

# NEWSLETTER

2<sup>ND</sup> ISSUE | APR – JUN 2020 | IBA ALUMNI UAE CHAPTER

## WELCOME NOTE

Greeting IBAians,

We are delighted to bring you our second issue of IBA Alumni UAE Chapter Newsletter. In these challenging times, this newsletter is just a small effort from our side to bring the alumni closer together and highlight some positivity around us. I understand times are tough not only because of the pandemic but also because of the slowdown in the economic activity globally. It is very important that we remain optimistic in these times, be patient and above all be considerate to others. We should all pitch in to do our bit for the society as much as we can.

In this newsletter, we have highlighted a few of our alumni who have gone an extra mile to help the underprivileged people in our country. On the economic front, this newsletter includes an overview of the automobile industry and the challenges it is facing since the virus has hit the world.

In these testing times where everyone is looking for some mental peace and relaxation, we have included an article on Group Meditation contributed by Sabeen Roshan, the writer of the famous book 'Kun FayaKun – the Divine Decree.' Khadija Abubakar has written a

remarkable piece highlighting the silver lining in our daily routine to stay optimistic during these rough times.

Danish Kazi, President of UAE Alumni Chapter, has also taken out some time to show us his Literary skills with a poem titled 'Kiyon boltay ho.' We have included some snap shots of Abu Dhabi city taken during the last few months to give you an overview of how people in UAE have followed Covid guidelines by staying at home, implementing social distancing and eventually flattening the curve.

Most of the countries, across the globe, are now able to bring the Covid figures down. Economic activity is gradually coming back to normal. We all are hopeful and praying that in a few months, things will be back to pre-Covid times, bringing a boost to the much-needed economic activity.

And lastly, we are always open to any kind of suggestions and feedback regarding the newsletter. Please feel free to contact us.

Kind Regards,

*Ms. Andaleeb Shahid  
Head of Publication Committee*

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# COMMENDABLE WORK BY IBA ALUMNI

By Ms. Andaleeb Shahid

MBA-2003

Head of Publication Committee, IBA Alumni UAE Chapter

The year 2020 has brought very testing times for people all over the globe. Many of us fear economic meltdown leading to loss of jobs and reduced income. However, many of us have already reached to the point that we are worried about our next meals and medicines for our kids.

In these times of dire need, IBA Alumni has been in the forefront to help such people. They came forward with various ways to help people depending upon the resources available to them. In this article, we would like to highlight and applaud a few of them for their commendable work.

**Mohammad Ekhlaque Ahmed**, an IBA alumni from the batch of 1981 has an NGO working under the



name GEAR Trust (Generating Employment Alternatives for Self-Reliance established in 2009). Mr. Ekhlaque, GEAR trustees and team (who are all IBA alumni) decided to play their roles in the Covid-19 crisis by raising funds and providing food/ration packs to needy families. The whole activity was aimed on reaching and delivering food to the needy families at their doorstep. GEAR Trust served around 9000 families in this drive, in remote area of Karachi with their network of 30 plus Managers/Officers in 9 chapters in Karachi. In this drive a number of corporate organizations and individuals generously donated and supported the cause and GEAR was able to raise a fund of over Rs. 30m in a short period of 2 months only.

Founder and President, GEAR Trust Ekhlaque Ahmed said "I believe that connecting with our brothers and sisters in the society is everyone's concern and a greater cause. The feel and intention to do is also very strong in everyone."



Another of our alumni **Safi Ahmed Zakai**, MBA batch of 2003, came forward to help the people of Sindh and Baluchistan. His team ran a ration distribution drive for 30 days under Merit n Merit platform, distributing a total of 37,600 Ration Bags & 6,300 10 Kg Flour Bags. Main distribution areas were Karachi, Tharparkar, Bela & Khuzdar in Baluchistan. He dedicated his entire work place to do this mammoth task along with his volunteers. He is also a member of the Corona Task Force Sindh and leading our country from the front during this crisis.



# PAKISTANI EXPATS COMING TOGETHER

By Ms. Andaleeb Shahid

MBA-2003

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In UAE, Pakistani community came forward to help the individuals and families affected by Covid – 19. Few Pakistani restaurants were offering free Iftar meals to individuals.



Picture courtesy of: Gulf News

Many people voluntarily collected food and hygiene products and distributed them in labor camps in Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah. IBA Alumni in UAE also gathered some money amongst themselves to donate to a food outlet, providing free meals to needy people. Pakistan Association Dubai also did its bit by distributing free food packages to the families and individuals irrespective of their nationalities. The welfare wing of PAD has reached out to over 1,500 people and delivered food to needy people at their doorsteps. PAD has also launched a Tech Drive to help the Pakistani students continue their e-learning in the wake of corona virus. Along with the local community, they have arranged for tablets and laptops for some students so they can have an uninterrupted education at their homes.

# GROUP MEDITATIONS – THE POWER OF RAISING COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS

## WORKING TOWARDS A MORE PEACEFUL PLANET

By Ms. Sabeen Roshan

BBA-1999

Author of "Kun FayaKun-The Divine Decree"

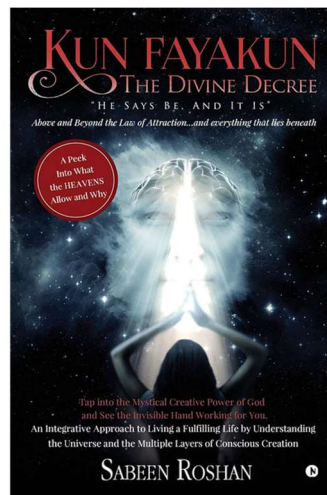
We are living in times of uncertainty and volatility. These extreme times reflect "old consciousness" that cannot survive for much longer. This old consciousness is driven by survival emotions such as hate, fear, competition, suffering, prejudice violence - emotions that serve to seduce us into believing that we are separate from one another. This illusion of separation (in the three-dimensional world that we experience through our five senses) divides societies, communities, and countries.

In addition to the upheavals in our highly charged social, economic, political, and personal environments, many people feel as if time is speeding up or that more momentous happenings are occurring in a shorter amount of time. Depending on our own individual outlooks, this could either be an exciting time of deep and intense awakening or an anxiety inducing period.

Regardless, the old must fall way so that something more functional and profound can emerge. This is how people, species, and even the planet itself evolves.

To date, the power of temporary peace-gathering projects has been exhibited and tested in more than 50 demonstration projects and 23 peer-reviewed scientific studies scrutinized by independent scholars around the world. The results have consistently demonstrated a positive effect in the immediate reduction of crime, warfare and terrorism by an average of greater than 70 percent.

When a group of people come together with a specific intention or collective consciousness to change some "thing" or to produce a specific outcome, if they create it with the emotions and energy of peace and unity (without physically taking any action), that unified community can produce changes 70 percent of the time. To quantify the results of these studies, scientists use a measurement called "Lead-Lag Analysis". The purpose of this



analysis is to uncover correlations between people and incidents. Studies have found that greater the number of meditators or peace-gatherers and the more time they put in meditation, the greater influence the gathering has upon decreasing the incidences of crimes and violence in a society.

A good example is the Lebanon peace project, in August and September of 1983, which brought together a group of meditators in Jerusalem to demonstrate the "radiating influence of peace".

This group project was able to achieve *super radiance effect* for both Israel and nearby Lebanon.

This effect happens when a group of specially trained meditators come together at the same time on a daily basis to create and radiate a positive effect on society. The results of the two-month study showed that on days when there was a high participation of meditators (the number of meditators fluctuated over time in this study), a 76 percent reduction of war deaths occurred. Other positive outcomes included reduced fires and crimes, decreased traffic accidents, accompanied by an increase in economic growth.

The results were then replicated in seven consecutive experiments over a two-year period during the peak of the Lebanon war. All this was achieved by combining people's intention for peace and harmony with exalted and sublime emotions that had to do with compassion and love. These experiments clearly showed that the unified consciousness of a group of people is potent enough to transform the consciousness of other people (the ones not part of the meditations) as well in a non-local way.

In what's considered one of the top three peace-gathering studies in the West, A RAND Corporation think tank assembled a group of almost 8,000 (and sometimes more)

trained meditators to focus on world peace and coherence during three periods ranging from 8 to 11 days each, from 1983 to 1985. The results showed that during this time, worldwide terrorism was reduced by 72 percent.

There are many other similar studies conducted in the world and they all point to the same truth – that a relatively small group of people united in their purpose to create peace and harmony through compassion and love can have a statistically significant effect on a diverse population.

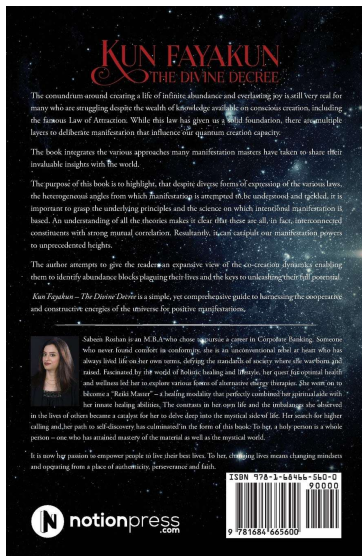
**Greater the number of meditators or peace-gatherers and the more time they put in meditation, the greater influence the gathering has upon decreasing the incidences of crimes and violence in a society**

All these studies ultimately tell us that there is significant evidence that group meditations of the right size with skilled meditators who change their emotions and energy can influence and create non-local, measurable effects on peace and global coherence.

awareness and consciousness to stay focused so as not to succumb to these negative energies. Instead of becoming victims of uncertainty, we are powerful enough to transmute these energies into greater degrees of orderliness and peace and prosperity, both personally and globally.

(The ideas and views expressed in this article are my own and do not represent the ideologies of any group, company, community or country).

Can you imagine the positive effects and the profound changes, as well as the speed with which these would happen, if this type of meditation and mindfulness became a part of the education curriculum?



We are all in the midst of turbulent times that affect all of humanity on many different levels and in multiple ways. However, if we can somehow stay in alignment with who we are at a deeper soul level, working daily on our meditations to stay connected to our inner being as well the rest of the world, and dispel the concept of separation, we can propel ourselves further instead of getting sucked into the doldrums. Yes, it is going to take tremendous amount of will,

## LITERARY SECTION

By Mr. Danish Kazi

MBA-2002

President of IBA Alumni UAE Chapter, IBA Alumni UAE Chapter

### کیوں بولتے ہو

کیوں سچ بولتے ہو ہر وقت بولتے ہو  
اس فریب کے دور میں تم کیوں بولتے ہو  
اگر بولنا ہی ہے آجکل تو مثبت ہی بولو  
کیوں اس دورِ یزید میں بھی حق بولتے ہو

ہر دور میں لاشیں اٹھائی ہیں سچ کے سپاہی نے  
سر ہی نہیں بچے بھی کٹوائے ہیں ایسے شہدائی نے  
ہاں کبھی جیت ہوتی ہے ضرور جھوٹ کی مکاروں کی  
رہ جاتی ہے یاد سسکیوں کی نہ کہ فریب کہ نکاروں کی

آج بھی سنائی دیتی ہے سسکیاں سچ بولنے والوں کی  
وہ تار تار چادرئیں ستاتی ہیں یاد حق پہ چلنے والوں کی  
میں بھی سوچ میں رہتا ہوں اکثر کب بلند ہوگا  
وہ علم جو ہوگا نشانی حق پہ چلنے والوں کی

پھر بھی مجھ سے میرے دوست کہتے ہیں  
تم وہ سچ اس دور کا کیوں نہیں بولتے  
کیسے میں کروں منافقت کوئی سمجھاؤ مجھے  
ظالم کو نہیں تم بھی مجھ ہی کو کیوں روکتے ہو

دن کو رات اور رات کو دن کیوں نہیں بولے  
جھوٹ کو سچ اور سچ کا جھوٹ کیوں نہیں بولے  
تم بھی عجیب ہو اس دورِ تعصب میں بھی  
کیوں بولتے ہو نا جانے کس لئے بولتے ہو

یہ سودا مہنگا نہیں اگر کرلو شناسائی  
دوست بنیں گے اور ہر کوئی ہوگا بھائی  
صرف اپنی نظروں کو جھکانا ہے موندنا نہیں  
ہم ہیں بہترین بس فریب کو سہی بولنا ہے

اب بھی دیر نہیں ہوئی ہے ایسی بات زمانے کی  
اس گفتار میں ہے بیشک ضرورت سچ چھپانے کی  
اب بھی وحشت سی آتی ہے مجھے دردِ تنہائی میں دانش  
کیسی مجبوری ہے تمہیں سچ نہ چھپانے کی

# AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY 2020

By: Ms. Andaleeb Shahid

MBA-2003

Head of Publication Committee, IBA Alumni UAE Chapter

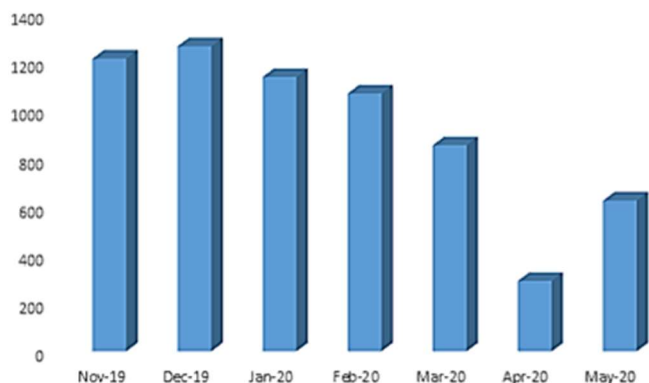
The world's largest auto manufacturers are mainly head quartered in France (Renault, PSA Group), Germany (Volkswagen AG, Daimler AG), Japan (Toyota, Nissan, Honda), United States (General Motors, Ford), South Korea (Hyundai, Kia), and Italy (Fiat, Ferrari, Lamborghini, Maserati) with their manufacturing units spread all over the world. China is considered as one of the largest automobile markets worldwide, both in terms of sales and production. China sales units were 21 million units in 2019.

Auto industry globally had a peak sale of 79.6 million units in 2017. The sector is expected to experience a downward trend because of the global slowdown in economy and reduced purchasing power. It was estimated that international car sales will reach 80 million figures, however due to the pandemic and economic woes, demand for motor vehicles is now estimated to be dropped to 59.5 million, a decrease of 20% from last year.

For Renault, a French automaker, the coronavirus only added to its current economic problems. The company was already struggling since 2018 and reported its first ever loss in 2019. Renault recently announced a job cut of 10% of its global workforce that is around 180,000 people. The French government, its biggest shareholder (15% stake) came for its rescue and is considering a \$5.5 billion loan to help Renault overcome this crisis. Nissan, a Japanese carmaker, and Renault have already been in a car making alliance for over two decades. Now, it is predicted that Nissan will also cut 12,000-20,000 jobs out of its total global employers. It has already reduced its annual sales target with 1 million cars. Closing its plant in Spain, which employs around 3,000 people, is also on the cards.

German automaker Volkswagen is considering cost cutting due to the impact of corona mainly to the R&D and fixed costs. The CEO believes that the group's net liquidity will continue to decline at least for the next few months due to weak demand, and not all group brands would achieve a positive result in 2020. Volkswagen plants have started operation from June 16<sup>th</sup>. Production was suspended for almost 10 weeks in Europe, South America, China, Germany, Spain, Portugal, and Russia. Capacity deployment at various plants is an average of about 60-70% of capacity prior to the Covid crisis. Depending on the demand, they will be increasing production capacity accordingly.

Monthly Passenger Car Sales in Europe (in 1,000 units)



Source: Statista 2020

PSA Group also had a tough time when the virus hit Europe. Closing its German, Polish, and UK plants effected its supply of Peugeot Citroën & DS vehicles. By May, PSA started opening a few of its German and Polish plants. Its other production units will follow gradually to restart output.

Mexico and Brazil have started to face the wrath of the virus now. In April, the two countries together manufactured a total of only 5,569 vehicles as compared to an average of over half a million cars a month. Both countries are key bases for global automakers including General Motors, Ford motors, Volkswagen and Fiat Chrysler. Vehicle production in Mexico is mainly exported to US. The export figure fell by 90% in April as compared to March 2020 figures. Other than local demand, Brazil depends on exporting vehicles to Argentina as a result of which 77% exports of auto industry fell down. Auto makers in Brazil and Mexico are trying to negotiate a government aid package but nothing is finalized yet.

General Motor United States manufacturing plants reopened its operations smoothly during May,



Total vehicles sales in US, no of vehicles in millions  
Source: Trading Economics

after closing for a couple of months due to corona. They are still not working at full capacity yet and have implemented many safety protocols for employers.

Toyota Motor Corp, Japan is also expecting a profit decline of 80% in 2020 due to the fall in demand for vehicles due to corona. The automaker forecasts a global sale of 8.9 million vehicles only as against a 20.44 million last year. Few of its Japanese plants were closed due to the virus for a few months. But the company is hopeful that even after facing a hit of \$13.95 billion this year Toyota will still close at net operating profit. It is also expecting that the demand for vehicles will be back to normal by 2021.

Hyundai was the first auto maker to close its South Korean production plant due to the disruption in supply of auto parts from China. Hyundai and its affiliate Kia Motors together were the first ones to be affected due to virus as they import more auto parts from China than any other auto manufacturers. Hyundai has seven factories in South Korea, catering

to the local market and the United States, Europe, and the Middle East. Hyundai's production at home accounts for about 40% of its global output. By April 15<sup>th</sup>, Kia and Hyundai started opening a few of its factories. Though its South Korean and Chinese plants still stand closed as of end of May 2020 due to the low demand globally.

Automakers are getting back to work slowly and steadily but not back to business as usual. They are facing challenges from various angles; additional cost of safety procedures, lower consumer demand for vehicles, and irregular supply of auto parts. Fitch projected a 20% decline in retail unit sales for the global auto manufacturers in 2020, however it expects a growth of 15% in 2021. We are hopeful that the automobile industry will be back to pre-Covid times by the end of this year, leading to increased employment and triggering higher economic activity.

**Sources of data:**

***OICA, Statista, Automotive News Europe, Khaleej Times***



# ZOOMING TOGETHER

Compiled By: Ms. Andaleeb Shahid  
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IBA alumni UAE is one strongly knitted community and this is evident from the fact that even Covid-19 could not stop them from staying connected with each other. The member of UAE Chapter conducted a zoom chat with the IBA Alumni and discussed the current socio-economic situation prevailing in the region.



# AAPNE GHABRANA NAHI HAI

## FINDING THE SILVER LINING

By Ms. Khadija Abubakar  
MBA-2017

*Works as a Sales Consultant for a Chemical Distribution Company, IBA Alumni UAE Chapter*

The unusual and uncertain conditions during this pandemic have also brought unforeseen challenges. However, it is the best of human nature that comes around during such difficult times.

From reading the news of what seemed like a far-fetched flu-like virus going wild in China to this virus turning into a pandemic within weeks, we all have been desperately praying for it to die down. We have been trying hard to hold on to positive thoughts as we wash our hands every few hours or as we sanitize our surroundings or get our temperature checked at every doorstep.

Minutes turned into hours and the hours took hold of the day and then weeks and even months. The current pandemic situation is testing our patience and to stay optimistic and prevent our anxiety to go berserk has been quite challenging. But dividing our attention, that's only been focused on the latest numbers, with the stories of people who are doing extraordinary things to help others during this uncertain time brings some comfort. These stories also serve as a reminder that we all have a part to play in not only protecting each other from this deadly virus, but also in keeping our spirits high during these incredibly trying times.

Every person in this world is playing his own part, however small it may be, to fight this Covid-19 crisis and to make things a bit better for himself and for the others. From the people of the first world countries to the people from the third world,

there are extraordinary acts by ordinary people all around. Most of us, throughout the world, are



finding time to discover new skills and interests in DIY crafts and painting and trying new recipes while some of the people have been sewing and delivering homemade reusable face masks to first responders and healthcare workers. People are delivering meals, groceries and household essentials to at-risk people who aren't allowed to venture out to the stores. It's almost enough to make one think that our collective sense of humanity could be on the verge of being restored. From hotels and business associations to individual donations, businessmen in the UAE have reported investments that will help stop the spread of the deadly disease.

The building complex which I reside in, in Ras-Al-Khaimah, is a small community of people coming from different countries and cultures across the world. Yet, the whole community came together and turned itself into a little help group as soon as this crisis hit us hard. When the people in our neighborhood started suffering from pay cuts, job losses and as the businesses slowed down and almost halted for a lot of freelancers, the community facility

management immediately set up refrigerators and shelving units in the control room where people volunteer to place food items and groceries for the people struggling with daily necessities within the building complex. The items in excess are collected by Red Crescent or Food banks from time to time to reach out to the ones in need, outside our community. The sense of community has been remarkable as the people who are at home due to forced leave or those who have been stood down from work have been selflessly offering homecooked meals and free car rides to the neighbors; only to utilize their own time and energy effectively by making lives easier for people around them.

Likewise, we have witnessed in Pakistan, people have gathered together everywhere to raise money to provide monthly groceries and medications specifically to the daily wagers who are unable to work and earn under these circumstances and to the people who have lost their jobs during this crisis.

It's imperative now, like never before, to be proactive about making little moments of joy in our



days count, given the discoveries in psychology research that positive

feelings help us to fix the negative impacts of stress. Hence, finding that silver lining during this time is what we need to appreciate the hopeful side of this situation.

Following are a few relatively practical things to foster positive emotions in our lives:

#### *Capture the small moments:*

The smell of saffron tea or coffee while texting our loved ones, the warm meals on our table and the feel of being safe inside our homes are a few little things to cherish day in and day out even during these lockdowns. Rather than letting them rush by on auto-pilot, if we stop to take in these moments, we can take control of our lives and let our brains process the pleasure which boosts our serotonin – the feel-good neurotransmitter that helps us in elevating our mood and in staying calm.

#### *Strengthen our ties:*

These times have given us an opportunity to hug our kids or partner for a little bit longer, to have extended conversations with them, to teach our kids a few more things or play with them for a little more



time – all these gestures develop understanding and closeness which then boosts our oxytocin. This is a hormone that bonds us people, calms our bodies and when it spikes, it tells our bodies to switch off the stress hormone called cortisol.

#### *Look for the good in people around you:*

Challenging times like these can bring out either or both of the best and worst in a person. While we have read about people snatching and fighting over toilet papers, we have also come across a lot of stories where the front-liners are working overtime and with determination through sleepless days and nights only to ensure the safety of others. People in ordinary neighborhoods and communities are checking on each other while philanthropists and celebrities are donating money for medical research and aid. Friends and family are reaching out to one another through social media no matter the distance. People from across the globe are posting positive and motivational messages to keep our hopes high. These optimistic and pro-social aspects of the crisis is what keeps us all united in hope and goodwill.

Ramadan 2020 was also one of a kind when we spent this month away from mosques and gatherings but in our safe spaces which we so devotedly call HoMe. It was a blessing to have Ramadan during this lockdown for when it brought with itself countless life goals, we hardly found any time to sit and stress over being isolated or quarantined. We had more time to connect and collect ourselves internally. It gave an ultimate boost to our spiritual health and morale which was much needed during this time of despair. It replaced the constant fear of the unknown with the blisses of self-reflection, consciousness and graciousness. While we became more self-aware, the spirit of generosity and charity during Ramadan helped us in empathizing with the less fortunate and under privileged.

The people making an effort to spread positivity, kindness and generosity through small or major acts, doing good in these unprecedented times, recognizing that something is wrong, needed, or unjust and stepping up to work to make it right are the upstanders in this society.

A powerful remedy, to these anxious turbulent times we're experiencing, is to consciously recognize and confront inaction, to move from being a bystander to being an upstander...It's about moving from observing in silence to making **good noise**. To the upstanders, the joy comes from being of service to the community.

We can build up our energy stores and potentially redirect our brain chemistry and hence our actions towards positivity to help restore our faith in humanity, and to cope up with the other aspects of this crisis which have been tough on us.

Staying positive during this pandemic has given a lesson in crisis management to all of us as a global community. Experiencing optimism during such stressful times has taught us to up our game in being resilient. It supports us in increasing our immunity to help fight off sickness and stay fit; emotionally and mentally.

Optimism boosts our problem-solving skills as well as our decision making. It also develops better judgement, creativity and cognitive flexibility.

The need of the hour is to take charge of our mental health in these testing times, make the best out of the opportunity and solidify that silver lining. And we will all come out of this as stronger and better human beings.

# ABUDHABI DURING COVID-19

Photo Credits: Ms. Cecile Strydom

