of clinical cases from residents or interns from various medical colleges after which they are presented to the audience in a clinical case format. Once the session is over, objective questions are given to the audience to assess the efficacy of the session.

Some of the very interesting cases that have been covered in the COTW Series till date are: Lemierre Syndrome, Tension Pneumothorax, PIN palsy in a case of Monteggia Fracture, Elschmig Pearls, Legionella infection, Rhabdomyolysis, Paraneoplastic SIADH, etc.

We at SAMSA believe that in order to truly help others, it is essential that we ourselves are not only knowledgeable but are also able to correlate all the textual knowledge in our clinical practices. Under the expert guidance of a panel of faculty members, we have high hopes for this programme to give rise to skilled doctors in the days to come.



d.

## Girl Child Awareness week- Webinar on Diseases Affecting Indian Girls

**Chaitali Nath**

**College of Medicine and Sagore Dutta Hospital  
Second Year MBBS**

On the occasion of the Girl Child Awareness Week, observed from 24th to 30th January 2022, SAMSA organised a webinar on 29th January, 2022 on Zoom and YouTube Live on the "Diseases affecting Indian Girls". The chief speaker for the event was Dr Souvik Sarkar.

Dr Sarkar is a MD Internal Medicine Resident at Medical College Kolkata, and the former head of the Academics team at SAMSA.

The seminar was conducted with the aim to educate and spread awareness among medical students regarding these health issues which are currently a menace to modern society.

Dr Sarkar educated the students about the aetiology and pathogenesis of some of the diseases more common in females and preventable measures that can be taken to reduce the morbidity and mortality incurred.

The other goal of the webinar was not only to increase knowledge about these diseases but also spread awareness about the social problems that the patients face. The students who attended the webinar had a positive response to it, saying that it was very beneficial to them, not just from an educational point of view but also as physicians of tomorrow.



# South Asian Medical Students' Association

Presents

WEBINAR ON :

## "DISEASES AFFECTING INDIAN GIRLS"

 29 th January

 5 PM

Platforms :

  YouTube

### DR. SOUVIK SARKAR

MBBS,  
Resident, M.D. Internal Medicine at  
Medical College and Hospital,  
Kolkata



Register now at : <https://samsa.org.in/>

e.

## World Leprosy Eradication Day Celebration

**Chaitali Nath**

**College of Medicine and Sagore Dutta Hospital  
Second Year MBBS**

An event was organised by Ramakrishnan educated the SAMSA on 30 January 2021, on the occasion of Leprosy Eradication Day. It was a webinar conducted on Zoom and YouTube Live and the chief speakers were Dr Renuka Ramakrishnan and Mr Suresh Mariaselvam. Dr Renuka Ramakrishnan is a senior consultant dermatologist consultant. A Member of the Royal Society of Health, London, she is a social worker working with the disease for the last 30 years.

The seminar was conducted in an educational setting, aimed specifically at the medical students who would be the physicians of tomorrow. Dr

students about Leprosy as well as the approach that should be taken towards it's treatment and eradication of societal prejudices against leprosy. She also spoke of her experience in the field, and inspired students to understand the patients more than they understood diagnoses and diseases. The goal of the webinar was to increase knowledge about the disease and spread awareness about the social problems that the patients face, both of which were well achieved. Students who attended the webinar had a positive response to it, saying that it was very beneficial to them, not just from an educational point of view but also for practical purposes.

# WEBINAR

## World Leprosy Eradication Day

Everything you need to know about Leprosy is right here!  
From Microbiology to Pathophysiology,  
Manifestations to Treatment!



Rotary Club  
of Chennai  
Bharathi



### RTN. DR. RENUKA RAMAKRISHNAN

Senior Consultant Dermatologist  
Leprologist and Social Reformer  
Director Community Health Services, RCCB  
Director, Mangalam Charitable Trust



### SURESH MARIASELVAM

Former Adviser-DANIDA/UNFPA/UNDP  
Adviser to Community Development  
Agencies and GoTN

**REGISTER NOW!**

[WWW.SAMSA.ORG.IN/REGISTER-FOR-EVENT](http://WWW.SAMSA.ORG.IN/REGISTER-FOR-EVENT)

**JANUARY, 31ST**  
**02:30PM TO 04:00PM**  
On Zoom and Live on Youtube



f.

## Trailblazer of research- Webinar on Research Opportunities in MBBS

**Mahima Barua**

**IPGME&R and SSKM Medical College and Hospital  
Third Year MBBS**

The South Asian Medical Students' Association (SAMSA) organised a webinar called the "Trailblazer of Research" on 12th February 2022 discussing about the research opportunities in MBBS. The session was conducted by Dr Dattatreya Mukherjee who is the editor of India's first medical students' journal, author of four books and has also been the youngest paper presenter at the American Association of Cancer Research.

The webinar focussed on the importance of academic scholarly works, the possible types of original researches that can be conducted at the undergraduate level and the procedure of carrying out an original research

work. Dr Dattatreya spoke about clinical trial and its phases, the types of papers that can be presented and about the importance of biostatistics in research work. It was a very interactive session involving multiple Q&A segments between the audience and the speaker.

In this day and age of medicine where research is of utmost importance, the Trailblazer of Research was a successful attempt by SAMSA along with Dr Dattatreya Mukherjee at explaining the importance of original research at undergraduate level and the preliminary knowledge required for doing so.



# Trailblazer of Research

Your guide to original research



## DR. DATTATREYA MUKHERJEE

Dr. Dattatreya Mukherjee is a MBBS student, Undergraduate Graduate and Research Assistant at Jinan University, P.R China. He has published over 100 Scientific Works and is the youngest paper presenter at American Association of Cancer Research. He has published works in world's top journals like Cancer Research, BMJ, European Heart Journal. He constantly mentors many students in research and is the Editor of India's first medical student led journal, Global Journal of Medical Students.

## Join our Webinar!

Register @ <http://samsa.org.in/register-for-event/>



12 TH FEBRUARY



6 PM IST 1 PM BST

# 6 | Back on the Ground

*Following a nearly two year-long hiatus in offline activities, we at SAMSA have returned with a bang with multiple on-field projects highlighting both our goals of carrying out impactful social activities as well as furthering knowledge on medical and related topics. With multiple collaborations with NGOs working at the grassroot levels, we have successfully conducted health camps over the last year as well as worked towards other impactful goals, doing what we do best- 'Service with Conscience, Knowledge with Purpose'.*

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a.

## The Health Camp Series

**Nidhi Agarwal**

**ESIC Post Graduate Institute of Medical Science  
and Research, Kolkata**

**Second year MBBS**

SAMSA with its motto “Service with conscience, Knowledge with purpose” has always believed in contributing to the society selflessly since its birth back in the year 2017. When the pandemic hit in 2020, it compelled us to put brakes on all of our social activities. After almost two years of undertaking all the activities on online platforms, on 13th March 2022, we conducted our first health camp post-pandemic for the geriatric population near Tollygunge Phari, Kolkata. The camp catered to the healthcare needs of around 80 elderly patients. General examination was done along with the measurement of the vitals and generic medicines were prescribed according to the needs. This camp was a success with the participation of very enthusiastic student volunteers from all the batches, interns and doctors.

Since the first camp, we haven't looked back. SAMSA now organizes at least 2-3 health camps every month which isn't just located at the urban locations. Our member volunteers are always up for providing services even at remote locations travelling as far as 250 kms away on their only day off.



  
**WORLD MENSTRUAL HYGIENE DAY**  
 AWARENESS SESSION ON MENSTRUATION IN  
 ASSOCIATION WITH PARICHITI



**MAHABIRTALA, TOLLYGUNGE,**  
**KOLKATA**  
**MAY 28**

@samsaindiaofficial

 IN ASSOCIATION WITH   
**PRESENTS**  
**HEALTH CAMP SERIES**



Some highlights from our first health camp  
 which was conducted on 13th March at  
 Bottala, Tollygunge Phari

**Health camps will be conducted every month**

To Volunteer Shagufta Raghib- 9163246734  
 Please contact: Nidhi Agarwal- 8240555826



  
**HEALTH CAMP SERIES**



**TAMILNADU**  
**JUNE 25**

@samsaindiaofficial





## Our Regular collaborators —

- 1) PARICHITI with its motto “Making Women Visible” is mainly focused on providing healthcare to the elderly patients who are unable to travel to even the nearby hospitals.
- 2) CRY (Child Rights and You) focussed on providing for the children and the teenagers along with their parents. These camps are also a means of educating and spreading awareness about menstruation and PCOS.
- 3) SwitchON Foundation aims at assessing the occupational health risks followed by community surveys. These camps focus on finding solutions to the risks faced by the community due to air pollution.

For years with its ground presence in the state of West Bengal, we have finally broken boundaries and realised the dreams of the founders of this student organisation.

On 26th June, 2022, SAMSA conducted its first ever health camp outside West Bengal in the state of Tamil Nadu. The success of this camp showcased the dedication of the members of SAMSA and their zeal contribute to the society.

With the dream of providing healthcare for all, we at SAMSA hope for ever widening participation from medicos across India on a greater scale since post the pandemic we all know that the only way to a good life is good health.

b.

## World Asthma Day with SwitchON Foundation

**Dr. Soirindhri Banerjee**

**IPGME&R and SSKM Medical College and Hospital**

**Resident, Radiation Oncology**

Without air there can be no life but breathing polluted air condemns us to a life of disease and early death. Over the last decade, India has emerged as the world's fifth most polluted country and is home to 21 of the world's 30 most polluted cities. For megacities like Kolkata, as per earlier research conducted by UCG - residents are losing 3.5 years average of their lives and if the 2019 air pollution concentrations persist, residents are on the track to lose more than 9 years of life expectancy. Poor air quality in urban areas of Kolkata is surely a national concern today. While we are all affected, those who are the most vulnerable in our society are more at risk, especially children and older people. According to the World Health Organization, every year around 7 million premature deaths are attributable to air pollution—a staggering 800

people every hour or 13 every minute.

On the eve of World Asthma Day on 2nd May, 2022, SwitchON Foundation in association with Cipla and supported by SAMSA (South Asian Medical Student Association), organized an intense discussion on "Air pollution to Asthma."

World Asthma Day (WAD) is organized by the Global Initiative for Asthma, (GINA) a World Health Organization collaborative organization founded in 1993. WAD is held each May to raise awareness of Asthma worldwide.

Asthma is a disease that affects our lungs. It causes repeated episodes of wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness, and nighttime or early morning coughing. Pollen, air pollution and dust are common asthma triggers. The Lancet Planetary Health researchers found 2 million cases

of childhood asthma around the world may be triggered by nitrogen dioxide, a pollutant emitted by motor vehicles, power plants and industrial sites. About two-thirds of those cases, they say, are in urban areas, with high traffic.

The event was attended by 30 doctors practicing pulmonary medicine, including many MD trainees from various Medical Colleges from Kolkata and student members of SAMSA, participating in the Clean Air Student Ambassador Program. This dedicated group of medical students and practitioners committed to the cause controlling asthma took part in the interactive discussion while increasing awareness on the subject. The discussion reviewed and explored how the growing air pollution in the city and increasing number of asthma cases were related, besides exploring solutions on what needs to be done.

During the event renowned pulmonologist, Dr. Arup Halder from the Woodlands Multispeciality Hospital delivered a special medical lecture on the subject, followed by an interactive panel discussion by Dr. Suman Mallik (Radiation Oncologist, Narayana Super

Speciality Hospital), Dr. Kaustav Choudhury (Paediatrician, Apollo Gleneagles Hospital), Dr. Soirindhri Banerjee (MD Radiation Oncology Trainee, IPGME&R & SSKM Hospital).

Dr. Halder said - "Among various diseases caused by air pollution, Asthma and COPD are two diseases which affect a large number of the population. While Asthma can occur at any age, COPD is a disease of the elderly. The biological pathways, clinical manifestations, treatment and prognosis are different for these two diseases. But both of them are causes of significant morbidity and mortality. As children are the major sufferers in Asthma, and the prevalence is showing a relentless increase, it's a matter of concern for all of us."

During the occasion, SwitchON Foundation also revealed an air pollution based health survey findings conducted on outdoor workers as a part of its awareness initiative. The survey, based on a sample size of 1500 people exposed to ambient air pollution, either due to occupation or due to poverty showed clearly how the respiratory system is affected.

The conclusion from the survey findings called for an urgent need for implementation of the city clean air action plan under the NCAP, promotion of non motorized transport and expanding public transport using electric vehicles. The recommendations further asks state agencies to develop specific public health policy action for outdoor workers and vulnerable communities, who have been compelled to breathe toxic air, at no fault to their end - resulting in decreased life expectancy and serious illness. These workers and professionals themselves may have little or no control over the sources of outdoor air pollution, particularly given that almost half of the air pollution in Kolkata is a result of vehicular emission, also additional impact from release of hazardous chemical agents, bioaerosols, gasses, and vapors at their workplace.





# ANTICIPATED ARRIVALS

# JSAMSA

*First Edition Releasing Soon*

Illustration by Ipshita Prosad

# 7 | Anticipated Arrivals

*With our on-field projects back in full swing and armed with our new-found confidence in organising impactful online activities, SAMSA now has a host of events lined up that are geared towards increasing and enhancing our social and educational footprints. We bring to you, some of the most anticipated upcoming events on our post-pandemic roster.*

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# 7 | JSAMSA

Aayushi Das  
Medical College and Hospital, Kolkata  
Second Year MBBS

“

*Research is to see what  
everybody else has seen,  
and to think what nobody  
else has thought.*

*~ Albert Szent-Gyorgyi*

”

Medical research is an extremely valuable, yet quite an under-explored field in our country, especially at the undergraduate level. Therefore, with the purpose of instilling and supporting scientific thinking among medical students, the South Asian Medical Students' Association will soon be introducing "JSAMSA" - The Journal of SAMSA CRN (Collaborative Research Network). The SAMSA CRN has been launched recently to inform and educate students about the intricacies of research, and to create a community of research-minded individuals. JSAMSA is an integral component of this initiative, and would serve as a platform for researchers to showcase their work in the form of articles.

Applications for the JSAMSA Editor-in-Chief, Associate Editors, Peer Reviewers and College Journal Ambassadors have already been received. The first edition of this journal is expected to be released at SAMSACON 2023. The indexing procedure would be started after the first issue. The journal would be widely available across various medical colleges of India- both in print and online mode. In order to encourage scientific temper among the research enthusiasts, this journal will be absolutely free of Article Processing Charge (APC). To start with, we may sign a MoU with a preprint software and we shall be accepting articles which are in preprint. All the articles would be double blinded peer-reviewed so as to ensure the absence of any kind of bias. In future, the task of publishing might be handed over to a reputed publisher.

We are excited and pumped up to be diving into this new arena of research through JSAMSA, and hope this would aid in building as well as sustaining a thriving network of research enthusiasts.



# Celebrating Our Collaborations



Illustration by Ipshita Prosad

## 8 | Celebrating Our Collaborations

*The South Asian Medical Students' Association is what it is today because of the dedication of its founders, members and all the participants of our projects, whose immense support has forever been our source of strength. On that note, this section is an ode to all the wonderful organisations we have collaborated with over the past year and who have been an integral part of some of our most significant activities. SAMSA thanks you all from the bottom of our hearts.*

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## a. **Rescue and Relief Foundation: 'Love' and 'Care' everywhere**

**Nikita Singh**

**IPGME&R and SSKM Medical College and Hospital  
Second Year MBBS**

SAMSA joined hands with Rescue and Relief foundation to fight against the monstrosity of human trafficking and to provide our brothers, sisters, children and grandparents who are not so fortunate with a life of health and dignity.

### **Together, they have started**

- ❑ Routine health camps at orphanages and old age homes
- ❑ Teaching programs for underprivileged women and destitute children who are skilled but don't have the opportunities.
- ❑ Donation drives mostly targeted at outskirts of West Bengal to alleviate the condition of distressed people

by providing financial help.

- ❑ Providing vocational training to children of sex workers so that they are not sucked up in the unfortunate profession and can give a better life to themselves and their family.

Above all, a new project is slated to be released, which will give an opportunity to people to spread the laughter of joy to our unfortunate brothers, sisters and children, by sponsoring their growth at less than Rupees 330 per month.

Together they are geared up and working hard to ensure that 'love' and 'care' reaches every corner of West Bengal and smile reaches to the depressed and emaciated faces who have forgotten it.

## b. Child Rights and You (CRY)

**Aayushi Das**  
**Medical College, Kolkata**  
**Second Year MBBS**

CRY is a well-recognized NGO which works towards ensuring the rights of children. SAMSA and CRY have been jointly working towards the improvement of child health since 2018. Under this collaboration, health camps had been conducted for the paediatric age group once every month across Kolkata. The camps involved performing anthropometric measurements, providing free health check-ups, and supplying the required medicines.

Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, social media platforms were utilized to conduct several

orientation and awareness sessions on mental health, general hygiene and other health-related topics. Presently, we are working on conducting health camps in the Sundarban area along with free distribution of medicines. In the near future, SAMSA, in collaboration with CRY, plans to expand its reach, and conduct health camps in areas outside Kolkata, like Asansol and Durgapur among others.

We hope that our small acts of service will cumulatively make a significant impact on improving the lives of the children in the society.



## c. Parichiti Foundation

**Mahima Barua**

**IPGME&R and SSKM Medical College and Hospital**

**Third Year MBBS**

The South Asian Medical Students' Association (SAMSA) in collaboration with Parichiti has been regularly organising health camps once a month in and around Kolkata since its beginning. Parichiti is a women's group that dreams of a society where women, girls, and people of all other genders can live in a just and equal world, working mainly in Southern Kolkata and South 24 Paraganas. It is a non-profit organisation currently working with women domestic workers, other marginalised women and working-class men as well.

The camps are organised in locations spanning across Kolkata, mainly for the female geriatric age group but caters to the men and women of other age groups as well. In these health

camps, free health check-up along with medicines are provided by doctors volunteered by medical students. Severe cases are followed up in medical colleges with references by the doctors.

Apart from these camps, orientation sessions on mental health are conducted. Awareness sessions on menstrual hygiene are also organised for women in the reproductive age group, explaining to them the importance of safe periods. Furthermore, sessions on general hygiene during the covid pandemic were held via virtual platforms.

This is one out of our many attempts at making a difference in the society for the good wherever we can with our efforts.

## d. SWITCHON FOUNDATION: Together for a healthier environment

**Nikita Singh (IPGME&R) and Chaitali Nath (CMSDH)**  
**Second Year MBBS**

The SwitchOn Foundation (Environment Conservation Society ) is a leading ,not-for-profit organisation, dedicated to addressing environmental challenges and promoting sustainable livelihood.

SAMSA is proud to announce it collaboration with Switch On to realize its goals of contribution of the medical fraternity in understanding the effects of environmental pollution on the Indian population as well as sensitizing future doctors about it.

On the priority list of this Collaboration, The SwitchOn Foundation and SAMSA have focussed on following

- ❑ Medical Student Ambassadors Programme in which students are given an opportunity to take up research projects to conduct studies and record data with renowned professors working in different multispeciality hospitals.
- ❑ The Medical student Ambassadors are also given training by a panel of mentors, professors and doctors about effects of air pollution and how to advise the future patients about it.
- ❑ Conducting Health Camps and studies targetted at Autodrivers in kolkata to quantify the effect of air pollution on them.
- ❑ Replicating this with coal mine workers and construction workers the effects of air pollution on this group of highly exposed people will be studied.
- ❑ Several seminars and physical meets are also jointly organized, about the effect of air pollution on life expectancy, one of which was graced by Shri Ashirbad Raha, EPIC India, University of Chicago along with other eminent doctors at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital on 12 July 2022.

□ There are also two ongoing projects which are relatively novel in Indian Research scenario, a Perception Based Study and a Prevalance study to collect data on effects of air pollution on various age groups.

The Switch On Foundation and SAMSA have also jointly organized various sessions for school and college students to spread awareness about air pollution.

Ms. Ipshita Prosad, General Secretary, South Asian Medical Students Association, attended a seminar on Impact of Children's Rights to breathe to clean air, organised by SwitchON Foundation. The seminar was conducted on 14th November 2022 at She was an honorary speaker at the same, where she strikingly compared air pollution to smoke, especially second hand smoke,

and stated that it caused 4 times more deaths. She was honoured for being an eminent speaker who made an impact with her words, by sharing inspiring thoughts and facts on climate change and motivating the young minds to take active roles in securing our common futures.

She was also the part of a health advisory committee in regards to air pollution, which is causing disease, disability, and huge economic loss to the country. The press conference in regards to the same was organised by SwitchON Foundation, on 2nd December 2022. A health advisory was created by the board to cast light on numerous ways in which citizens can prevent impact from air pollution, beside preventive measures and practices that should be adopted in everyday life by citizens to better prepare from the onslaught of polluted winter days.



The event was held in accordance with National Pollution Control Day, and all doctors attending the press conference called upon authorities to understand the magnitude of the problem, and take necessary steps at the earliest.

Together, both the organisations will work towards paving the way for a cleaner and healthier environment for future generations.



## e. | **Lecturio**

**Chaitali Nath**

**College of Medicine and Sagore Dutta Hospital**

**Second Year MBBS**

Lecturio, one of SAMSA's educational partners, is one of the best educational platforms in the world. Their resources include online lectures, comprehensive question banks and spaced retrieval-based learning methods, which help prepare students for university medical examinations, USMLEs, COMLEX, GAMSAT, and MCAT exams. SAMSA's collaboration with Lecturio began in October 2021, and they have been our principal educational partners since. They were our principal sponsors for the first online SAMSACON, and provided free timed trials and USMLE coursework materials to all SAMSA members. Their courses were the prizes for the winners of the prestigious Case of the Week series. SAMSA looks forward to continuing the relationship with Lecturio.



## f. Unacademy

**Chaitali Nath**

**College of Medicine and Sagore Dutta Hospital**  
**Second Year MBBS**

Unacademy, one of India's leading educational platforms, is emerging as a new educational partner of SAMSA. This partnership, which began in January 2022, led to the success of the First Year Bonanza. They provided brilliant educators to our students, who thoroughly enjoyed attending the enriching sessions on Anatomy, Physiology and Biochemistry. The goal of the event was to foster a competitive spirit and light the fire of passion for medicine in the first year medical students, which was successfully reached. With immense gratitude, SAMSA looks forward to further partnership with Unacademy.



## g. Rotaract Club of Medcrew

**Chaitali Nath**

**College of Medicine and Sagore Dutta Hospital**

**Second Year MBBS**

Rotaract Club of Medcrew, allegedly the largest medical Rotaract Club, with over 3000 members in over 20 states, is one of SAMSA's academic partners. The collaboration, which began in January 2022, has led to two successful webinars between the organisations. Both the webinars had esteemed doctors as speakers, which were well received and highly appreciated. Certificates were issued for the events to the members of both the organisations. Health camps have also been organised with collaborative effort of the organisations.

This collaboration has led to a lot of development on several levels, and SAMSA looks forward to being a part further collaborations.

In association with Rotaract club of Medcrew, SAMSA conducted Measles and Rubella Elimination Programme under the expert mentorship of Dr. Amitabha Sarkar, Surveillance medical officer and epidemiologist of WHO. The webinar aimed at discussing the Strategy of Elimination, Epidemiology, Management and Outbreak surveillance system.



## h. CONFLUENCE

**Monisha Dutta**

**IPGME&R and SSKM Medical College and Hospital**

**Final Year MBBS**

CONFLUENCE 2022, organised undergraduates. In addition in collaboration with SETH Research based debates, Medical GSMC & KEMH lasted from 28th Symposium competition and to 31st of July 2022. The MEDATHON- The Healthcare conference hosted Quizzes, Case Hackathon were conducted to & Poster presentation to showcase enrich the innovative spirits the skills of medical among participants of the event.







# KNOWLEDGE WITH PURPOSE

**Guest Writers' Corner**



Illustration by Abhirup Sarkar



Dr. Avisnata Das  
Specialist Registrar,  
Gastroenterology and Hepatology,  
King's College Hospital,  
London, UK

## 9 | The Guest Writer's Corner

---

### a. Living Through A Liver Night On-call : A Story From A London Teaching Hospital

**Dr. Avisnata Das**

Denmark Hill bus stop is never quiet. The reason is not hard to guess, it is located just outside King's College Hospital, one of the busiest teaching hospitals of South London. Thoughts cross my mind as I get off from the bus and enter the hospital for my last of the four night- on -calls in a row, as a Clinical Fellow in the Liver Unit of the hospital. Last night had been busy – a gastrointestinal bleed, an unwell post-transplant patient that needed to be shifted to Liver ICU, admitting couple of patients coming in for a trans-arterial chemoembolization the next day. Well-rested during the day, I was all ready for the final night's action with hopes of a breezy

three-day weekend leave to follow .

Walking down the corridors of this hospital feels like walking down history, with wards named after medical legends like Wilson, Sam Oram and Todd. As I enter the Liver Doctor's office, Penelope, my Greek physician colleague greets me with a smile, but I can see the tiredness in her face – quite natural given she was the Day Fellow and had been handling the transplant patients for the last 12 hours. After a quick handover over coffee in Todd office, I get going with work at hand, when the nurses call me to inform that a post-transplant patient from Liver ICU has just been stepped down to the ward two days post-transplant.

Khuswant is too happy with how things have turned out. A second-generation Indian growing up in South London, he was diagnosed with diabetes at age 41 and had NAFLD diagnosed 5 years later. Into his mid-50s now, ultrasound scan last year showed a 3.5 cm tumour of the right lobe . Fitting nicely into the Milan criteria, he was listed for a liver transplant and finally got his graft 3 days back from a brain-dead donor. I quickly review his blood results which show ALT rapidly coming down and so also the bilirubin. The mild acute kidney injury post-surgery is settling nicely now. The drains look fine and the abdomen is soft. He is back on diet and is enjoying the dahl soup for dinner. Putting in my patient orders for iv fluids, painkillers and immunosuppression among other things , I take a few seconds to put in blood requests for the next morning into the computer system , not forgetting to add tacrolimus levels.

I steal a few minutes to warm the noodles I brought from home in the microwave and settle down for

a quick dinner in Todd office. Eyeing through some of the blood results from the patients in the computer, the bleep goes off. It is the transplant co-ordinator on the phone line, she wants to let me know that there is liver transplant offer graft coming from a different London hospital from a deceased cardiac donor. They have found the ideal recipient for that graft, a 45 year old woman of blood group 0+ suffering from Autoimmune liver disease related liver cirrhosis. The very smart Transplant Benefit Score, around since 2018 , was used to match the organ with the recipient using the National Organ Allocation System in vogue in UK. An hour later, the potential recipient is in our ward, excited at the prospect of a new liver and a newer life. She hopes she no longer has to go through the monthly ascitic drains and no more hospitalizations with jaundice or encephalopathy. Her husband is equally optimistic. I make sure her blood tests are sent along with a cross-match request and a Chest X-ray form. I don't have to wait long for blood results to come back, they are all fine and in



couple of hours post confirmation the donor liver is suitable for being transplanted as confirmed by the surgical team, she is all ready to be wheeled to the theatre. I can see anxiety and hope written together in her face, but I quietly smile to myself as there is close to 99 % chance that in 3-4 days she will be stepped down to the ward from Liver ICU post-surgery with a face as content as Khuswant's I got to see earlier in the evening.

The night shift brought a few of more reviews – an oliguric post-transplant patient, a patient post TACE with fever spikes, an encephalopathic patient needing top up of lactulose. I realize that the first beams of sunlight have entered the room. I have to quickly review the early morning blood results of a patient going for liver biopsy for suspected rejection. The nurses share their titbits about patients with me with necessary inputs from me. To my relief I find Jonathan and Penelope entering the room for morning handover. I remind

Penelope not to forget collecting the Tacrolimus blood tubes to be dropped in the Immunosuppression Drugs Lab upstairs. All done, time to say bye and catch a quick bite – 'A New Day Has Come', the Celine Dion number plays at the back of my mind.

*PS: Names of all doctors and patients in the story are imaginary. The author is currently a Specialist Registrar in Gastroenterology and Hepatology in a UK teaching hospital. His first job in UK was as a Clinical Fellow at King's Liver Unit, King's College Hospital, London. This liver unit runs Europe's largest liver transplantation programme and had done pioneering work in formulating guidelines for liver transplantation in Acute Liver Failure – known as 'King's College Criteria for transplantation in Acute Liver Failure'*



Dr. Arkajit Dasgupta  
Senior Resident,  
Department of Biochemistry,  
Jhargram Govt Medical College and Hospital

## b. Krebs' Cycle, Serotonin & Career in Medicine: Hello from a World Unknown

**Dr. Arkajit Dasgupta**

Hey fellow doctors! Here's a shout-out from a Biochemist. Yep, one of those who forced you to mug up all those enzymes of the Krebs' cycle! I am here for a bit of career consultation.

Laughing much? Looking to turn the page over already? Well, you could. Or, you could give me two precious minutes of your busy life so I can try to tweak the way you have been looking at your future.

By this time in your career, you must be pretty stressed about getting that PG degree. Adding fuel to the flame are the people around, constantly reminding you that to be deemed as a doctor, you must secure but a few glorified "core clinical" subjects.

One simple question: has anybody

cared to explain to you the Career options in Biochemistry? Did you ever wonder what happens behind the closed air-conditioned door of the laboratory after they received the sample?

Let me tell you how it is to be a consultant Biochemist. But before that, allow me to rid your mind of the age-old notion of Clinics and Non-clinics. That scenario may have held some thirty years back, but in the current setting, your clinical acumen stands nowhere, either in front of the patient or in the Court of Law, unless supported by sound evidence of Diagnostics. So, how about we rephrase the medical subjects as Academics, Diagnostics, and Therapeutics? Biochemistry encompasses a huge chunk of Diagnostics.

Have you ever checked a complete lab report? Do you think those are just a few machine-dependent numbers? Well, assume for a second, that there is no consultant Biochemist to overview and correlate the analysis of every assay in a laboratory. Or, a guy who claims to be the signatory authority does not have an M.D. in Biochemistry. Who is going to tell you that the borderline high TSH that your patient had in the evening sample may have been a mere diurnal variation? Or maybe the high prolactin level found in a patient was not abnormal but due to non-functional macroprolactin? Contrarily, a seemingly benign rise in serum creatinine may have been an indicator of AKI. A passionate Biochemist can save a patient from overtreatment, or impending death. More importantly, the world has just begun exploring the arena of metabolomics and genomic diagnosis of diseases. But in the upcoming era of individualized medicine, the entire diagnostics is going to strive

Biochemistry is a relatively new and upcoming subject. What are its avenues? You already knew about being a faculty in a Medical College. What else?

Be a Diagnostician, i.e. a Consultant Biochemist in a reputed Laboratory or hospital! You can be an auditor for the NABL (National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories) as well.

Third, you can get your Ph.D. and travel abroad to dedicate your life to Medical Research. If someone didn't know the enzymes of glycolysis, how are they going to invent anti-cancer drugs?

Fourth, a D.M. in Clinical Hematology or Medical Genetics will allow you to pursue a career in Superspecialty.

Fifth, if you have the mindset and resources of an entrepreneur, you can set up your own Diagnostic Lab in partnership with a pathologist, without depending on anyone else.



Regarding scopes and monetary returns, a private chamber, apart from general practice, is not associated with core biochemistry. However, according to the Laboratory Director cum consultant Biochemist of a reputed Calcutta hospital, the corporates which appoint full-time consultants in Biochemistry, pay salaries equivalent to a fresher candidate of all other specialties. The scope of medical research in foreign countries is also ripe.

Now, I could have stopped there. Why did I have to bring the Happy Neurotransmitter in the headline? As a harsh realist, I can assure you that our career is often decided by so many factors: namely exam results, peer pressures, supposed social status, and monetary gains that the one thing that we need to be spot on, e.g. where you want to see yourself ten years later, takes the back seat. Have you looked up the suicidal rate among the junior doctors who have supposedly achieved their “Dream PG Branch”? At the end of the day,

what matters most is how you feel. Unless you are happy, what good are you to your patient? So, ask yourself: what motivates you? Do you enjoy the rush of adrenaline while resuscitating a collapsed patient at 3 AM? Or would you rather go home to enjoy a hot meal and a soft bed with your family? If you belong to the first category, Biochemistry will not satisfy you. But if you are the second, well, give it a thought. We shall be waiting. Every branch of medicine needs its dedicated followers. After all, in the future, therapeutics won't survive without the aid of diagnostics.

*Dr. Dasgupta is a Senior Resident at the Deptt of Biochemistry, Jhargram Govt Medical College and Hospital*



Ayana Datta, LLM  
Data Protection Personnel  
Koblenz: Debeka  
Germany

## c. | Data Protection Laws in Healthcare

Ayana Datta, LLM

Doctors are one of those people who must work with a mountain of data. The diagnoses of patients, their allergies, their habits...everything has to be taken note of to provide the optimum care for a patient. In this noble service however, the need for proper Data Protection is not only required, it is needed too. Both for the sake of the doctor and patient, as well as the administration of hospitals, clinics and nursing homes.

various countries. The European Union's GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations), The UK's 'The Data Protection Act' are some of the major Data Protection Laws currently in use to safeguard personal data. The US has, at the moment, no singular Data Protection Law. It is a collection of various federal and state laws that somehow amount to Data Protection. The closest thing to something like GDPR in the USA is the CCPA ( California Consumer Privacy Act).

### 1. What is personal data?

Now before we go scrambling around for the definition of Data Protection, let's take a sneak peek into what personal data exactly is.

Personal data can be regarded as Personal information through which a person can be identified. Attributes like name, age, address, schooling etc. are regarded as personal data. The usage and protection of personal data are governed by special laws in

In India, the fundamentals of Data Protection are laid down in various laws like Information Technology Act, 2000 and Information Technology (Reasonable Security Practices and Procedures and Sensitive Personal Data or Information) Rules, 2011. A comprehensive Data Protection law was submitted to the parliament in the form of the Personal Data Protection Bill 2019, but unfortunately it was withdrawn recently. However the Indian Government assures to

create strong and comprehensive laws in the areas of Data Protection, Cybersecurity and Telecom regulations.

So leaving all the legal jargon and acts, let's come to the point: Personal data are data that can be used to identify any individual person. There are laws in place in most of the world for the protection of personal data. Some of the major ones are the GDPR of the European Union, the UK Data Protection Act.

## **2. Special Categories of Personal Data**

There are some types of personal data that are different from others. These are more sensitive in nature and have the potential to do more harm than normal personal data. These data have been classified as special categories of Personal Data. Healthcare or Medical Data are classic examples of special categories of personal data. According to Art.9 of GDPR, special categories of personal data are:

“personal data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or trade union membership, and the processing of genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person, data concerning health or data concerning a natural person's sex life or sexual orientation”

But, why is this data getting special treatment? Why are they treated like they're made of glass? It is because these data have the potential to do more harm to the individuals they're related to, if they're ever leaked without the knowledge or consent of those individuals.

Imagine a situation, where the biometric data of a person gets leaked out and gets used by terrorists to arm a bomb and blast it as an act of terror. Not only will this innocent person be dragged into a messy affair of terrorism, national security and be hunted by major law and order authorities, but they will also be stigmatised for life with the label of a “terrorist”, thus making life a



literal hell for this person. No organization will employ such a person and a proper social life will be immensely difficult.

In short, leakage and misuse of special categories of data is enough to destroy a person's livelihood and normal course of life.

To avoid such circumstances, consent plays a big role in Data Protection. Not only in cases of special categories of data, but in the processing of any kind of personal data. This consent should be obtained from the individual related to this data in a manner that is "clearly distinguishable from the other matters, in an intelligible and easily accessible form, using clear and plain language", according to Art.7 of GDPR.

### **3. Why is Data Protection needed in Healthcare?**

Let's put this into a practical scenario. As a doctor, you need to gather the medical history (aka Medical Data) of your patient for a proper diagnosis.

In a very optimal scenario, you'd

have to explain the following to the patient or, in case they're unable to give their consent (for example: if the patient is unconscious or delirious), to anyone who has the juridical authority to sign/take decisions on their behalf before you can touch any of their medical data:

- A. Their medical data will be collected
- B. It will be collected for the sole purpose of their diagnosis and for no other purpose, such as advertisement
- C. They have a right to withdraw their consent in the future.

I know, you'll be coming to me with pitchforks and saying "How do you expect us to perform our duties if the patient suddenly withdraws their consent for the processing of their medical data at any point in the future?"

And so here comes Art.6 Section 1 Part.d of the GDPR where it is mentioned that processing of the personal data "is necessary in order to protect the vital interests of the data subject or of another natural person".

Given that medical care IS in the vital interest of an individual, we can say here that the processing is necessary.

However, a tip from the practical field: Always get the consent in writing, signed by the patient.

In short, Data Protection is needed in Healthcare for:

- A. Allowing the patient autonomy over their personal data (for eg.: release from the doctor-patient confidentiality)
- B. To protect the Healthcare providers from future backlash (eg.: Patient comes in later screaming, "How dare you process my personal data without my consent, when I was lying in a coma with severe haemorrhage and no family member nearby!")
- C. To prevent any instances of misuse of the patient's medical data, even if it is unintentional.

#### 4. Existing major Healthcare Data Protection Laws:

All the European Union countries

are covered by the GDPR when it comes to Data Protection, including Healthcare Data Protection. In spite of the GDPR, Germany has its own Patient Data Protection Act 2021 (PDPA) to ensure the protection of personal medical data while digitizing the medical data in such a manner that would ease the usage and control of that data.

The USA has a number of major laws that are associated with the protection of medical data:

##### A. Healthcare Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA)

The main objective of HIPAA is to ensure the protection of privacy of medical data. However, there have been some controversies regarding the possibility of using national patient identifiers being detrimental to the medical data privacy.

##### B. Health & Human Services Rules (HHS)

Two rules went into force in March 2020 from the HHS Office of the National Coordinator (ONC) for Health Information Technology and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS), they

strive to ensure better control, usage and exchange of personal medical data by the patients through easy access such as smartphone apps.

### C. California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA)

This law is specifically for the residents of California and not for the entirety of the USA. The CCPA mostly controls the personal data that are collected by businesses. At the moment this is the most comprehensive Data Privacy Act in the USA. In the matter of the protection of medical data, paired with HIPAA, it offers better protection to medical data

### D. California Confidentiality of Medical Information Act (CMIA)

The CMIA (also applicable only to California Residents) prevents unauthorized sharing and sharing without the consent of the involved individual, of any medical data. This law also ensures the storage of medical data in a manner so that the confidentiality of such medical data is preserved.

## **5. Indian Standpoint on Data Protection in Healthcare**

Currently, India does not have a cohesive Data Protection Law to govern personal data privacy. There

was a lot of hope for the Personal Data Protection Act 2019, but unfortunately it was retracted. Data Privacy now rests solely on the Information Technology Act, 2000. But this Act deals more in Information Security rather than Data Privacy.

However on the Healthcare front we have reason for hope. The proposed Digital Information Security in Healthcare Act 2018 or DISHA, although not yet in force, is regarded as the Indian version of HIPAA.

However, in the initial stages, DISHA poses some confusion. DISHA does not regulate the exchange of medical data, but rather the control of digital health data only. That means that any analogue medical data, for eg: handwritten prescriptions escape the scope of DISHA. Furthermore DISHA attempts to make a distinction between Digital Health Data and sensitive medical data which creates more confusion. It also does not include the processing of the medical data via mobile apps and wearable gadgets such as the Apple Watch.

However DISHA is the only hope for the protection of medical data at the moment. With the recent withdrawal of the Personal Data Protection Bill 2019, it is better to have some protection in place rather than no protection at all.

The Government of India assures that the withdrawal of the Personal Data Protection Bill 2019 was in order to re-evaluate and provide a better version of the withdrawn Bill. Although the future cannot be predicted, we can all remain hopeful of a data protection law in India that will one day be regarded as the Indian version of the GDPR.

In the meantime, we need to integrate Data Protection in Healthcare as an integral part through best practices, gaining consent from patients before processing their medical data as well as by informing the patients of their rights in terms of their data privacy.

*Ayana Datta is a Masters graduate in IT Law and Intellectual Property Law from Leibniz University Hannover, Germany and University of Oslo, Norway. Currently she's working as a Data Protection Personnel with one of leading private insurance companies of Germany in Koblenz: Debeka.*





**Dr. Soaham Taraphdar's self-introduction is- The Lord of Memes, healer ordinaire, pursuer of the principles of modern medicine, eater of 'lyadh', lover of sleep, daydreamer and overthinker of nonsensical and pointless ideas and fantasies, enjoyer of good food, books, comics, tv series and movies, member of multiple fandoms, and upholder of the beliefs of magic, superpowers, fantasy and divinity.**

## d. Medical Education In The Vernacular

**Dr. Soaham Taraphdar**

Recently, the MBBS curriculum in Madhya Pradesh was revised to be taught in Hindi, which was followed by a huge controversy.

In India, from the outset till now, western medical education has been taught predominantly in English, with the terminology originating from Latin and Greek roots. In the 19th century, there were institutions with training courses in the vernacular, but those were discontinued after a while.

In foreign non-English countries, European countries or Japan, for example, medical education is in the predominant/official language of the country. In some countries, a Latin course is taught beforehand to make the terminology easier to understand. The doctors there are well versed in English too, for it the international language of medical communication and academics.

Being a doctor has two major components – gaining knowledge and its practical application, and communication with the patients. English is essential for the first part, and for the second part, vernacular. In countries with a single major and official language, vernacular medical education is easier. But India is a land of huge language diversity, with the roots being mainly from Sanskrit, Dravidian, or Arabic. Moreover, each major language has many dialects and sub-dialects. The colloquial tongue varies from district to district, and also among different social classes. Besides, most Indians do not understand English enough for a proper medical communication. Traditional Indian medicine has terminology based in Sanskrit, but the masses are also not clear on the complex, pure Sanskrit terminology. In reality, the communication occurs in a mixed tongue – mainly the local tongue, with sprinkles of colloquialised English terms.

Medical education should be of a uniform standard across the country with one common language of academics in view of the high inter-state migration/travel of doctors for education or practice. India has no single official or national language (No, Hindi is not the national language of India!). Unity in the language diversity of India cannot be accomplished with one single vernacular, as every major language is unique by itself. Sanskrit could be a choice for terminology, being the language for traditional medicine. But it is extremely cumbersome to translate a Latin base terminology to a Sanskrit base one, not to mention the named terms. Also, Sanskrit is quite a complex language, and has never been a language for the masses.

Vernacularisation in Madhya Pradesh has been done by simply writing the English terms in Hindi. Despite being in the local language, it serves no practical purpose of clarifying the terminology to the students. The complexity would be increased if explaining the Latin etymology is

altogether omitted in this vision for vernacularisation. The result would be students just mugging up the material with little comprehension, hampering their ability to communicate in later practicing life.

For now, medical education should be continued in English, with clarity of the text in the common language for communication. If vernacularisation is to be attempted, the first step should be a good translation with a solid etymological background. Along with that, a solid base in that particular language should be built up from the primary education setup, for the future doctors and general masses alike. The common people should have a basic knowledge of the ailments for ease of communication with doctors. This can be achieved by regular public educational campaigns. It should be noted that vernacularisation of medical education in India cannot be a sudden step, but a planned programme to be carried out over decades, encompassing a strong improvement in the primary and secondary general education.





©Sumanta

# THE SCALPEL AND THE PEN

*Let Your Creativity Flow*

Illustration by Sumanta Majumdar



# A Story....or a Narrative?

**Sumanta Majumdar**

What happens now?  
Where will we go?  
What will change  
and what would stay the same?  
What will I encounter in this new world?  
New passions? New feelings?  
New Adventures. New Surprises.  
And even a new heart ache.

It sounds like a pretty good story  
And everyone I've met and everyone I'll meet will be a character  
And I've been lucky to know a lot of great characters  
I'm excited for the next chapter but I'm afraid too.  
We all know scary things can happen  
How will we face them?

How will we find a way forward? Together, I hope.  
And who will be there to help us along the way?  
An old joker? A new love? A first crush who became a lasting friend.  
Or a best friend who calls in the middle of the night with news,  
that will change everything in an instant.

You ever really know where this story will go  
Just when you think you got it all figured out,  
And everything you wished for is finally coming true,  
You hit an obstacle. Right when it seems like everyone else is soaring  
ahead.

But obstacles can help you, too.  
They can push you to be creative to be creative  
And sometimes to make you start over from the very beginning.  
That can be a good thing, too.  
I think the important thing is to keep writing the story.  
No matter how frightening or confusing  
No matter if it takes you to another country.  
Or takes you back into your own backyard.  
Just keep writing it.  
Because that's the only way you can ever really have  
a happy ending.  
But of course,  
even when you've written the final chapter,  
Someone else is just writing the first.

# *“Life is...” ~ A Series of Photographs*

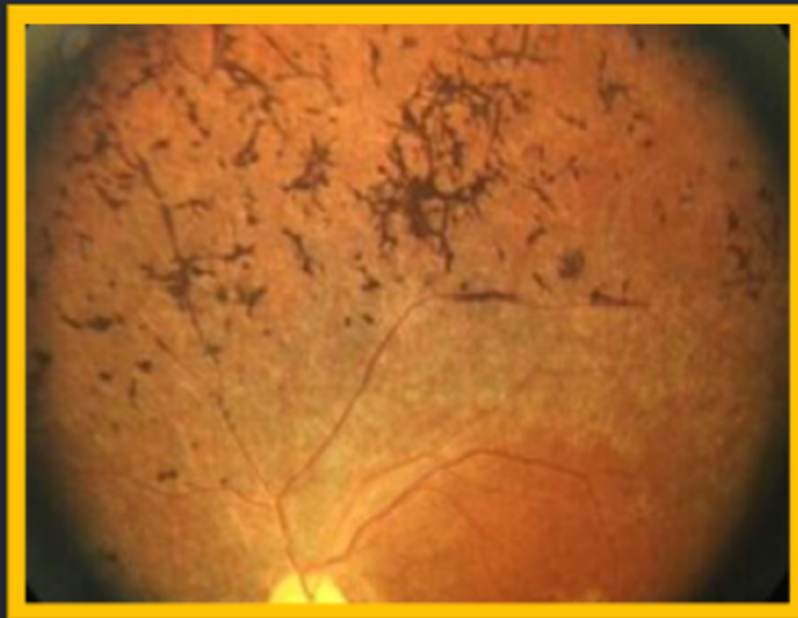
Sanjeevani Hazra, IPGMER



Life is Bittersweet...



...and So Full Of Colour...



... THAT ONE GLIMPSE ALONE  
WILL NEVER BE ENOUGH

# by Chaitali Nath

I still think of you  
When I should've forgotten you  
Your name still comes to me  
When I think of people who make me happy

While that might still be true  
We both know it's not the same you  
The you that I knew  
Is no more the current you

You've lost the love  
Started to not believe in love  
Started living in flings  
Pretending you don't have feelings

But your eyes still speak  
What you wouldn't speak  
They still tell me  
The truths of thee

I still care just as much  
I still love just as much  
But I'm more scared than I was  
More scarred than I was

I don't have the courage to  
Walk up and talk to you  
Even though my eyes do  
I can't possibly do

It's hard to  
With the story I have with you  
With the flutters we used to feel  
It's hard to heal

I haven't healed completely, too  
And I don't think I'll ever do  
For a love like that doesn't happen again

And a loss like that never ceases to pain



# *Unconditional Love*

**Ipshita Prosad, RGKMCH**





*Beauty in Black and White ~ A series of sketches*

**Sanjeevani Hazra, IPGMER**







# A Doctor is (Supposed to be) Brave

**Sneha Das, IPGME&R**

She woke up to the sounds of the alarm clock. It was 7:30 am and the room was still dark. Through the languor of the recently asleep, she detected sounds from the laptop in the next room (“...am I audible students?”..... her brother’s online classes were in full swing) as well as the constant drone of the old ceiling fan. Another day, identical and never-changing.

Right at the edge of her hearing, there was a third sound- the car backing out of the garage. In the entire ‘paara’, with the pandemic at its height, her father was the only person regularly going out. She dragged herself out of bed; once upon a time, her father used to wake her up but nowadays it was the alarm clock. She ventured into the living room, the edges of her vision blurred with sleep. Her mother was on the sofa engaged with her phone. And that.....was a rather unusual sight. This early in the morning, she was generally flitting from the kitchen to the dining room to

the impromptu ‘separate household’ on the ground-floor where her father was currently staying in self-imposed seclusion.

Whereas the lockdown had leeched the sense of purpose from almost everyone she knew, it simply seemed to have bolstered her mother’s already enormous sense of responsibility. Perhaps, having a frontline worker in the battle against Covid-19 in the house, had a hand in that.

Her mother’s voice was calm- “Did you know, a new case has been detected in the next ‘paara’?” – neither fear nor anxiety reflected in it. She shook her head numbly; whereas the pandemic was still an abstract concept to many who were holed up in their homes, the ‘corona-talk’ (as her brother had dubbed it) was a regular piece of conversation in this household. “The masks will take another fourteen days to arrive.....” her mother murmured; back to her world of washing hospital-worn clothes, sanitizers

and maintaining a regular supply of masks..... holding the fort, so to speak. She yawned and shuffled to the drawer that held her toothbrush. Sometimes she thought that their mother was like a poem. Some things about her were easily read, but the core of her, the part that mattered was harder to decipher. She remembered the early days of the quarantine and how it had blown through their household like a storm- their mother, frantic and scared, vehemently protesting against their father's punishing hospital shifts in the wake of the outbreak as news of deserted streets in Spain and mass graves in Italy spread like wild-fire all across the world..... the long drawn-out debates into the night when a few of her father's PGTs had contracted Covid-19 and had to be quarantined at the Rajarhat Centre ..... the curious stillness of the house in those early days with her father shuffling downstairs and her mother calling every drug-store in the locality for masks. It was a state of

Even so, it was curious how fast they fell into a routine....their parents, fighting a two-fronted battle, both at home and outside it. The nation's news networks have portrayed doctors as glorified saviours in these troubled times; however few stop to think about the regular washing cycles of clothes and PPE, the stocking up on masks and mountains of sanitizers ready at hand, on the home-front..... all a daily battle in their own right. And fewer yet stop to think about the people behind this second, largely silent war- invisible but staggering in its enormity.

Apparently, adversity brought out the best in some people.

After brushing, she shuffled to the kitchen for breakfast -cornflakes and milk - a concoction her father thoroughly disliked, said that it provided nothing nutritious to the body. While rummaging for milk, she wondered about the last time she had actually seen her father- Ah, she



remembered- three days ago, when she had actually managed to get out of bed before the intrepid morning alarm and bid him adieu from the balcony. Their interactions had been severely limited these last few months, mostly at his urging; the shadow of the highly infectious virus darkening the most trivial of interactions. Morning wake-up calls, regular chess-matches, debates on current affairs and evenings spent playing badminton had dwindled down to a solitary “ Goodnight Baba, sweet dreams ” hollered from the balcony every night and waiting for his answering shout. His presence was now mostly marked by the sounds of the car, the piles of clothing and the regular meals sent downstairs- silent but ever present. However, she liked cornflakes.

She remembered the first time she had sneaked downstairs, equal parts curiosity and trepidation. The first thing she had encountered was the much-vaulted specimen of a PPE- the saviour of saviours, last line of defense- lurid pink and looking like a glorified raincoat. As she

had stared at it in a horrified trance, a cough from the next room had sent her into an irrational fit of panic- she had escaped upstairs, all curiosity forgotten (and had narrowly avoided running into her mother). Later, the rather extreme reaction had made her feel ashamed; she was a 1st year Medical student for heaven's sake. A few years older and she'd have been a frontline worker much like her father. Doctors were supposed to be courageous and brave and strong and all manner of things under the sun; not jumpy and cowardly.

On relatively peaceful mornings like this, she wonders whether the remaining years of MBBS would miraculously transform her into a girl scared at the sight of her own blood to someone like her father- brave and responsible and ever-eager to honour his duties. And most of the time, she doubts it. But then she sees her mother carrying the clothes basket full of white and blue shirts, dark trousers and a solitary white coat, humming under her breath. She sees this epitome of quiet strength and can't help but

compare it to the scared person she saw in the early days of quarantine. And she thinks she will be alright. After all, breakfast is the perfect time for self-introspection.

Oh, and did she mention that adversity brought out the best in people?

Also on mornings like this, she muses.... She muses that, perhaps there are warriors of all kinds- the ones who stay out every day to fight a six month long battle with no end in sight and the ones who stay back home, doing a lot more than just praying for their safety. And she hopes that, perhaps, a second-hand account of the pandemic may, for once, be just as compelling as a first-hand one.

*“They say it lies in the eyes of the beholder”*

*~ A series of photographs*

**Sautam Bhattacharya, IPGMER**



Live the light! Live the Violet! ♥ Amidst all Darkness always find the Ikigai of your life 🍫. A Cadbury if you can guess correctly what this picture is! 😊



Living the life people dream about. #Serenity found





**The waterfall teaches me the biggest lesson ever- Keep flowing no matter how many obstacles you face.**



**I am on the right track to somewhere great**



**Amidst blurry clouds, focus on the splendid Kanchenjunga**



# *“Memories of Autumn” ~ Painting*

**Sanjeevani Hazra, IPGMER**



# LR Nights

**Dr Meenakshi Khemka**

**PGY1 OBGYN**

**IPGME&R and SSKM Hospital, Kolkata**

*(Labour Room: the night watch, the battlefield of interns and OBGYN residents,  
armoured with hope ushering in the dawn of a new life)*

I vividly remember those  
night watch days of internship  
Where new life was brought  
in at the doorstep  
on the beds  
on delivery tables

Monitors beeping  
breaking the cacophony  
of the highest degrees of pain  
indeed a storm  
preceding the calm  
armed with life

At times the storm  
catapulted into the most  
heart-wrenching misery  
unannounced came  
life's tragedy

Amidst it all  
were those without a  
care in the universe  
sleeping soundly barely  
peeking through round eyes  
ironically, labouring through  
a human's highest  
recording on the pain scale  
descends the dawn of a  
new life



# *Happiness Lies in the Little Things*

**Ipshita Prosad, RGKMCH**



# ***“Two Seasons, two questions” ~Photography***

**Sanjeevani Hazra, IPGMER**



**If winter is here, can spring be far behind?**



**Can you hear the Dhak in the background?**



# by Chaitali Nath

Your eyes shine on me  
Your smile sways me  
Your hands hold me  
As you drown in me

I wake up with the same dream each day  
Yet, I know it'll never be that way  
For you're gone  
And will always be gone

There's no way  
You can come back today  
Or any day in my life  
Despite the constant strife

All I'll have of you  
Is memories of you  
Stories of you  
That'll glisten all through

Sometimes through their own shine  
Sometimes through our love's shine  
Sometimes with my tears  
Sometimes with my fears

Yet, will never be  
Just another story  
For it'll always be the story  
That stays with only you and me

The story we never get to tell  
The story where love fell  
The story where love wasn't a bluff  
Yet, the story where love wasn't enough

It'll always be the most sacred story  
Yet always the hidden story  
It'll always be the story of you and me  
The story that'll stay with only you and me

*Its rare to have one of those good days,  
but in the end, they're worth it!*

**Ipshita Prosad, RGKMCH**



# Executive Board



## The Team Behind The Scenes

# 11 | Know your Executive Board

## Directors

Dr. Rupesh Pakrasi

Dr. Rishav Mukherjee

Dr. Priyadarshini Bhattacharjee

## General Secretary

Ipshita Prosad

## Secretariat Of Finance

Dr. Shriya Saha

Aniruddh Agarwal

## Secretariat Of Human Resources

Dr. Soirindhri Banerjee

Dr. Souptik Majumder

Nidhi Agarwal

Nikita Singh

## Secretariat Of Information Technology

Anisha Basu

Abhirup Sarkar

Debmalya Das

Ananya Das

Archisman Das

Soumyajit Samaddar

Md Adeel Ashraf

Pranav Bhatia

## Secretariat Of Promotions And Marketing

Sneha Das

Monisha Dutta

Shagufta Raghieb

Aayushi Das

Nikita Singh

Raunak Agarwal

Md Shahnawaz Ansari

Biswaroop Joardar



## **Secretariat Of Academics**

Souryadipta Majumdar  
Sanjeevani Hajra  
Atharva Batwe  
Mahima Barua  
Dattatreya Mukherjee  
Chaitali Nath  
Sarada Mondal  
Sujaya Chattopadhyay  
Tauseef Masood Iqbal  
Rimi Hazra  
Arghadip Das  
Swastika Nandi  
Pranav Bhatia  
Darshna Dutta

## **Public Health Officers**

Afifa Naushad  
Ahana Majumdar  
Bishnupriya Mukherjee  
Debasmita Saren  
Shubham Kumar

## **College Representatives**

Shagufta Raghib

Debmalya Das  
Dattatreya Mitra  
Saima Shirin Gul  
Sanjeevani Hajra  
Monisha Dutta  
Yash Agarwal  
Soumyajit Samaddar  
Aditi Agarwal  
Neha Veerabose

## **State Co-ordinator**

Sakthi Meena (Tamil Nadu)

## **Mentors**

Dr. Souvik Sarkar  
Dr. Pronoy Sen  
Dr. Deepayan Sarkar  
Dr. Soirindhri Banerjee  
Dr. Shoily Nath  
Dr. Sunrit Majumder  
Dr. Aayush Bhadani  
Dr. Meenakshi Khemka  
Dr. Shubham Sabherwal  
Dr. Sujaya Chattopadhyay  
Dr. Promiti Pal  
Dr. Upamanyu Nath  
Dr. Srijan Das



## GOONJ 2022 – LIMITED EDITION

They say, "Necessity is the Mother of Invention". The South Asian Medical Students' Association is one of the pioneers of the current model of medical student-run free health camps and social service campaigns carried out across India today. Our strength lay in our on-field campaigns.... a strength that was severely crippled by the pandemic. Goonj 2022- The Resurgence, our official newsletter chronicles our journey through the pandemic and it's aftermath. In the form of activity records, creative works and some exhilarating guest pieces, Goonj 2022 is the story of how SAMSA reinvented itself, step by gritty step, diversifying our activities, expanding our online outreach, making real human change on the ground....all in the backdrop of one of the greatest challenges ever faced by humanity. So hold on tight....because this is going to be a ride to remember.



/samsaindiaofficial

Designed by Ipshita Prosad

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