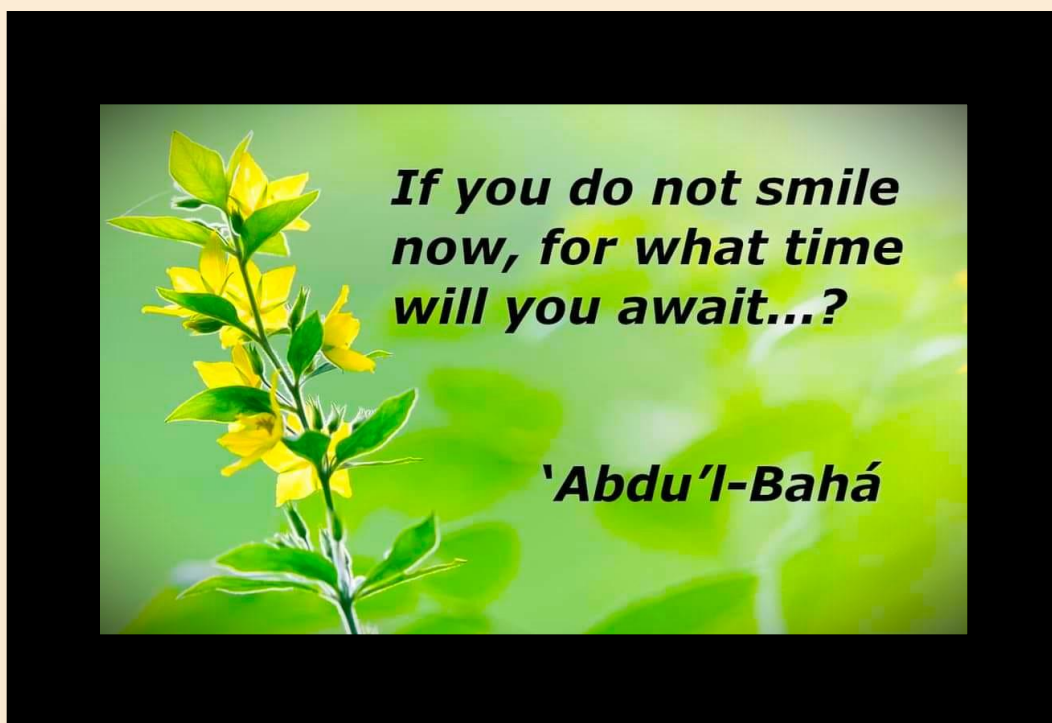




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Baha'i Stories

Death

The great kindness that was such a prominent feature of Shoghi Effendi's character is shown in the manner in which he conveyed to Khánum the news of the death of her beloved mother, May Maxwell: The devastating news of May Maxwell's passing in Argentina was a terrible shock to Rúhíyyih Khánum. She often repeated the story of how she received this sad news from the Guardian. Four cables had arrived that day and she took them to Shoghi Effendi in his study. He opened each one and then looked up at Rúhíyyih Khánum with a mixture of shock, love and compassion on his face. She said the look frightened her, and she started backing away until she reached the wall. She said she wanted to sink into the wall so deep was the fear engendered in her by that look. Shoghi Effendi went over to her,

held her in his arms and broke the news to her with great tenderness. He told her 'Now I will be your mother'. Then he spoke of the high station of May Maxwell in the Abhá Kingdom, of her joy in at long last having reached her heart's desire, of her nearness to her beloved Lord and Master, 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Then gently, in order to dispel her shaking grief, he began to talk to Amatu'l-Bahá in a lighter mood, to describe her mother's activities in the next world, where she was going and what she was doing in that sublime company. She would have been ushered immediately into the presence of Bahá'u'lláh first, of course, he assured her. And no sooner had she come there than she naturally asked permission to tell Him about her precious daughter. But she talked so much that Bahá'u'lláh had finally become tired and had passed her on to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Here again she did nothing but talk about her beautiful daughter, until at length, exhausted, 'Abdu'l-Bahá passed her on to the Greatest Holy Leaf. And there she is still, said Shoghi Effendi laughing, there she is still talking about her beloved daughter, stopping every passing member of the Concourse with her opening lines, 'Do let me tell you about my daughter ... !' By the time he reached this point in his narrative, Rúhíyyih Khánum was laughing through her tears. And so with infinite compassion and patience, he comforted her. **-Violette Nakhjavání, A Tribute to Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum**

Events and News

Bahá'í World News Service

Summit of the Future: BIC Statement calls on leaders to Reimagine Global Order



BIC NEW YORK — As world leaders prepare for the Summit of the Future taking place later this month, the Bahá’í International Community (BIC) has released a statement titled “Embracing Interdependence: Foundations for a World in Transition.” The statement emphasizes the profound opportunity and vital imperative for the international community to place humanity’s interdependence at the heart of the systems of global governance.

The statement acknowledges the significant strides made since the establishment of the United Nations, recognizing it as a symbol of humanity’s aspiration for peace. However, it notes that the scale and complexity of global challenges are rapidly outpacing the evolution of the systems designed to address them.

“This is a significant moment in humanity’s collective history, a moment when we are called to recognize that our present trajectory is no longer a viable path to the future,” said Daniel Perell, a BIC representative from the New York Office.

“We see it in the way we deliberate on international matters; the way we treat the earth; the way we define progress; the way we relate to one another—in nearly every facet of existence, we need new approaches and even a new understanding of how we conceive of progress,” Mr. Perell added.

The statement invites the arbiters of international affairs to consider the implications of an alternative central organizing principle—the oneness of humankind. “Without full acceptance of this principle,” the statement reads, “lasting peace and prosperity will remain a distant hope, and even systems of global governance will tend to reinforce division, deepen inequalities, and prioritize the interests of certain groups over the common good of all.”

Liliane Nkunzimana, another BIC representative, added that “there is no shortage of proposals or recommendations for institutional reform. Each has potential benefits, but this moment calls for something more—a new set of underlying assumptions if we are to achieve lasting peace and harmony. Embracing Interdependence invites all of us on the international stage to consider new approaches that meet the true needs of our time.”

The BIC statement explores several key elements of a shared framework founded on the unreserved acceptance of humanity’s interdependence: a shared identity that transcends national boundaries while honoring cultural diversity; an expanded conception of justice that fosters unity and well-being; and new approaches to leadership that prioritize the collective good of humanity.

As the Summit of the Future approaches, the BIC invites participants at the global forum and of the processes that follow to “join together in a profound, collective act of learning,” set aside outdated assumptions, and consult together in search of appropriate solutions.

The statement calls for a collective effort to reshape the future of the global order, concluding: “Laying unshakeable foundations upon which our future can be built is a collective challenge. It is the next chapter in our shared story toward a just and harmonious future.”

The BIC will continue its exploration of these themes as part of its ongoing contributions to the discourse on global governance.

News from the Twin Community of Jaipur

Here is a sample of activities in pictures of many junior youth groups, Ruhi study groups, children's classes, home visits and devotional and prayer meetings in different parts of Jaipur and Rajasthan.



Food for the Mind, Heart and Soul

“China’s Angel” , has saved 469 people from committing suicide



Provided that China hawks in Congress haven't convinced you the Chinese people are all diabolical communist footsoldiers, then the trailer for this documentary will bring a tear to your eye.

Mr. Chen Si, known as the Angel of Nanjing, has volunteered to patrol the Yangtze Bridge every day, and over a 21-year career, he has saved 469 people from committing suicide.

One of the most famous bridges in the country, it is also the world's most popular location to commit suicide. Almost daily there are people lingering alone or wandering aimlessly along its sidewalk, and Chen engages them in conversation to test whether or not they are prospective jumpers.

Sometimes that's all it takes, but as the footage shows below, it sometimes requires an awful lot more.

South China Morning Post reports that it started for Chen back in 2000, when he saw a desperate-looking girl wandering on the bridge. He was worried something might happen to her so he brought lunch for them to share and started to chat with her. He eventually paid for a bus ticket for her to go home, but realized that this was something that must happen all the time.

For the past 21 years, he's crossed the bridge 10 times a day on his electric scooter wearing his red jacket with the words "cherish all life" written across the back, he's charismatic, he's determined, he can be almost rude, in a certain Chinese way, in his efforts saving people's life, and he's become an expert.

"People with an extreme internal struggle don't have relaxed body movements, their bodies look heavy," Chen told the Chinese outlet News Weekly.

He's caught suicidal people who've been cheated on by their spouses, those who can't afford school, and many other reasons. He has spare rooms in his house to keep those he pulls off the bridge in a safe environment.

His story was made into a Western documentary in 2015 which won over a half-dozen awards. Called Angel of Nanjing, it's a gripping look into those on the margins of a rapidly changing Chinese society.

Poems

By Tahera:

The Báb

Foretold in the Scriptures of the past,
Bab was "The first Trumpet-blast."

"The Harbinger of the Most Great Light,"
For His appearance, Muslims prayed day and night.

He was the "Return of Elijah" anticipated by the Jews,
Who had come to proclaim such great news.

Christians too awaited His return,
For John the Baptist, their hearts would yearn.

The Promised Qaim, the long-awaited Mehdi,
For the Blessed Beauty, He made us ready.

He was "The Essence of Essences,"
The "Sea of Seas."

The "Primal Point," "The Mystic Fane,"
Whose coming God did divinely ordain.

On this day, let us beseech,
That we may all arise to serve and teach.

That we may all rejoice and sing His praise,
And our hearts with His love be set ablaze.

Tahera

Social Action

Ongoing Gatherings for Community Consultation and Action



“Take ye counsel together in all matters, as much as consultation is the lamp of guidance which leadeth the way, and is the bestower of understanding.”

~Baha’u’llah

*The majority of Bahá’í development efforts have arisen in villages and neighborhoods where an increasingly pronounced sense of community exists. In such settings it is especially apparent that, irrespective of the area of action—be it education, agriculture, health, or others—sustained progress is dependent not only on the empowerment of individuals and groups but more broadly on the capacities and nature of interaction between individuals, the community, and its institutions. The more that the qualities of cooperation and mutual assistance are manifested by a people, the Bahá’í writings state, **“the more will human society advance in progress and prosperity.”***

Animated by this conviction, opportunities are being created among inhabitants, groups, and institutions at various levels around the world to gather together to engage in an ongoing process of reading the material and social conditions of their communities. Such collaborative spaces involve all segments of the population in a conversation where experiences and resources are readily shared. In addition to enhancing unity of vision and thought, such gatherings also often lead to the emergence of initiatives of fixed duration to resolve one or another issue, as well as the creation of projects that are sustained overtime.

*In one such community gathering in **India**, 40 families in the periphery of a village that was previously disconnected from government programs have been discussing the material and social advancement of their locality. When a member of the village council was invited by a local Bahá’í institution to attend this community gathering, the relationship between the community and the government was strengthened, and the government officials became more acutely aware of the reality of that segment of the village. The community took systematic actions as a result of these gatherings, which fostered collaboration with the local leaders and helped connect the community to various schemes offered by government structures, such as those for microfinance and child welfare. Through such steps, what was previously characterized as a relationship of distance and mistrust between the community and local government gradually began to change to one of mutual collaboration and trust.*

*In **Papua New Guinea**, a three-day community gathering with over 600 participants was arranged by the local Bahá’í institutions in collaboration with local government officials. Rich conversations involving the inhabitants of the area, representatives of the local government, and ward councilors explored the historical account of steps taken thus far, as well as social, economic, or cultural barriers that have been impeding the population’s spiritual and material progress. Participants of the gathering also discussed ways to strengthen cooperation among various entities concerned with processes central to the community’s life, including secondary and tertiary education, healthcare, and infrastructure. Following the gathering, thought was given to establishing a committee within the community that could engage in a more systematic and profound collaboration with the local government over issues of concern.*

In addition to regular conferences that bring together members of the community, special gatherings have been taking place in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** convening local chiefs. One example is a three-day meeting of 60 village and tribal chiefs, many of whom were on opposing sides of armed conflict in the past, coming together to discuss the promotion of social progress and decide on practical action that could transform tense coexistence into constructive and peaceful collaboration among various ethnic groups and religious communities. A notable result of the conference was the decision by many of the chiefs to call regular meetings of all the women in their villages to discuss taking steps toward this goal, realizing that their participation was essential for successful reconciliation.

From the Pages of History

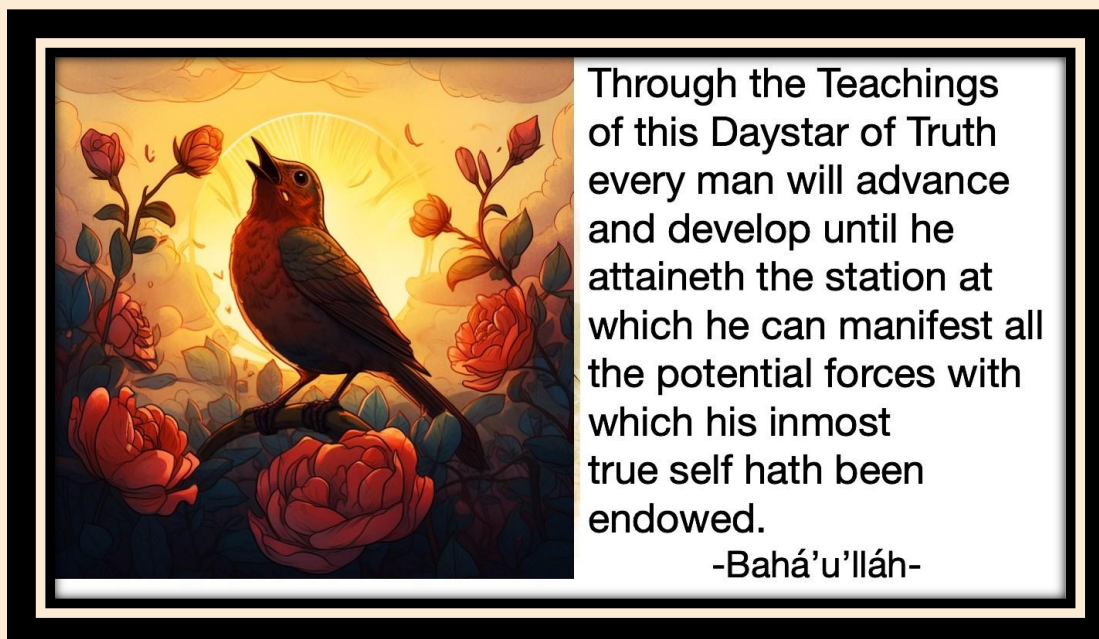
Declaration of the Bab in the Masjid-i-Vakil

The Bab, accompanied by Haji Mirza Siyyid Ali, arrived at the Masjid at a time when the Imam-Jum'ih had just ascended the pulpit and was preparing to deliver his sermon. As soon as his eyes fell upon the Bab, he publicly welcomed Him, requested Him to ascend the pulpit, and called upon Him to address the congregation. The Bab, responding to his invitation, advanced towards him and, standing on the first step of the staircase, prepared to address the people. "Come up higher," interjected the Imam-Jum'ih. Complying with his wish, the Bab ascended two more steps. As He was standing, His head hid the breast of Shaykh Abu-Turab, who was occupying the pulpit-top. He began by prefacing His public declaration with an introductory discourse. No sooner had He uttered the opening words of "Praise be to God, who hath in truth created the heavens and the earth," than a certain siyyid known as Siyyidi-Shish-Pari, whose function was to carry the mace before the Imam-Jum'ih, insolently shouted: "Enough of this idle chatter! Declare, now and immediately, the thing you intend to say." The Imam-Jum'ih greatly resented the rudeness of the siyyid's remark. "Hold your peace," he rebuked him, "and be ashamed of your impertinence." He then, turning to the Bab, asked Him to be brief, as this, he said, would allay the excitement of the people. The Bab, as He faced the congregation, declared: "The condemnation of God be upon him who regards me either as a representative of the Imam or the gate thereof. The condemnation of God be also upon whosoever imputes to me the charge of having denied the unity of God, of having repudiated the prophethood of Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets, of having rejected the truth of any of the messengers of old, or of having refused to recognise the guardianship of Ali, the Commander of the Faithful, or of any of the imams who have succeeded him." He then ascended to the top of the staircase, embraced the Imam-Jum'ih, and, descending to the floor of the Masjid, joined the congregation for the observance of the Friday prayer. The Imam-Jum'ih intervened and requested Him to retire. "Your family," he said, "is anxiously awaiting your return. All are apprehensive lest any harm befall you. Repair to your house and there offer your prayer; of greater merit shall this deed be in the sight of God." Haji Mirza Siyyid Ali also was, at the request of the Imam-Jum'ih, asked to accompany his nephew to his home.

This precautionary measure which Shaykh Abu-Turab thought it wise to observe was actuated by the fear lest, after the dispersion of the congregation, a few of the evil-minded among the crowd might still attempt to injure the person of the Bab or endanger His life. But for the sagacity, the sympathy, and the careful attention which the Imam-Jum'ih so strikingly displayed on a number of such occasions, the infuriated mob would doubtless have been led to gratify its savage desire, and would have committed the most abominable of excesses. He seemed to have been the instrument of the invisible Hand appointed to protect both the person and the Mission of that Youth. ~ The Dawn Breakers & Nabil's Narrative

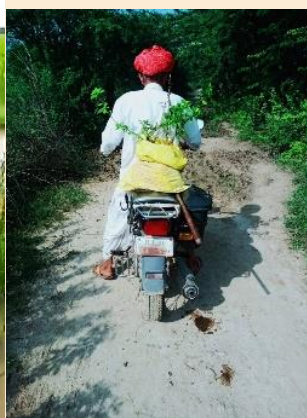
Sharing

Douglas Wilson's sharing:



Badi's sharing:

Every day, more work is done at the Nazz Rest Home. Trees are growing slowly. With some hard work on foot and motorcycles, the newly purchased plants were taken to the Nazz Rest Home's land for more planting. All the 250 Bougainvilleas have been planted on all four boundaries of "Nazz Rest Home". Planting all the fruit trees was done with the help of young Baha'i friends coming 80 kilometres from Jaipur to have a plantation day. What a blessing it is to have friends like them.





News and Nuggets from Other Religions and

Communities



Canada's Oldest First Nation's Newspaper

Ditidaht receives Funding from DFO to Restore Doobah Creek Watershed



Vancouver Island, BC

The Doobah Creek watershed, an area ravaged by industrial logging, can now begin its healing journey with \$852,000 in federal funds to support restoration work over the next four years.

Located on the west coast of Vancouver Island in Ditidaht First Nation's territory, about 92 kilometres southwest of Port Alberni via the Bamfield Road, the entire headwaters of the Doobah Creek were

logged off multiple times — a poor industrial approach which annihilated fish spawning habitat. Forty years later, the Ditidaht people are starting to rebuild.

“Basically, we’re trying to save all our fish,” said Ditidaht’s natural resource manager Paul Sieber.

The First Nation’s restoration plan includes taking chum from the Hobiton River and rearing them in the Doobah watershed. In the early 1970s a grassroots environmental campaign saved three lakes, Hobiton, Squalicum and Tsusiat, from being logged. By the mid-1980s the three lakes or “Nitinat Triangle” was formally added to the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve (PRNPR), and travelling from lake to lake is considered a bucket list adventure for canoeists.

“Hobiton River flows out of Nitinat Triangle into Nitinat Lake. That upper watershed is in the park, so it’s never been logged. We have viable runs in there of wild chum, steelhead and coho that still go spawn there,” said Sieber.

Ditidaht has hired veteran biologist Mike Wright and his team at M.C. Wright and Associates Ltd. to work towards restoring Doobah Creek watershed. Most recently, M.C. Wright helped with the Cheewaht Lake Restoration project. Fish habitat around Cheewaht Lake, while located within the boundaries of the PRNPR, was still impacted by nearby forestry activity due to log jams and sediment flow. Since the restoration work on Cheewaht started about three years ago, Sieber says it’s “helped greatly”, but any concrete results will be determined this fall, four years after the restoration began.

“We just keep monitoring. Thank God (the fish) are coming back,” said Sieber. “The provincial and federal government, they are reacting way too late. There is a lot of stewardship funding coming up, but it’s not enough. It’s not just our nation.”

He went on to tell the Ha-Shilth-Sa that there needs to be a more permanent funding stream established.

“We will still need funding for future monitoring and hatchery rearing,” said Sieber. “We know (restoration) is long-term and we have to continually ask the federal government for funding.”

Funding for Doobah Creek watershed is one of four projects in B.C. to receive a portion of about \$9.3 million in federal funds under Canada’s Oceans Protection Plan, Aquatic Ecosystems Restoration Fund (AERF). The other projects include: enhancing estuarine resilience for salmon in the Salish Sea by SeaChange Marine Conservation Society, managing and restoring a historic marine-based log handling site in Haida Gwaii and culturing giant and bull kelp by the Kelp Rescue Initiative. All four projects were funded over a four-year term.

“The Government of Canada is committed to taking action to restore and safeguard the health of our ocean and freshwater ecosystems,” wrote Diane Lebouthillier, minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, in a July 9 media release. “We are proud to help fund the work of these recipients in restoring and enhancing priority coastal and upstream aquatic areas. Working together, we can enhance our abilities to combat climate change through aquatic restoration activities.”

From the Editor’s Desk

“The Russians Love Their Children Too”

For those of us who are old enough to remember, this was the title of Sting's song, "The Russians Love their Children Too" at the height of the Cold War, when the level of hatred for Russians had reached its highest. The song gently reminded us about the fundamental fact that no matter what country or political ideology we belong to, we are human first, and we have the same human emotions, such as love for our children.

The message in the song is still fresh and clear. It points us to the universal fact that parents everywhere love their children, worry about their future, and fear losing them.

Once again, the world has so much hatred and negative feelings. In particular, negative feelings toward Russia because of the war and the destruction in Ukraine.

The mass media's coverage of this devastating war is comprehensive and detailed. Every death and bombarding is shown. Every tear shed, every story of Ukrainian suffering is reported.

Sadly, what is missing is seeing the faces of the dead Russian soldier's mother and father, who do not even know where their son's body lies. These soldiers were forced to leave home away from their parents to fight a war they most likely did not want. They were killed and left behind the heartbreak for their grieving parents. The media has no access to these parents so that they can share their pain and agony, and that is a tragedy because "The Russians love their children too."

Any human death is a tragedy. It does not matter if they are Ukrainian, Russian, American or German. The savagery of war has to stop.

"For thousands of years men and nations have gone forth to the battlefield to settle their differences. The cause of this has been ignorance and degeneracy. Praise be to God! In this radiant century minds have developed, perceptions have become keener, eyes are illumined and ears attentive. Therefore, it will be impossible for war to continue. Consider human ignorance and inconsistency. A man who kills another man is punished by execution, but a military genius who kills one hundred thousand of his fellow creatures is immortalized as a hero. One man steals a small sum of money and is imprisoned as a thief. Another pillages a whole country and is honored as a patriot and conqueror. A single falsehood brings reproach and censure, but the wiles of politicians and diplomats excite the admiration and praise of a nation!" -Abdu'l-Bahá

How long does humanity need to realize that there is no winning for those who died and left behind their families to grieve? It is so sad that the young who have their whole lives ahead of them must pay the ultimate price of life in every war. How much longer will we glorify killings in our psyche and culture through songs and movies? We can if we want to put all these energies into educating humanity on ways to settle disputes through reasoning and peaceful methods.

We can not even imagine the amount of money and resources that could be saved by the nations not stockpiling weapons. All these savings could be used for constructive purposes such as eradicating diseases and eliminating poverty.

As we mourn every death in Ukraine, mourn the destruction of the country and other parts of the globe, let us also grieve with the mothers and fathers of the dead Russian soldiers who died by following orders. Those parents loved their children too.



There's a Japanese legend that says:

"If you feel like you're losing everything, remember, trees lose their leaves every year, yet they still stand tall and wait for better days to come."

Writings to Ponder and Practice

**‘There is no act of worship more pleasing unto God than benefiting others, even if it is only by creating joy in their heart.’
~ The Bab**

For sharing materials and questions, write to bshams@telus.net