

My COVID-19 Story

I was at home on winter vacation when I first heard about Covid-19 virus.

I was so scared. The way my uncle told me was in such a scary way that I couldn't fall asleep the whole night. I couldn't think of any other thing except about the virus jumping from one person to another and making them seriously sick and causing so much suffering to the people.

My uncle told me that the people who got infected with the virus cannot be cured. Many people are dying. No medicine can cure it. Even if we touch a small thing that has been touched by a person who has got that virus, we will also get it. He told me it was a Chinese disease and the virus was in many countries. He said it is in south India too. The only way to stay safe was to wash our hands for twenty seconds. And we should stay clean and keep everything in the house clean. He advised me to take care when I reach Bir where I was going because that is where my school is.

I was very scared and wished I didn't have to go to school because very soon we had to be there and I thought it would be very easy to get infected with Covid-19 in school. But fortunately, just about an hour before all had to be in school, I got the information that the school will remain closed for few months because of the virus. I felt very happy as my wish was granted automatically.

I had always wanted to stay home and spend long time with my family in Bir. I stay in a community with few monks and few lay people with my cousin sister and one boy who is like my own brother. We all go to TCV, Suja in Bir. Usually, I get to spend time with them only once a month when we get to go home every second Saturday of the month.

This time, I spent more than nine months with them. I have never spent such a long time with them.

From them, I learnt many new things. I learnt how to be tolerant, how to make sang offering, how to read mantras and memorised few very long prayers. After lunch we would go in the garden and relax and listen to the music. At 4:30 pm, we all sat in the Lhakang and did Solkha and made serkyem offering to the dharma protectors to protect the people from the Covid-19 virus. So now, I know most part of the Solkha by heart.

As time passed I also noticed the environment of the world changing and becoming better due to the long lockdown. The sky was most of the time blue. I saw many beautiful birds

flying in the sky fearlessly. I heard them chirping with their melodious voice most of the time.

As the sky was filled with birds, our home was also filled with beautiful people. Many were stuck here because of the lockdown. The gate of our place was locked. We couldn't go out and no visitors were allowed in. So we always saw each other all the time. We spent our time playing badminton and carrom board. We were always smiling and having fun. I also read a lot of books. The favourite book I read was 'Old Path White Clouds' written by Thich Nhat Hanh. This book taught me many lesson which will remain with me all my life.

We hardly ate junk food since we couldn't go out at all. We had and still have online classes. Our teacher teach us very well. I miss my school, friends and the school activities but at the same time I don't miss them. It is a strange feeling.

But I also heard the adults talking about millions of people losing their jobs and now having no money to buy food and pay rent. I felt sad when I heard these talks.

But as the lockdown opened, the laughter and the crowd we had here vanished into thin air. Many family members left our Bir home to go to their other home.

But it didn't completely become an empty house as I believe this world is an impermanent world and it will fill with laughter again.

2020 has been a mixture of strange, terrible, wonderful, happy, sad year that I am happy to have been alive to experience it.

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