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ONAM CELEBRATION 2k17



Onam is an annual Hindu festival with origins in the state of Kerala & is the official state festival of Kerala. It falls in the Malayalam calendar month of Chingam, which in Gregorian calendar overlaps with August-September. The festival commemorates the Vamana avatar of Vishnu, the subsequent homecoming of the legendary Emperor Mahabali and mythologies of Hinduism related to Kashyapa and Parashurama .Onam is a major annual event for Malayali people in and outside Kerala. It is a harvest festival, one of three major annual Hindu celebrations along with Vishu and Thiruvathira, and it is observed with numerous festivities. Onam celebrations include Vallam Kali (boat races), Pulikali (tiger dances), Pookkalam (flower arrangement), Onathappan (worship), Onam Kali, Tug of War, Thumbi Thullal (women's dance), Kummattikali (mask dance), Onathallu (martial arts), Onavillu (music),

Kazhchakkula (plantain offerings), Onapottan (costumes), Attachamayam (folk songs and dance), and other celebrations.

It is the New Year day for Malayali Hindus.



In Amet Onam got celebrated in a gala manner. On the day of Onam whole college comes together to celebrate the festival in unison regardless of their creed. Students were dressed in traditional clothing and decorated the whole campus with flowers and colours.

The celebration is commenced with traditional music and lighting the ceremonial lamp. After that the cultural programmes started in Janakiraman auditorium.



RACISM

A) INTRODUCTION

The term RACISM is not something new in our vocabularies. Majority of us, if not all of us are familiar with it and even aliens (if they exist) must be too. We must have once in a while or a multiple time heard testimonies from random people about racism or we, ourselves have actually had our own experiences regarding the same. In this article, I am going to briefly give my little knowledge about this topic in question.

B) WHAT IS RACISM?

I don't want to be naive and ignorant by simply assuming that everyone actually understands what racism is. So why don't we define it? Shall we? Well, racism in layman's terms, literally means prejudice towards people of other race(s) mainly because of their skin colour. It can also be defined as discrimination and mistreatment of people that are from other race(s) than yours. A racist thinks that his race is more superior and better off than that of others and thus does not respect or regard people from other race(s) and instead, tries to intimidate and dominate them. Most racists are bigoted and biased and their stance is that; as long as someone is from their race, regardless of how retarded or stupid they are, they are still far much better than that other person from another race. It doesn't matter whatever the status, personality or achievements of the that other person. All of that mean nothing except whatever they are equated to (by the racist).

C) CAUSES OF RACISM

Of all the evils that have thrived in the history of humanity, racism has proven to be almost immortal. Even after several major revolutions and reformations, it still managed to survive. So what sustains this menace? This question prompted me to do my little research and I discovered that the following must be responsible:

1. CULTURE AND TRADITIONS

Most cultures associate being black with inferiority, uncleanliness, ugliness, poverty and any other vices of the same or even more magnitude. This explains why many races act indifferent towards the black people. The more fairer your skin is, the more beautiful and intelligent you are considered even though this cannot be necessarily true. Many Asian and Western cultures have this element.

2. IGNORANCE AND NAIVETY

Ignorance is a total or partial lack of knowledge about something. Naivety on the other hand is doing things just for the sake or taking things for granted. Illiterate people are more susceptible to this and are likely to fall into the trap of being racist just because they lack awareness or they literally don't see anything wrong with it. Some just follow the trend since they observe everyone else doing it.

3. MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS

Some races (if not all) have myths and misconceptions about others. For example, some Asians think that Africans are cannibals and jungle men. White people on the other hand think that Africans are superstitious and practice witchcraft and magic. Black people also think that White people are imposters in disguise and cannot be trusted. Who would want to associate with a cannibal or a magician or an imposter? The answer is NONE! These stereotypes further help to fuel racism.

4. FALSE SENSE OF SUPERIORITY

The apparent reality in our today's world is that the White race and many other races have achieved a lot more in comparison to the black race in the recent years. This has created a coincidental impression that the more lighter your skin is, they more superior, intelligent, successful and influential you are likely to be. As a result of this, the White race has been made to feel that they are superior since they have made more achievements and contributions to the world in various aspects compared to the other races. Whatever prompted them to feel that way is unjustified at all. There's no biological or genetical evidence that any race is more intelligent or superior than the other. It's only the external features our bodies that are different otherwise the internal organs make up is all the same in all races. There's no such thing like a superior race and people should stop advancing pointless ideologies and propaganda.

5. CIRCUMSTANCES

This particular point is an isolated one but it does count. Some people turn racist because of one or multiple bad experiences that they might have had with a certain race. They do this out of frustration and bitterness. The status of one's background can also contribute to them being despised or discriminated by the others. For example, most Westerners are racist against Middle Easterners because of consistent accounts of terrorism associated with them coupled up with their religious beliefs, customs and practices which are incompatible with theirs. Also the fact that most Middle East nations are unstable with some being controlled by terrorist organizations make it even worse. All of these unfortunate circumstances paint a bad picture of them in the eyes of many. Other races too may also be in some circumstances that make others not to like them and most of the time the victims have little or no control at all over such circumstances.

D) EFFECTS OF RACISM

They say it's only he who feels it knows it. This means that it is unless and until you experience something, you are unlikely to appreciate or realize its negative impacts. To understand the impacts of racism, you must first get to know how it works in our real life world. I don't know exactly how many races are there around the world but I'm going to condensed them into just three to fit my theory of "Racism Triangle". According to this theory, there are only three races namely: The Blacks, The Whites and the "Others". Here, the "Others" category is valid for the Latinos, Hispanics, Arabs, Indians, Mongolians or any other group that doesn't identify as either Black or White. These three races form a triangle. At the top vertex of the triangle is the White race and at the two bottom vertices are the Black and the "Others" race on either vertex. The White race discriminates both the Black race and the "Others" race. The "Others" race in turn discriminates against the Black race and hence the Black race becomes a punching bag for both. This does not mean that the Blacks cannot be racist towards the Whites and the "Others" or the "Others" towards the Whites. They can be racist but in a reversed manner or what has now come to be known to as reversed racism. This is whereby one race act racist towards another in retaliation for racial discriminations done against them by that race. Now that we've at least understood how racism works, why don't we then dive into its effects? I know the effects might be more but for now, I'm only going to discuss just four. These are ;

1. HATRED AND SUSPICION

Hatred is strong dislike towards something or someone. Suspicion is strong mistrust towards something or someone. These two can happen where there are outstanding racial issues. For example, there's a very strong feeling of hatred and suspicion that Black people have towards the Whites due to frustration and bitterness which resulted from what the White people had put them through (slavery and colonisation) over the past few centuries.

2. OPPRESSION AND SUPPRESSION

This is whereby the powerful race abuses and misuses their power to intimidate and dominate the less powerful one(s). This has happened some time in the past in the form of slavery and colonization. The white people misused their power to oppress and suppress other races especially the Black people. Racial oppression and suppression still do happen in some places even today. For example, in USA, the Blacks and the native Red Indians are oppressed by Whites due to racially motivated reasons. In Australia also, the Aboriginal people who happened to be dark skinned are oppressed too by the Whites in their quest to have only a homogeneous race.

3. VIOLENCE AND TENSION

Racism sparks up violence which can either be initiated by the dominating race or the dominated race. Several racially motivated violences and tensions have happened in the past and still do happen even now although sporadically. For example, the Holocaust or the genocide against the Jewish people was racially motivated. Also the KKK movement in the USA which was a White Supremacists movement to wipe out the Black people perpetuated several violent acts which claimed many lives. The blacks in retaliation also formed their own movements to counter them and this created a very huge racial tension.

4. MORALE AND SELF-ESTEEM ISSUES

The people from the dominated race sometimes become vulnerable and helpless and end up voluntarily or involuntarily accepting whatever the dominating race equate them to. The constant elevation and uplifting of fair skin people have affected the self-esteem of several black people and this has led some to resort to bleaching just to meet the society's set beauty standards. The black people and many other minorities have been made to feel unworthy and incomparable to White people.

E) HOW TO ERADICATE RACISM

A lot of prominent people have given their thoughts on how to get rid of racism. Some like Morgan Freeman have suggested that the only way to stop racism is by not speaking about it. Others on the other hand have also suggested that putting an end to labels like WHITE or BLACK or BROWN etc can save the situation. Well, I'll not dwell on what other people think should be done but what I think should be done. Firstly, we should recognize that racism exists from the word go. It's only when you name that you can tame it. A lot of us are in a complete denial of its existence in our today's civilized world. They consider it to have "died" ages ago and does no longer contribute to anything in our current era. This is very ridiculous and ludicrous at the same time to me. If you are one of such people who think like that, then I'm very sorry to inform you that racism never did die! It is still very alive, healthy and still doing what it has always done before. It is only its parents, slavery and colonialism that died (Although their ghosts still haunt some parts of the world upto this date). However, there is a great difference between the racism then and the racism now. Unlike the racism then, the racism now has also gotten "civilized" and it is unless you are very keen, you are likely to join those who don't acknowledge its existence. Racism in some places has taken different dimensions where is not only just a street thing but also a mainstream or systematic thing. Your skin colour could be a big deal breaker in a lot of stuff. So it's very important we acknowledge that racism is still a part of our today's society. Secondly, we must education people on this issue. There are many people who are still very ignorant and naive about it. Creating awareness among such people can therefore help a great deal. Thirdly, promoting interaction among people of different races and ethnicities. Interaction can come in the form of intermarriage, trade, cultural exchange, tourism and any other activities that bring different people together. I believe that the more people interact and intermingle, the more they familiarize with each other. This can help clear up prejudices, stereotypes and subsequently racism. Last but not least, persecuting perpetrators of racial offences. This will bring about accountability and responsibility for one's actions. Strict laws and regulations should be specifically prescribed to deal with this menace. That way, the people will be kept in check.

F) CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I'd like to say that in as much as racism is deep-rooted in our society, there's still hope of eliminating it. We just have to first recognize that it does exist and then face it in unison. We must create awareness and educate the society about racism and how undesirable it is. Let's support all organizations and activists that speak against racism. Say NO TO RACISM.

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