



# APSS NEWS

Issue 11 / Dec 2020  
www.apssonline.org

News From Your Regional Spine Society

## Honorary Secretary's Message



Dear Colleagues,

I would like to start by wishing you and your families my personal best — for your health and safety in these difficult times. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the lives of billions of people in different ways all over the world. Keeping the safety of our APSS members in mind, the APSS Executive Committee (EXCO) had made a number of important decisions by postponing many of the face-to-face education activities, i.e., conferences, fellowship programmes, and courses.

Recently, we had made another important decision by taking early action and converting the upcoming 13th Combined Meeting of APSS and APPOS 2021 in Kobe, Japan into a hybrid format. The Organising Committee, led by Dr. Morio Matsumoto and Dr. Yukihiro Matsuyama, is working with great enthusiasm to run a successful meeting. I hope that all of you will block the date in your calendar to attend this meeting from June 10th – 12th, 2021. To view the programme and to register, kindly visit our [website](http://www.apssonline.org).

The movement restrictions or national lockdowns enforced in many countries to curb the spread of the virus transmission have affected the clinical practices of spine surgeons globally. Our APSS Research Committee had taken an effort to investigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the clinical and surgical practices of spine surgeons in the Asia Pacific region. This study had been published in the Spine Journal recently. The findings from the study indicated that 92.3% of a total number of 222 respondents from 19 countries felt that their clinical practice had been affected (for further details, kindly read the summary of the publication on pages 4 and 5). On a similar note, we are honoured to have an esteemed APSS Board Member from Hong Kong, Dr. Yat-Wa Wong, to share his clinical experience in the management of orthopaedic patients in Queen Mary Hospital amidst the COVID-19 outbreak in Hong Kong in this newsletter.

APSS EXCO members have also leveraged on the downtime to finalise the APSS Organisational Chart. Under the governance of the Board and Management of the EXCO, six Committees were formed to look at different aspects of the Society: (1) Finance; (2) Governance; (3) Community Development; (4) Education; (5) Congress; and (6) Research Committees. The Constitution, Bylaws and Procedure and Policy Menu (PP&M) Sub-Committee under the purview of the Governance Committee has been mandated with the task of drafting the detailed operation procedures of the Society. We look forward to share the complete draft soon.

We are pleased to inform the successful incorporation of the Asia Pacific Spine Society Limited in Hong Kong. The APSS Limited is currently in the process of applying for tax exemption status as a non-profit corporation. Moving forward, our Honorary Treasurer had pointed out in his testimonial that the Society's next milestone is to achieve financial independence, thus, highlighting the importance of effective financial management in the coming years.

For a Society that has recognised education as one of its main missions, it had been difficult to complete a whole year without being able to carry out a single face-to-face education or outreach programme. Acknowledging the new norm, the Executive Committee of APSS has established the Online Education Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee has started its work with extraordinary effort, and I would like to invite all of you to attend the first APSS webinar on January 3rd, 2021. Please visit our [website](http://www.apssonline.org) for free registration to the inaugural virtual event.

Finally, I wish you a peaceful and safe New Year. Hope to meet all of you in person soon.

Yours sincerely,  
**PROFESSOR DATO' DR. MUN - KEONG KWAN**

# BE AN ACTIVE APOA & APSS MEMBER TODAY!

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- Contribute actively to orthopaedics and spine subspecialty in your region

For more info, visit

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## Board Member's Message



As the Honorary Treasurer, I witness how APSS becomes financially independent of APOA. To accomplish the task, it is not simply taking back all our savings and depositing them into our bank account. Dato Dr K S Sivananthan has made tremendous effort to collaborate and negotiate with APOA to repatriate all of our money to be deposited in our bank account. The next hurdle is where the assets are safely stored. Because of concerns about money laundering, the difficulty of opening a new bank account is beyond my imagination. APSS must first be registered as an official association or company. We chose Hong Kong for registration because of its low tax rate and the ease of sending money in and out of the territory. The second obstacle is finding a bank that trusts APSS. With the joint efforts of EXCO members, good track record in APSS and the assistance of our audit firm, we finally have our own bank account. Our next goal is to obtain tax exemption in HK. By the end of 2021, we will produce our own audit reports to ensure that every dollar we earn or spend is appropriate, legal and transparent.

Our financial administration is now independent, but we are not truly financially independent. Our current asset is about half million US dollars. However, we need about US\$50,000 per year to maintain the baseline operations, such as purchasing secretariat services. My wish is to expand our savings to the point where only interest income can maintain the basic operations. This is why I emphasised so strictly that there is a slight positive balance with most APSS activities.

Yours sincerely,  
YAT WA WONG

***Dr Yat Wa Wong also shared with us his personal experiences on the management of spine patients in his hospital during the COVID-19 outbreak in Hong Kong.***

I am currently the Deputy Hospital Chief Executive and Chief of Service of the Department of Orthopaedics and Traumatology. In the face of the recent COVID-19, many medical and nursing staffs have been under tremendous pressure and have experienced increased burden on patients' management. The guiding principle of handling the crisis is to support the entire hospital and Hong Kong in fighting the war while taking care of colleagues' emotion.

In the early stages of the COVID-19 attack, infection control training and education were organised to alleviate their fear and anxiety in handling COVID-19 cases. Most colleagues do not forget the main goals of health care workers. They voluntarily provide services to COVID-19 patients. Our department has deployed the most personnel to the isolation wards. It will inevitably lead to a shortage of manpower. The remaining colleagues worked hard to get through the tough times. We maintained basic services such as trauma, oncology and emergency surgery, but appropriately reduced other elective tasks.

In addition, we transferred postoperative cases to surrounding supporting hospitals or discharged them as soon as possible after the condition permitted. Rehabilitation is always necessary, but it can be done at home or on an outpatient basis. Telemedicine is another mean to strengthen supervision and monitoring of patients' progress. The disaster will eventually pass, but I am proud of the selfless dedication of my colleagues to take care of various patients.





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# The Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on Spine Surgeons: An Asia Pacific Spine Society (APSS) Survey

Chan CYW, Chiu CK, Cheung JPY, Cheung PWH, Gani SMA, Kwan MK. *The Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on Spine Surgeons: An Asia Pacific Spine Society (APSS) Survey. Spine (Phila Pa 1976). 2020 Sep 15; 45(18): 1285-1292.*

## Background

COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. It was first identified in December 2019. This infection caused symptoms that ranged from mild cough, sore throat, and fever to severe viral pneumonia with multiple organ failure. To date, over 18.6 million people were infected worldwide with 1.73 million death recorded. Movement restriction or national lockdown was enforced in many countries to curb the progression of the virus transmission. The disease itself coupled with these measures had led to a profound worldwide social and economic impact. This study was conducted to report and investigate the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the clinical practices of spine surgeons within the Asia Pacific region.

## Methods

This is a cross-sectional survey that was carried out from May 4, 2020 to June 4, 2020. The questionnaire was administered using REDCAP. The online questionnaire was divided into four sections. First section were questions on the surgeon's demographics, background, type of clinical practice, and status of pandemic in their country. Second section included questions on the volume and the type of spine surgery practice before the COVID pandemic. Third section included question on the changes of clinical practice during the pandemic and the last section was regarding their concern on COVID transmission.

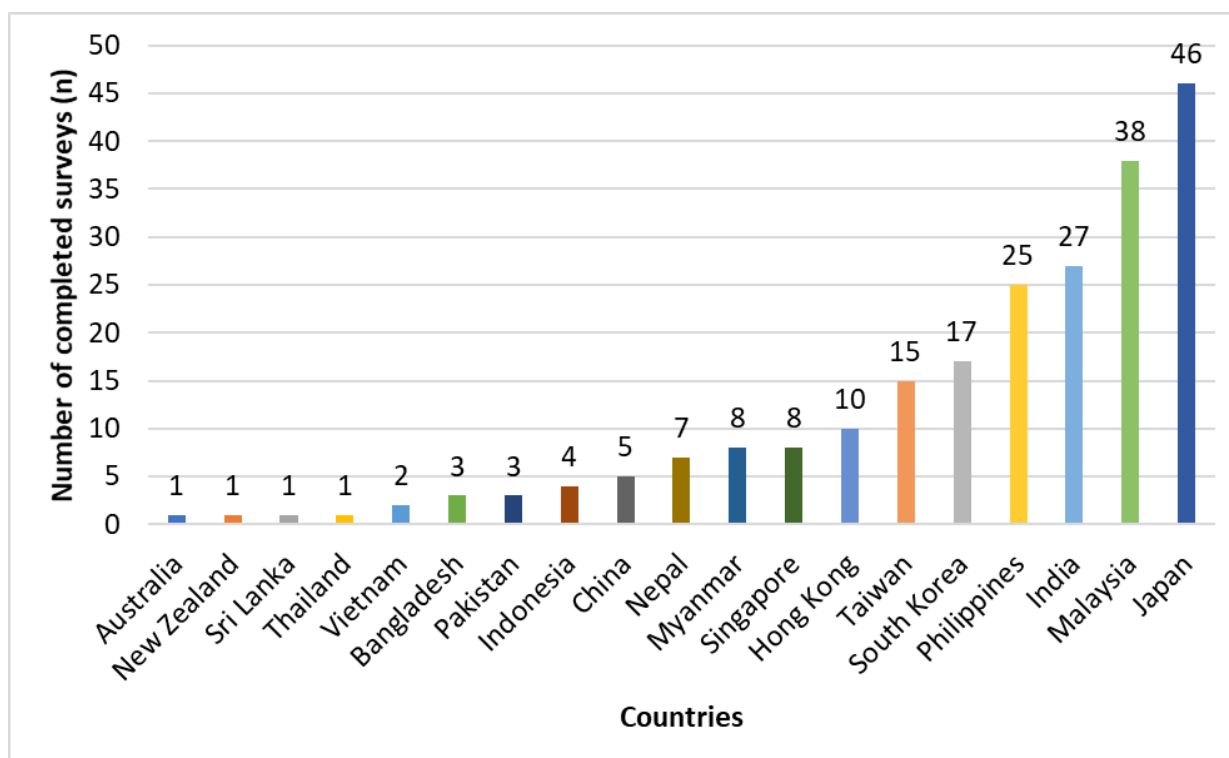


Figure 1. Survey respondents according to country. 222 respondents completed the survey.

## Findings

Total of 222 respondents from 19 countries completed the questionnaire. During the pandemic, 92.3% of the respondents felt their clinical practice was affected. 58.5% respondents reported reduced outpatient clinic hours and 74.6% respondents reported reduced operation theatre hours due to the enforcement by the hospital administration. The mean reduction of clinic volume for all countries was 48.1%. There was a significant reduction in the number of surgeries performed in Japan, Malaysia, India, Philippines, and South Korea. This was due to reduced patient load. More than 60% of respondents were worried being infected by COVID-19 virus and >68% were worried of transmission to their family members.

Country	Number of cases	Before COVID-19 (%)	During COVID-19 (%)	P value
Japan	0-10	34.8	70.7	0.003
	11-20	47.8	17.	
	>20	17.4	12.2	
Malaysia	0-10	28.9	92.1	<0.001
	11-20	52.6	7.9	
	>20	18.4	0.0	
India	0-10	18.5	96.2	<0.001
	11-20	37.0	0.0	
	>20	44.4	3.8	
Philippines	0-10	64.0	100.0	0.004
	11-20	28.0	0.0	
	>20	8.0	0.0	
South Korea	0-10	17.6	63.6	0.023
	11-20	52.9	36.4	
	>20	29.4	0.0	
Taiwan	0-10	46.7	69.2	0.248
	11-20	20.0	23.1	
	>20	33.3	7.7	
Hong Kong	0-10	60.0	90.0	0.121
	11-20	40.0	10.0	

Table 1: Number of surgeries performed before and during COVID-19 pandemic stratified by country

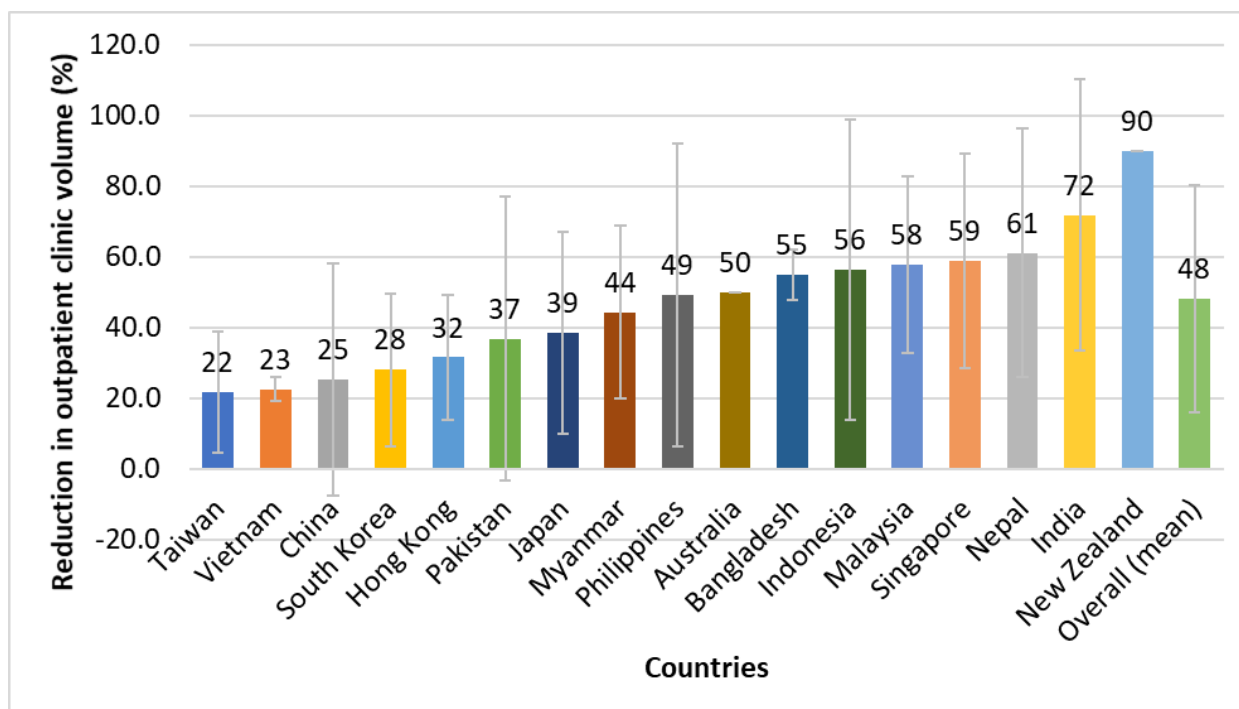


Figure 2: Reduction in outpatient clinic volume in Asia Pacific countries

### Conclusion

COVID-19 pandemic had significantly affected the clinical and surgical practice of spine surgeons in the Asia Pacific region. Clinics were closed or the practice hours were reduced. Similarly, surgical theaters were closed, reduced, or limited to semi-emergency and emergency surgeries. Spine surgeons were moderately concerned of contracting COVID-19 during their clinical practice but were extremely concerned to transmit this disease to their family members.

Access this [link](#) to read the full published article.

**APSS CALLING FOR SUBMISSION OF COLLABORATIVE (SPINE) RESEARCH**

**FIND OUT MORE ON APSS WEBSITE!**

# APSS Board Members

(Terms: 2019-2021\* and 2020-2022)

<b>Australia</b>	Dr Orso L Osti Dr Brian Hsu
<b>Bangladesh</b>	Dr Md Shah Alam Dr Kh Abdul Awal Rizvi Dr Md Kamrul Ahsan
<b>China</b>	Dr Zhuojing Luo Dr Hui ren Tao Dr Zhaomin Zheng
<b>Hong Kong</b>	Dr Yat Wa Wong Dr Jason Pui Yin Cheung Dr Kenny Yat Hong Kwan
<b>India</b>	Dr Ram Chaddha Dr Saumyajit Basu Dr Ajoy Prasad Shetty
<b>Indonesia</b>	Dr Zairin Noor* Dr Luthfi Gatam*
<b>Japan</b>	Dr Yukihiro Matsuyama Dr Morio Matsumoto* Dr Daisuke Sakai*
<b>Korea</b>	Dr Kee Yong Ha Dr Ki Tack Kim Dr Kyu Jung Cho*
<b>Malaysia</b>	Dr Chung Chek Wong Dr Chris Yin Wei Chan* Dr Chee Kidd Chiu
<b>Myanmar</b>	Dr Myint Thaug Dr Thant Zin Naing
<b>Nepal</b>	Dr Rohit K Pokharel Dr Rabindra L Pradhan
<b>Pakistan</b>	Dr Muhammad Tariq Sohail Dr Abdul Satar Dr Shahid Ali
<b>Philippines</b>	Dr Jose Manuel F Ignacio Dr Ronald Tangente
<b>Singapore</b>	Dr Hee Kit Wong Dr Wai Mun Yue Dr Yung Hua Li
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	Dr V Swarnakumaar Dr Udai De Silva
<b>Taiwan</b>	Dr Shu Hua Yang Dr Chi Chien Niu Dr Wen Tien Wu
<b>Thailand</b>	Dr Torphong Bunmaprasert Dr Athikom Methathien



Group Photo: APSS Board Members during the Annual Board Meeting held in conjunction with 12th Combined Meeting of APSS and APPOS in Incheon, Korea.

**Thank You**  
for your contribution  
(APSS Board Members - Term: 2018-2020)

<b>Australia</b>	Dr Michael B Johnson
<b>China</b>	Dr Gui-Xing Qiu
<b>Hong Kong</b>	Dr Keith DK Luk Dr Kenneth MC Cheung
<b>India</b>	Dr Arvind Jayaswal Dr Rajasekaran Shanmuganathan
<b>Malaysia</b>	Dr Mun Keong Kwan
<b>Pakistan</b>	Dr M Arif Khan
<b>Philippines</b>	Dr Antonio Sison Dr Tiong Sam Lim
<b>Singapore</b>	Dr Gabriel Liu
<b>Thailand</b>	Dr Warat Tassanawipas
<b>Taiwan</b>	Dr Tsung-Jen Huang Dr Ing-Ho Chen
<b>Turkey</b>	Dr Mehmet Aydogan
<b>Vietnam</b>	Dr Vo Van Thanh



Group Photo: APSS Board Members during the Annual Board Meeting held in conjunction with APSS Annual Meeting 2018 in Taipei, Taiwan.



13th Combined Meeting of Asia Pacific Spine Society & Asia Pacific Paediatric Orthopaedic Society

# APSS-APPOS 2021

In collaboration with the Japanese Society  
for Spine Surgery and Related Research

Combined with the 60th Meeting of Japanese  
Paediatric Hip Research Society

Abstract Submission  
Period

October 19 Mon., 2020

February 22 Mon., 2021

Congress Chairman of **APSS**

**Prof. Morio Matsumoto**

Department of Orthopaedic Surgery,  
Keio University School of Medicine

Congress Co-Chairman of **APSS**

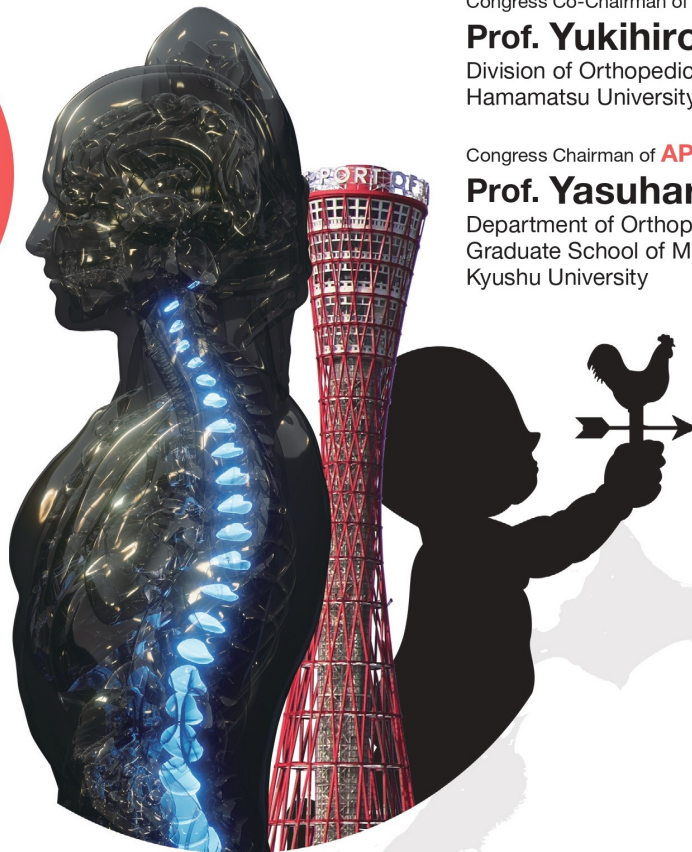
**Prof. Yukihiro Matsuyama**

Division of Orthopedic Surgery,  
Hamamatsu University School of Medicine

Congress Chairman of **APPOS**

**Prof. Yasuharu Nakashima**

Department of Orthopaedic Surgery,  
Graduate School of Medical Sciences,  
Kyushu University



June 9 | Wed. | -12 | Sat. |, 2021

Kobe International Conference Center,

# Kobe City, Japan

Congress Secretariat of APSS-APPOS 2021

13th Combined Meeting of Asia Pacific Spine Society & Asia Pacific Paediatric Orthopaedic Society

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URL: <http://www.congre.co.jp/apss-apos2021/>



# Highlight of 2021: APSS Inaugural Webinar



## APSS 1<sup>ST</sup> Webinar Multilevel Cervical Myelopathy - Dilemmas in Management

3<sup>rd</sup> January 2021 (Sunday) | 1.00 PM (GMT +5.30)

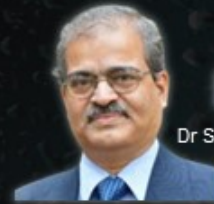
(GMT+5.30)	Programme	Faculty
13:00 – 13:03	Welcome Address by the President of APSS	Dr Keith Dip Kei Luk
13:03 – 13:06	Program Overview by the Chairman of Education Committee	Dr Chung Chek Wong
13:06 – 13:11	Case Presentation - Dilemmas in Multilevel Cervical Myelopathy	Dr Vishal Kundnani
13:11 – 13:31	Clinical and Radiological Prognostic Factors to Predict Outcome in Cervical Myelopathy Management	Dr S Rajasekaran
13:31 – 13:51	Management Options & Decision Making: Anterior vs Posterior & Role of Fusion / Instrumentation	Dr S K Shrivastava
13:51 – 14:11	Posterior Surgery in CSM – Video Technique – Decompression + Fusion	Dr Jose Manuel Ignacio
14:11 – 14:31	Complications in CSM Management – Prevention & Salvage	Dr Chung Chek Wong
14:31 – 15:01	Case Discussion Session / Q&A	Dr Kenny Kwan Dr Chee Kidd Chiu
15:01 – 15:06	Summary Statement	Dr Vishal Kundnani
15:06 – 15:09	Vote of Thanks	Dr Vishal Kundnani

### Faculty Members:

Dr S Rajasekaran  
(India)



Dr S K Shrivastava  
(India)



Dr Chung Chek Wong  
(Malaysia)



Dr Jose Manuel Ignacio  
(Philippines)



### Moderators:

Dr Vishal Kundnani (India)  
Dr Chee Kidd Chiu (Malaysia)  
Dr Kenny Yat Hong Kwan (Hong Kong)

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## 21<sup>ST</sup> ASIA PACIFIC ORTHOPAEDIC ASSOCIATION CONGRESS 2021

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ORTHO 360°

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www.apoa2021malaysia.org






### Asia Pacific Spine Society

The APSS started with the Western Pacific Orthopaedic Association - Spine Section in 1979 as an educational and scientific forum for the advancement of knowledge in the field of spine surgery.

Our mission is to advance knowledge in the field of spine surgery and promulgate the maintenance of professional standards in order to provide the best professional care to patients with spinal problems.

### APSS News

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