the surgeon toils, the anaesthetist

spends his time drinking endless

cups of coffee, and doing the

Sudoku in the day's newspaper.

The fact remains that, quite con-

trarily, he is the first person to

attend the patient and also the last

to leave the OT, and often wheeling

the patient into the ICU, where her

the name of the Senior

Anaesthetist, but the rest of his

staff went under the generic name

'Anaesthesia.' Atul Gwande, a

famous writer and surgeon, has

claimed that knowing the name of

the anaesthesia staff members

reduces the complication rate by

35%. In modern-day hospitals, it is

now a protocol to introduce by

name any new person in the OT. It is also mandatory to address by

name instead of just calling 'doc-

must realize how good the anaes-

thetist is, for them. In 1940's, the

death rate for surgery was 1:1000.

By 1980's, it became 1:10000. In the

latest reports, the numbe r is

1:50000 despite more prolonged

and complicated surgery. The

cause of death is, rarely, a primary

anaesthetic reason. Informed

patients ask to meet and speak to

the anaesthetist, today. They have

begun to realise that surgery is

now a teamwork between the sur-

geon and anaesthetist!

Finally, patients and relatives

At one time, the surgeon and the OT people may have known

care will be required further.

राष्ट्रदुत

#CONSERVATION

International Vulture Awareness Day

Due to their scavenger nature, many misunderstand the wonderful and important birds known as *vultures*, many species, of



vultures are disgusting, filthy,

Sadly, this stereotype has some negative consequences in the real world and has brought about some struggles for these important birds, many of which can actually be quite beautiful! In order to correct it,



International



T nternationalVultureL Awareness Day, which aims to raise awareness of all species of vultures, began in 2009 through a collaboration between the Birds of Prey program in South Africa and the Hawk Conservatory Trust in the United Kingdom. Because of the strength of these two

programs, the day quickly spread around the world. Zoos and wildlife organizations from the United States and Canada to India, Uganda, Serbia, Australia, Tunisia and elsewhere host events where members of the public can learn more about vultures. and sometimes, even get up close to see and experience them! The first Saturday in September has been set aside as a day to consider the ecological importance of a bird of *prey* that is, otherwise, mostly

How to Celebrate

ooking for fun ideas and plans to celebrate International Vulture Awareness Day? Check out some of these ways to get involved with honouring this bird on this important day.

Watch a Documentary About Vultures

Vulture Culture: Nature's Greatest Moments (2020) • The Vulture Documentary

International Vulture Awareness Day, and get that info from reading books, researching online or watching a documentary. Check out some of these shows and films that feature the important **Host a Vulture Themed Party**

love of these noble but mis-

understood animals, in cele-

earn more about vultures

bration of International ure, it's a weird reason to have a party, but it's a Vulture Awareness Day, And. great way to raise awareness of course, the decorations about vultures! Gathering a for the party should certaingroup of friends to watch a ly be themed around vulvulture-centric nature docutures and birdies. For the mentary can help share the ambitious, a vulture-shaped

Make a Donation to Help Vultures

onsidering that some vultures are now at risk or in danger, International Vulture Awareness Day would be an ideal time to help out a charity that assists them.



which, are threatened or endangered.



and turkey vultures in particular, have a pretty bad reputation. People, in many cultures, believe that disease-carrying birds.

> September Vulture Awareness Day, also called International

dismissed with a shudder.

With some species under

severe threat of extinction,

Awareness Day aims to edu-

cate and turn around the ideas

of a reluctant public in the

critical role of this creature,

to the well-being of the envi-

ronment. With vultures, tradi-

tionally being perceived as

representing death and decay,

conservationists involved in

preserving their numbers

nave faced an uphill battle in

fund-raising efforts and in

making theirs a more sympa-

thetic cause. Hopefully, the

ioint effort of South Africa's

England's Hawk Conservancy

Trust in establishing a day of

vulture awareness will change

public attitudes, with the help

of International Vulture

role of vultures in the envi-

Giving Nature a Voice:

Race Against Time (2021)

cake could make the perfect

Vanishing Vultures, A

ronment and for humans.

Birds of Prey Program and

Dr. Nirmal Sen Cardiothoracic

or a long while, during the beginning of our careers in medicine. Goutam and I were in a quandary as to which branch to choose for our post-graduation (PG). Being top level students in the class, we had the option of many subjects to choose from. This was in those days when

PG entrance exam was not in existence at that time. For Goutam, the choice was easier because he could choose according to his inclination. He was the class topper in Obstetrics and Gynaecology (OB & G). Some of the best specialists in the bigger metros in this branch were men. This was not true in Rajasthan as people were conservative and did not welcome men as specialist for the care of women in their families. All the same, he felt that the time had come to break

selection was made on the basis of

Final MBBS marks. The All India

this glass ceiling in Rajasthan. He applied for OB & G. When he was called in for the interview, amused glances were

exchanged after seeing his six foot plus figure. The Professor of OB & G, who knew him well, gave a halfamused and half-querulous glance. She began by saying that the application was refused. She maintained that even if she allowed him to join as a post graduate, he would, probably, be limited to paper work and never be allowed to touch a patient. Leave alone caring and operating! So. that was the end of the aspirations to become Obstetrician and Gynaecologist. His father had been an eminent surgeon, and so, he decided to follow his footsteps.

Role Reversals

With advances in surgery (incidentally only possible because of good and safe

back physicians, who had restricted themselves to the Operation Theatre (OT)

have now stepped into nearly every section of medicine. They now play a role

Intensive Care Unit, to name a few! They are also considered to be experts in

Anaesthesia), the Anaesthetist is being given a separate identity. Those laid

in the care of the patient not only in the OT, but also have expanded into

esoteric roles of helping in pain relief and care of all sorts of issues in the

therapeutics and pharmacology. Truly, they are the present era alchemists.

In The OT

My case was different. I, too,

He asked: So, what are you

ward to the break. He suggested: Why don't you come to the Anaesthesia department and help me with the handling of cases. I am desperately short of staff and would be grateful to have an extra hand. You would have a wonderful exposure to the subject.



had many options because of my high scores in Final MBBS. I could choose any main subject. Those, who knew me, expected my choice to be OB & G. It would probably have been so too, but for an incident. There was a one month gap between the ending of our internship and the counseling for post-graduation. I was accosted by Dr. S. N. Kakkar. Professor of Anaesthesia, in the cor-

I answered: I was looking for-

that time, there was a major rush of work in the plaster room where bers. Normally, all of them required anaesthesia. The little children usually had very short duration procedures. The impa-I accepted the offer hesitantly. tient and overworked orthopedic

> see this. Then and there, I chose Anaesthesia as a career. So, when I entered the Principal's chamber for counseling, one of the senior professor in Medicine, Dr. L. R. Sarin, stated abruptly "What is this nonsense? You have chosen Anaesthesia. It is a behind-the-screen career. You are a bright girl. You could do wonders in OB & G or any other main branch. We are not going to give you a PG seat in Anaesthesia.'

Within few days, I realised how

interesting the subject was. At

reduction of fractures, disloca-

tions and correction of congenital

defects was done in large num-

residents did not have the time or

patience for the children to under-

go anaesthesia because they

would have to wait for the anaes-

thetist for long, at times. So, they

would stun the child with a tight

slap (*Jhapat*), and quickly get

their job done. I was horrified to

I was adamant. I was asked to go out and reconsider. Later, I was called in, and seeing my steadfastness, I was reluctantly given the option. This was the year 1964. It is true that in those days, patients did know the name of their surgeons, but did not have any idea of anaesthetist and the important role played by him/ her. Knowing the name was a far

For long, the role of the

#MERRI-MEDI

Anaesthetist has been hidden behind many curtains from the patient and the general public. It is only now, sixty years later, in 2024 that the situation has changed. With advances in surgery (incidentally only possible because of good and safe Anaesthesia), the Anaesthetist is being given a separate identity. Those laid back physicians, who had restricted themselves to the Operation Theatre (OT), have now stepped into nearly every section of medicine. They now play a role in the care of the patient not only in the OT, but also have expanded into esoteric roles of helping in pain relief and care of all sorts of issues in the Intensive Care Unit. to name a few! They are also considered to be experts in therapeutics and pharmacology. Truly, they

are the present era alchemists. As a result of 12000 to 16000 hours of training during PG, the present day anaesthetist is the

now a myth! While the surgeon is tasked to do more complicated and prolonged surgery, the anaesthetist has now got a much wider role. It begins well before the surgery when a preoperative assessment is done for the 'fitness' of the patient to undergo a surgery. The decision made by the anaesthetist is final, much to the annovance of the surgeon, who is always in a hurry to go ahead. Experience has shown that most patients require a certain amount of preparation before surgery for a good and safe outcome. In the long term, it reduces complication rate and allows a shorter hospital stay.

At one time, it was said that

the surgeon was the 'director of

the orchestra' in the OT. This is

Going into the OT, the patient feels calmer, being wheeled in by a person, who has seen one earlier. This is particularly true for children! The anaesthetist gains the confidence of the child and familiarises them with the mask etc., to allay their fear. The conduction of anaesthesia and controlling complications by maintaining stability of the patient is also a part of the duty of an anaesthetist. Often, excessive blood loss and fall in blood pressure may add pressure on the surgeon. It is here that the anaesthetist helps by resuscitating the patient and allowing the surgery to continue. It is good

The caustic comment in the medical fraternity is that while

teamwork now.



Ganpati Bappa Morya

Ganesh Chaturthi 2024: Why is the festival celebrated for 10 days?

anesh Chaturthi is one of the most auspicious Hindu festivals in India, and is also known as Vinayaka Chaturthi or Ganesh Utsav. It is widely observed in India and marks the birth of *Lord Ganesha*. It is believed that Lord Ganesha removes all the obstacles and is worshipped at the beginning of any new activity such as a new business venture, endeavour, or intellectual pur-

The origin of the celebration of Ganesh Chaturthi can be traced back to the *Maratha* empire in the 17th century, when Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj promoted nationalism and unity among Indians. Ganesh Chaturthi is a 10-day fes-

tival, celebrated with great enthusiasm across the country. Lord Ganesha, also known as Gajanana, Dhumraketu Ekdanta, Vakratunda, and Siddhi Vinayaka, is often termed as 'god of wisdom, prosperity and good fortune.' This day is a testimony of the rich tapestry of Hindu beliefs and traditions, making it a cherished festival in India.



ccording to *Hindu*

A mythology, Goddess Parvati created Lord Ganesha from the Sandalwood paste, that she used for her bath, where she breathed life into the idol One day, when she was bathing, she instructed him to stand guard. However when her husband, Shive returned, Ganesh denied entry to him. Resultantly Lord Shiva beheaded for what he had done, Shiva granted Ganesh a new head that is, of an elephant. This is being reenacted during the festival of Ganesh Chaturthi, which lasts for 10 days, representing the birth of Lord Ganesha, and his journey back to his mother, Parvati.

Ganesh Chaturthi 2024: 10 Days Celebration

Day 1: Ganesh Chaturthi

he 10-day festival begins with the installation of Ganesha idols in homes and temples, making the ritual of 'prana pratishtha,' inviting the spirit of Lord Ganesha into the idol. Apart from this, Ganapati Puja is also accompanied by the chanting of hymns and offering sweets like modaks, the favourite sweets of Ganesha.

Day 2-3: Bhajans and Cultural Programmes he second and third days are generally devoted to devotional singing and cultural performances. Temples with local communities organise Bhaians. dance performances and cultural programmes, celebrating Lord *Ganesha*. This is one of the most joyful days as competitions and events are also organised in different places. **Day 4-5: Community Celebrations**

he day four and five are prominent, featuring elaborative decoration and theme events in public pandals. The festival's spirit is reflected in street

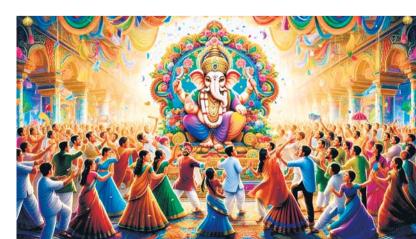
decorations, lights and vibrant processions where devotees carry idols to different locations, and are often accompanied by music, dance and firecrackers. Day 6: Ganesh Chaturthi Special Puja

n the sixth day, a *special puja* is performed which is known as 'Raja

Ganpati.' This festival offers special prayers and rituals, seeking blessings of Lord Ganesha to gain prosperity and success.

Day 7-8: Immersion Preparations

he focus shifts towards preparing for the grand immersion procession on day 7 and 8. Families and communities begin arrangements for the final procession, taking the Ganesha idol to a water body for immersion, symbolising deity's return to this divine abode.



Anant Chaturdashi nant Chaturdashi should mark

Day 9

the end of the *Ganesh Chaturti* festival. On the day, the grand procession for immersion takes place. This is the day when devotees will bid farewell to Lord Ganesha, with great reverence, chanting "Gannati Bappa Morya, Purchya Varshi Laukariva." The immersion takes place with traditional music, dance and celebration.

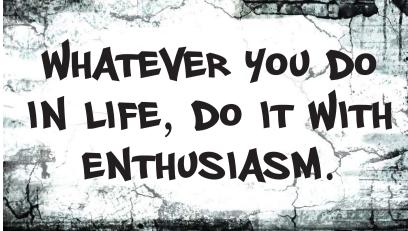
Post-Immersion Rituals

here are many post-immersion rituals and clean-up activities.





THE WALL



BABY BLUES



THAT WAY, WE



expert who is often consulted in

the usage of specific drugs and

their interaction. They are aware

of even the minutest nuances of

medicines used in the ICU. The

fact is that in most ICUs, the

anaesthetist has now taken over

the post-operative care of the

patient, giving the surgeon more

time to do what he is skilled in.

surgery. In medicine too, there are

now ICII intensivists who were

initially anaesthetists, and now,

the complete 'moment to moment

This is extremely hard work

The question often asked is. What

does the present day Anaesthetist

do all day? It is quite to the con-

trary today! He can be seen to be busy in the obstetric suite, giving

epidural anesthesia for a painless

delivery, and at the next moment,

he may be asked to resuscitate a

severe trauma patient in the casu-

alty. It has been calculated that

most anaesthetists do 8000 to 12000

steps in an 8 hour shift, moving

from one place to another. This too

may be a low estimate as most hos-

pitals are short-staffed and the

steps may easily increase by

another 3000. Studies show that

3000 calories while having time for

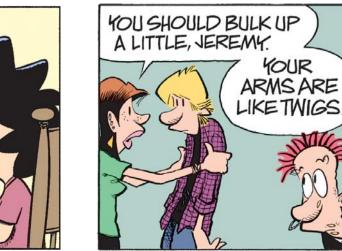
only a hurried cup of coffee/ tea

such duty doctors burn up about

caretaker of the sick patient.

By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

OR, WE COULD



ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

