

# *Reflections*

January 2022



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~

Tell us

What we're doing right and what we're  
doing wrong and what you think of this  
issue. We'd love to hear from you.

# FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

**W**e're at the start of another year  
and another chance to do the  
things we've always wanted to do.

It gives me immense joy to bring to you the  
first issue of 2022.

This issue of *Reflections* features a spine  
chilling nightmarish story, a crossword  
puzzle on phobias, a gorgeous travelogue on  
Iceland, and several thought-provoking  
Tamil poems from our regular contributors.  
The Spotlight section is on Joseph Antoine  
and Raji Nirmal, both from the OUP team.

Read all about the beautiful commune of  
Greve in Chianti in Florence, Italy, and the  
wonder of photography by our talented  
Arunkumar, who creates magic with his  
photographic lens.

The photographs featured in Raji Nirmal's  
spotlight section will surely take some of  
our long-time employees for a trip down  
memory lane.

The *Editorial Board* and *Reflections* team join  
me in wishing everyone of its readers a  
happy happy new year filled with renewed  
hope, boundless opportunities and  
adventures, and in finding new ways to give.  
Wishing you and yours a happy, healthy, and  
abundant 2022!

~ Lydia

**NewGen**  
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# The Nightmare

Running an errand has never been this hectic in her 3 years of service as a florist, searching streets and lanes for an address, asking passersby on the street, sometimes getting lost: a difficult task.

Watching people switch on lights and the roads getting emptier, she thought uneasily that there was no way to get home without delivering the bouquet within the next 30 minutes. As she turned the last corner, a





nagging feeling stopped her from moving forward. She felt a cold shiver run down her spine as an uneasiness settled in. Finally, looking at the delivery address on the signboard, Sarah threw caution to the wind and followed the directions.

Dark trees and wilted flowers loomed over, and the moonlight made the path scarier. Time was a blur but it took 15 minutes to reach the destination and the unexpected sight hit her all at once, as she realized she was at the entrance to a cemetery. Reluctantly, she found her legs moving ahead on their own and a soft whisper guiding her through the graves, not like the wind, but more like a spirit calling out from a particular stone arch ahead. Darkness surrounded her and her eyes seem to blur, all the while making her way to the arch. Pulling the bouquet to her chest, she took slow steps holding her breath in dreadful anticipation. The whispers were getting louder and panic gripped her heart as she looked at the familiar looking gravestone under the arch. Written in bold block letters was her name "Sarah Rodgers," Loving Daughter and Friend, 1972–2020.

As a hammer hit her head, a scream tore up from her mouth and she woke up from the dream.

**Priya Dharshini**

*Executive Copyeditor, Wolters Kluwer Australia*

**"Thanks for sending me Reflections, Oct 2021 issue. I found the contents interesting and especially the visuals. The account presented by your colleagues from different locations is indeed captivating. A common thread is love for nature, traveling, and concern for the environment. All the narrations are indeed worthy of praise. All [responsible for] bringing out the issue deserve to be complimented."**

*~ Major General Nilendra Kumar*



*Manarola in the Cinque Terre region in Liguria, Italy*

# Greve in Chianti

There's something about Italy that makes you want to go back again and again and this proved to be true in my case! My husband and I decided to explore the coastal areas of Cinque Terre in Liguria and the Tuscany region. For part of the trip, we decided to keep Florence as our base, and we were

looking forward to explore a few of the quaint Tuscan towns that were just a bus ride away.

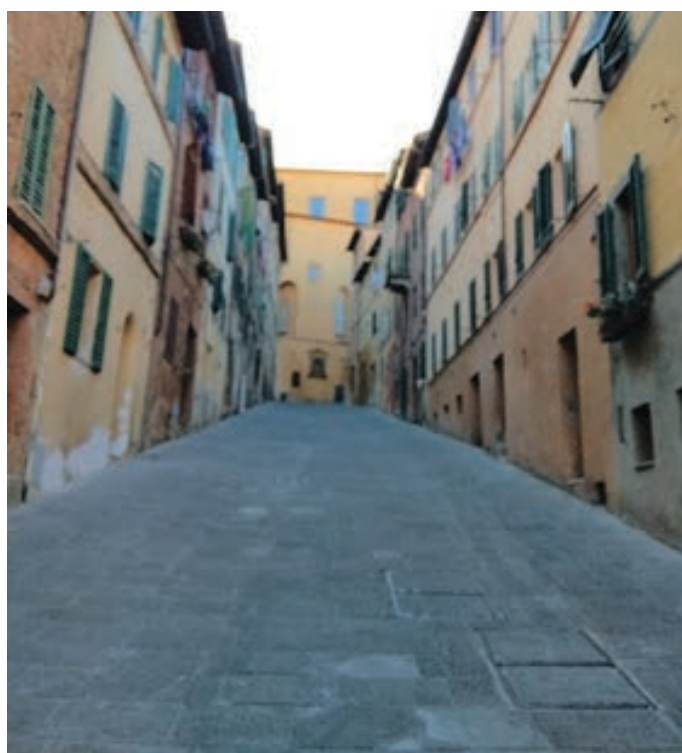
We picked Greve in Chianti as our destination for the day and travelled by taking a bus from Florence which mostly had locals and very few tourists (who we later found were heading to a town further down). More like a





**"Italy is a dream that keeps returning for  
the rest of your life."**

*Anna Akhmatova, Soviet Russian poet*



*Desolate streets of Greve in Chianti*

'passenger train' in an Indian context, the bus stopped at various small stops (or what looked like an electric pole with a small board carrying bus timings!) and at times stopped for people standing by the road, with whom the bus driver chatted animatedly throughout the trip. We reached Greve in less than 40 minutes and the bus dropped us (just the two of us got off here!) on what looked like a desolate road.

Hungry as we were and slightly worried that we were lost, our first stop was to find a place to eat. Lo and behold! A short walk from the bus stop brought us to a beautiful outdoor restaurant that was buzzing with locals eating and, of course, drinking. As we stood tentatively wondering if we should go in, a gentleman, who we came to know as the owner, ran up to us, gave us a warm hug, and pressed two glasses of white wine into our hands, insisting that we sit and enjoy! We sat at one of the tables and after a quick chat about what we liked ("vegetables only, no meat and yes cheese" was our standard request), we were served the most delicious pizza loaded with fresh veggies and local cheese . . . not to mention the huge basket of bread and olive oil as sides. Finishing our meal with a dessert wine – on the house – we strolled to the market square – technically not a "square" as it had only three sides.

With a beautiful portico running along three sides of the square, it was a lovely place to browse for knick-knacks – fascinatingly some of the shops have been around for centuries as noted in their signages – or just indulge in people watching. As it was a lazy Sunday afternoon, there were very few people around and we found a tourist office to ask what was worth doing as we had limited time . . . we





(above) Vernazza in the Cinque Terre region in Liguria; a wine cellar converted into a pub (below) in Greve.







had to catch the last bus back at 5 pm. We really didn't want to see another church or a museum. They said that a must-do was a visit to a wine cellar converted to a pub. After a bit of running around in circles (thanks to Google Maps) and as we were about to give up, we found a small door at the back of a derelict building leading to a basement. We opened the door and walked down a narrow set of steps and reached what was a large, beautiful cellar lined with wines of every colour and type and huge wooden tables where large groups of people – surely tipsy – were hanging out drinking, and clearly having a good time. We decided to do the same thing (*when in Rome, do as the Romans do and all that*) and for a small cost were allowed to take our wine glasses and top up wine from various barrels with taps. Time

flew by as we made friends with the locals, most of whom spoke very little English, and who were most intrigued on learning that we were from South India.

As we looked at the clock, it was a quarter to 5 and we had to rush out waving goodbyes. As we were sprinting back to the bus stop, we passed by the restaurant where we had eaten. The owner waved at us to come in and as we were trying to tell him that we were running late, he handed us two large chocolate cake slices saying, “for your trip back!”

By now we were truly worried about getting stuck here and dashed to the bus stop. As we stood panting, the bus, which fortunately ran late, picked us up and we were on our way back to Florence, once again amidst locals.

With satisfied smiles and tummies, we sat back munching on our cake and enjoying the sights and sounds, totally happy with the day well spent!

**Rohini Krishnan**

*Freelance Copyeditor & ex-Newgenite*





*A shop displaying its wares*





SPOTLIGHT ON

# Joseph Lurdu Antoine

Chennaiites love Pondicherry! It's an easy weekend get-away. The enchanting drive through ECR and the scenic landscape, and what awaits every apartment-bound,

overstressed young and old in Pondicherry are its pristine beaches, foreign nationals on cycles peacefully riding around, no-frills restaurants baking pizzas and Italian sizzlers,





**"We shall never drift apart."**

*Joseph Antoine to his wife Nirenjana*



*Joseph's children, Deerick and Katy Jona*

gelato ice creams, cakes and black coffee!! Pondicherry is blessed with peace and tranquillity. The city is wrapped in a serene silence and space – moulding characters and defining strengths. Joseph Lurdu Antoine of the Oxford University Press team has it all!!

Joseph Antoine has in him a passion for life that is beautifully groomed by the city and its vibes – for Nirenjana his wife he has a tattoo etched on his arm that reads “We Shall Never Drift Apart”; and for his daughter Katy Jona and son Deerick he is planning a second tattoo on his other arm. A committed and devoted husband, a loving father who takes pride in his family, Antoine is a true son of the erstwhile French Province in India!

A product of Don Bosco School, Antoine holds an engineering degree and an MBA as well. His career kick-started with a short stint at Integra Software Services, and then his association with Newgen, which is over a decade long. Antoine has been a part of the OUP team at Newgen since 2011, from where he rose in the ranks and is now the team’s account manager. A memorable part of his career, he recalls, was his official visit to the Oxford University Press's New York office. This was one wonderful trip to be remembered for his lifetime, he says.

Antoine was involved in the development of Pubkit, which he says was a significant contribution. He was one of the project managers chosen to be part of developing Newgen's own system – My own Book. He continues to contribute towards its new developments and enhancement. He believes that team as well as work are



*Joseph's passion: sailing. He sails on 18-ft leisure sailing boats and Catamaran boats*

equally important in his work life: the daily meetings with his team members and his daily morning calls with Anupama Gopinath who takes him through the day's tasks. He believes in automation and system-driven data. Wherever possible, in the day-to-day tasks, he always tries to find if something can be improved to make lives for his team members better.

An enchanting side of Antoine's personality, one that anyone would be envious of, is his balance of work-life-pastime. He finds time for everything, most importantly for his passion, which is sailing. He has been training with the Pondicherry Sailing Association since

2018. The association has eight Optimist class boats, two Laser/radial boats, one Catamaran boat and three leisure sailing boats. He started off by learning the "Optimist class" boat and he took nearly 15–18 months to learn the basics, like catching the wind, tying knots, rigging the sails and finally sailing alone. He sails on leisure sailing boats (18 ft) and Catamaran boats along with his fellow association members. He hopes to sail professionally by the end of the year.

Antoine takes his kids for a beach ride at least once in a day. He says he always feels something refreshing with the gentle winds on the beach. He also relishes his wife's





*With friends and family*

cooking. And whenever possible he goes with his family or friends on short vacations. He also plays badminton daily to ease himself from the impact of laptop and TV.

A turning point in his life, he says, was the birth of his daughter. "It was the happiest moment of my life! The birth of a child is always happy, but for me, the birth of my daughter was even more special. That first moment when I got to hold my daughter was absolutely the most precious moment in my life. I was so happy and overwhelmed with joy. I don't often show a lot of emotion but this

moment brought tears to my eyes. Even though I was pretty confident that I was going to have a daughter, I had to wait for almost 16 hours to see her and hold her in my arms." Katy is six years old now and he remembers the day she was born like it was yesterday. With every year that passes he says she is more special than before. "Through every stage, through every age, I love her even more. No words can describe the warm memories, pride, and gratitude that come from having a daughter to love and cherish," says an emotional Antoine and a proud father.

**"With every year that passes by," he says "she is more special than ever before. Through every stage, through every age, I love her even more. No words can describe the warm memories, pride, and gratitude that come from having a daughter to love and cherish," says an emotional Antoine and a proud father.**



With so much to a person, one wonders where he draws his inspiration from and who has been in his aura of influence. Antoine recalls that around 2009 he started watching documentaries about motorcycling clubs and the first one was *Sons of Anarchy*. Suggestions on Netflix led him to the Gangster series and that further led him to watching how drug lords were ruling the 1970s. Here he encountered Pablo Emilio Escobar Gaviria.

Despite Escobar being an outlaw and a narcoterrorist, Antoine was impressed by the following:

- the love he had towards his family and friends
- the love for his daughter more than anything else. He burnt around \$2 million dollars to keep his daughter warm when he was hiding out
- that he built a jail for himself
- that he built hospitals, stadiums and housing for the poor. He even sponsored local soccer teams
- that he owned a zoo with 200 animals.

We see in Antoine a man grounded in reality, rooted in a culture that nurtured him and who is devoted to a family that is his life.

He dislikes superheroes and imaginary characters doing unimaginable things. He is more comfortable watching ordinary people doing extraordinary things. He finds hero worshipping absurd and worries that it will not die out any time soon. Picking someone to excessively admire to the point of believing that they can do no wrong seems to be second nature to humans, he says. Antoine reasons that hero worship can completely consume and possibly destroy someone's life if they aren't careful.

Antoine lives life to the fullest and has a deep connect with people. Eyes are a mirror to a person's soul and he considers anyone who holds an eye contact to be confident. Good posture, a firm shake hand, and positivity speak of their confidence, he says. A person's dressing sense too defines who he or she is.

Written for *Reflections* by **Bibi Christa Xavier**

*Senior Copyeditor, Books Copyediting Team*



*The Reflections Team & the Editorial Board wish you all a very happy, prosperous, & wonderful new year!!*



*Photo courtesy of Arunkumar, Project Manager, NPUK Onshore team*





SPOTLIGHT ON

# Raji Nirmal

Meet Raji Nirmal, Manager – Editorial, OUP Books (Acad, Med, Law and OHB/OHO divisions), the star of the spotlight section in this issue of *Reflections*. She lives in the quintessential locality of Santhome, Chennai.

Raji is an old timer at Newgen and has been with the organization for 17 long years. What she loves most about Chennai is its people. She has lived here for nearly 30 years now, and in this journey has made a lot of good





friends and well-wishers who are her network of comfort. She values the friendships she has nurtured over the years and for their part, her friends have stood by her through thick and thin. For her, friends mean a lot, even more than relatives.

On the flip side, what she hates about Chennai is the poor hygiene seen in public places. The garbage management and potholed roads leave a lot to be desired and she is unhappy with the threat the roads pose to vehicles.

Her greatest source of inspiration was her father, whom she looked up to and admired for being her support all through her life. His hard work and sacrifices to make sure Raji always got the best in life inspired her a lot. She strives to be like her father and thus be an inspiration to her son. Unfortunately, she lost her father in May 2021, and if she could have one superpower, she wishes she could bring him back. She says sadly, “Away from my sight but forever in my heart.”

Though Raji thought that the happiest and proudest moment of her life was when her son was born, she realizes that she felt most proud when her son’s school principal and his teachers called her and commended on how disciplined he was and how very accomplished he was academically. They praised him for his language skills and announced that he was selected as the English language captain of the school. Raji and her husband’s cup of joy overflowed when they were invited to witness the honoring of their son with the captaincy post. The event and thus the



(top to bottom): Raji and her husband Nirmal; Raji with her husband and son on the occasion of her son being invested with captaincy, Raji’s parents with her son



pride the young lad brings to his parents are all the more precious since Raji lost her first child and this little one came along when she was trying to cope with her loss. She quotes the *Thirukkural* (ancient words of wisdom authored by Thiruvalluvar), which goes as follows:

ஈன்ற பொழுதின் பெரிதுவக்கும் தன்மகனைச்  
சான்றோன் எனக்கேட்ட தாய்.

*(When a mother hears his named 'fulfill'd of wisdom's lore,'*

*Far greater joy she feels, than when her son she bore.)*

*[The mother who hears her son called "a wise man" will rejoice more than she did at his birth.]*

Raji's happiest memory is of the day she was selected as a Trainee Technical Editor in Newgen in the year 1999. Fresh out of college, she had applied for the vacancy in Newgen upon reading an ad in the *Indian Express*. She came with no great expectation in mind as people at home discouraged her from attending the interview. They wanted her to stay at home and eventually get married. But the gritty Raji wanted a career for herself and hence thought of giving this a shot. The first of her two rounds was conducted by the then editorial head and the second round by Prabhakar Ram. Within 24 hours she was called and informed that she had come out with flying colors and had been selected and she was to collect the offer letter. In her words, "Looking back, I am grateful to God and my family for having given me the much needed support to make a great career out of a humble beginning. I am also thankful to the management for their support and encouragement. I had to take a break from my career for 6 years to take care of my son.



*Prabhakar Ram releasing the first issue of Reflections*

Nevertheless, I am glad that I have been able to cling on to my job even after all that. This day is still evergreen in my memory and reminds me of the following two lines of the poem by Francis Duggan: "Old memories die hard as some do like to say / And for as long as I live such things with me will stay."

Raji was also part of the original *Reflections* team when it was first launched. The first issue of *Reflections* was released by Prabhakar Ram.

Some of Raji's pet peeves are people who backbite, are irregular to work and inefficient, have a lethargic attitude toward work, are not proactive, and are hypocritical. She gets



(from left to right): Women: *Vidya, Raji, Bhuvana, Suni, Monica, Vijaya, Lydia*; Men: *Saravanan, Jai Kumar, Vijay Kumar, Ravi, Clement, Arun, Vincent, Thiagu*

annoyed by people giving lame excuses for unfinished work. Three things that no one knows about Raji: she is a good public speaker. She has served as the general secretary of the Parents Teachers Association in her son's school in the past few years and has had to deliver a lot of speeches to parents. Content writing is her passion and she writes articles for a few monthly magazines in both English and Tamil. She is a very socially responsible person involved in social service where she visits slums to help poor children with their basic needs.

Where women are concerned, Raji feels that women's place in today's society has indeed improved a lot. Women have overcome a lot of hindrances that were meant to block their growth and break their spirits. Women have faced and fought everything that was meant to destroy them. Today they have developed a strong spirit, and even with tears in their eyes, they are able to rise up above all and say "I'm okay!" Raji feels that a "woman is like a full circle!! Within her is the power to create, nurture and transform!"

**Women have overcome a lot of hindrances that were meant to block their growth and break their spirits. Women have faced and fought everything that was meant to destroy them . . .**  
**"[A] woman is like a full circle!! Within her is the power to create, nurture and transform!"**





*Raji with her Palgrave team members when she was head of the team in 2002. (Front row) Kalaivani, Yegammai, Raji, Sudha, Sangeetha, Sharmila; (back row) Srilakshmi, Suresh, Preethi, Asha Boaz*

She recharges through deep, peaceful and undisturbed sleep. After this, she is up and about ready to take on the world!

Music is her panacea and if she didn't have to sleep at all, she would keep listening to some nice melodious music.

She is the go-to person for people who need a sounding board and counselling. Friends and relatives who are generally upset or depressed over something in their life usually reach out to Raji for guidance. She tries to motivate and inspire them with her warm words and talk.

The best book or series that she has ever read is the *Bible*. She never tires of reading it, and every time she reads it, it gives her new

insights and meanings. She feels it speaks to her like a person, which she has not experienced with any other book. The first thing Raji notices about a person is how genuine they are by what they say or do. This warm person is indeed a genuine and good friend to those who need her.

“You look soft on the outside but you are really tough and strong!” — this is one of the nicest compliments she has received and everyone who has interacted with her will surely vouch for this.

Written for *Reflections* by **Ujwala Vaidya**

*Senior Manager - Copyediting*

*Books Copyediting Team*



## திட்ட மேலாண்மை

பிழை அறியா தைரியத்தோடு  
வாய்க்கொண்டு வாய்ப்பை பெற்று  
வாழ்க்கையில் அடுத்தக்கட்டம்  
புதியதோர் தொடக்கம்!

நீ மட்டும்தான்  
உன்னை நம்பித்தான்  
நங்கூரமாய் விதைப்பான்  
பக்குவமாய் தீட்டப்பட்ட  
பழையவாள் கொண்டவன்!

புள்ளியும் விவரமும் தெரியாமல்  
கடிவாளம் கட்டிக்கொண்டு  
மடிக்கணினியோடு ஓட்டம்

காலத்தையும் வீட்டையும் மறந்து  
துறையின் முக்குளிவீரன் ஆக!

மற்றவர் பார்வையில்  
முகதிரையிட்ட அரக்கன் பேரல்  
உண்மையில் தேவைகளால்  
கைலிலங்கிடப்பட்ட ஆட்டுக்குட்டி

தன்னிறைவற்ற மேலாண்மைக்கடலில்  
மனிதநேயம் என்னும் செளல்  
மறையாமல் காத்திடுவேன்  
நம் நலன் கருதி...

- ரா.அ.பெ. Written by **Aristo Felix**

Senior Manager - Operations

Wolters Kluwer Germany





**EVEN THOUGH  
THINGS GO  
WRONG,  
LIFE GOES ON.**

விருப்பமில்லாமல்

விருப்பத்துடன் எழுதும் வரிகள்

தோட்டம்விட்டு கானகம் நோக்கிச்  
செல்ல எண்ணி  
பாலை வந்து சேர்ந்தேன்!

புல்லில் அமர நினைத்து  
முற்களில் உறங்குகிறேன்!

குயிலின் இசை கேட்க வந்து  
வல்லூறுகளின் அலறல்  
கேட்கிறேன்!

மண்தோண்டி மண்புழு தேடினேன்  
கொட்டும் தேனீக்களே அதிகம்  
தீண்டியது!

உண்ண கிழங்குகள் அகழ்ந்தேன்  
மிஞ்சிய எலும்புத்துண்டுகளே  
அதிகம் கிடைத்தது!

இறுதியாக கானல் கண்டு  
குளமென நினைத்து குதித்தேன்  
அது புதைமணலாய் என்னை  
முடியது!

Written by **Nagarajan**

*Executive Paginator, Data Division*



## ஆன்ட்ராய்டு அழுது

குளிர்நிலவை அம்புலி  
என்று அன்போடு காட்டி  
அமுதை ஊட்டிய காலங்கள்!

"தோத்தோ" என்றே தெருவின்  
நாய்களைக் காட்டி ஊட்டிய  
மிச்சத்தை அவைகளுக்கே  
படைத்த காலங்கள்!

காகங்களின் கரைதலை  
தேடித்தேடி காட்டி  
உணவைப் பகிர்ந்திடு என்றே  
ஊட்டிய காலங்கள்!

கதைகளுக்கிடையே திசைதிருப்பி  
நல்லொழுக்க சிந்தனைகளோடு  
அன்போடு ஊட்டிய காலங்கள்!

உறவுகளைச் சொல்லி  
ஆளுக்கொரு வாயென்று  
முறைசொல்லி உணவூட்டி  
சொந்தம் வளர்த்த காலங்கள்!

மாதா ஊட்டாத சோறா  
மாங்காய் ஊட்டுமாம் -- இன்றோ  
மொபைல் ஊட்டுகிறது!



மசித்த உணவை  
பசித்த கைக்குழந்தைக்கு  
ஊட்டும் கடமையை  
தட்டிப்பறிக்கிறது அலைபேசி!

பெற்றவர் கடமைகளை  
கைப்பேசிக்கு கைமாற்றி  
விடுகிறோமோ நாம்!

எதைக் காட்டி வளர்க்கிறோமோ  
அதை ஒட்டியே வளரும்  
பிள்ளைகள்!

“எந்நேரமும் மொபைலா?” என்றே  
பிள்ளைகள் வளர்ந்தபின்  
சலிப்பதில் நியாயங்கள்  
இருக்கப் போவதில்லை!

நிலவும் மலரும்  
நாய்களும் பூனைகளும்  
பறவைகளும் செடிகளாகளும்  
உறவுகளும் இதர உயிர்களும்  
நிலவில் வடைசும்  
பாட்டிகளும் அவர்கள் சொல்லும்  
கதைகளும் காத்துக்கிடக்கின்றன  
உங்களின் பிள்ளைகளுக்கு  
நீங்கள் காட்டி சேரறுட்ட!

ஆம்! அன்பிற்கு மாற்றாக  
ஆன்ட்ராய்டு ஒருபோதும்  
ஆகிவிடாது!

\* The poem calls on parents to go back to showing nature to their children while feeding them instead of entertaining them on their cell phones.

Written by **Arockia Alexander**  
Manager, Books Pre-Editing Team

## கிளி ஜோரசியக்காரர்கள் (Parrot astrologers)



கிளைக்குக் கிளை தரவும் பறவை  
போல்  
காலம் மாறும் போது உதிரும்  
இலையாய்  
உதிர்க்கிறது சில மணிதர்களை!

இந்த தொழில்நுட்ப வியாக்கனங்கள்  
சதை கிழிய இழுத்துப் போகின்றன  
சில ஆதி ஜீவராசிகளை!

ஒரு மழை நாளின் கணத்த  
மௌனத்தில்



தூறல் முடிந்து திரும்புகிற  
மேகமாய்  
நினைவுகள் தலைகோதுகின்றன!

காலி வயிற்றோடும்  
செருப்பு இல்லாத கால்களோடும்  
சிறகு வெட்டப்பட்ட கூண்டுக்  
கிளிகளோடும்  
எல்லா கடவுளோடும்  
கொஞ்சம் பேய்களோடும்  
நம் வீதிக்கு வருகிற கிளி  
ஜோசியக்காரர்களை!

புழுதிப் படிந்த பழைய தெருக்களில்  
பாடித் திரிந்த படகோட்டிகளை!

கிராமத் தெருக்களில் அடுக்கு  
மொழியில்  
தமிழாடும் சிறார் உலகத்து  
சிற்றரசர்களை!

கிழிந்த வேட்டியும், ஒட்டிய  
வயிறுமாய் திண்ணைகளை  
அலங்கரித்த தீர்க்கதரிசிகளை!

படிப் படியாய் குறைந்து போயின  
அந்தப் பாதகவடுகள்!

அந்த மேரப்பம் தேடி அலைந்துக்  
கொண்டிருக்கின்றன  
சில தெருநாய்களும் அந்தக்காலத்து  
சிறுவர்களும்!

பின்னர் ஒருநாள்  
நெடுஞ்சாலையின் புளிய  
மரத்தடியில்,  
மலைக்கோவிலின் படிக்கட்டுகளில்  
ஒளிந்து வரழ  
பழகிக் கொண்டனர்!

ஆனால் விடுவதாக இல்லை

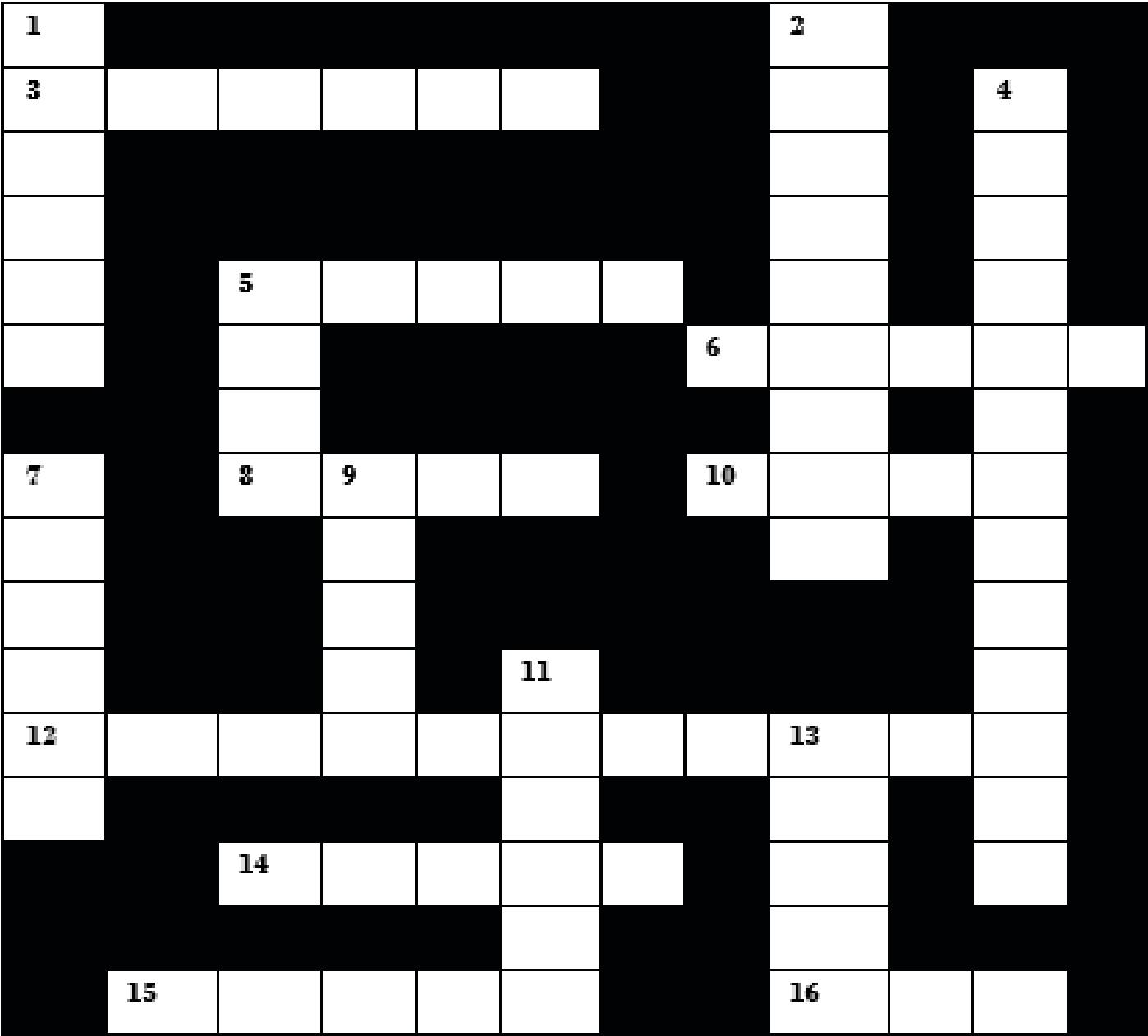
காலத்தின் ஒவ்வொரு  
ஒப்பனையிலும்  
பலிபீடங்களில் பெரும்பாலும்  
துண்டிக்கப் படுவது விளிம்பு நிலை  
மணிதர்களே!

Written by **K Kannan**

Quality Control, Books Typesetting Team



# Crossword: Phobias



**Across**

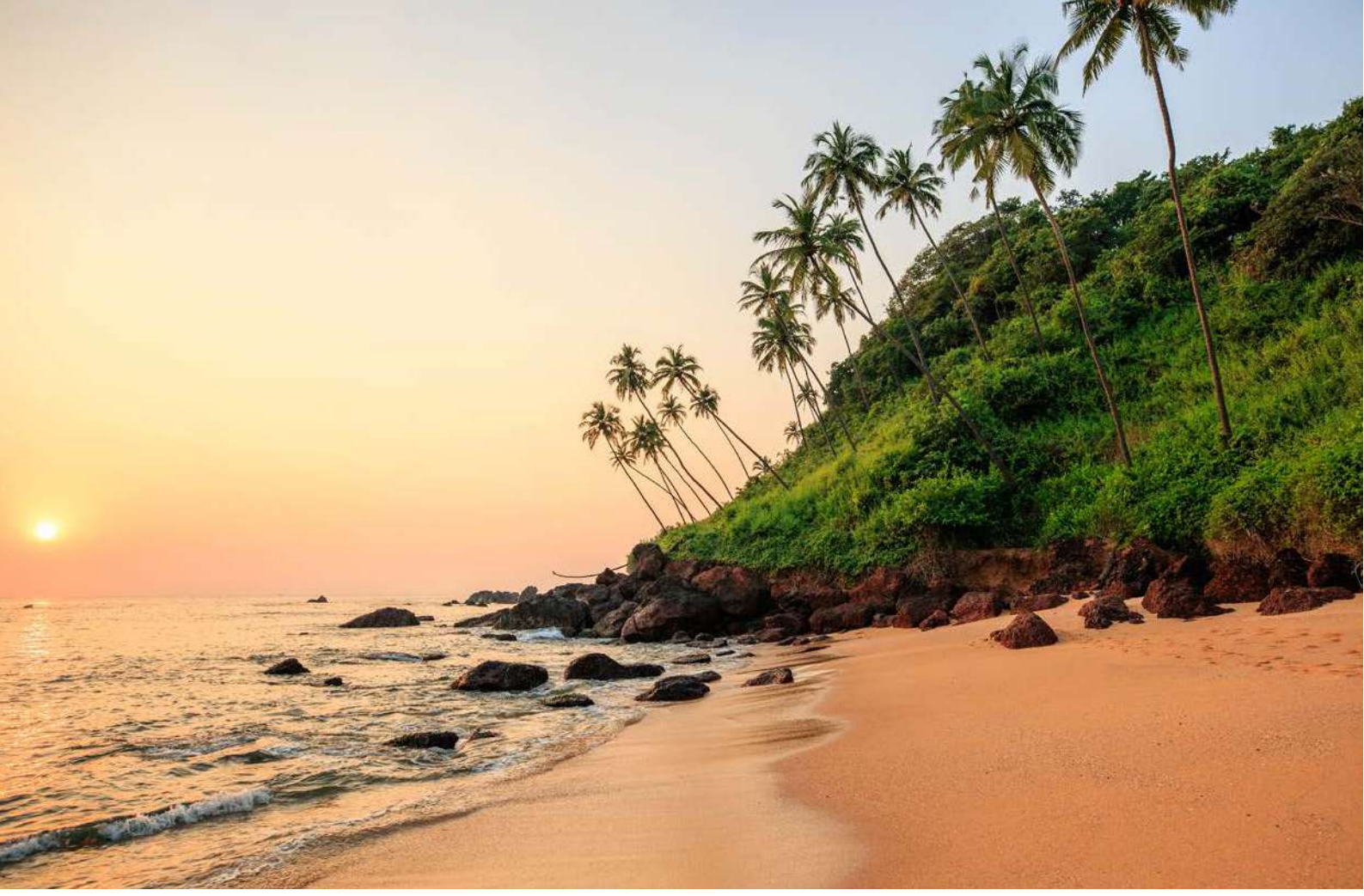
- 3 Fear of COVID-19: \_\_\_\_phobia (6)
- 5 A symptom of Across 3 (in reverse) (5)
- 6 Chromophobia is the fear of \_\_\_\_\_ (5)
- 8 Fear of the number 8 (4)
- 10 Pyrophobia is the fear of \_\_\_\_\_ (4)
- 12 Fear of Across 15 (11)
- 14 Ornithophobia is the fear of \_\_\_\_\_ (5)
- 15 The elixir of life (5)
- 16 Heliophobia (3)

**Down**

- 1 Didaskaleinophobia (6)
- 2 Fear of animals (9)
- 4 Claustrophobia (8, 5)
- 5 Fear of blood (4)
- 7 Acrophobia (6)
- 9 Fear of computers (5)
- 11 Arachnophobia (6)
- 13 Bibliophobia (5)

**Christina Poornima**

*Senior Executive — Copyediting, OUP Books*



## இரசிக்க மறந்தோம்\*

ஆரவாரமில்லா  
அமைதியான சாலை  
அங்கொன்றும் இங்கொன்றுமாய்  
வெட்டாமல் விட்டுவைத்த மரங்கள்

பச்சை உடை உடுத்திய புல்வெளி  
புல்லின் நுனியில்  
கண்ணாடிக்குமிழாய் பணித்துளி...  
தொட்டால் உடைந்து விடக்கூடுமோ?  
உடைக்க மனமில்லாமல்  
புல் தரையில்  
கால் தடம் பதித்து  
நடக்கையில்  
குளிர்ச்சியாய்  
சில்லென்று கன்னத்தை  
வருடிய காற்று  
சட்டென்று  
சிலிர்க்கும் தேகத்தை  
போர்த்தியபடி  
அழகாய் ஒரு மாலைநேர  
நடைப்பயணம்...

வானில் ஏழு வர்ண சாலையாய்  
வளைந்த வானவில்!!!  
எதை இணைக்கும் முயற்சியில்  
இந்த பாலம்??  
விடை தெரியாத  
இயற்கையின் விநோதங்கள்...

சட்டென்று ஒளிர்ந்து மறைந்த  
கேமராவின் ஒளிர்க்கதிர் போல்  
ஒரு மின்னல்!  
யாரைப் படம் பிடிக்க இந்த அவசரம்?

மேளதாளமாய் இடி இடிக்க  
மழை வருமோ வராதோ?  
நடைப் பயணம்  
தொடருமோ தொடராதோ?  
ஏதோ ஒரு சிந்தனையில்  
நடந்துச் செல்ல,



சற்றே தொலைவில்  
தூரமாய் ஆவிப் பறக்கும்  
மக்கரச்சேனம்,  
மழைக்கு முன்னதாகவே  
தயாராகி காத்திருக்கின்றது...

கண்ணாமூச்சி ஆட்டம் ஆடி  
காகிதக் கப்பலோடு  
குதித்து விளையாட  
குதூகலமாய்  
குழந்தைகள்...

மேகங்களுக்குள்  
தன்னை ஒளித்துக் கொண்டு  
செங்கதிர்களை விழுங்கி  
அஸ்தமனமாகியது  
சூரியன்..

நீலத்தில் மூழ்கியிருந்த  
வான்மகள் சட்டென்று  
கருப்பு உடைக்கு மாறி  
கும்மிருட்டை பரவினாள்..

ஏணிந்த கருப்பு  
யாருக்கு இந்த எதிர்ப்பு  
என்ன உன் போராட்டம்??  
ஏன் இந்த திண்டாட்டம்??  
குழப்பம் வானிலை மாற்றம்!

வானிலிருந்து கல்லெறிந்தாய்  
ஆலங்கட்டி மழை  
பிடிக்க கையோ போதவில்லை  
மழையை விடுத்து  
வேறொதுவும் நினைவில் இல்லை...

பட்டுன்று பலரும் குடைப்பிடித்து  
மழையைத் தடுக்க

மழையை விடுத்து  
வேறொதுவும் நினைவில் இல்லை...  
பட்டுன்று பலரும் குடைப்பிடித்து  
மழையைத் தடுக்க  
முந்தானைத் தலைப்பில்  
பொய்யாய் குடைப்பிடித்து  
முழுதாய் நனைந்து  
மனதின் வெம்மைகளை  
மழைநீரில் நனையவிட்டு  
நீம்மதியாய் ஒரு பெருமூச்சு...

மழையை ரசிக்க மனமில்லாமல்  
அவசரகதியில்  
வீட்டுற்குள் அடைந்துக் கொள்ள  
மழையை வசைப்பாடிக்  
கொண்டிருக்கும் ஒரு கூட்டம்

மழையின் சாரலில்  
மனது இதமாய் மாறி  
மழையே மழையே  
நின்று விடாதே!!!  
என் மனதின்  
குளுமையை  
தணித்து விடாதே!!  
ஏக்கமோ என்னுள்...

நனைந்த கொலுக்கள்  
பளபளப்பாய் மின்ன

ஏக்கத்தோடே தொடருகிறது  
நடைப்பயணம்..

மூச்சு முட்ட கட்டிடங்களும்

மூச்சு முட்ட கட்டிடங்களும்  
வாகன இரைச்சலுக்கு இடையே  
அலுவலக அலைச்சலின் அசதியில்

அழித்து விட்டோம்  
இயற்கையின் அழகை..

மரசில்லா இயற்கை காற்று  
ஓலையில் வடியும்  
மழையின் தண்ணீர்  
ஏரி குளத்தில்  
குதித்து ஆடும்  
ஆட்டம் இளகுகளின்  
கொண்டாட்டம்

இத்தனை சுகங்களும்  
இனிவரும் சந்ததியினருக்கு  
நகரத்தில் கிடைக்க வாய்ப்பில்லை..  
நகரம் இப்போது நகம்..

\* The poet talks of all the little things that make life beautiful and how over the years we have forgotten such things. How mindless urbanization has destroyed life's little pleasures and how our future generations are poised to live a life of hell on earth.

Written by **Inbakkavi PT**

Senior Executive – XML

Books Typesetting Team

புன்னகை...! (பரிமாணங்கள்) (Dimensions of a smile)

குழந்தை முகத்தில் முதல் மூச்சுக்  
காற்றாய் புன்னகை..  
மழலை முகத்தில் மிட்டாய்  
வாங்குகையில் புன்னகை..  
பருவ வயதில் முதல் காதலாய்  
புன்னகை..  
பள்ளி மாணவர்களுக்கு மழை  
வருகையில் புன்னகை..  
காதலியின் முகத்தில்  
வெட்கமாய் புன்னகை..  
காதலன் முகத்தில் முத்தமாய்  
புன்னகை..  
தந்தை முகத்தில் சோதனையிலும்  
புன்னகை..  
தாயின் முகத்தில் வேதனையிலும்  
புன்னகை..  
தமையன் முகத்தில் தங்கைக்காய்  
புன்னகை..  
தங்கை முகத்தில் தமையனுக்காய்  
புன்னகை..

மனைவி முகத்தில் சமைக்கையில்  
புன்னகை..  
கணவன் முகத்தில் சாப்பிடையில்  
புன்னகை..  
பாட்டன் முகத்தில் அனுபவமாய்  
புன்னகை..  
பாட்டி முகத்தில் அதிகாரமாய்  
புன்னகை..  
நண்பன் முகத்தில்  
நகைச்சுவையாய் புன்னகை..  
பிராணிகள் முகத்தில் பாசத்தால்  
புன்னகை..  
பூக்கள் முகத்தில் வண்டுகள்  
வருகையில் புன்னகை..  
வெவ்வேறு பரிமாணங்கள், ஒரே  
புன்னகை..  
இரு இதழ் விரித்து ஹைக்கூ  
கவிதையாய்..

Written by **Afroze**

Project Manager, OUP Books





# The Land of Fire & Ice: Iceland

Have you ever wondered if Greenland is full of greenery? Or Iceland is full of ice? If yes—well—you are in for a surprise.

About 80% of Greenland is snow and ... yes ... you got it right—most of Iceland is green.

There are glacial mountains, ice caves, etc. in Iceland, but for the most part it is green.

Iceland, also known as the land of fire and

ice, is also the land of the midnight sun, which means the sun never sets during summer because of its proximity to the Arctic Circle. In some places it sets for a few hours but it is bright enough to read a book outside at midnight. On June 21st (summer solstice) the sun is visible for the full 24 hours in the Westfjords. In the capital city of Reykjavík it does not get dark at night from May 21 until



*Pingvellir (Thingvellir) National Park, Selfoss, Iceland*

July 30. The midnight sun therefore stays visible in the sky for more than 21 hours in Reykjavík in the middle of summer.

So if you suffer from insomnia and if you are the kind of person who likes to sleep in cave-like darkness, this isn't the place for you. Because it is quite likely you will start hallucinating if you go without sleep for days! So you will see all the windows in Iceland houses having heavy drapes to keep off the sunlight during the night hours.

During the summer of 2019 my family decided on an impromptu trip to the Netherlands and other Scandinavian countries. Believe me, we just booked flight tickets to and from Amsterdam. Nothing planned for the in-between days. Long story

short, after seeing the sights in Amsterdam, The Hague and Belgium, we took off to Iceland and, my word! it was indeed a trip well taken.

Since it was unplanned, the stuff we saw too weren't the typical touristy kind. More of offbeat locations. So though everyone raves about the Blue Lagoon, personally I think it is just an item to be ticked off rather than any merit in the overly priced place. A tourist trap, if I may say so.

Our trip included the Golden Circle, which consisted of three stunning locations southwest of Iceland: the Thingvellir National Park, which is steeped in history and is a UNESCO heritage site. The guide informed us that some episodes of the *Game of Thrones*





*The exploding geyser Strokkur*

were shot here. I haven't watched it so I cannot establish the veracity of this claim.

The highly active Geysir Geothermal Area is another fabulous place, where hot geysers and bubbling mud pits are smoking all the while. There are exploding geysers and the lively Strokkur is a tourist's dream as it goes off every ten minutes, shooting hot water in the air nearly 40 metres high. This geyser in the Haukadalur Valley dates back to 1294. Nineteenth-century research showed that this geyser could reach a height of 170 metres! It was dormant for many years and was revived by an earthquake in 2000.

Then there's the majestic Gullfoss Waterfall, which people say is the Niagara Falls of Iceland.

Our next destination involved travelling to the far south to see the Seljalandsfoss Falls, Jökulsárlón (lit. "glacial river lagoon") — a large glacial lake in the southern part of Vatnajökull National Park, Iceland, and the most beautiful black sand beach, Reynisfjara.

**Seljalandsfoss** is a magnificent and mind-blowing waterfall that drops 60 metres (197 ft) and is part of the Seljalands River. This river has its origin in the volcano glacier Eyjafjallajökull. An amazing aspect of this waterfall is that visitors can walk behind the falls into a small cave. It was indeed an exciting and unforgettable experience.

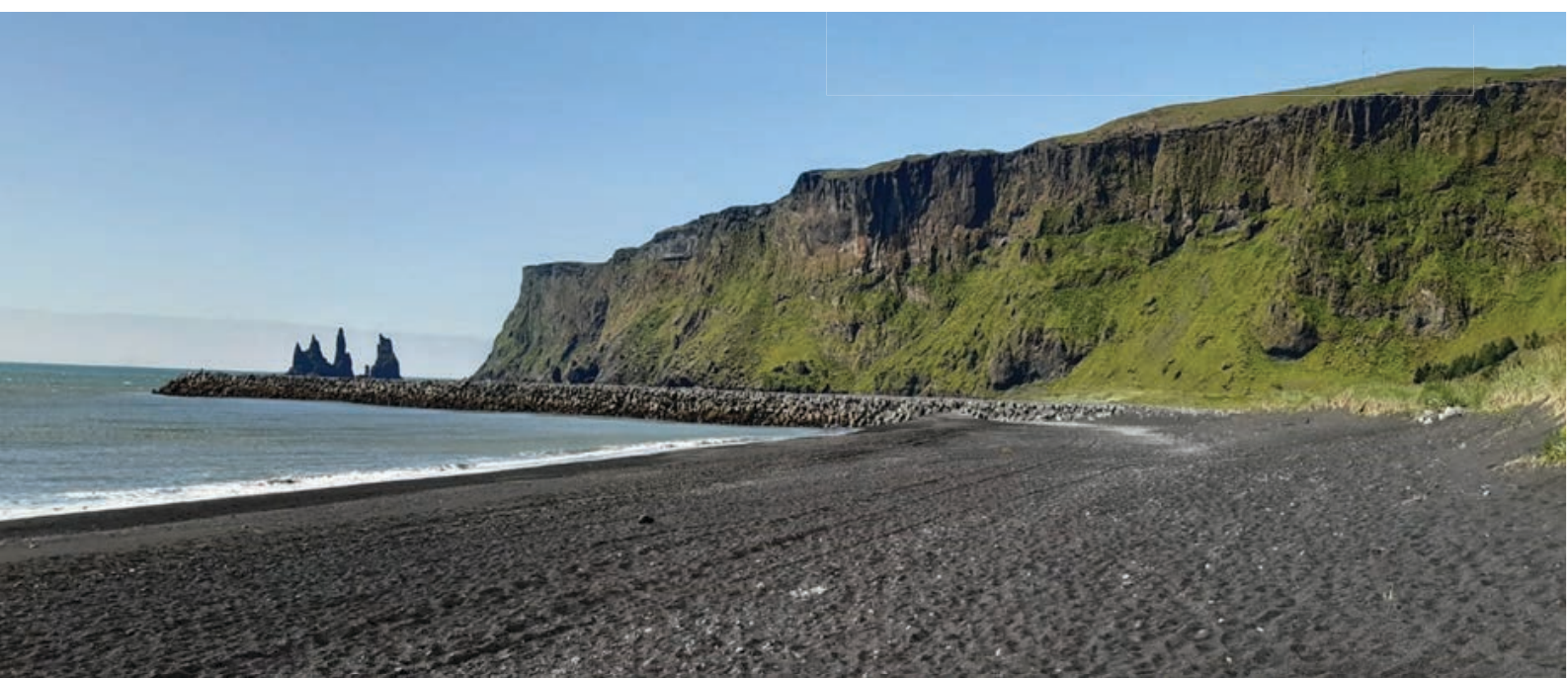
**Jökulsárlón** is a must visit place if you visit Iceland! Blockbuster films such as *Tomb Raider*, *Batman Begins*, and two James Bond











*Ujwala with her family at Jökulsárlón; the beautiful glacier lake Jökulsárlón; (just above) the black sand beach Reynisfjara, also known as the Diamond Beach*





*A chipped off glacier floating through the lagoon*

films, *A View to a Kill* and *Die Another Day* feature this beautiful glacier lake. It's not surprising why famous directors would choose this amazing location as a backdrop! The sky, the lagoon, the blocks of ice floating in the lagoon are of such varied and bright shades of blue that you begin to wonder at the canvas of nature. No artist can reproduce this beauty.

This extremely picturesque glacial lagoon at the southern edge of the Vatnajökull Glacier is regarded as one of Iceland's greatest natural wonders. Huge chunks of ice keep

breaking off the glacier regularly and float through the glacier lagoon on their way to the sea. You could keep looking at this amazing sight forever. It reminded me of the huge iceberg break in the *Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. The nearby black sand beach Reynisfjara is called Diamond Beach because these ice chunks twinkle and glisten in the sun resembling diamonds.

The next day was pretty unhurried with only a visit to the magnificent lava tunnel Raufarhólshellir, one of the longest and



*The majestic Seljalandsfoss Waterfall*

best-known lava tubes in Iceland. It is located just 30 minutes from Reykjavík and is easily accessed year round. A journey into the belly of the earth via Raufarhólshellir is a unique experience. It was freezing cold and we were dressed like Eskimos! As we looked in awe at

the inner workings of a volcanic eruption while walking along the path of lava that flowed during the Leitahraun eruption, which occurred east of the Bláfjöll mountains about 5,200 years ago, I was constantly jittery that the earth may cave in. The guide





*The highly protected Icelandic horses*

informed us that every winter spectacular ice sculptures are formed inside the entrance of the cave making the experience of visiting the lava tunnel even more breathtaking. There was a moment during the trip when she informed us that the lights would all switch off and plunge us in utter intense darkness, giving us a virtual feel of being in the core of the earth. I literally stopped breathing because the darkness was so dense and all-encompassing and we could hear water droplets ping pinging inside the earth's core. All tourists were very quiet and it was like even a breath would bring the rocks above us tumbling down. A shiver ran down our collective spines and we took in the eerie beauty of the atmosphere. Finally we all let

out a huge sigh when the lights came on. An experience worth going through rather than reading it like this!

Some interesting facts about Iceland: Icelandic horses have been the only breed of horse in Iceland since they were brought here many years ago. They are known as being the purest in the world because no other breed of horse has been allowed to breed with them, let alone be around them. In order to keep this line of purebred, healthy horses intact, Iceland has created very specific and strict laws regarding the horses. One, no other breed of horse is allowed to enter the country; two, any form of riding equipment brought into Iceland must either be new or thoroughly sanitized; and three, once an





*Raufarhólshellir lava tunnel*

Icelandic horse leaves the country, it is never allowed to return. While it may seem a little harsh, it is important to keep the strong lineage of these horses safe.

The parliament of Iceland was founded in 930 and still exists. Known as **Althing**, it is the oldest surviving parliament in the world. Another fact about Iceland, which will be of interest to our readers here—Icelanders read a lot and the tradition of reading goes as far back as the 13th century. Also, one out of ten

Icelanders publishes a book in their lifetime! Halldór Kiljan Laxness, one of the country's most noted authors, was awarded a Nobel Prize in Literature.

So friends! If you ever make a bucket list of places you want to travel, put Iceland at the very top. It deserves the spot and you deserve the joy it will bring you!

**Ujwala Vaidya**

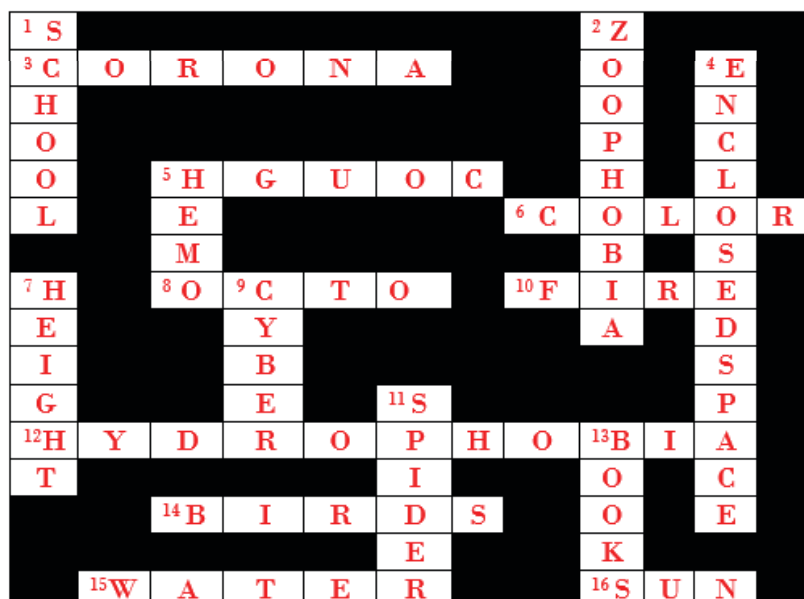
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*Did you know that  
the word above is  
a fear of long words?*





# INTERNATIONAL DAY OF **PERS<sup>o</sup>NS WITH** *Disabilities*



## Nandavanam: Update

The Nandavanam Center for Healing and the Nandavanam Center for Learning, both under the umbrella of the Newgen Nandavanam Charitable Trust and Newgen's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) venture, cater to children with developmental challenges like

Autism, Intellectual Impairment, Cerebral Palsy, Multiple Disabilities and Learning Disability.

Nandavanam provides a wide range of services that include





- Medical Intervention
- External Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Family Support
- Educational Services

to underprivileged children from the local community.

*International Day of Persons with Disabilities:* December 3rd is an international observance promoted by the United Nations since 1992. The observance of the day aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities.

Over the years Nandavanam has been celebrating this day in a special way by conducting Inclusive Barefoot Beach Walking and Traditional Beach Games on the Chennai beaches to promote the benefits of barefoot beach walking - a free therapeutic modality that benefits all, especially people with disabilities.

Many schools and children from all over Chennai have been participating in this event every year.

Since last year, due to the pandemic, the day has been celebrated virtually and this year Nandavanam conducted two events:

1. Disability Awareness Program for school children
2. An interactive Zoom session on the Therapeutic Benefits of Barefoot Beach Walking in Managing Disabilities

The first was an activity-based online experiential program for children from various schools aimed towards creating an awareness of persons with disability to help the children in understanding them better.

We received an overwhelming response from many schools and several children participated. All the participating students were awarded with certificates of participation.

**Nandavanam**

Presents

PANEL DISCUSSION ON  
**Therapeutic Benefits of Barefoot Beach  
Walking in Managing Disabilities**

On the Occasion of  
**INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS  
WITH DISABILITIES**

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**4TH DECEMBER 2021  
5 PM - 6 PM IST**

PANEL DISCUSSION BY  
EXPERIENCED PROFESSIONALS,  
TESTIMONIES BY PARENTS AND  
AWARD TO PERSON WITH  
DISABILITY FOR AN OUTSTANDING  
ACHIEVEMENT.

[Click Here](#) to register

For query  
**+91 9940615599 | +91 9940638910**  
**nandavanam@newgen.co**





**PRESENTS**

# *Disability Awareness Program*

An Awareness Towards Persons with Disabilities



**1ST DECEMBER - 25TH DECEMBER 2021**  
**DATE & TIME - YOUR SCHOOL'S**  
**CONVENIENCE**

**Come and join for a unique experiential online  
workshop to understand and identity with  
persons with disability**

Registration is free - Please contact us through  
+91-9940615599 | +91-9940638910 | +91-9150090009  
Email: [nandavanam@newgen.co](mailto:nandavanam@newgen.co)

**Each participants will be awarded with  
certificate of participation**



The image shows a Zoom meeting interface. At the top, there is a toolbar with icons for Join Audio, Start Video, Security, Participants (37), Chat, Polls, New Share, Pause Share, Annotate, Remote Control, Apps, and More. Below the toolbar, a green banner says "You are screen sharing". The main content area displays a list of benefits of barefoot beach walking on a background of a beach with a large orange seashell. The Zoom logo is visible in the bottom right corner.

- ***Free acupuncture to foot, stimulating the blood flow action***
- ***Ozone 3 freely available to increase cell health.***
- ***Exercise improving blood circulation.***
- ***Joy of the beach stimulates painless exercise.***
- ***Massage for the feet.***
- ***Exposure to the sun will give free vitamin D.***
- ***The exercise warmth creates self-awareness.***
- ***Bringing the body and mind together.***
- ***Holistic health through beach walking.***
- ***Beach walking for a stress free life.***
- ***Calming down with the sound of the waves.***
- ***Beach Walking helps in improving the cognition and speech***
- ***It also helps in developing the feet arches in children.***

### *Benefits of barefoot beach walking*

The second event was conducted on 5 December 2021 over Zoom platform and it was broadcast live on Facebook.

The program started with a short documentary made by Nandavanam. The documentary was about people from various walks of life talking about their experience of Barefoot Beach Walking.

The special educators, teachers and physiotherapist from the Nandavanam Center for Healing Education spoke about their experience with Barefoot Beach Walking and the benefits they have observed in the children.

The second session of the event was a panel discussion on the Therapeutic Benefits of Barefoot Beach Walking. The panelists were Dr. Veera Panch, Ms. Preetha Srinivasan, Ms. Kala Ravindranath and Mr. Micky Joseph.

Dr. Veera spoke about how the program

began and the idea and the science behind the same. Barefoot Beach Walking was initiated in Nandavanam to develop gross motor muscles in the body, which led to upright posture, walking, speech and thinking.

The participants asked various questions to the panelists to know more about this novel modality of managing a disability. All the questions were answered by the panelists.

The last session of the program was the felicitation of a special guest. Each year Nandavanam selects a person or persons who have attained extraordinary achievement in their life in spite of their disability. This year the award was given to Ms. Kanchan and Mr. Manjunath, both married to each other. Both the recipients shared their life story as a form of interview with Micky Joseph. It was inspirational for all present and many more who saw the feed live.





Mr. Manjunath, a person with cerebral palsy, is a Cloud Architect and works as DevOPS Coach with a leading IT company in Bangalore after finishing his engineering.

He passionately spoke about his work on developing a solution on Integrating Alternative Augmented Communication with voice-controlled devices like Alexa and Google Home to assist speech-impaired persons for effective communication. He shared his enthusiasm for reading books and studying about climate change.

In spite of his difficulty when asked about his challenges in life, he said, "It is all in the mind." His achievement is a true testimony to his statement.

Ms. Kanchan had a polio attack at 2 years of age, which has caused a permanent disability. But that has not stopped her from being a Graphic Designer with a leading IT company in Bangalore.

She is not only a para-basketball player who leads the Karnataka Women's Team, but she is also a choreographer who teaches dance to many students.

Both Manjunath's and Kanchan's conversations about life were so inspiring and motivational for others. They met and fell in love during the event "Indian Congress for Persons With Disabilities," an annual event initiated by Nandavanam in 2017.



Written for *Reflections* by **Arthi Srinivasan**  
*Nandavanam Center for Learning*



*Jökulsárlón glacier lake*