

# UBF Diary

February 2022

## Actor Shriya Saran hosts a panel talk on breast cancer advocacy

To commemorate World Cancer Day, well-known actor, Shriya Saran held an online conversation with two cancer conquerors, Shalini Nayar from Delhi and Mumbai-based Shormistha Mukherjee. Both had fought against breast cancer with courage and determination. Their powerful and inspiring messages – their grit and fierce determination in the face of adversity, was brought out very well by the actor.

Dr Raghu Ram too participated in this interaction, and he added his perspective about various aspects of breast cancer care, including underlining the importance of counselling, which he believes is “50 per cent of the treatment”.

In the video, Shalini Nayar, who discovered she had breast cancer in the midst of the Covid pandemic, found herself in a “whirlpool” at first. But for the sake of her loved ones, she decided to fight and with the help of Dr Raghu Ram’s counselling, who gave her the all-important ‘pep talk’, she got rid of the disease after eight months of treatment and care.

At first, Shormistha Mukherjee was scared to face up to the fact that she had breast cancer. Finally, she decided to enter the ‘zone’ and go through the surgery, the chemo and the ‘entire works’. But she kept her eyes firmly on the light at the end of the tunnel. And, she won the battle with the help of great doctors, great family support and even wrote a book on her experience.

The programme was keenly watched by over 500 people. Check out this link to the video to know more:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EojmRmc\\_080&t=3547s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EojmRmc_080&t=3547s)



**KIMS HOSPITALS™**  
KIMS-USHALAKSHMI CENTRE FOR BREAST DISEASES

**USHALAKSHMI BREAST CANCER FOUNDATION**  
Hyderabad, India

**On the occasion of WORLD CANCER DAY**  
**ABCs OF BREAST HEALTH -**  
**WHAT EVERY WOMAN MUST KNOW!**

**Two Breast Cancer ‘conquerors’**  
who have fought breast cancer with courage & determination  
&  
**A Surgeon**  
who has dedicated his life to Breast Cancer advocacy & Early detection  
will empower you about every aspect of Breast Cancer  
advocacy & Survivorship

**Shriya Saran**  
Actor & Host

**Shormistha Mukherjee**  
(Mumbai)

**Shalini Nayar**  
(Delhi)

**Dr. P. Raghu Ram OBE**  
Director, KIMS-USHALAKSHMI Centre for Breast Diseases, Hyderabad  
CEO, Founder & Director, Ushalakshmi Breast Cancer Foundation

**Mark your calendar ...**  
**Date:** Friday 4 February | **Time:** 7:30 pm  
[www.ubfhelp.org](http://www.ubfhelp.org)

OUR HEARTS BEAT FOR EARLY DETECTION... DOES YOURS???

## A RARE 'HONOUR'

Dr P Raghu Ram is conferred the OBE, the second highest ranking order of the British Empire (excluding Knighthood/Damehood)



Instituted in 1917, the Queens Honours are amongst the most prestigious awards worldwide. The British Honours system aims to show gratitude publicly to those who have 'gone the extra mile' in their service and who stand out 'head and shoulders' above others in their distinction.

The Queens Honours, which is part of the British Honours system, has a robust and thorough selection process.

The 'Honours Committee' produces the list, independently of the government, before it is submitted to the Queen through the Prime Minister. Considered as a fountain of honour in the UK, Her Majesty, The Queen has the sole right of conferring titles of honour on deserving people from all walks of life, in public recognition of their outstanding merit, exceptional service or bravery.

The Hyderabad-based Dr P Raghu Ram, director, KIMS-USHALAKSHMI Centre for Breast Diseases and founder CEO

of Ushalakshmi Breast Cancer Foundation, has achieved the rare distinction to become one of the youngest surgeons of Indian origin in over 100 years to be conferred OBE (Officer of the Most Excellent Order of British Empire). Dr Raghu Ram's honour featured in the prestigious Queen Elizabeth II's 2021 New year's Honours list, was also published in the *London Gazette*—the official publication of the Crown.

OBE is the second highest ranking of the British Empire award (excluding a knighthood or damehood) that has been conferred in recognition of Dr Raghu Ram's "Services towards improving breast cancer care and surgical education in India and to UK/India relations."

The award was bestowed by His Royal Highness, Prince Charles, Prince of Wales, who represented Queen Elizabeth II during a glittering Investiture ceremony held on March 30, 2022, at the Windsor Castle in Windsor near London, which is the oldest and largest occupied castle in the world and is one of the official residences of the British monarch.

Some well-known names who received an OBE in the recent times include Om Puri (actor), Prof Michael Griffin—president, The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, David Beckham (sports), Ben Stokes (vice- captain, England's cricket team), Victoria Beckham (fashion), JK Rowling



A lively interaction with His Royal Highness, Prince Charles, Prince of Wales, who represented Queen Elizabeth II during a glittering Investiture ceremony held on March 30, 2022, at the Windsor Castle in Windsor near London



*A memorable experience: Dr Raghu Ram with his wife Dr. Vyjayanthi*

(author-Harry Potter series), Kiera Knightley (actor), Damon Albarn (musician) and others.

Venkaiah Naidu, vice-president of India tweeted congratulating Dr Raghu Ram on receiving this rare honour. In his message, Dr Raghu Ram said: "I am deeply grateful to her Majesty, The Queen for conferring this high honour. Over the past 15 years, I have strived to replicate the best of British practices in my motherland and feel immensely proud to have been a 'living bridge' between the UK and India. I dedicate this astonishing moment and tremendous recognition to my family, my patients, my colleagues at KIMS Hospitals and to the Indian surgical fraternity the world over. Proud to have represented my motherland at the Windsor Castle in the traditional Indian attire with India's tricolour pocket square representing Bharath."

### **What happened during the Investiture Ceremony at Windsor Castle?**

An Investiture is a special day when 50 Queens Honours recipients and their accompanying persons visit a Royal Residence to formally receive their insignia from the Queen or a Member of the Royal Family. In February 2022, Dr Raghu Ram had received a letter from the secretary, Central Chancery of the Orders of Knighthood at St James Palace in London, inviting him to attend the Investiture Ceremony scheduled at Windsor Castle in Windsor, a small town in Berkshire near London. The Investiture was scheduled on March 30 at 11 am.

Dr Raghu Ram describes the experience: "My wife Vyjayanthi and I were most fortunate to witness firsthand the exceptional grandeur of the several ceremonial rooms

in the Castle, including the King's Drawing Room, where all the recipients and their accompanying persons were welcomed."

"The Investiture ceremony was held in the spectacular Throne Room. However, after greeting HRH Prince Charles with a traditional bow, moving away from protocol, Dr Raghu Ram also did a 'Namaste', to which HRH reciprocated twice—once before award presentation and second time just before leaving him. It was a wonderful gesture to see HRH Prince of Wales making a meaningful conversation with every recipient."

### **Dr Raghu Ram's Interaction with HRH Prince Charles**

"After pinning the OBE medal, HRH Prince Charles asked me as to where I was residing and about the Centres of excellence and where I had obtained my training in the UK. He then asked me what took me back to India. I mentioned to him about my mother's cancer diagnosis and that I have been serving as a 'Living Bridge' replicating the best of British practices, in an endeavour to improve the delivery of breast healthcare in my motherland. I invited him to visit Hyderabad when he next came to India. He wished me well and it was time to have the great pleasure of shaking hands with him before exiting the room. Vyjayanthi was a short distance away in the same room watching my lively interaction with Prince Charles. This was well and truly a memorable experience with British Royalty, that I shall cherish, always."

### **Final impressions...**

Unlike most other prestigious awards worldwide, one cannot self-nominate for the Queens Honours. The British High Commission cannot submit a nomination either and one does not know as to who has submitted the nomination. And hence, being handpicked for this high honour although Dr Raghu Ram is not residing in the UK, makes this award even more special and precious.

Dr Raghu Ram also believes there was an element of 'divine coincidence', since he was conferred the Padma Shri – one of the highest civilian awards in India on March 30, 2015 at 11 am. And, precisely 7 years later, on the same date and time, he was conferred the OBE—one of the highest civilian awards in the UK (March 30, 2022 at 11 am)!

On his award, Dr Raghu Ram said: "This award has increased my responsibilities even more. Having dedicated my life towards improving breast healthcare in my motherland, I shall continue to work with rock-solid determination in this chosen path. I would like to quote a very poignant and thought-provoking speech given by late Dr Abdul Kalam, the former President of India— 'Ask what we can do for India and do what has to be done to make India what America and other western countries are today!'"