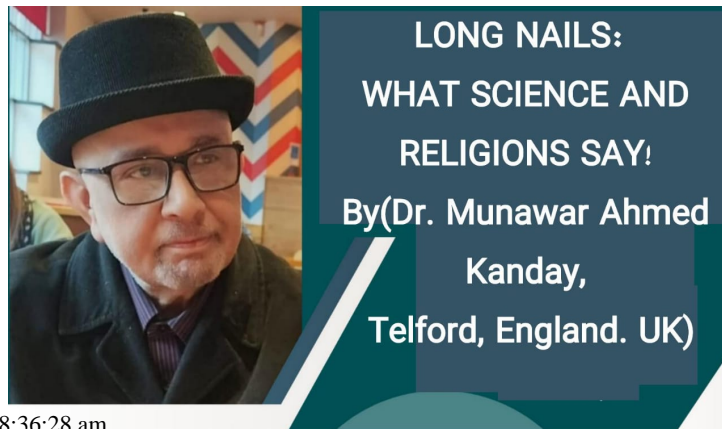


## LONG NAILS:

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### WHAT SCIENCE AND RELIGIONS SAY!

(Dr. Munawar Ahmed Kanday, Telford, England. UK)

Many women in the world grow long nails. They think it makes their hands look pretty. But there are some problems with long nails that we should think about.

Our hands touch everything. We use our hands to eat, clean, change baby nappies, and go to the toilet. When nails are long, it is very hard to keep them clean. Dirt and germs hide under long nails. Even if you wash your hands many times, the germs stay under the nails. These germs can go into food or milk and make the people sick who eat or drink these.

Doctors and scientists say long nails are not good for health. One study in the Journal of Clinical Microbiology showed that nurses with long nails gave infections to patients. Very dangerous germs like E. coli and Staphylococcus live under long nails. These germs can cause serious illness.

For mothers, it is more dangerous. Their hands touch babies' mouths, eyes, and food. If germs from the nails go into the baby's body, the baby can get very sick. Washing hands is not enough. The area under the nail is small and hard to clean.

The world religions also teach us to stay clean. In Islam, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) told us to cut nails and stay neat. A Hadith in Sahih Muslim says that we should not let nails grow longer. If dirt stays under the nails, it can stop our wudu (ablution) from being correct. Then our prayers may not be accepted.

Other religions also tell people to stay clean. In Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity, cleaning the body before praying is very important. All these religions care about health and say we must keep hands and nails clean.

When COVID-19 came, health experts warned people about long nails. The CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) in America said that long nails can hide viruses and germs. Even washing with soap is not enough.

So we must ask:

Is it good to look pretty if it makes us sick? Is fashion more important than health?

The answer is no. Clean hands and short nails are better for our body, for our babies, and for our prayers. Real

beauty is in being clean, healthy, and simple.

Let us choose what is safe and pure. That is the smart and kind thing to do.