

(MY REFLECTIONS DURING COVID-19)

- Tenzin Dolma

Once the busiest lane  
Was now all empty and deserted  
With not a soul to be seen around,  
It was the sight of lockdown 2020.

The so-called life we took for granted was moving at such a pace until the inevitable Covid-19 hit India around mid-March. Nobody thought they would be the victim so they just carry on with their life. The rate at which people are getting infected and die only seems to go up each day until it hit thousands. Now the people realised the seriousness of the situation, and then it was like time stopped all of sudden, everything falls apart. When people can't figure out what exactly is happening around, it creates chaos. On 25<sup>th</sup> march, the government imposed the lockdown and introduced the social distancing and wearing mask to keep the virus at bay. Now, everyone can be seen cooped up in home, fear to go out or even talk with own neighbours.

Living in Delhi with my Mongolian feature face, we became the target of racism. People barely knowing the facts would called us "corona" "go back to China" and all improper comments, treating us as if we are the one who brought this. It was the first time ever that I feel unsafe being Mongolian face and it evoked a thought in me like "why I am not normal like the rest?" as if being born with this feature is abnormal sigh! That unsettling thoughts and haunting loneliness with the constant fear of being attack while walking down the street. I bet every Tibetans, north-eastern brothers and sisters living in the metropolitan cities away from home felt this at one point of time during this pandemic.

Being a health worker myself I was the one of those people who felt the brutal blow of Covid-19 so hard and deep. People started coming with all those symptoms, beds started filling. Every hospital face the load of need to have a separate ward and staffs for the covid patients. With the less number of beds available, shortage of men-power, it put a strain on the whole healthcare system of the country.

I worked for two months in Covid-ICU and I will never forget my time there. Once a healthy, fit person will next day needs ventilator to breathe. It was that bad with no designated cure for that. With everyone lying there with tube shove down their mouth, unconscious, breathing only with the help of machine. It was such a tragic, harrowing scene to witness. I get along pretty well with my patients, get to know many there during that. Seeing them deteriorate day by day and losing them was like a nightmare I can never get away with. REST IN PEACE □ to all those beautiful souls the world lost to COVID-19.

I am sorry to that boy who couldn't make it till his college day.

I am sorry to the father who won't see his daughter walk down the aisle.

I am sorry to the little one who couldn't make it till one year birthday.

I am sorry we couldn't save you all despite all our efforts and prayers.

I am sorry that 2020 have been so unfair to you all.

Everyday I go to work with the hope that we can save someone and another one and yet another one.

My time during that was a experience of a lifetime.

Now it's November already and even though the lockdown have been lifted but we still have long battle to fight with COVID-19, it's not yet over. This pandemic bought misery, people knew it. It created a crack in the life of each one of us. The world will never be same

again. But as there are always two sides of the coin and every cloud has a silver lining, let's talk about the brighter side of this pandemic.

At first people are little skeptic about talking with others let alone helping. But as time goes by and people came to know about what really is this virus how it is spread and how hygienic is the key and how can be prevented. The most affected are the people living on streets, slum people, daily-wagers. Their place is like tinder waiting to be spark. With all the work and transportation shut down, they been worst- hit and with no income, they became inaccessible to even those basic rights of a human being I.e, food, shelter, hygiene, security. Then people started helping them by distributing food supplies, sanitary and hygienic kits.

With everyone working from home, there have been more of family time. We can see many people sharing their stories and views of how this family together and bonding time had been so healing and blessings for everyone. People started picking up hobbies and give time to stuffs be it singing, dancing, cooking, baking, stitching etc that they never get time to pursue before the pandemic. People get time to honed their passion, talents so overall it's a win-win both mentally and physically. The biggest recompense was for our planet, Mother Earth, who finally got the time to rejuvenate, and healed. Just like a speed-breaker on the road and a comma in a sentence, this months long of lockdown was a little pause for our daily hectic, moving at such a pace life. It can be seen as one way of nature telling us it's okay to take a break in-between, a little pause to breathe, to enjoy the moment.

Writing my reflection during COVID-19 would be incomplete without a word of appreciation for all the health workers around the world. They are the one fighting at the front, risking their life leaving their beloved family behind and serving for the people. Whatever achievement we have during this fight with COVID-19, it's mostly the crown of efforts of the health workers. Working during that time was like walking on a path where there is no certainty of where and when it will end. What's even more saddening is all those life of health workers we lost while saving the Covid-19 patients. REST IN PEACE TO ALL OUR MARTYRS ☐

Personally for me, while working in covid ICU and during this pandemic I finally found the answer to "why I chose this profession" now I realised in the world of darkness, we are the stars people look up to, that beacon of hope, that little light at the end of tunnel. Nothing can be closer than the Nursing profession to follow my very goal of being human and as someone who follow and believe in Buddhism.

This pandemic have made our community closed knit together by love. Everyone treat each other nicely and help other in need. That surely is a sign that humanity will prevail and with each other's help we can get past this storm too. Enclosing my essay with the following paragraph in hope to lift up your spirit.

NO MATTER HOW COLD AND ROUGH  
THE WINTER IS, REMEMBER THAT  
ANOTHER SPRING WILL COME BY AND  
EVERYTHING WILL BLOOM ONCE AGAIN ☺