

Yeti Viewpoints

Promoting Nepalese Culture in the USA



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Association of Nepalese
in Midwest America

NASEA/ANMA Joint Convention 2013
Greenville/Spartanburg, SC August 30 - Sep 01
Hosted by South Carolina Association of Nepalese (SCAN)

#44

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August 13, 2013

Message

I am pleased to note that Nepalese Association in Southeast America (NASEA) and Association of Nepalese in Midwest America (ANMA) is going to organize "9th Annual Joint Convention 2013" from August 30 to September 2, 2013 in Spartanburg, South Carolina. On this occasion, I would like to express my hearty congratulations and best wishes for the success of the convention. I also would like to congratulate South Carolina Association of the Nepalese (SCAN) for hosting this convention.

We believe that the growing numbers of Nepalese population and community organizations in the United States have largely contributed to promote Nepal in the USA. In addition to their engagement in community welfare activities, they are actively working to promote Nepal's tourism, trade and culture.

While expressing sincere thanks for the activities organized by NASEA and ANMA in the past, I am confident that these organizations would further contribute in advancing the interest of Nepal and Nepalese community in the United States in the days ahead.

Once again, I wish all success of 9th Annual NASEA/ANMA Joint Convention.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "S. Sharma".

Dr. Shankar Prasad Sharma
Ambassador

Message from NAsEA President



Nepalese Need to Come to the Mainstream in the United States

- Sanjeeb Sapkota, President

Nepalese Association in Southeast America (NAsEA)

Serving the leading organization in the United States that caters to the Nepali community as its President, I have come to recognize first hand the stamina, power, courage and the behavior of our community. This community in which we all belong to is no less competent than any other ethnic group in the United States that have originated either from Europe, Latin America or Asia that constitute the 'melting pot' of this country. However compared to, say Croatian American or Swedish American or Vietnamese American or Russian American or Lebanese American or any other American for that matter, we Nepalese Americans have a lot of catching up to do.

Everyone of the Nepali community in the United States - children, youth, men and women - can do lot more, achieve lot more and be empowered lot more than we are right now. There are opportunities that are either untapped or untried by Nepali community or that are not known to the community. The latter exceeds the former. Every area has lots of opportunities for Nepali community including in entrepreneurship, business, education, entertainment industry, local and federal government, social service, technology and others.

Not that the Nepalese have not excelled in these areas. Darshan Rauniyar from Seattle ran for US congress, a Nepali women in Florida is running a Kumon Tuition Center, Amreeta Regmi from Georgia is a council women in a city government, Gobinda Giri Prerana from Virginia is selling several books in Amazon, Anita Adhikari from An Arbor created children books are now in public libraries across the country, Madhav Dhakal from High Point is running a large trucking business, Dr. Lila Bdr. Karki from Alabama received President's Volunteer Service Award for coordinating over two dozen blood drives so far, Bala Ghimire from Chicago has been recognized as an acclaimed restaurant entrepreneur, Suman Silwal from Birmingham have ran over two dozen marathons, Prabal Gurung from New York is now a nationally acclaimed fashion designer, Kiran Chettri is a news anchor in a major news channel, Dr. Kiran Shrestha performs Liver Transplant at a VA Center are but a few examples of Nepalese coming to the mainstream and making accomplishments in many fields. This is an axiom that given the appropriate training, skills, resource and peppered constantly with right blend of motivation, a large proportion of the Nepali Community can achieve any feats that mainstream Americans have achieved. However, there is not enough Nepali making the mark if we compare to the progress of other ethnic groups.

Nepalese Association in Southeast America (NAsEA) has long recognized the remarkable potential of Nepali community and has run many programs and events to support that. The 'children to children webinar' to empower Nepali children, monthly talk sessions to inspire and energize the community members, monthly immigration conference call to answer pressing questions of the immigrants, blood drives once almost every month to meet the pressing need of American people, Nepal Festival organized in the heart of a major metropolitan to showcase what Nepal has in its core culture, heritage and value, monthly Spiritual *Satsang* organized through NAsEA, TV, 'NAsEA how to' guides on safety at gas stations, organizing walk and run, running blood drive and organizing Nepali school, gathering funds for the victims of natural calamities or motor vehicle crashes both in Nepal and the United States, connecting with Nepali organizations in Universities, cities and states and encourage them to share best practices and lessons learned, promoting the well being of the community via walk and run organized every quarter – are some of the activities NAsEA organized in the past year. There is lot more NAsEA could do, not necessarily alone, but with partnership with other agencies, organizations or authorities.

NAsEA has made remarkable strides in serving Nepalese in Nepal as well. Examples include helping villages in getting wireless connections, supporting *Ganga Ghar*, a not-for-profit organization that is running one-sponsor-one-child program in Nepal, raise funds for victims of natural calamities in Nepal, and promoting the Nepali finalist of 'CNN Hero of the Year.'

But still, many more Nepalese need to come to the mainstream and be successful in the areas of their own expertise for us to be significantly recognized and to make an impact as a community.

Message form ANMA President



Gopendra Bhattarai,

President, Association of Nepalese in Midwest America (ANMA)

Dear Friends,
Namaskar,

The Association of Nepalese in Midwest America (ANMA), following its mission, has always been engaged in promoting, coordinating, and facilitating close cooperation among Nepalis and friends of Nepal in North America, particularly in the Midwest of the United States. This year was no exception. During the year, as always, ANMA executive committee members have been visiting different places, meeting individuals and community leaders, discussing the issues faced by them in their day to day life as well as finding ways to enhance the quality of life of our community in the US and Nepal.

We are all very encouraged to see and feel the excitement and enthusiasm for ANMA in the mid-west region and beyond. Broad participation of Individual members, community leaders, social workers, poets, singers, dignitaries from different part of the country including but not limited to Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Missouri, Iowa, Kentucky, Virginia, Texas made the meetings wonderful experiences. I would like to thank everyone involved including ANMA executive committee and other committee members, community leaders, social workers, journalists, donors, life members, advisers and well wishers for their support and guidance throughout the year. Ladies, and Gentlemen, let me assure you that your suggestions, help and participation have been instrumental in shaping the future of ANMA.

In addition to facilitating the participation of the community in identifying the issues and finding solutions, ANMA has been engaged in multitude of activities that benefit the general public. ANMA continues to support many previous projects and has initiated agreements with other laudable projects. One of the projects that ANMA has been engaged in for some time is writing and publishing the book "Adjusting to the American Way of Life: Tips for Visitors, Students and Immigrants From Nepal". The book is written by ANMA members Bal Krishna Sharma, Ph.D. and Anita Adhikary. As the title of the book suggests, it is intended for use by the recent visitors and immigrants to the US. ANMA has been looking for different forums to distribute the book. Recently, a box of book was handed over to International Office of Migration (IOM) in Kathmandu which distributed those to the Bhutanese/Nepalis who were embarking on their new journey to the US. We are planning to distribute these books during our joint convention in South Carolina as well.

Another effort that ANMA has started this year is to provide funds for MOBILEYEZ project. MOBILEYEZ is a global program by BLIND CORPS which involves individuals and organizations from different walk of life to work together to enhance the life of blind people all over the globe. Under the leadership of Buna Dahal, this summer BLIND CORPS conducted a 2 week training program in Kathmandu which involved 40 to 50 students. The goal of the projects is to educate and train blind people so that they can excel in their life. Funding provided by ANMA was used to cover travel expenses, accommodations for the trainers and students, training expenses, and equipment for the students.

Health care costs in Nepal are high and not many people can afford quality health care products and services. MediPlus healthcare center is another ANMA project. Their center provides easy and affordable access to quality medical services to the people. ANMA provided funds to the center to buy emergency beds with bed side locker and IV Stand as well as to buy minor operation tables and wall mounted watches.

ANMA believes that working together we can serve the community better and provide more opportunities to our community members. Being a regional organization, one of our goals is to work together with other organizations, community leaders and individuals in the mid-west region and beyond. Organizing joint convention has been one of the most important activities that ANMA is involved each year. The 9th convention that we are planning to organize jointly with Nepalese Association in Southeast America (NASEA) is hosted by South Carolina Association of Nepalese (SCAN). This year's convention also happens to be the 32nd ANMA convention. These conventions provide opportunities for resident Nepalese and friends of Nepal to mingle, get to know each other, enjoy the various cultural/social/sporting activities, discuss important issues faced by citizens here in the US as well in Nepal. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in this community effort, especially members of different committees, member of South Carolina Association of Nepalese (SCAN) and Chair-person Dr. Ramchandra Baral.

As a president of ANMA, I personally, thank you all very much for your immeasurable support and participation and hope that it continues in the future. Working together we can definitely spread the message of peace, cooperation and democracy in our community and beyond.

Message from Convention Chairperson



Ram C. Baral, Ph.D.

Chair, 9th Annual NAsEA/ANMA Joint Convention 2013
Spartanburg, South Carolina, USA, <http://jointconvention.org/>

Dear Friends,
Namaste with warm love and regards!!!

On behalf of the NAsEA/ANMA Convention Committee and all the committees for the convention, it is my great pleasure to welcome you all. We are very excited to have this convention of Nepalese Diaspora for so many reasons. In fact, it is a matter of pride for the 'South Carolina Association of Nepalese (SCAN)' to host and welcome participants to the 9th NAsEA/ANMA Joint Convention at the world class Hotel 'Marriott' in Greenville/Spartanburg, SC, from August 30 to September 1, 2013.

I would like to give special thanks to the SCAN family - President Manish Shakya and his executive team members. They have done marvelous job tenaciously and efficiently. Let me also express my sincere thanks to NAsEA President Sanjeeb Sapkota and his executive team members. Likewise, my appreciation and thanks to ANMA President Gopendra Bhattarai and his executive team. I admire their full cooperation and advice. My sincere thanks to so many local and out of state volunteers who has worked so hard to make this convention an experience and a success.

We have many interesting activities in this convention including sessions on many important issues, platforms to provide up to date information pertinent to our Nepalese Diaspora. Our programs include: Welcome Session, Health and Wellness Session, Literary Session, Musical Concert, Cultural Programs, Immigration Laws, NRN Session, Nepal forum, Sports, Children Session, Youth Session, Women Session, Essay Competition, Blood Drive, Social Service Session, Welfare Session, Dharma Session, Janajati Session, different Nepalese Organizations Sessions, General Meetings, NAsEA Executive Committee Election, and others.

South Carolina being the venue is the first in the history of NAsEA/ANMA conventions. The scope of the convention is not limited within the NAsEA and the ANMA regions but includes interests of all concerned with Nepal and Nepalese heritage. Thus, our goal is to make the convention better than ever with participants from across the USA and abroad, and discussions on wide ranging issues of concerns.

For your enjoyment, we are happy to provide four Marriott style breakfast coupons per day per room included in the registration package. The breakfast coupons are transferable to your family and friends. Our regal dining hall is very cozy, classy and relaxing. Hotel rooms are highly luxurious and the conference room is large enough to entertain 800 plus members in plenary sessions, cultural programs and musical concerts. We also have a numbers of smaller conference rooms to accommodate accordingly. Thus, we can provide more quality-based concurrent sessions.

The theme of this year's joint convention is 'Promoting Nepalese Culture in the USA.' In this convention, we are signing historic Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for our joint conventions between NAsEA and ANMA along with SCAN as a legacy to the future of the very 'theme.' Thus, NAsEA and ANMA and local organizations can and will work together forever.

We expect to welcome 500 plus attendees from across the USA, Nepal and other countries. In our cultural programs and musical concerts, we are bringing forth our hidden Nepalese talents within the USA, and many famous and renowned artists from Nepal.

Once again, I welcome you all in South Carolina, the American Capital of flowers. You will enjoy the southern hospitality, southern soul food, smiling faces, flora, fauna, beaches, perennially clement weather, and lots of early American history. Let me assure you many good memories and experiences in this Nepalese convention.

Thank you for your gracious attention!

Message from SCAN President

Namaste,

On behalf of Nepalese community in South Carolina I would like to welcome you all to the 9th NASEA/ANMA Joint Convention 2013 being held at Greenville/Spartanburg South Carolina.

Hosting this great convention at our state was a great challenge for our relatively small Nepali community. After many deliberation and homework we summon up the courage to undertake this responsibility and dived into it. I would like to thank South Carolina Association of Nepalese Executive team, prominent members and its entire members for great support they have provided during our year long adventure.

I hope our guest will appreciate our beautiful small city setting, great venue, pleasant climate and southern hospitality.

Various convention committees worked hard on programs/forums to appease wide range of interests among Nepalese diaspora, from sport to literature, from immigration to youth programs. My foremost gratitude goes to 150 plus committee members who have been working nonstop for almost a year on various aspects of convention. My gratitude goes to all volunteers without whom the convention would not be success.

I would also like to thank NASEA board members for choosing us to host 2013 convention. Many thanks to local/state organizations around our state who gave us full support in our quest to host convention.

SCAN family is very delighted for the opportunity to host this historic event for our organization. I hope your visit is very comfortable and memorable. Thank you all for giving us opportunity to serve you.

Thank you,



Manish Shakya

President

South Carolina Association of Nepalese [SCAN]



*South Carolina Association of Nepalese (SCAN) Family
welcomes everyone to the NASEA ANMA Joint Convention in
Greenville/ Spartanburg, South Carolina
Aug 30 – Sep 1, 2013*

Consulate of Nepal in USA San Diego, California, USA

I am pleased to learn that the NASEA /ANMA Joint Convention 2013 is going to be held from Aug 30, -Sep 1st, 2013 in Greenville/Spartanburg, South Carolina, USA. I appreciate and commend the efforts made by Joint Convention for bringing in South Carolina and making excellent arrangements. NASEA/ANMA publishing a souvenir will encompass the recent updates, activities, articles and address more issue on Nepali Diaspora, which can make significant positive changes in National Economy with the help of business opportunity between USA and Nepal and Promoting Nepalese Culture in United State of America.

It is an encouraging fact to know that one of the biggest numbers of Nepali diaspora is residing in Northern America. We have to preserve our cultural values, traditions as well as trade and investment opportunity for the sake of our motherland. We all have common goal to expand our social-cultural value, network to bring and organize Nepalese Diaspora where we can commit together promoting Nepalese identity and image abroad. Joint Business ventures, professional development and networking with collective investment will provide a sustainable income source for future. The Large number of Nepalese is going for foreign employment and new opportunity. Among them, many will return home with knowledge and skills of business, industry and tourism etc. that will ensure sustainable projects of national development to build prosperous Nepal.

I wish the NASEA /ANMA Joint Convention 2013 a great success with its slogans Promoting Nepalese Culture in the USA

Rishi P. Dhakal

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Cultural Program Schedule

September 1st, 2013

(8:00 PM – 11:00 PM)

MCs: Mrs. Rama Singh and Mr. Dinesh DC

Coordinator: Kailash M. Kayastha

SN	Category	Performers	City, State	Title
1	Dance	Shardula Joshi Manisha Prasain Innu Thapa Bandana Adhikari	The Colony, TX	Ganeshaya
2	Fashion	Various	Various	Fashion Show
3	Dance	Nyaika Khadka Samira Koirala Jessica Koirala Anuja Koirala	High Point, NC	Nepali Mixed
4	Dance	Suhani Dhungel Dipashana Aryal Sampada Acharya Sami Ghimire	Cary/Morrisville, NC	Maitighar
5	Dance	Lochanitara Shakya	Baltimore, MD	Kumari Dance
6	Song	Suvu Singh	Chantilly, VA	Pheri Tyo Din
7	Dance	Rujula Shrestha Sanjeena Shrestha	Marietta, GA	Wo Daicha – Newari
8	Dance	Ozashwee Ghimire Manashwee Ghimire	Leesburg, GA	Mai Ramri Huna K Garu Bhandeu
9	Dance	Swechha Ghimere Arya Regmi Unnati Kayastha	W. Des Moines, IA	Nanchu Nanchu Lagyo Malai
10	Song	Basanta Khadka	High Point, NC	Nepali Gazal
11	Dance	Yagya Man Shakya	Baltimore, ND	Bajra Pani - Traditional
12	Dance	Ayushma Sharma	Morrisville, NC	Aaja Barahate Patuke Le
13	Dance	Shanti Rajlawat	Cary, NC	Let's Rock Mayalu
14	Song	Kailash Kayastha Unnati Kayastha	W. Des Moines, IA	Mohani Lagla Hai
15	Dance	Shristi Gupta	Greer, SC	Hariya Chura
16	Dance	Shestruma Parajuli	Columbia, SC	Himal Lai Dhakyo Kanchha
17	Song	Yogendra Gautam	Morrisville, NC	Sun Pani Le Charka Mayalu
18	Poem	Govinda Giri Prerana	Manassas, VA	कविता - फर्किहाल्लु देश
19	G. Dance	Shardula Joshi Manisha Prasain Innu Thapa Bandana Adhikari	The Colony, TX	Classical Dance
20	Song	Biswa Kiran Bishal Bharati	High point, NC	Barsha Ma Din
21	Dance	Diva KC Dipti Chettri Nanu Thapaliya Muskan Khadka Sujata chettri Susan Dhakal	High point, NC	Tunga Ra Dampu Bajaundai
22	Song	Deependra Bist	Cary, NC	Doteli Deuda
23	Dance	Rapana Shrestha Sangita Dongol Aruna Shrestha	Atlanta, GA	Sir Swaan Yah Heku – Newari
24	Dance	Yagya Man Shakya	Baltimore, MD	Lakhe Dance (लाखे नाँच)

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Bala and Tracy Pant

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Bimal and Srijana Nepal

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Choodamani and Sarita Khanal

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Dhana and Sunita Timilsina

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Dipendra and Jyotshna Thapa

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Dr. Ram Chandra and Kusum Baral

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Dr. Dharmendra and Sharada Dhakal

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Dr. Lila and Dr. Uma Karki

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Dr. Narayan and Nirmala Rajbhandari

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Dr. Prahlad and Bindu Pant

A Brief Overview of South Carolina Association of Nepalese (SCAN)

- Manish Shakya

In the early 2000s, the number of Nepali families residing in South Carolina was only a handful. In the following years, a modest growth was observed and the need to remain connected and maintain fellowship became apparent. This resulted in 2002 in an organization named South Carolina Association of Nepalese (SCAN) being conceived. There are presently approximately 110 adults in the Nepali community in the state spread across different regions. While still small in comparison to the number in many other US states, the increase reflects a growth in opportunities resulting from a significant development in recent years in the industrial, engineering and academic segments in the state and steady growth of Nepali population in the United States.

While everyone in the small Nepali community in the state remains connected and reachable via phone and emails, SCAN started to receive greater structure as an organization in the latter half of the past decade. It is now registered as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. A Facebook page was created in 2011 to cater to the emergence of social media, and in 2012, the present logo of SCAN was settled upon.

Similar to many state and regional community organizations in the US, the main objective of SCAN is "to promote fellowship among and representation of people of Nepalese origin" in South Carolina and surroundings. We seek to help newcomers get settled and put them in touch with other Nepalese in the area, helping them feel at "home". Our annual events continue to foster friendship and togetherness in our communities across the state. There are a number of professionals and entrepreneurs who live in the Upstate - the cities of Greenville/Spartanburg and there is a sizeable student population in Clemson University and other smaller colleges. In the Midlands, the state capital city Columbia has a relatively larger population made up of professionals and students attending University of South Carolina as well as other nearby colleges. The community is the smallest in the coastal cities of Charleston and Myrtle Beach. We are proud to also have integrated the Nepali community from Asheville and vicinity in neighboring North Carolina due to proximity to Upstate SC.

The statewide community seeks to get-together twice annually: to celebrate Nepali New Year and Dashain during which everyone in the state, from near and far, come to meet and exchange greetings, have fun participating in friendly activities and enjoy delicious food. Newcomers and longtime residents both appreciate such opportunities to meet and get to know each other. In addition, local families in different parts of the state gather more frequently, such as during various Nepali festivals and help keep our culture alive in the community and their own families. While the community is always happy to get-together for fun and entertainment, we also come together for comfort and support during times of loss.

SCAN has engaged in various community-serving activities since its inception in addition to the New Year and Dashain events under leadership of past presidents Mr. Pramod Pokharel, Mr. Dipendra Lamichhane, Mr. Ganesh Basnet. In March 2012, under the present leadership and with coordination from NASEA Community Services Committee, we hosted a successful blood

drive event in Spartanburg – our first. A total of 33 people donated blood, and the event was covered by a local TV news channel. That success encouraged us to seek to continue this effort every year going forward and inspired us to hold one during the 2013 Joint Convention.

In 2012, an opportunity was observed to become the host for the NASEA/ANMA Joint Convention in the year 2013. While many questioned how a small Nepalese community would manage to host a gathering as large as the Joint Convention, some quickly saw the value in getting involved in this highly visible event and the benefit it would bring to the SCAN organization. After doing some research and reaching out to experts from the past conventions, the present SCAN executive committee, with encouragement from Dr. Ram Chandra Baral, prepared and presented its bid to have the 2013 convention hosted in the Greenville/Spartanburg area and easily won over other bidders despite its known limitations in available resources and people. Proximity to major cities in the southeast, strong industrial presence, family friendly attractions in the area, as well as support extended by neighboring states all played in SCAN's favor.

For the past 14 months, members of the SCAN community have been working tirelessly for hundreds of hours outside of their day jobs to make this convention a grand success. With nothing to be gained but togetherness, satisfaction and learning, we hope that the passion, dedication and hard work that all of us have put to make this event successful sets the bar high for future host organizations and is remembered by many for years to come.

With the imminent future growth in the community, we are confident SCAN will be taken to new heights, continuing to realize the strength in bonding together and helping each other do better in personal, professional and public life in the United States.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to host this convention. We are excited to have you join us during this historic event and look forward to welcoming you to our beautiful state again in the near future.



SCAN Executive Committee 2010-2013

President: Manish Shakya

Vice President: Satish Gupta, Piyush Upadhyay

General Secretary: Manish Das

Members: Bijay Thapa, Prakash Gupta, Manoj Lama and Naresh Osti

<https://www.facebook.com/SCAN.NEPALESE>



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Dr. Tilak Shrestha

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Gobinda and Laxmi Shrestha

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Hari and Rebecca Dhungana

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Hari Bhandari

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Janak and Parbati Baral

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Kumar KC and Sabita Kunwar

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Lekh & Srijana Sharma

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Madhav Mainali and Sita Mainali

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Dr. Ramesh and Dr. Sudha Amatya

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Dr. Samanta and Rashmi Thapa

रक्तदान गर्न नेपालीबीच अझै जाँगर आवश्यक

अर्जुनप्रसाद मैनाली

नेपालीमाझ रक्तदानको इतिहास र यस क्षेत्रमा हामीले लिन नसकेको गति बढो विपरित अवस्थामा छन् । यो बुझिनसक्नुको भएको छ । यही कुराले मलाई बेला-बेला झड्क्याइरहन्छ, लौ न किन यति सुस्त भनेर !

नेपालका पहिलो रक्तदाता दयावीरसिंह कंसाकारले वि. सं. २००० सालमा रक्तदान गरेका थिए । ७० वर्ष पुगेको छ । नेपाल रेडक्रस स्थापना वि. सं. २०२० सालमा भएको हो । ५० वर्ष पुगेको छ । अमेरिकामा धेरै नेपाली समेटेको एएनएको स्थापना सन् १९८३ मा भएको हो । ३० वर्ष भएको छ । एसोसिएसन अफ नेप्लिज इन मिड-वेस्ट अमेरिका (आन्मा) को स्थापना अझ अघि सन् १९८२ मा भएको हो । त्यसअघि अमेरिका नेपाल सोसाइटी (एएनएस) को स्थापना सन् १९६७ मै भएको हो । रक्तदान उसबेलै मुलुकमा सुरु भयो । रेडक्रस नेपालमा सक्रिय भएको आधा शताब्दी भयो । अमेरिका आएका नेपाली एकजुट हुन थालेको ४६ वर्ष भयो । रक्तदान जस्तो सामाजिक कामले किन गति लिन सकेन ?

नेपाल र अमेरिका छाडेर विश्वका धेरै देशमा नेपाली पुगेका छन् । यो बेला नेपालीमाझ विश्वभर अभियान किन चलाउने भन्ने यक्ष प्रश्न खडा हुन सक्छ । रगत शरीरका कुनै अवयव दानको पहिलो कदम हो । रगतका बराबरीमा कपाल, मृगौला आदि जीवन रहँदै दान गर्न सकिन्छ । त्यसपछि मात्र शरीरका अंग दानको पालो आउँछ ।

रगत, कपाल, मृगौला आदि दानपछि अन्य अवयव दानको चेतनाले बाटो लिन्छ । हामीमाझ रक्तदानमै अझ जोश चाहिएको छ । अहिले विश्वका एक दर्जनभन्दा बढी देशमा नेपालीहरू रक्तदान गर्दै आएका छन् । अमेरिकामा सयौंको संख्यामा नेपाली संस्थाहरू छन् । तर रक्तदानमा जुटेका संस्था भने एक सयभन्दा कम छन् । विकासको चुली भएका देशमा आएर हाम्रो सक्रियता कम छ ।

एउटा गम्भीर विषय उठान गरौं । अमेरिकामा जाति वा मूलका आधारमा स्वास्थ्य समस्या वर्गीकरण गर्न सकिन्छ । यसका केही उदाहरणहरू छन् । वंशाणुगत रूपमा देखिएको एक विकारका कारण काला जातिमा अल्जाइमर बढी हुने गरेको अनुसन्धानले देखाएको छ । गत अप्रिलमा 'जर्नल अफ दी अमेरिकन मेडिकल एसोसिएसन' मा प्रकाशित एउटा अनुसन्धान भन्छ, 'एबिसिए७' नामक वंशाणु विकारका कारण अल्जाइमर्स रोगको प्रभाव बढी भएको हो ।

उता चिनीरोग वा डायबीटिजबाट हामी बढी प्रभावित भएको पाइएको छ । न्युयोर्कमा दुई वर्षअघि गरिएको एक अनुसन्धानअनुसार न्युयोर्कका बासिन्दा वा एशियाका अरु देशका मानिसभन्दा भारत, नेपाल,

पाकिस्तान, भूटान, बंगलादेशबाट आएका मानिस बढी प्रभावित भएको पाइएको छ । नेपाल, भूटान, भारत, बंगलादेश, पाकिस्तान, जस्ता दक्षिण एशियाली मूलका वयस्कमध्ये १४ प्रतिशतमा डायबीटिज देखिएको छ । यहि उमेरका न्युयोर्कका स्थानियमध्ये ९ प्रतिशत र अरु एशियालीमध्ये ७ प्रतिशतलाई मात्र डायबीटिज छ । न्युयोर्कको स्वास्थ्य विभागको अनुसन्धानमा भनिएको छ, 'स्वस्थ खाना खाने र सामान्य तौलका भए पनि दक्षिण एशियालीमा डायबीटिज देखिएकाले नियमित परीक्षण गर्न जरुरी भएको छ ।'

भन्न खोजेको के भने भिन्न जाति र मूलका मानिस भिन्न खालका स्वास्थ्य समस्याहरू छन् । रोग उस्तै भए पनि फरक जातिमा फरक प्रतिशतमा यसको असर देखिन्छ । यो जानलाई मध्यनजर राख्न जरुरी छ । दुई वर्षअघि 'जेम्स की' ले 'युएसए टुडे' मा लेखेका थिए, 'अमेरिका रंगिन (गोराबाहेक) समुदायमा अंगदानको चेतना जरुरी छ ।' जेम्स आफू सेनाका पादरी रहेछन् । उनले एउटा घटनालाई जोड्दै थप लेखेका छन्, 'दुर्भाग्यवश जसलाई अंग प्रत्यारोपण आवश्यक हुन्छ, त्यसमा पनि अल्पसंख्यकहरूमा, ले निकै कठिनाई महसुस गर्ने गरेका छन् । अमेरिका प्रत्येक दिन २० जना मानिस अंग प्रत्यारोपण कुरेकै अवस्थामा मर्छन् । यो विषयले गोराका तुलनामा अल्पसंख्यकमा बढी महत्व राख्छ, जो मृगौला, मुटु, फोक्सो, पेट र कलेजोका रोगबाट अंग नै काम नगर्ने हुने गरेको छ ।'

अमेरिकाको स्वास्थ्य मन्त्रालय (डिपार्टमेन्ट अफ हेल्थ एन्ड ह्युमन सर्भिस) का गोराका तुलनामा अनुसार काला, एसियन र प्यासिफिक क्षेत्रका मानिसमा मृगौला रोग बढी हुने गरेको छ । अल्पसंख्यकले आफ्नै समुदायको सदस्यको रक्षाका लागि पर्याप्त मात्रामा अंगदान गर्दैनन् । अमेरिकाको कूल जनसंख्यामा करिब १३ प्रतिशत काला जातिका छन् । काला जातिका कूल बासिन्दामध्ये १२ प्रतिशतमात्र अंगदानी छन् । मृगौलादान कसैले गर्ला न बाँचिएला भनेर कुनै कूल अमेरिकीमध्ये एक चौथाई काला जातिका छन् । यसको अर्थ त्यहाँ पनि चेतनाको कमी छ ।

अब अमेरिकामा करिब ७० हजार नेपाली-भाषी भूटानी हुनुभएको छ । आधिकारिक संख्या कम देखिए पनि २ लाख नेपाली होलान् । यो करिब तीन लाख अमेरिकाका लागि अल्पसंख्यक हो । यो अल्पसंख्यकमा रक्तदानबाट सुरु भएको चेतना अंगदानमा कहिले पुग्ला ? अहिलेलाई चिन्ताको विषय यही छ ।

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Dr. Bhaskar Kuwar and Neelam Karki 'Niharika

DHARMA - Hinduism

-Tilak B. Shrestha, Ph.D

The understanding and practice of Dharma is fundamental to the inner strength. The inner strength is the prerequisite for the 'progress', in any sense of the word. It is a matter of open discussions, not belief.

Dharma is the study of own nature \ inner reflection and the discipline of inner improvement. The Dharmic discipline is about: a. the search for truth (Satya), and b. ways of spiritual growth (Yoga). Spiritual growth is transcending - a. first from own ego, and then b. to the universal reality. Dharma is not religion. Dharma is mainly internal and personal issue. However, it also does express in external social level as - c. issues of social harmony, and d. cultures.

A. Search for truth (Satya): Truth can be realized in intellectual, experiential and existential levels. Let us take an example of water. You may study physical and chemical properties of water, drink it to satiate thirst, and realize that our body is the expression mostly of water. Intellectual understanding is one dimension of understanding. As a chemist we may consider ourselves much ahead of a mule. However, drinking, not understanding the properties of water, will satiate the thirst. As far as satiation is concerned there is no fundamental difference between Einstein and a mule. In another level, we are the product and part of the existence. Most of our body is made of water. Instead of 'I' realizing 'water', 'water' is expressing itself as 'I.' Even the consciousness, thoughts and feelings are the creations of the existence. When we (created) try to understand the creator (existence) we are actually going background. The framework of understanding needs changing from that of 'created' to 'creator.' The deeper answer to the question 'Who am I?' comes from the existence. Both the thinking process and the experience are subsets of existence. Thus existence cannot be conceptualized or experienced in the ego level. Any human concept of it is only a reflection. Thus it neither can be directly discussed nor taught. Any speculation is precisely that – speculation. However, one definition of spirituality is the “process” of realizing it. Thus, the inquiry about the truth comes from three centers of our being:

1. Intellectual – through thinking process,
2. Experiential – through direct experience, and
3. Existential – transcending to universal reality.

Truth can be sought as per its intrinsic nature: objective, subjective and revelatory. Objective understanding is independent of individuals. Subjective understanding depends upon individuals, thus differences of opinions can exist together. Both objective and subjective understandings may be clubbed together as empirical. Empirical understanding is within human faculty. There are issues beyond empirical or human faculty, which can be dealt only as beliefs or revelations. Usually such understandings are related with the concept of God and may be called 'theistic.' We may note that objective understanding is more rigorous and valid than subjective. However, subjective understanding covers larger areas of human faculty than objective. Similarly, empirical understanding is more rigorous and valid than theistic, but has lesser scope. Subjective issues can be discussed and understood. Revelation is valid only for the prophet. For others it is only a belief. Thus, the inquiry about the truth may be discussed within the framework of the following three paradigms:

1. Scientific - only objective methods,
2. Empirical - objective and subjective methods, within human faculty only, and
3. Theistic - methods include faith and revelations.

B. Ways of spiritual growth (Yoga\Tao\Zen\Discipline\Way): Spiritual growth is transcending - a. first from individual ego, and then b. to the universal reality. The way or practice of 'Yoga' begins with developing healthy body and mind, then ethics and internal values. The disciplines of yoga or spiritual journeys ultimately lead to the salvation or liberation. There are many ways of spiritual journey and are broadly grouped into four.

1. Way of love and devotion (Bhakti)
2. Way of selfless duty (Karma)
3. Way of meditation or self-realization (Raj)
4. Way of knowledge (Gnan)

C. Issues of social harmony: The insights, not social or legal rules, towards the social harmony. Justice is the first step toward harmony. The relationships are of two kinds - between individuals within a society, and between different societies. The secular issues like 'democracy', 'socialism', and 'human rights' are also part of it.

D. Cultural mosaic: The world mosaic of human spiritual heritages. It's evolution in different environmental, historical and philosophical backgrounds. The mutual appreciation between peoples of different spiritual backgrounds and their colorful festivals.

Definitions:

Sanatana: To wonder about ultimate truth and to strive for spiritual progress is a universal phenomenon inherent in humanity. It is not limited by geography, history or culture. Sanatana is such universal principles and ways of spiritual growth, studied and practiced around the world.

Dharma: Dharma is the study of own nature and the discipline of self improvement. It is a set of beliefs and practices towards seeking truth and spirituality. Dharmas are subsets of the 'Sanatana.' There are many Dharmas: e.g. Vaishnav, Shaiva, Bauddha, Sikh, Jain, Tantra, Agnosticism \ Atheism (Lokalaya\Charvak) etc. A Dharma differs from another merely by emphases in different methods or by cultural backgrounds. Usually Dharmas have lot in common and their practices overlap. They are like different branches of science (Sanatana) pursuing different techniques and coming from different lineages. Dharmas are not hostile against others. Rather differences are recognized and appreciated - 'Sarva Dharma sambhava.' A Dharma may claim to be easy or more rigorous or explains more, but will not condemn others. It is like going to college where each student chooses different but overlapping sets of courses to study. Physicists do not condemn Mathematicians. Matter of fact, you cannot learn Physics without Mathematics. However, it is not about blind acceptance of any doctrines. Each doctrine has to pass the test of - a. the critical examination and b. the time. Dharmas are not rigid. Many masters come along redefine, interpret and innovate Dharmas to address new settings.

Dharma should not be confused with non-Dharmic issues like Varna \ Jati or Rituals or Mythology. Varna is not Jati, though confused as such. Varnas are due to the social evolution as per the human motivations. It is not by lineage. Jatis are natural associations of people by cultural affinity, security in number, job specializations and extended families. Varieties of rituals are mostly cultural expressions. Mythology gives a sense of belonging and ethics. But they are not the Dharmic disciplines.

Practice of Yoga:

Students of 'yoga' begin with the practice of the following first set of discipline. These are the basics of physical and mental well being to be practiced by every body. After these basics, the students of different 'yoga' will specialize in different, though not exclusive, practices.

1. Basic physical exercise (Hatha yoga) for good health.

2. Basic ethics:

A. Virtues (Dharma) to uphold are honesty, purity, goodwill, mercy, patience, forbearance, generosity and asceticism.

B. Self control (Yama) from violence (Ahimsa - non-violence) both physical and mental, falsehood, stealing, coveting, lust, anger, greed, infatuation and pride.

C. Proper conduct (Niyama) of cleanliness, contentment, continence, austerity, study and devotion.

D. Behavior\attitude (Byabahaar) of respect for parents, teachers and others; cheerfulness, positive thinking and enthusiasm.

3. Breathing exercise (Pranayam) for better oxygen input, cool thinking and concentration.

4. Meditation (Dhyana):

Part A. Concentration: For longer attention span and critical thinking. Students are encouraged to develop discipline in thinking thoroughly, understand own biases, be objective and view an issue from different perspectives.

Part B. Non-attachment. Relaxation, not concentration: The discipline is for controlling ego related problems like passion, anger, greed, infatuation, pride etc. It leads to freer mind. It is done by isolating such human emotions and making objective analysis. For example, if a person gets a slap then it will invoke anger. The anger can be studied objectively as how the mind is designed or works, by dissociated 'anger' from the 'slap.' The slap remains a fact. The duration of anger depends upon the emotional fuel created by the ego. Then it will slowly fade away. Now the slap can be studied without encumbered by the anger.

Part C. Transcendental: It is to remain only a witness to the passing thoughts and stay unattached. The thought process is like waves on the sea of consciousness. Consciousness is not thoughts. Going beyond thinking is required to go beyond.

Four Dharmas: Four representative Dharmas among many are briefly illustrated.

1. **Materialism \ Agnosticism \ Epicureanism \ Lokaya Dharma:** For any statements there has to be evidence. A belief without facts is merely a superstition. Truth must be recognizable either logically or experientially. Others, if exists, are neither recognizable nor can be part of any conclusion. For example, if one claims God exists, then it is his\her responsibility to prove so. Others are not obliged to accept some one's unsubstantiated belief. A person may claim to be a prophet and sole spokesman of God. For others the claim is only hear say. They are not obliged to believe if unless God tells them so. God, if exists, should be perfectly capable of telling every body, and a single point prophet is absolutely unnecessary. Scholars may objectively study the so called divine statements coming from any prophet claimants, and use them if relevant and useful. However, sane people must reject the contention that, "I am the prophet, therefore obey my commands" as nothing more than attempts at swindling. Careful analysis, not blind belief, is the way.

In this Dharma, objective facts, logical thinking and scientific methods are emphasized. The non-theistic Bhakti and Gnan yogas are emphasized as the disciplines. The goal of individuals is to maximize experiential happiness of all life forms. For example, if one needs to die to save many more, then the person will die happily that overall happiness is maximized. His sacrifice is not contingent upon the reward by God later.

2. **Dwaita \ Dual \ Vaishnav Dharma:** Divinity created the universe including us as an expression of love. Creator and creation makes two – dual \ Dwaita. Symbolically: Shankha \ Conch - Declaration of divinity's existence. Chakra \ discus - Perpetual creation. Gadda \ Mace – Protection. Padma \ Lotus – Love. The motherly relation (umbilical cord) between creator and creation is depicted as the Brahma sprouting from the navel of Narayan \ Vishnu. God approaches in understandable form to creation, for humans in human form. Creation \ we can approach God through love. The form can be any which way tickle our fancy: between parent and children, friends, lovers and others. The love of God to the multitude of creation is also symbolically depicted in human form as Krishna's love for 64,000 Gopis.

There is God in every grain of sand and every blade of grass. We might find it convenient to approach in a temple than in a bar. It is a matter of human need and weakness. Otherwise, God is every where and in every being. The world we know of is the Sansar and our experience is directly related to our Karma. Divinity teaches us how to live in and ultimately be free from the Sansar. Each and every body will experience the fruits of own Karma and eventually will achieve salvation. We all came from and ultimately return to the divinity. In this Dharma believing in divinity, Bhakti and Karma yogas are emphasized.

3. **Advaita \ Non-dual \ Shaiva Dharma:** All of the existence (Brahman) is one. There is no duality between creator and creation (non-dual \ Advaita). An individual or ego or Jiva is a subset of the Brahman. What a Jiva experience is his\her personal Sansar, which is also a subset of the Brahman. Here the spiritual goal is to transcend from Sansar to Brahman, from a subset to the whole.

Understanding is an intellectual exercise and also a part of Brahman. Thus we cannot understand the Brahman, because a part cannot get hold of the whole. However, we can understand two aspect of the Brahman – Consciousness and Nature. They are 'Shiva' and 'Parvati' in person and Lingam and Yoni in abstraction. Lingam and Yoni are not to be confused with anatomy or its parody. Otherwise, in Sanskrit male and female anatomies are 'Shisna' and 'Bhaga.' They are also symbolically given as upturned and down turned triangles. The combination of these two makes the hexagon, a symbol of the esoteric knowledge.

Though Brahman cannot be understood it can be approached through meditation. Meditation is transcending from the ego. It is existential, not intellectual. Shiva is called the God of destruction. Let us be clear that medicine of head ache cares, not gives, head ache. That is Shiva does not destroy but teaches about death. We are not annihilated at the death, but remain a part of the Brahman. Every religion claims to know what happens after death, but requires belief in their doctrine. Shiva gives a technique to find it in your own. Devi Parvati asks her beloved Shiva, "What is your reality? What is this wonder filled universe? What is this life beyond form pervading forms? How may we enter it fully, above space and time, names and descriptions?" This is a conceptual question, waiting for similar answer. Instead, Shiva teaches the technique: "Breath in, stop, breath out, stop. Be aware at all the four stages." Then he further teaches 112 meditation techniques. Any of the spiritual systems around the world is some combination of the 112 techniques described.

http://www.meditationiseasy.com/mCorner/techniques/Vigyan_bhairav_tantra/Meditation_techniques_index.htm

Shiva's teachings are spread all over, including in Veda, Tibetan Bon, South Indian Agam and Kirati Mundum. The chief deity of Bon Dharma in Tibetan language is 'Shiwa Okar', whose abode is Kailash Mountain by Man Sarobar lake. He is none other than 'Shiva Omkar' in Sanskrit. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shenlha_Okar

Followers of Shiva emphasizes in meditation (Yogis), and followers of Parvati on nature (Jhakris \ Scientists). The main Shiva temple in Nepal is of 'Shree Pashupati Nath' or the 'Lord of life.' In Sanskrit 'Pashu' is life, including animals. In Shaiva Dharma the way of knowledge and the way of meditation are emphasized, along with technique of non-attachment 'Bairagya' as a method of controlling the ego. Our mind is designed to view and seek happiness outside. Our wants have no limit and we spend our life after the illusion of the happiness. This is how the Sansar operates. Instead the source of happiness remains our own core being. Bairagya is a process by which a yogi directs the attention from outside to within. Ultimately it is to transcend from ego to existence – Brahman.

4. Bauddha Dharma \ Empiricism: It uses methods within human faculty only. Every religion claims to know about God, but requires believing it. Buddha Dharma strictly uses empirical techniques only and is independent of any belief system. It uses only scientific and experiential techniques to search for truth and thus is more rigorous. Buddhism is a major break through within the long traditions of Hinduism. That is Buddha achieved Nirvana without depending on supra-humanity or divinity. The central message of Buddha is that an individual can achieve salvation by working within the human faculty.

All of Buddha's teachings and analyses are within rational self-examination of the world including one's mind. Buddhism is incorrectly labeled atheistic. It does not deal with unknown 'divinity', remains silent on the issue, but does not deny it. To deny it also means knowing. Its doctrines comes from self analysis, not from the authority of scriptures 'Veda.' Thus, it is 'Nastik.' We cannot see or conclude the existence of soul within self analysis – 'Anahat.' Buddhism is not political or social grouping or ethnicity. It is an inner discipline, similar to mathematics or music, to be practiced by any body regardless of their religious or other backgrounds. No body is born Musician or Buddhist. To be one a person has to know and practice - Music or Buddhism. Bauddha Dharma emphasizes on the way of knowledge and the way of meditation. It is similar to Shaiva Dharma. Both Shiva and Buddha are popularly depicted in meditation. They are not saying let them meditate and let us pray to them. Rather they are demonstrating that we also should meditate. The difference is that Shaiva Dharma (Adwaita) uses belief in 'Brahman – the ultimate reality' as a priori. Where as Bauddha Dharma does not use any belief including Brahman as a priori, rather have 'Bodhi \ Brahman' to be realized on own effort.

Bauddha Dharma discipline neither anchors on nor needs prayers to divinity, including Buddha. However, Buddhist will make statues \ paintings of Buddha and pray as a matter of respect to the enlightened teacher. Vaishnav Dharma (Dwaita) sees every living or object in the universe \ nature as the manifestation of the personal God – Narayan. Thus, they do exalt Buddha as the incarnation of Narayan himself. Buddha Dharma also has evolved mythology using cross Dharmic motifs to convey ethical messages.

In essence:

Satyam eva jayate

Truth always triumphs

Vashundhaiva kutumbakam

World is a family

Sarve api sukhino santu

Let all be happy

Yeto Dharma stato jaya

Victory is where virtue is

Ekam Sat Vipraha Bahudha Vadanti

Truth is one, sages call differently

Sarva Dharma sambhava

Many paths to the summit

Ishwor sarba hridaya tisthati

Divinity in every heart

Sat, Chit, Ananda

Divinity is truth, conscious and bliss

Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram

Truth, auspicious and beautiful

Om mani padme hum

Goodness comes out of goodness

Om shantih, shantih, shantihi

Divine peace, peace, and peace

*Wishing Nepalese Association in Southeast America (NASeA)
and*

Association of Nepalese in Midwest America (ANMA)

*a Grand Success for the Joint Convention in
Greenville/ Spartanburg, South Carolina*

Aug 30 – Sep 1, 2013

Krishna & Sunita Shrestha

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Hari Om & Meena Pradhan

अन्धोको ईछ्या



अनन्तगोपाल रिसाल

अन्धो आफू मन्दिर बाट फर्कीदैथैं साझँ,
मुहारमा चमकथ्यो, हेरिरहें आज !
'सिर्दी उक्ली, सबैले झैं भगवानलाई ढोगें !'
'दर्शन भो ?' जिस्काएर साथीहरुले सोधे-

दाँज्दिन म कोहि सँग, आफ्नो दर्द ब्यथा
दुखी-गरीबीका मीठा, भिन्दाभिन्दै कथा,
धनी भन्नु के नै र छ? मन-खुसियाली
लोभ, मोह हट्यो, सुखी-बन, रीस फाली!

नाति थियो डोर्याउने, सानो झोला पोको
अक्षेता र अबीर यो लगाउने धोको,
त्यत्तिकैमा हूलबाट, पोको खोस्यो तानी
'बाबू किन लग्यो तेल्ले? मैले बिराँए कि?'

लट्टी मेरो सहारा छ, माग्नु पर्दैन तै,
ईष्ट-मित्र, ईश्वर छन्, चल्छ बिश्वाश मै-
आँखा भाका अन्धा भन्दा, यस्तै निको, जाति
आफ्नै नीति नियम छन्, आफ्नै दिउँसो राती!

हैन बाबा मान्छे हैन, बाँदर हो त्यो- देख्छु,
सँस्कारको, धर्म, नीति जान्दैन त्यो पशु
लुटेर वा पिटेर नै, मन्दिरमा बस्छ-
सज्जन र भक्तलाई रातदिन डर छ!



मन्दिर छ घर मेरो, मन मन्दिरमा
शरीर यो रहिरहोस्, ईश भजन मा
कालै कालो बर्तमान, ज्योति भविष्यमा
क्षमा गरी देउ प्रभु, गलित अन्जानमा



मेरा हात देख्छन् सीप देख्न पाउँन्न म
कस्ले लान्छ पैसा तिरि हेर्न पाउँन्न म
ईश्वरले दिएको छ कला कालीगढी
एकदिन त दर्शन देला, मन्छु यसैगरी

लाटो कानो सुन्दिन कयै, बोल्ने बुद्धी छैन
शरीर यो चित्तबृत्ती म त्यो हुँदै हैन!
सुर्य चन्द्र छैन त्यहाँ बिजुली न आगो
प्राण बाटै माला बुन्छु सानो छ यो धागो
तिम्रो कृपा भयो केही अ-संभव हैन
आत्मा बनी भित्र बस म कयै माग्ने छैन

जात मेरो छैन कुनै आफ्नो धर्म गर्छु
कर्म-जन्म दिएको छ, जतन त्यो गर्छु
जती कर्म गरू यहाँ तिम्रै लागि पूगोस्
बाँकी जती समय छ सेवा निम्ती बितोस्

'लोड सेडिङ' भन्छ देश, गयो आधा दिन
झन् झन् तल भासिँदैछ गरीबीको ऋण
फलफूल, पानी, दुध, पुजारीले मागे -
'भगवानले त देख्नु भो नि', सबै ईक्षा
भागे !



'मेरो मन बिचारले सँसारलाई हेर्छु'
'कस्ता होलान् ईश्वर ती आफैं चित्र केर्छु '
आँखा खोस्यो, बुद्धि दियो, निधारमा लेख्यो,
मैले देख्न सकिन त, के भो? उसले देख्यो !

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Raj Food Inc
(Mr Swetal and Mr Rakesh Patel)

Tips on Preventative Medicine for Adults

I would like to thank members of the Publication Committee of the 9th NASEA- ANMA Joint convention for asking me to submit an article for Yeti View Point. As a Family Physician, I am honored to share my two cents on how to stay healthy and what type of preventative measures we need to take to stay healthy physically, psychosocially and functionally. Consequences of poor health could lead to heart disease, high cholesterol, diabetes, sleeping difficulty, depression, low self-esteem, stigma, abstinence from school or work, and much more.



**Prabhat K. Phokhrel ,
MS, MD, Ph.D**

Primary care physicians are the best trained physicians when it comes to preventative health. Therefore, make sure to have a primary care physician (Internist or Family Physician) and see him or her at least once a year for wellness check, which may include monitoring your blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol, body weight (Body Mass Index or BMI) and etc. In next few paragraphs I am going to shed some light on preventative medicines that has shown to keep people healthy.

Make sure your adult vaccinations are up to date. Your primary care physician (PCP) should be able to help you find out if your recommended vaccinations are up to date or not. Influenza vaccination is recommended every year during flu season. If you are traveling to other countries surf <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list> web site to find out what type of vaccinations are recommended for the country you are traveling to. See your PCP at least 6 to 12 months before your travel date. Some vaccinations need two to three shots with 1 or more months in between. If your PCP does not do travel vaccinations, speak with the health department or an infectious disease specialist.

Know your family's medical history (exact diagnosis and age at the time it was diagnosed, of course, if possible). This will help your PCP to make certain decision to help you and keep healthy. Know at least your parents and siblings medical history, if there is any. If you are a female and 40 years of age or older, you may need mammogram. There has been some controversy on when to start mammogram, to keep it simple, I said 40 years. You may need even earlier than this, if your family member has been diagnosed with breast cancer. You may try Breast Cancer Risk Assessment tool to assess your risk for breast cancer at <http://www.cancer.gov/bcrisktool/>. This is just a tool. You must talk to physician to make an informed decision.

Female 21 years and older are recommended having Pap smear. See your OB/GYN or PCP regarding prevention of cervical cancer. If you are 50 years or older, male or female, you MUST talk to your PCP about colon cancer screening. There is more than one way to screen for colon cancer, although colonoscopy is the most popular one, it is not necessarily superior to other methods, when it comes to saving life. If you smoke and / or consume alcohol in excess, then you should stop. Nicotine and alcohol are addictive substances and most people need professional help to quit. Your PCP will help you identify resources in your community to help with nicotine and alcohol addictions. If you EVER smoked on a regular basis in the past, quit many years ago and you are 65 years or older, you may need abdominal ultrasound (for some reason this recommendation is for men only, but I do for female as well).

If you are a male 40 years of age or older and want to be screened for prostate cancer speak to your PCP. Routine screening for prostate is not recommended, but if you are at high risk for prostate cancer it may be beneficial to screen for prostate cancer. Unnecessary PSA screening may actually hurt you. Make an informed and shared decision with your PCP. You must have an explicit understanding of the risk / benefit rational and it is your preference. All adult male and female must be screened for depression, if your PCP has resources to treat people with depression.

Regular exercise (at least 30 minutes most days of the week, minimum 3 to 4 days) combined with a healthy diet is a must to stay fit. When I say "fit", I mean physically, psychosocially and functionally. Staying healthy may save you money and prevent bankruptcy due to medical reason (#1 cause of bankruptcy in USA is medical reason). In June 2013, American Medical Association (AMA) has categorized overweight and obesity as a disease. It is not just a physical appearance anymore. One in three Americans has over-weight problem. It is an epidemic. We are responsible to prevent obesity for future generations. Take charge of your health. Recommended intensity and length of exercise varies from person to person and depends upon baseline physical fitness and medical conditions. If you are planning to start an exercise program consult your health care provider. Visit Wellness and Medical Booth to know more on how to lose weight. When to stop preventative medicine is another topic.

Take care of your health and also someone's health that you love. I preach and practice exercise, diet and healthy life style. Exercise is part of our family. All four of us, exercise 5 to 6 days a week, at least 60 minutes each time. My daughter and I have run marathon. My wife, son, daughter and myself have run half marathon as a group. And we run 10 miles race every year. It has strengthened our family bonds and we all feel very sound physically and mentally. All these recommendations are to increase your understanding of staying healthy, but make sure you discuss about your health with your physician. Visit Wellness and Medical Booth and take advantage of free blood pressure, BMI, finger stick blood sugar checks. We can educate more on how to lose weight and weight management principles and other things.

नेपाली भाषासाहित्यमा अनेसासको भुमिका

—गीता खत्री

भाषा, साहित्य, कला र संस्कृति हरेक जातिको जातीय गौरव हो । आफ्नो जातीय पहिचान हो । देश बाहिर विभिन्न देशहरूमा छरिएर रहेका नेपालीहरूले पनि नेपाली भाषासाहित्य, कला र संस्कृतिको विकासको लागि विभिन्न क्षेत्रबाट योगदान पुऱ्याएका छन् । हाम्रो भाषा जीवन्त रहेमा मात्र हामी बाँच्दछौं र हाम्रो अस्तित्व रहिरहन्छ । आज विश्वमा जति पनि नेपालीहरू छरिएर रहेका छन्, उनीहरूले आफ्नो भाषासाहित्यलाई जोगाउन अथक परिश्रम गरिनै रहेका छन् । नेपाली भाषासाहित्यलाई नेपाली डायस्पोरामा जीवन्त राख्ने उद्देश्यले नै दुई दशकभन्दा अगाडि अमेरिकाको वाशिङ्गटन डी.सी.मा अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय नेपाली साहित्य समाजको स्थापना भएको थियो । स्थापनाकालदेखि आजसम्म यसले नेपाली वाङ्मय र नेपाली भाषासाहित्यको श्रीवृद्धिमा निरन्तर समर्पित रहिआएको छ । त्यसैले अहिले यो संस्था ३९ देशहरूमा ७५ ओटा च्याप्टर खोल्न सफल भईसहेको छ । अनेसास नेपाली डायस्पोरामा भाषासाहित्यको लागि स्थापना भएको सबैभन्दा पहिलो संस्था हो ।

हालसम्म अनेसासमा ५७५ जना आजीवन सदस्यहरू भई सक्नु भएको छ । यसमध्येमा २१ जना बोर्ड अफ ट्रस्टीहरू हुनुहुन्छ । आजीवन सदस्य बन्नको लागि अमेरिकी डलर १०० तिर्नु पर्छ भने बोर्ड अफ ट्रस्टी बन्नको लागि अमेरिकी डलर १००० तिर्नु पर्दछ । अनेसासको विभिन्न उद्देश्यहरू मध्ये पुस्तक प्रकाशन गर्नु र नवउदीयमान लेखकहरूलाई प्रोत्साहन गर्नु पनि हो । त्यसैले यो संस्थाले विदेशमा बसेर लेख्ने सबै तहका लेखकहरूको पुस्तक प्रकाशन गर्दछ । दुई दशकको अवधिमा यसले करिब १०० जति पुस्तकहरू प्रकाशन गरिसकेको छ भने हजारौं साहित्य सर्जकहरू जन्माई सकेको छ । यो विकासक्रमलाई प्रमाणको रूपमा हेर्ने प्रयास गर्नु हुन्छ भने न्यूयोर्कको साहित्यिक माहोललाई सन् २००४ देखि नियाल्नु होस, स्पष्ट हुनेछ । सन् २००४ मा पहिलो कृति बिमोचन मेरो सृजना “सिर्जनायात्रामा गीता” भएको थियो । अहिले कृति बिमोचन हरेक हप्ता जस्तो हुन्छ । हरेक कार्यक्रमहरूमा एकैछिन भएपनि साहित्यिक माहोल दिइन्छ । अनेसासको सक्रिय भूमिकाले गर्दा नै समाजभित्र सिर्जनाका लहरहरू बढिरहेको मैले ठानेकीछु ।

अनेसासले प्रत्येक दुई वर्षमा मोतिजयन्तीका अवसरमा अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय नेपाली साहित्य सम्मेलनको आयोजना गर्दैआएको छ । अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय नेपाली साहित्य सम्मेलन सन् २००९ मा न्यूयोर्कमा आयोजना गरिएको थियो भने सन् २०११ मा बेलायतको राजधानी लण्डनमा गरिएको थियो । तेस्रो सम्मेलन संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिकाको कोलोराडो राज्यमा हुदैँछ ।

सन् २०१३ आदिकवि भानुभक्तको २०० औं जन्मजयन्ती हो । त्यसैले अनेसास केन्द्रीय कार्यसमितिले सन् २०१३ लाई वर्षभरि नै “भानु

दुई शताब्धिको वर्ष” मनाउने निर्णय गर्‍यो । फलस्वरूप सबै च्याप्टरहरूले विश्वभरि आ—आफ्नो तर्फबाट आदिकवि भानुभक्तको जन्मजयन्ती मनाउँदै छन् । यसै अवसरमा आदिकवि को सालिक वाशिङ्गटन एरिया वा न्यूयोर्क क्षेत्रमा स्थापना गर्नको लागि सालिक नेपालमा तयार भइरहेको छ । आगामी डिसेम्बर महिनासम्ममा भानुभक्तको सालिकको अनावरण गरिने लक्ष्य छ ।

अनेसासले बर्तमान समयलाई मात्रै विचार नगरी भविष्यमा कसरी नेपाली भाषासाहित्यलाई डायस्पोरामा जन्मीएका बालबालिकहरूमा सार्न सकिन्छ भन्ने विषयलाई गम्भिरभएर विचार गरिएको छ । डायस्पोरामा नेपाली भाषाको पाठशाला खोलेर केटाकेटीहरूलाई नेपाली सिकाउने कामको थालनी मैले न्यूयोर्कबाट सन् २००६ तिरै शुरू गरेको थिएँ तर त्यसलाई विभिन्न कारणहरूले गर्दा निरन्तरता दिन नसकेर बन्द गरियो । तर अनेसास फ्लोरिडा च्याप्टरले वेष्ट पालम बीचमा यो पाठशाला कार्यक्रमलाई सफलतापूर्वक संचालन गरिरहेको छ । अन्य राज्यहरूमा पनि पाठशालाको बिस्तार हुने क्रम बढिरहेको छ । यस्ता कार्यक्रमहरूलाई अगाडि बढाउन सकियो भने नेपाली भाषासाहित्य विस्तारै नेपाली डायस्पोरामा सप्रिने छ अनि मौलाउने छ ।

अनेसासले नेपाली भाषा साहित्यको विकास र विस्तारका लागि विभिन्न अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय संघसंस्थाहरूसँग मिलेर सहकार्य गर्न शुरू गरिसकेको छ । ए.एन.एले आयोजना गर्ने कार्यक्रममा धेरै पहिलेदेखि अनेसासले साहित्यको कार्यक्रम आयोजना गर्दै आएको थियो । सन् २००६ मा न्यूयोर्कमा भएको ए.एन.ए सम्मेलनमा साहित्य महोत्सवको संयोजक अनेसासको तर्फबाट म नै थिएँ । एन.आर.एन, र आन्मानासिया आदि संस्थाले पनि अनेसासलाई नेपाली भाषा साहित्य सम्बन्धी कार्यक्रमको जिम्मा दिदै आएको छ । सन् २०११ मा आन्मानासियासँग ममेराण्डम अफ अण्डरस्ट्याण्डिङ पत्रमा तीन ओटै संस्थाका अध्यक्षहरूले हस्ताक्षर गरेर नेपाली भाषासाहित्यको विकास र विस्तारमा अनेसासलाई जिम्मा दिनु भयो । यस्ता सहकार्यहरूले नेपालीहरूबीचको सम्बन्ध अझ बलियो हुने र नेपाली भाषासाहित्यको विकासमा समय अनुसारको परिवर्तन, परिर्माण र विकास गर्नमा निक्कै मद्दत हुने मैले ठानेकोछु ।

आन्मानासियाको नवौं संयुक्त सम्मेलन आगामी सेप्टेम्बर महिनामा साउथ क्यारोलाइनाको ग्रीनभिलमा आयोजना हुदैँछ । यस्लाई सफल र भव्य बनाउन सबै नेपाली दाजुभाई दिदीबहिनीहरू एकजुट भइसक्नु भएको छ । त्यसमा अनेसासले पनि आवश्यक सहयोग निशंकोच भएर गर्नेछ । यो सम्मेलन भव्य र आगामी पुस्ताले सम्झन योग्य होस भनि अग्रिम शुभकामना र सम्मेलनको सफलताको कामना गर्न चाहन्छु । यसका सबै पदाधिकारीहरू श्रद्धाका पात्र हुनुहुन्छ ।

जलश्रोत: विकासको प्रमुख आधार

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हामीमा इच्छाशक्ति र इमान्दारिता भए कुनै पनि काम गर्न गाह्रो छैन । सय वर्षको नेपालको जलविद्युतको इतिहासलाई केलाउँदा अघिल्लो ८० वर्षमा जति विजुली उत्पादन गर्थ्यौं पछिल्लो २० वर्षमा त्यसको झण्डै दोब्बर उत्पादन गर्न सफल भयौं । सन् १९९१ को फर्पिङ जलविद्युत आयोजनादेखि १९९१ सम्म २३९ मेगावाट मात्रै जलविद्युत निर्माण भएको थियो भने त्यसपछिको २० वर्षमा नेपाल विद्युत प्राधिकरणले २३८ मेगावाट र निजी क्षेत्रले १७० मेगावाट निर्माण गरेको र निजीकरण गरिएको १७ मेगावाट गरी ४२५ मेगावाट थपिएर झण्डै सातसय मेगावाटको पुगेको छ । सय वर्षमा पछिल्लो २० वर्ष उत्साहपूर्ण जस्तो देखिए यो गर्व गर्न लायक भने होइन । किनभने पहिलाको आवश्यकता र विकास गति नै फरक थियो ।

हाम्रो नेतृत्व नीति निर्माता साच्चै इमान्दार हुने हो भने अबको २० वर्षमा निकै ठूलो फड्को मारेको हुनेछौं । प्रत्येक नेपालीको घरमा बल्लि बलेको हुने छ । हिटरमा खाना पाकेको हुनेछ । वासिङ मेशिनले लुगा धोएको हुनेछ । विद्युतीय गाडि चढेर हामी स्वच्छ वातावरणमा गन्तव्य पुगेको हुनेछौं । हाम्रो उद्योग धन्दा पूर्ण क्षमतामा सञ्चालन भएका हुनेछन् । कृषि प्रशोधन तथा कृषिको बिद्युतिकरणबाट नेपाली किसान समृद्ध हुनेछन् । नेपालीका छोराछोरीले खाडीको कष्टपूर्ण काम छाडेर आफैँ मुलुकमा राम्रो वेतनसहित काम गरेको हुनेछन् ।

यो प्रत्येक नेपालीका आशा र सपना भए पनि असंभव भने छैन । मुख्य कुरा मैले भने हाम्रो नेतृत्वको इमान्दारिता, हाम्रो नीति नियममा सुधारको मात्र जरुरी छ । हामीलाई लगानीको दुःख होइन । सबैले यो देश बनाउनुपर्छ । यहाँका अपार संभावना बोकेको जलविद्युतको दोहन गर्नुपर्छ । यसबाट राष्ट्र र जनता लाभान्वित गर्ने भनेर लाग्यो भने २० वर्षमा हामी अल्प विकसित सुचीमा रहेर विकासको लागि अरुको हाथ थाल्नुपर्ने अवस्था पक्कै हुँदैन । हामीले चीन र भारतलाई समृद्धिमा पछि पार्न सक्छौं । यो कुरामा म विश्वस्त छु । किनभने हामीले दक्षिण कोरियादेखि थुप्रै मुलुकले छोटै समयमा गरेको प्रगतिलाई पनि नियाल्दै आएका छौं । नेपालको राष्ट्रिय हितमा कसैले अवरोध गर्न खोज्छ भने त्यसको पनि डटेर प्रतिवाद गर्ने क्षमता हाम्रो नेतृत्वमा हुनुपर्छ । तर विडम्बना त्यो स्थिति अहिले देखिन्छ । अहिलेकै सोच, नीति र नेतृत्वले निरन्तरता पाएमा २० वर्षमा जलविद्युतमार्फत संवृद्धितर्फ लम्कने कुरा संभव छैन । किनभने हाम्रो नेतृत्व त्यसको लागि तयार नै देखिदैन । त्यसको लागि दिर्घकालिन रणनीतिक सोच पनि निर्माण हुन सकेको छैन । भाषण मात्र गरेर विकास हुँदैन । हुने भए अहिले हामी किन लोडसेडिङको अध्यारोमा दिन बिताउनु पर्थ्यो ? वर्तमान सोच र नीतिले निरन्तरता पाएमा त्यो समय टाढा छैन, जतिखेर हप्तामा केहि घण्टा बिजुली आउने छ, अहिले धारामा पानी आए जस्तै ।

नेपालको दुर्गतिको कारण मुलुकको संक्रमण, अस्थिर राजनीति, भ्रष्टाचार मात्रै होइन विद्युतको अभाव पनि हो । विजुली भएन भनेर सुकिला मुकिलाले धेरै गुनासो सुनिन्छ । टुकी बालेर रात काटनेहरूको

गुनासो हामीले कहिल्यै सुन्दैनौं । किनभने विद्युतमा पहुँच नै नभएका उनीहरू आवाजविहिन छन् । राजधानीमा रहेको सरकार विद्युतको पहुँच नभएका ग्रामीण क्षेत्रका तीन चौथाई जनताको आवाज सुन्न सक्ने अवस्थामै छैन । सबै जनतालाई, सबै उद्योगधन्दालाई विजुली दिने हो भने, यातायातलाई बिद्युतिकरण गर्ने हो भने तत्कालै पाँच हजार मेगावाट विद्युतको जरुरी छ । जनताको आवश्यकता पूरा गर्नु पूर्व नै हाम्रो राजनैतिक नेतृत्व विजुली भारतलाई बेचेर देश धनी बनाउने गलत सपना बाँढ्दै हिडेको छ ।

अहिले विप्रेषणले देशको अर्थतन्त्र भरथेग गरेको अवस्था छ । उपाय नभएकोले मात्र हामीले वैदेशिक रोजगारीलाई अपनाउनु परेको छ । तर यो मुलुकको लागि ठूलो संक्रामक रोग जस्तै हो । पैसा कमाउन विदेश जाँदा धेरैको पारिवारिक विखण्डन हुनेदेखि बालबच्चाको विचल्ली हुने, बिग्रने, रोगहरू भित्रिने, समाजमा मर्दापर्दा चाहिने पुरुष नहुने । अर्कोतर्फ बाहिर नेपाली युवा युवतीले घाइते भएर पनि उपचार नपाउने, बलात्कार हुने, अनिच्छित गर्भधारण गर्ने, अकालमा मृत्यु हुने जस्ता घटना धेरै देखिएका छन् । मुलुकमै पर्याप्त उद्योगधन्दाको विकास, आयआर्जनको राम्रो अवसर, सुरक्षाको सुनिश्चिता भएको भए पक्कै नेपाली यसरी बाहिर जान्थेनन् । दुख पाउथेनन् । पर्याप्त विद्युत भएको भए उद्योग व्यवसायको राम्रो विकास भइसक्थ्यो । रोजगारीको प्रशस्त अवसर हुन्थ्यो । नेपाली पयालन हुन बन्द हुन्थ्यो । चर्को मूल्यको पेट्रोलियम खपत कम हुँदा मुलुकको व्यापार घाटा, शोधनान्तर घाटा कम हुन्थ्यो । सोधनान्तर बचत बढेपछि देश धनी हुन्थ्यो । वातावरण प्रदूषण कम हुन्थ्यो । एउटा गरिवले टुकी बाल्ने कुरा भन्दा पनि औद्योगिकीकरण र रोजगारी सिर्जना नहुँदा राष्ट्रलाई परेको भार बढी चिन्ताको विषय बनेको छ ।

वार्षिक तीनसय अर्बको व्यापार घाटामा झण्डै एकसय अर्ब भन्दा बढी पेट्रोलियम पदार्थको आयातले नै ओगटेको छ । जबकी हामी जलविद्युतमा धनी मुलुक भन्छौं । एक थोपा पेट्रोल डिजल उत्पादन नहुने मुलुक आयातित पेट्रोल डिजल निर्भर हुनु बुद्धिमानी होइन । जलस्रोतको संभावना नभएको भए त्यसको विकल्प थिएन । तर जलस्रोतमा विश्वकै धनी मध्येको मुलुक भन्ने अनि भएको ट्रिबिस, रोपवे फालेर कर्मचारी सञ्चयकोबाट ऋण थप्दै इन्धन आयात गर्ने सोचले कसरी हामी जलविद्युत उपयोगमा सफल हुन्छ र ? यातायात विद्युतीयकरण गर्ने भन्दा डाँडा काँडा पहरा फोडेर सडक खन्ने कुराले भुस्खलन, पहिरो जस्ता समस्या थपिँदै गएको छ । विद्युतको समूचित उपयोग भनेको यातायातमा विद्युतीयकरण गरी पेट्रोलियम पदार्थको विस्थापन पनि हो । पूर्ण क्षमतामा उद्योग धन्दाको सञ्चालन र कृषि प्रशोधन हो । नेपालका प्रायः हरेक समस्याको समाधान जलश्रोत तथा उर्जाको विकासमा छ ।

नेपालमा मनग्य विद्युत उत्पादन गर्ने र त्यसबाट लोडसेडिङ भोग्दै आएका तथा विद्युतमा पहुँच नपुगेकालाई मात्र विद्युत उपलब्ध गर्ने होइन, प्रशस्त रोजगारी सिर्जना हुनेगरी औद्योगिकीकरण गर्ने र

यातायातलाई विद्युतिकरण गर्ने हो । विद्युतबाट चल्ने थुप्रै साधनहरू अहिले विकास भइसकेको छ । विश्वका थुप्रै शहरमा प्रदुषण कम गर्न ढुवां फाल्ने साधनलाई निशेष नै गरिएको छ । नेपालमा पनि त्यसलाई अपनाउनु पर्छ । यातायातको विद्युतिकरणमा जोड दिन सके पेट्रोलियम पदार्थको बढ्दो मूल्य, ढुवानीको अनिश्चितता र गुणस्तरमा हुने समस्याबाट केही राहत मिल्छ । नेपालमै अहिले निजी क्षेत्रबाट झण्डै साँढे पाँचसय मेगावाट विद्युत डिजल जेनेरेटरबाट उत्पादन गर्ने गरेको छ भनिन्छ । यति महङ्गो डिजलबाट विद्युत उत्पादन गरेर व्यवसाय चलाउँदा त्यसले एकातिर उत्पादित वस्तुको लागत वृद्धि भएको छ । अर्कोतर्फ राष्ट्रको व्यापार घाटा बढेको छ । पानीबाट निकालिएको विद्युत प्रति युनिट १० रुपियाँ हाराहारी पर्छ । डिजलको ४२ रुपियाँसम्म पर्छ । यस्तो अवस्थामा विद्युतीय रेल, बस, रोपवे, केवलकार, अरु यातायातका साधन चाँडै प्रयोगमा ल्याउन सकिने भन्ने हाम्रो स्थिति के होला ?

अहिले निर्माणको लागि अगाडि बढाउन र चाँडै विद्युत उत्पादन गर्न सकिने संभावना बोकेका अरुण तेस्रो (९०० मेगावाट), तामाकोशी तेस्रो (६५० मेगावाट), माथिल्लो मस्याङ्दी (६०० मेगावाट) र माथिल्लो कर्णाली (९०० मेगावाट) गरी चारवटा आयोजना निर्माण प्रारम्भ गर्ने अवस्थामा छन । यी आयोजनाको चाँडै निर्माण सम्पन्न गरी विद्युत उत्पादन गर्ने र मुलुकको समस्या चाँडै समाधान गर्ने भन्दा पहिले मुलुकको नेतृत्व भने विजुली निर्यात गर्ने कुरा गर्दै आएको छ । अहिले नै विद्युत निकै अपुग छ र नेपालले दुई अंके आर्थिक बृद्धि दर हासिल गर्न आगामि १० वर्ष भित्र १० हजार मेगावाट आवश्यक हुन्छ । तर अहिले एउटा ठूलो आयोजना भनेको तामाकोशी जम्मा ४५६ मेगावाटको छ । अरुण तेस्रो, तामाकोशी तेस्रो, माथिल्लो मस्याङ्दी, माथिल्लो कर्णालीको तीन हजार मेगावाट विद्युत अहिले भारतलाई सस्तोमा दिने सम्झौता गर्ने अनि लोडसेडिङ बढ्न थालेपछि फेरी उसैसँग महङ्गोमा पैठारी गर्ने । यो अदुरदर्शी र गलत सोचले हामीलाई फेरी उही गरिवी, लोडसेडिङ, घाटा, अशान्तिमा पुर्‍याउँछ । प्रति युनिट दुई रुपियाँमा भारतलाई विजुली बचेर उहीसँग फेरी १० रुपियाँमा किन्दा हाम्रो हित र सम्मान कहाँ हुन्छ ?

सय वर्षको इतिहासमा पनि हाम्रो नेता, नीतिनिर्माताले बिगतको अनुभवबाट सिकेर अगाडि बढ्ने काम भएन । विद्युत निर्यात गर्न हुँदैन भनेको होइन । बढी भएको, बचेउब्रेको निकासी गर्ने हो । यसमा विजुली दिन्न भनेर भारतलाई चिड्याउनु पनि जरुरी छैन । भारतमा बिजुली निकै धेरै अपुग हुनाले नेपालले निकासी गर्ने विजुलीले उसलाई खासै अर्थ पनि राख्दैन । राम्रो आयोजनाहरू चाँडै निर्माण गरौं । पहिला आन्तरिक माग पूर्ति गरौं । त्यस्तो माग पूर्ति एउटा गरिव किसानको घरमा वित्ति बाल्ने हिसावले मात्रै होइन । दाउरामा खाना पकाउँदा उत्पन्न प्रदुषणले हाम्रा आमा दिदी बहिनी भाउजुको स्वास्थ्यमा प्रतिकुल प्रभाव परेको छ । हाम्रो अमूल्य वन जंगल मासिदै गएको छ । दाउरा खोज्न समय खर्चदा ग्रामीण क्षेत्रका ४६ लाख घर परिवार दैनिक २ घण्टा आयमूलक काम गर्नबाट बन्चित भएका छन । त्यसले उनीहरूको जीवनस्तर सुधार ल्याउन सकिने छैन । जनताको स्वास्थ्यमा सुधार हुँदा त्यसको बहुआयामिक फाइदा हुन्छ भन्ने कुराको दूरगामी सोचपूर्ण अवधारणा (भिजन) उच्च नेतृत्वमा हुनुपर्‍यो । त्यस्तो सोच भएको नेतृत्व नै आउन ।

अरुण तेस्रोले प्रतियुनिट डेढ रुपियाँमा, माथिल्लो कर्णालीले एक रुपियाँमा विजुली निकासी गरेर मुलुकलाई फाइदा हुँदैन । देशलाई फाइदा हुन्छ भन्ने यी आयोजनाबाट नेपाल राज्य आफैले विजुली किन्ने, आन्तरिक रुपमा अधिकतम खपत गरेर बाँकी रहेको विजुली राज्य आफैले प्रति युनिट आठ दश रुपियाँमा भारतलाई दिने । यसो गर्न सकियो भन्ने मात्र त्यसको अर्थ हुन्छ । हाम्रो प्राकृतिक साधनको सही मूल्य प्राप्त हुन्छ । राज्य सुदृढ हुन्छ । सस्तोमा विजुली पाएपछि जनता पनि खुशी हुन्छन । उद्योगबाट उत्पादित सामानको मूल्य पनि कम हुन्छ । त्यसरी उत्पादित वस्तु निर्यात गर्न पनि सहज हुन्छ । कुनै एउटा लगानीकर्तालाई मात्र फाइदा हुने गरेर सिन्कीको मूल्यमा विजुली निर्यात गर्ने कुरा स्वीकार गर्नुहुँदैन । त्यही मूल्यमा राज्यले नै विजुली किनोस । उसले नै जनताको आवश्यकता सुपथ दरमा आपूर्ति गर्नुपर्छ भन्ने मेरो धारणा हो । यसको अर्थ विदेशी लगानीको विरोध होइन । उनीहरूलाई चाहिने प्रतिफल हो, त्यसमा आपत्ति भएन । उसले जति मूल्यमा भारतलाई बिक्री गर्ने तयारी गरेको छ, त्यति मै नेपालले किन्दा के फरक पर्‍यो ? अवधारणा के भन्ने, लगानिकर्ताले निकासी गर्न खोजेको दरमा नेपालले किन्ने, मुलुकमा सुपथ दरमा लोडसेडिङबाट राहत दिलाउने, बिद्युतमा पहुँच नपुगेका नेपालीको घर आँगन पनि उज्यालो पार्ने, दाउराले गर्ने आन्तरिक प्रदुषणबाट गृहणिलाई मुक्ति दिलाउने, प्रचुर मात्रामा औद्योगिकरण गर्ने, यातायातलाई बिद्युतिकरण गरेर पेट्रोलियम पदार्थ बिस्थापन गर्ने, कृषि प्रशोधन गरेर कृषि उपजमा मूल्य अभिवृद्धि गर्ने, कृषि क्षेत्रलाई बिद्युतिकरण गरेर उत्पादकत्व र उत्पादन बृद्धि गर्ने अनि बचेउब्रेको बिजुली अन्तराष्ट्रिय प्रतिस्पर्धात्मक दरमा निकासी गरेर राज्यले मुनाफा कमाउने हो ।

जलविद्युतमा लगानीको समस्या होइन, बौद्धिकताको हो । धेरै आयोजनामा नेपाली आफैले लगानी जुटाउन सक्ने भइसकेका छन । प्राथमिकता पनि राज्यले नेपालीलाई नै दिनुपर्छ । नेपालीले नसक्ने ठूला आयोजना भए विदेशी लगानी पनि आकर्षित गर्नुपर्छ । नेपालले आधिकारिक श्रोतबाट वार्षिक रु ३०० अर्ब बिप्रेषण प्राप्त गर्छ भनिन्छ र यसको १० प्रतिशत मात्र जलविद्युतमा लगाउन सकियो भन्ने पनि १ वर्षको रकमले तीनसय मेगावाट विद्युत उत्पादन गर्न सकिन्छ । अझ एक तिहाई पूँजी र दुई तिहाइ ऋणको व्यवस्था गर्दा ९०० मेगावाट निर्माण गर्न यथेष्ट हुन्छ । यस हिसाबले बिप्रेषणको १० प्रतिशत रकम जलबिद्युतमा लगानि गरिएमा १० वर्षमा ९ हजार मेगावाट निर्माण गर्न सकिन्छ ।

हामीमा बचत गर्ने बानीको पनि विकास भएको छ । त्यसलाई पनि सदुपयोग गर्न सकिन्छ । गैरआवासीय नेपालीदेखि नेपालीको निजी क्षेत्र, वित्तीय संघसंस्थाहरू, स्थानीय जनताबाट लगानी आउँछ । त्यसको लागि राज्यले त्रुटीपूर्ण नीतिमा सुधार गर्नुपर्‍यो । विद्युत उत्पादन गरेर निर्यात गर्ने नीति नै ठिक छैन ।

त्यस्तै बुढीगण्डकी आयोजनालाई जलविद्युत आयोजनाको रुपमा अगाडि बढाइएको छ । तर यो बहुउद्देश्यीय आयोजना हो जसबाट विद्युत मात्रै होइन हिउँदमा समेत चितवन, नवलपरासी, बारासम्म दुई लाख हेक्टर जमिनमा सिँचाई गर्न पुग्छ र त्यो क्षेत्रमा न्यूनतम ३ बाली

उत्पादन गर्न सम्भव भएर किसान सम्पन्न बन्छन् । जलयातायात, पर्यटन, माछापालनमा पनि यो जस्तो जलाशययुक्त आयोजनाबाट नेपाल लाभान्वित हुन सक्छ । उदाहरणको लागि सडकबाट ढुवानी गर्दा भन्दा जलमार्गबाट ढुवानी गर्दा इन्धन खर्चमा ८५ प्रतिशत बचत हुने हुनाले बुढी गण्डकी आयोजना निर्माण उपरान्त बेनीघाट देखि त्रिवेणी सम्म स्ट्रिमर चलाउने अवधारणा राखेर पानीबाट बहुआयामिक लाभ लिने सोच राखिनुपर्छ, जुन कुरा माथिल्लो कर्णाली देखि सप्त कोशी उच्च बांध सम्म लागू हुन्छ ।

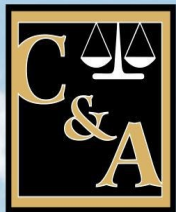
जलविद्युतमा चिनियाँ चासो भनेको एउटा लगानी तथा ठेक्कापट्टाबाट लाभ लिने मात्र हो । यहाँबाट विजुली लगेर उपयोग गर्न चीनको लागि आर्थिक हिसाबले युक्तिसंगत हुन्छ । भारतको स्वार्थ भनेको सस्तो विजुली किन्ने हो कि जस्तो देखिन्छ भने नेपाल भित्र पानी खपत हुने गरेर उपयोग नहोस् भन्ने हो, जुन कुरा धेरै नेपालीले बुझेका वा बुझ्न सकेका छैनन्, कतिपयले बुझेर पनि बुझ्न पचाएकाछन् भने भारतीय संस्थापन बुझाउन चाहँदैन । नेपालको जलस्रोतबाट सिँचाई जस्ता पानी खपत हुने उपयोग नेपालीले नगरुन भन्ने उ चाहन्छ । गंगामा बग्ने पानीमा औसत ४० प्रतिशत योगदान नेपालको छ भने हिउँदमा त्यो योगदान ७० प्रतिशत हुन्छ । नेपालले सिँचाई आदीमा पानी खपत हुने

काममा उपयोग गर्थे भने तल बग्ने परिमाण घट्छ भन्ने आशंका भारतलाई छ । त्यो नहोस् भनेर जलविद्युत विकासको नाममा आयोजनाहरू ओगटेको हो । भारतीयले भारतको आफ्नो स्वार्थको हिसावले गर्ने नै भयो । यसको एउटा उदाहरण माथिल्लो कर्णाली हो । भारतीय कम्पनी जीएमआरले तीनसय मेगावाटको लाईसेन्स लिएर अहिले नौसय बनाउँछु भनेको छ । तर यो चार हजार १८० मेगावाटको जलाशययुक्त आयोजना हो । जसबाट सुर्खेत, दाङ, कैलाली, बर्दिया, बाँके आदि जिल्लाहरूमा समेत सुख्खायाममा सिँचाई गरेर ३-४ बाली भन्दा बढी उत्पादन गर्न सकिन्छ (वर्तमानमा अधिकांश जमिनमा वर्षातमा १ बाली मात्र खेती हुन्छ, सुख्खायाममा सिँचाई नहुने हुनाले) । यसो भनिरहँदा मैले लगानीकर्ताको अथवा आयोजनाको विरोध गरेको होइन । सस्तो मूल्यमा सोझै भारतलाई विजुली दिने पहिलो कुरा नै गलत छ । दास्रो कम क्षमतामा विद्युत उत्पादन गरेपछि त्यसको बहुउद्देश्यीय फाइदा नै नष्ट हुन्छ । यस्तो भन्दा मलाई उग्रराष्ट्रवादी भनिन्छ । भारतले आफ्नो राष्ट्रिय स्वार्थलाई हरेर त्यो कुरा गर्नु स्वाभाविक हो । हामीले पनि पहिला आफ्नो स्वार्थलाई हेर्नुपर्छ, जुन गर्नु उग्रराष्ट्रवादी हुनु होइन । जयाशययुक्त आयोजनाले घाटा भन्दा वर्षातमा हुने बाढी नियन्त्रण गर्न भारतलाई सहयोग पुग्छ । यो कुरामा भारतलाई बुझाउने कुटनैतिक क्षमता हाम्रो नेतृत्वमा छैन ।

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One Foot in Nepal and The Other in US: Raising Kids in This Split

-Dr. Mridu Sharma

I was young once. I strained against the societal expectations and limitations and broke some fibers in the bond between me and my parents. The strain felt hard at times, impossible occasionally. And then I broke loose across the continents to start a life in the US. Most of us did, for one reason or another. That is our story - the first generation of immigrants. We came for education, for better opportunities; came mostly because we could and did. But we all, whether we admit it or not, chose to leave our cultures and bonds behind. We stayed on because we felt at home. We all tried to change our "twang" - where route, laugh, half, calf all took on a different phonetic sounds. We assimilated as best as we could. We learnt to go casual with shorts and t-shirts to picnics and the mall. Most of us bought un-recyclable Christmas trees and celebrated the birth of Jesus with the Hindus. Tried to make sense of football, and somehow even began to celebrate the super bowl with chips and salsa.

But we could never have mashed potatoes without feeling like adding chopped onion, chilies and cilantro. Never could stuff that thanksgiving turkey without a little Tabasco and perhaps curry. Cranberry sauce started tasting more like Lapsee ko achar. Spaghetti sauce would still have some turmeric and cumin in it. And we preferred it that way. The children came. We missed our parents and our extended families; we talked of returning home but never did. Life was too convenient here, even if we had to do our own dishes. The children started preferring to answer questions in English; we started feeling more effective lecturing in English. Lectures started taking over standard communications; English began taking over the mother language. The more American they sounded, the more Nepali we began to feel. And then the dichotomy started.

This is my story. This may not be your story. But I see hints of this in every household. And it makes me feel like a part of a community. I grew up in a very secular household. My mother held a Monday fast ever since I have known her. She would go to 'Pashupati temple' or 'Ganesh Sthan' when she had time. My father refused 'tika' more often than not, and established there was never going to be an untouchable moment in our house. The kitchen was free range, no matter what time of the month it was and who ate in it. We, as children celebrated 'Dashain' for the new clothes and the dakshina, and 'Tihar' for the goodies, the songs and more 'dakshinas.' These still remain my fondest memories. My mother kept a 'teej' fast, but never told my father about it, since he would have made sure she broke that fast. The household ran in harmony, and I had a beautiful childhood.

I married a man who was also not mired in religious tradition, mostly because his mother was not. We both came to the US and felt at home. Then the kids came, and Easter and Christmas as well. We tried to stay true to our secularism and said "we do not celebrate Easter or Christmas." One night before Easter, there was a little note tucked into a bowl set in front of the front door, with some carrots and leaves that said "Dear Easter bunny, here is something for you, in case you come to our house, even if we do not celebrate Easter". Of course the Bunny started leaving candy baskets. Later that became "Easter egg

finds" in a non denominational hiking trail, until the children caught the very matronly Easter bunny hiding the plastic eggs beneath the bushes.

Since Christmas came every year, and the story of baby Jesus was retold each winter, we thought we needed our own stories to tell. Then the little god statues came out, the incense came out and we tried our hands at 'Puja.' But after a while, it just seemed like we were trying too hard. So we ordered Amar Chitra Kathas from Amazon, read about all the Gods, little Buddha and how the Elephant God got his head. And that was that.

What started all this reminiscing? Well, the children are growing up. My first one is leaving for college. And at this phase in this mother's life, she has to take stock. I started second guessing myself. I wondered whether I had done the right thing, partially assimilating and sometimes not. Could I have been more Nepali? Or less? Did I turn more towards my parent's way of thinking when I felt I had no navigational map to follow? Do we all? And if we do, are we creating a split we cannot handle - that overstretches the hamstrings of our families, and leaves each generation strained?

The second generation has own struggles. They grew up with unpronounceable names in the south. They are the walking diversity in their schools and communities. They talk like one of them; walk like one of them yet will never be one on them. Their festivals fall in the middle of the school week. There is always the same 'daal \ bhaat' at home. Parties are always about dressing up in bejeweled clothes that look like costumes. The men sit on one side of the house and the talk always turns to the political crisis in Nepal. The women share a lot of recipes and share children stories. The music is loud; the dancing is not fun for the rhythmically challenged. I have always wondered what the kids talk about when they do - because the second generation is always in the other room and I don't get to hang out with them.

They go home to Nepal and find that their counterparts in Nepal are more westernized than their parents here allow them. That Christmas and Valentines Day are celebrated with as much pomp in the Kathmandu as is Dashain and Buddha Jayanti. That their cousins are showing off more skin than their fathers would ever allow them here.

I think the ages between 14 and 18 has been difficult for us and our second generation children. We are afraid that they will move too far from our culture and they are pulling away from the bonds. Neither will take a moment and recognize that the movement is not too far out of the family bond. We want them to stay close to their Nepaliness, not recognizing that this limits their ability to move freely within a society to find niches in the heterogeneity. They want to make sure they are invested in the society that they are becoming a part of, not just bound by the limits of an ethnic culture.

With time, we should learn to let go and to trust. They will learn to come back and respect. We will find our own selves within each family structure - and hopefully will realize harmony without the constraints of "them and us." Because, in the end, we have taught them who we are and they have shown us who they can be. This relationship will abide the strain of any expecta-

Bright Ideas

-Tilak Shrestha

Dear brothers and sisters, you all might have been wondering, how come we get so many bright ideas. To tell you the truth, it is our family trait. At least this is what our great-grandfather told us, when we were still young children. Those days my great-grandfather was already in his nineties. But he still could walk around, ride ponies and tell us stories. In his young days he also used to get lots of bright ideas. He told us the following story to illustrate this family trait.

One fine morning my great-grandfather was passing through a road minding own business and looking around the beautiful valleys and hills, and the royal palace. The palace was, as palaces come, a very large and well-made building surrounded by a thick and tall wall. There were a number of small side doors in the wall to the palace, which are always locked and guarded. There is of course the large main gate, through which people are admitted to the palace, which is always guarded by at least a hundred well-armed soldiers. The road, upon which my great-grandfather was passing through, skirts around the wall for a short stretch. As he was passing by the stretch, he had the bright idea of robbing the palace. The idea came so spontaneously and strongly that as if he could hear the wall calling him 'Psst come here tonight, psst come here tonight'. And so he went home, brought out and cleaned his coat of mail, and sharpened his Khukri. As the night came along he put on his coat of mail, tied his Khukri in his waist, took a piece of rope and a bag; and marched toward the main gate. On the way he had another bright idea, that instead of frontal assault perhaps he should break in through one of the side doors. So he went ahead and tried his luck with the first side door he came across. Surprisingly the door was not locked. So cautiously he went inside, again surprisingly it was not guarded either. He thought, so far well and good, now what? He thought, perhaps he should take home some thing interesting like the marble statue or the helmets of the guards. Then he had another bright idea that perhaps he should take home a bag of gold or some expensive jewelry. Then to his surprise he saw a beautiful young lady holding a bundle in her hand. She also was utterly surprised to see him. For quite a long moment both of them just stared at each other. Then before she could scream and alert the guards, my great-grandfather grabbed and gagged her. He realized that the palace girl was covered with all kinds of fine jewelry. Matter of fact, you may say she was covered from head to toe with most expensive ornaments. He started to pull out a few of the jewelry from her and pocketed them. Then he had another bright idea, why not carry off the whole of the girl and bother to take out all the ornaments later. So he slung her and her bundle on his shoulder. She started to protest and kick him as best as she could. Then my great-grandfather realized that she was the girl, rather the princess, he saw in the market a few days before. He thought, no wonder she had so much jewelry on her. Gods must be smiling at him that day. He carried her on his shoulder and thought may be that was enough for the day or rather the night. You know my great-grandfather was not a greedy man. Then he saw a beautiful, strong, well groomed and saddled horse nearby. You know, horse is one of the weaknesses of my great-grandfather. He would never let go such a beautiful horse. So he tried to carry the horse on

another shoulder. But because she was still kicking on his another shoulder he could not carry the horse as well. Then he had another bright idea. Why not just drag the horse by the bridle. So he came out of the door with the princess on the shoulder and dragging the horse behind. After a mile of walking or so he had another bright idea. Perhaps, princess was getting pinched by the coat of mail he was wearing. So he put her down and let her walk, but kept holding her hand so that she would not escape. She did not protest too much and let him pull her along. Then he had another bright idea, 'Why not ride the horse?' So he rode the horse with the princess in front and her bundle behind. That is how the famous quotation 'Don't drag the horse when you can ride' began. The horse was pretty strong and easily carried both of them and her bundle.

They rode along the way and pretty soon the sun started to rise in the east. My great-grandfather decided to take a look at what he got. The horse was very beautiful and of good breed. He opened the bundle to see what is inside. The bundle carried mostly her cloths and belongings. Luckily he also found a nice hood of his size, which he wore over his coat of mail. He was also lucky to find another hood of her size, which he put on her to hide the jewelry she was wearing. Then he took the gag off her. She did not scream but looked very angry. He also noticed a nice dimple on her. It was a beautiful and deep dimple. The dimple was on a beautiful face with bright eyes. And there was the beautiful body with narrow waist to go along with the beautiful dimple. Luckily he also found some food and drinks in the bundle. They quietly sat down and ate the breakfast. Of course the horse remained standing and ate grass. Then they rode again. Luckily there was enough food to make lunch also. Almost by the sunset they arrived at the house of my great-grandfather. He cooked some food for supper. But she refused to eat. He thought perhaps she did not like his cooking. He was a good cook but was no way comparable to the chefs of the royal palace. Then he had another bright idea, 'Why not let her cook?' That way not only she gets to eat whatever she wants to, but he also would get to eat tasty food. He has been eating excellent food ever since. Even his parent, that is my great-grandparent, was very pleased with her skill. It was early spring and weather was still cold. My great-grandfather used to live alone and did not have enough blankets for two. Then he had another bright idea.

My great-grandmother, who was listening to this story, cut in, 'Children aren't you tired of grandpa's bright ideas? Let me tell you some of my bright ideas as well'. My great-grandmother was also in her nineties but still could walk around and cook us some soup. Her eyes were still bright and the dimple still can be seen through the wrinkles. When she was young she also used to get lots of bright ideas. And then she told us the following story about her bright ideas.

When she was still a young lady, she had a big problem with her father, his majesty the king. You know, she was the princess, only child of the king. She thought and thought and got a bright idea. She thought, why not go for fishing. And with some of her retinues she went around in markets and other public places. We interjected, 'Fishing in a market? Not even a fish market'. Of course she was a princess and her fishing means much more than

what it sounds. My great-grandfather expressed his resentment of being considered as a fish albeit a big one. The market was the place where my great-grandmother saw my great-grandfather. Apparently then he was a dashing young man working as an apprentice in one of the business there. She then sends her retinues to spy on him. When she decided that he was the fish she was looking for, she arranged to have him go along the road that fine morning in his business. So it was true that he was minding his own business that morning. As he approached the palace and proceeded along the wall, she whispered him through a crack in the wall, 'Psst come here tonight, psst come here tonight. I will have the door unlocked, guards sent away, and a horse ready.' Then she collected some of her clothes, a hood for herself, a hood for him, and enough food and drink to last all the way to his house. But later she was pretty surprised to see him wearing his coat of mail. This of course was not needed at all. She was so mad at him for not letting her tell him that there was a horse ready. Later in his house she realized that she should have brought some blankets as well. But she had another bright idea. So he went out to chop some firewood and she made some hot spicy chicken soup. My grandpa cut in 'Hey that was my bright idea'.

We would ask her, 'how good was the soup grandma?' She would give each of us a bowl of soup and say 'this good.' Her soup was always delicious. We as children got this bright idea early on that every time we sit down and listen to their bright ideas, we get to eat her delicious soup. We have heard this story umpteenth times, but neither the story nor the soup ever lost its originality or taste. Some how the soup without the story or the story without the soup would not have tasted that good. They had other stories to tell us too. One time my great-grandmother had two aliens for friend from outer space. My great-grandfather still fondly remembers those days when he was abducted by Hitler to create the 'master race.' My favorite story was the one, when my great-grand parent had a bunch of tough looking oriental freedom fighters hiding in their basement.

We would request to continue the story. With the bowl of soup in our hand the story tastes even better. When the king found that some body stole his daughter, he got real mad. Hot peppers came out of his eyes and ears, and ordered to find and chop the thief's head off. His soldiers went around all over seeking the thief. We would act scared and ask, 'aren't you scared grandpa?' He was not scared because they had another bright idea. So they put a signboard outside stating, 'Here resides her highness the princess and his highness the son-in-law of his majesty the king. All the faithful employees of his majesty should present a gold coin before requesting the audience of her and his highness.' That worked well and no body came to bother them.

She would pour in some more soup and we would again be all ears for more stories. We would ask, 'Grandma, why you had problem with the king? Then what happened?' She would continue, 'We were barbarians then.' The king wanted to give her away to a king in a far away country. Of course she did not like the idea and protested in vain. That is why she went out for fishing. After she left the palace, king got very mad, hollered and thundered, fumed and fretted for whole month. Remember, she was the only child he had, and he terribly missed her. Then he had change of heart and decided to be civilized. So civilization was promulgated in our country by the king exactly one month after she left the palace. At the beginning no body liked the idea of being civilized. Every body cried, 'Oh, no.' But king was very firm and would say, 'Oh, yes.' But of course king is a king, and had his way. That is what happens in a barbarian country. King gets to do whatever he wants to do. He wanted to be civilized, and that's that.

My great-grandfather interjected, 'Mad king, bad decision.' My great-grandmother would not agree, 'That is not true. It actually was way around.' My great-grandfather gave up, 'Have your way. Bad king, mad decision.' My great grandmother would ignore him and continue the story.

Actually after the royal promulgation of civilization, nothing much changed. Only minor changes, here and there, took place. We had to adopt the metric system. The death sentence was abolished. Free schools and hospitals were established. Shelters for homeless were made. Boot camps were established to train the battalions of social workers who would go out and fight against strife, poverty, disease and injustice. When needed, they would be Para dropped in to the foreign countries. Violence and nudity were taken off the street. The 'earth day' was made a major national holiday. Ashok's pillars were erected in many places. So my dear brothers and sisters, I tell you, bright ideas runs in our family.

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Aug 30 – Sep 1, 2013

Daya Shakya

*Welcome to All the Participants the Nepalese Convention in
Spartanburg, South Carolina during 2013 Labor Day Weekend.*

**Chris Malcom Agency of Liberty Mutual
Phone 404-405-9152**

An Obituary to a Dear Friend of NASEA

One of NASEA's longest and dearest friends, Shakti Nath Aryal, passed away on April 14, 2013 at an age of 71 in Arlington, Virginia, from pulmonary fibrosis and lung cancer, diagnosed only one month prior to his demise.

He was born and raised in Kathmandu, Nepal and had immigrated to the US in 1978 to pursue a teaching degree. His journey led him through Oklahoma, Michigan, Illinois, and then finally to Oxford, Mississippi where he spent the last 26 years of his life. He was a business professor until his retirement in 2003 and then an interpreter which enabled him to do what he loved the most, talk to others and give advice, whether wanted or not.

He is survived by his wife Usha, daughters Smita Sawyer residing in Charlotte, North Carolina, and Prashanti Aryal residing in Arlington, Virginia, sons Ashish Aryal residing in Dallas, Texas and Anuj Aryal residing in Augusta, Georgia. He is also survived by his sister Sushila Dixit, in Kathmandu, Nepal as well as his 7 grandchildren who always surrounded him with hugs and kisses during his last days. They are Deven & Dillon, Surya & Anisha, Eva & Owen & his newest, Lola.

He loved to keep company and made a point of knowing one phrase that conveys love and friendship in almost every language. Sometimes people thought that he made up stuff, but he always managed to make people laugh. He will be dearly missed for his smile, his skills in organizing, his laughter, and his love.

He enjoyed playing soccer as a child then and as an adult, yelling at other people's game, "GO, GO, GOAL". It didn't really matter who was playing; sometimes there were no one! He spent Sundays watching Chicago Bears football with his boys, who screamed "sack 'em" at the television.

He was a life member and an advisor for NASEA. He played a crucial role in organizing a successful NASEA convention in Oxford, Mississippi in 1997. During that time, at the cultural program he played the role of a tourist visiting Nepal and how he was bothered by a street vendor (played by Shaubhagya Shrestha, NASEA Former president) selling handicrafts of the idol of Lord Krishna (who had 16,108 wives), idol of Lord Rama. Finally, after reaching exasperation, he yelled to the street vendor in Nepali that he was a visiting Nepali from the US.

He opened his house and heart to numerous students and friends, and taught us the value, significance, and power of family. **"Shakti dai, you will always remain in the hearts and minds of hundreds and hundreds of Nepalese and friends of Nepal."**



Late Shakti Aryal
1942 - 2013



Swami Vivekananda: Dharma's First Ambassador to the West

A history was made in the morning of June 4th, 2013. The birth sesquicentennial of Swami Vivekananda was marked in the Congressional record of the United States of America in Washington DC. This was possible largely due to continued efforts of Hindu American Foundation, a non-profit advocacy group based in Washington DC. A lot has been documented on Swami Vivekananda in different media including movie, documentary, books, articles, and so on. So this article is not to repeat what is already there but to focus on lessons that we can learn from Swami Jee's legacy.

Swami Vivekananda was an obscure young monk of Sri Ramakrishna in India. He did not have any means to visit United States but he did. When he arrived in the United States on a ship to attend Parliament of World Religions in 1893, he did not have any money and no place to live. When he wanted to speak at the Parliament of World Religions, the organizers wanted to see his credentials, which he did not have. But Swami Jee was not deterred. He did live in the United States for long time, and was a sensation among the people who heard him speak. Two lessons we can learn from this part of Swami Jee's life, persistence and strength. Once in a lecture Swami Jee said, "Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life; dream of it; think of it; live on that idea. Let the brain, the body, muscles, nerves, every part of your body be full of that idea, and just leave every other idea alone. This is the way to success, and this is the way great spiritual giants are produced." He did not just say it but practiced it by being persistent in what he did. He always emphasized for people, particularly the young generation to be strong. He once said, "Be not weak, either physically, mentally, morally or spiritually." Persistence with strength for sure will lead to success.

While wandering through the length and breadth of India, he saw the poverty, suffering and oppression of people from British rule at that time. So he genuinely wanted to help the people. Being a monk, he could have just wandered and meditated whole of his life but he did not. One of the reasons for his visit to the United States was to raise money for the welfare of the people back in India. In response to a question from an American woman, he said, "Madam, I am not teaching religion; I am selling my brain for money to help my people. If you get some lesson out of it, that is your benefit, not mine." Even though he was not very successful in raising money for the poor in India, he left an undeniable mark on the west about Dharma and Yoga. Selfless work was his motto. While he was in the US, Swami Jee wrote to his brother-disciples in India "Come out of your self-absorption! Stop all the rituals. Travel. Get organized for the worship of Man through selfless service!" He practiced selfless work all his life. He was a karma yogi. Karma Yoga, that is selfless work, is a wonderful practice if we can make it a part of our life.

Service to humanity was another of Swamiji's life goal. He used to say, "Nar Seva Narayan Seva' (Service to humankind is service to God)". It has inspired many and will continue to inspire many human-being to serve the humanity as and when needed. Famous philanthropist John D. Rockefeller (1839-1937) was inspired by Swami Vivekananda. Swamiji told JD Rockefeller in their first meeting that the money he had already accumulated was not his, that he was only a channel and that his duty was to do good

to the world — that God had given him all his wealth in order that he might have an opportunity to help and do good to people. Rockefeller was irritated and left the room even without saying goodbye to Swamiji. But about a week later, he came back with a paper with a plan to donate an enormous sum of money toward the financing of a public institution. "Well, there you are", he said. "You must be satisfied now, and you can thank me for it." Swamiji didn't even lift his eyes, did not move. Then taking the paper, he quietly read it, saying: "It is for you to thank me". This was Rockefeller's first large donation to the public welfare. The lesson here is that it is easy to convince someone to do good if there is no self-interest attached, and practice it before preaching it.

Any good work can lead to other unintended benefits. Today, an estimated 16 million Americans practice Yoga sustaining an annual \$6 billion industry of corporations such as lululemon to small mom and pop Yoga studios in the neighborhood. To top it all, practice of Yoga must be contributing to an unaccounted amount of saving of health care cost. It has been all possible due to Swami Vivekananda, a humble monk from India, who addressed Parliament of World Religions 120 years ago. Swami Vivekananda's short speech in Chicago on September 11, 1893 opened the door of America for the concepts of Yoga and Dharma.

Swami Vivekananda was accepted in the West not because he was cool or exotic but because he was fearless and was a repository of ancient wisdom, who could interpret the perceptions of Hindu rishis in modern times. "Here is a man who is more learned than all our learned professors put together" wrote none less than a professor of Harvard University, John Henry Wright, in a letter to the organizers of Parliament of World Religions in 1893. The organizers wanted the credentials of Swamiji to let him speak at the conference. Professor JH Wright was so impressed by the wisdom of Swamiji that he further said, "To ask you, Swami, for your credentials is like asking the sun about its right to shine." Therefore, if we want to be respected, we must earn the right to be respected. This right to be respected comes from strength be it physical, mental, moral or spiritual.

2013 is 150th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. To commemorate 150th birth anniversary of Swamiji, several organizations such as Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS), Hindu American Foundation HAF, Vedanta Society, Ramakrishna Math, Ramakrishna Mission, and Parliament of World Religions, are organizing various events all over the world including the United States. The marking in the Congressional record of the birth sesquicentennial of Swami Vivekananda was a part of this commemoration. HSS in particular has many streams of activities all year long in the US, starting with the launch program in January, nationwide DharmaBee™ for children, exhibit and speakers on university campuses, travels in the United States; and local social service projects by children and adults alike. DharmaBee™, in which over 3000 children from kindergarten to 8th grade participated, concluded on June 15th and 16th in Chicago with congress woman from Hawaii, Tulasi Gabbard as the chief guest. However, the grand finale of the commemoration would



-Dasharath Lohar

be through nationwide Dharma & Yoga Fest!

Needless to say festivals are fun to be part of. But there's more to it. According to a release posted on dharmayogafest.org, "Dharma & Yoga Fest event will commemorate Swami Vivekananda's 150th birth anniversary in 2013 by celebrating his vision of 'Universal Peace through Dharma and Yoga'." Learning more about the festival would certainly convince you that Dharma and Yoga Fest was planned to be fun and educational for everyone. Dharma & Yoga Fest would be a way that everyone could benefit from it, and at the same time have a plenty of fun. The key features of the festival remain the same; introduction to the four types of Yoga popularized by Swamiji, education on Dharma for Hindus and non-Hindus, cultural activities with Dharma and Yoga theme, fun activities for children, and delicious food for everyone. Three big cities planned to hold Dharma & Yoga Fest in the South East, Raleigh-Durham/North Carolina, Atlanta/Georgia, and Orlando/Florida. The program would include a key note speech, kirtan performance,

cultural dance and drama, skit on Sri Krishna, discussion and booths on different types of Yoga, exhibitions on Swami Vivekananda and Dharmic Traditions, face painting, henna tattooing, modern games with Dharmic themes (such as striker!), and more. The event would be free to the public. A volunteer of the planning committee explained, "we are trying to showcase Yoga and Dharma as envisaged and explained by Swami Vivekananda. It is for everyone irrespective of cultural affinity and religion. For example, who would not want to practice truth, charity, compassion and honesty, the four pillars of Dharma?" Furthermore, as Swamiji said, "All differences in this world are of degree, and not of kind, because oneness is the secret of everything." The focus of all these celebrations is not Swami Vivekananda but his message of peace and prosperity for all. Hopefully, everyone can learn something from Swami Vivekananda's teachings, and contributes to the universal peace that Swami Vivekananda hoped for in his first speech in Chicago 120 years ago.



*"Be a
hero.
Always
say I
have no
fear."*

"Swami Vivekananda"

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and

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Tara P. Poonmagar & Manju Gurung Poonmagar

Dilemma of being a working Mom

She smiles and it melts my heart! A little tiny being that looked so helpless at first has now slowly learned to respond, giggle, babble, and now reaching new milestones day by day. You want to give all the love and care in the world for this little wonder. But reality bites. A month and half, that's what I got after delivering her before I had to get back to work 7 AM to 4 PM. While at work, every now and then I feel I should be with her and care for her every way possible: feed her nutritious-delicious meals, hold her, see her smile and be the first to witness her saying that first word – what will it be – 'mama' or 'baba?' When will she begin to crawl? Will I be there? Or will I miss it? A pang of dilemma and guilt shrouds me as I think through it: to keep being employed or to be a full time mother for my child. If you or someone close to you is a working mom I am pretty sure this feeling resonates with you as well.



Dina Khaniya

Sometimes I think my mom is right when she says, "It would have been much easier if you didn't have a career." Today's woman has too much on her plate. She looks like a miracle wonder woman or at least has to strive to be one: rushing all the way making things happen, doing the chores, planning ahead and yes it looks like she can do it all! But beyond that façade, we all know there lays a vulnerable, exhausted being trying to keep herself strong for all. It takes a lot to be a good mother and a nice wife. Makes me reflect on how many sacrifices, sleepless nights and hours of work has been invested by my parents to make me what I am today. And it is payback time. Certainly, true admiration for moms can only come when you have to fill the shoes of being a mom yourself.

Don't get me wrong mothers who choose to stay home don't have it easy either. But the rewards are priceless: the smile in your child's eyes when she looks at you, the way she comes running to you passing hurdles of her favorite toys, how she cuddles in your arms and how she would chose you over strangers, give you the feeling that you are her nest; you are the one who is responsible to nurture and keep her safe. All that and many more listless things, the peace that reflects in their face as they sleep, the innocence and the beauty makes you want to do anything, literally anything in this world for them. Perhaps that's what they call the mother instinct.

While at work, your coworker will ask you or perhaps hint: "How can you leave your child with a stranger?" That feeling of guilt hits you hard again and you are forced to ask yourself, "Are you a bad mom?" How can you delegate a job of being a mother? You were not for sure raised like this! You feel you are treating your baby who has just started acclimating as an adult ready to take on the world, under someone else's supervision. The worst is when the baby gets sick and wants you the most and you have to meet deadlines, and still have to keep going. It becomes so overwhelming. The only thing that keeps me sane is to see other babies next to my own at the day care which assures that I am not the only one. There are others in similar situation. Soon she will grow up and things will take care of it self and your heart gets some peace.

As you look few years ahead, you know your kids will start their education and you would want to do something for yourself too. You want to reach the height that you have set for yourself. You want it all! You try to make it happen! You try to balance, take help, learn to delegate, start with trial and error, and rely on family.

I am sure 'stay in home moms' feel that they are missing what happens in the world, being with people, friends. There is a small window where one can enjoy own freedom which is also of value. Working mother has that opportunity to explore the outer world, be with friends and bring back and enrich your family with those all you gain. A study by the 'American Psychological Association' found that mother with jobs report fewer symptoms of depression and are happier and have better overall health. That got be something to cheer about for all working moms! Moreover, as society has progressed, roles of men and women have changed too. Men have been equal partner helping in house or taking care of kids. They are also trying to juggle career and family hand in hand.

It is a human tendency to think - "grass is greener on the other side." Instead of feeling guilty give them your best, when you are at home. You try to make your own grass green, ask for help, plan and organize. Be with them when you are with them, engage with them and make yourself guilt free. I just realized that I am no longer a girl but happy to carry myself as a woman. After a tiring day, I am back at home. It is pouring outside. I hold my little one, looking at the rain outside and singing "Rain, rain, go away... My Chori wants to play!"

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Bandita Sharma Dahal Esq

Vedic Heritage: Spirituality and the Environment



Durga D. Poudel

Nepal has long tradition of spirituality. Over 90% of the population, including various ethnic and linguistic groups, practices Hindu culture and traditions. Nepal has been the “*Tapobhumi*” for countless *Rishi Munis* and sages for millennia. Nepal is enriched not only with its beautiful landscape, vast natural resources, and vistas but also with its numerous temples, holy places and spiritual luminaries. While, King Janak, Princess Sita, Bhagawan Gautam Buddha and Veda Vyas represent some of the famous spiritual personalities in ancient Nepal; Gorakh Nath Baba, Yogi Narahari Nath, Khaptad Baba and Shiva Puri Baba are some of the famous sages who have meditated in Nepal and achieved their spiritual enlightenments in medieval and modern times. Similarly, reverend Babas and Swamis such as Shree Nepali Baba, Swami Prapanacharya, Swami Ramananda Giri, Swami Atmananda Giri, and Swami Gyanananda Giri are some of the contemporary spiritual personalities who are tirelessly promoting, preserving and advocating Vedic heritage in Nepalese society and are contributing to the spiritual awakening of Nepal as well as the rest of the world. The lectures, books and articles from these saints, Babas, and Yogis are truly an invaluable spiritual wealth. For example, writings of Khaptad Baba (*Dharma Bigyan, Swastha Bigyan, Ma ra Mero Kartabya, Yog Bigyan, Bichar Gyan, Aatmagyan, Bedantha-Bigyan, Essential of Bedanta, Science of Thought*), and Yagnas from Shree Nepali Baba are famous in our Hindu society and are drawing the attention of more and more people every day. Nepalese values, philosophies, ethos and morals are clearly the products of Hindu principles and teachings. Buddhism is another important aspect of Nepalese spiritual landscape. The birth of Lord Buddha in Lumbini, Nepal; and the inception of Buddhism 2,500 years ago have contributed enormously to the world spiritual setting. Through Buddhism, the world has received invaluable guidance on eliminating sufferings by the abolition of ignorance. Some of the traditions and practices of Buddhism include renouncement, leading a monastic life, supporting monastic communities and practicing the teachings and examples of Bodhisattvas.

Nepalese society is truly a unique blend of many spiritual traditions of Hinduism like Buddhism, Shivism, Vashnav. Temples, monasteries, *Shaktipiths*, holy lakes and rivers, sacred groves and plants, worshiping sacred rocks, festivals and celebrations, pujas, satsangs, prabachans, and ceremonies along with paintings, drawings, decorations, idols, and carving of gods and goddesses are just a few examples of religious activities and procedures that reflect our many traditions and cultures in Nepal. These activities have profound meanings and give very deep insights of the spiritual practices and philosophies coming from different Dharmas. These rituals, prayers, and procedures are directed to spiritual awakening, good-behavior, peace-building and the cultivation of global brotherhood. Some of the famous temples and religious places in Nepal include: Shree Pashupatinath Temple, Shree Shyambhunath Temple, Shree Boudha Temple, Lumbini Temple, Shree Krishna Mandir, Shova Bagawati Temple, Budha Nilkantha Narayan Temple, Manakamana Mai Temple, Shree Vindhyavashini Temple, Pokhara; Janaki Mandir, Janakpur; Muktinath Temple, Bageshowari Temple, Nepalgunj; Gita Mandir, Birgunj; Chhabdi Barahi Mandir, Tanahu; Kalinchowak Bhagabati Mandir, Dolakha; Pathibara Devi Mandir, Taplejung; and Deutibajey Mandir, Birendranagar, Churiamai Temple, Hetauda; Kalika Mandir, Gorkha; Bhagabati Mandir, and Kavrepalanchowak Bhagabati Temple. Most people go to temple regularly and get blessed by Gods and Goddesses throughout the day. In fact, Nepalese regard their temples and Gods and Goddesses as the centerpieces around which their lives, destiny, fate, aspirations and happiness revolve.

Vedic knowledge that has flourished through thousands of

years in the form of *Sruti* and *Smriti* literatures constitute the main philosophy of Nepalese society. Some of the major Vedic literatures that present several millennia's worth of knowledge and experience include the Four Vedas (Rig, Yajur, Atharva and Sam Veda), Holy book Gita, Mahabharata (the largest epic), 18 Purans, four Charak Shamhitas, Ramayan, Chandi, Bhrahmasutras, Devi Mahatmaya, Hatha Yoga Pradipika, Manusmriti, Shiva Shamhita, Swara Yoga, Upanishads and Yoga Sutra. All of these scriptures clearly respect the nature ‘Prakriti’ and human dignity, and advocate for human welfare, peace, prosperity and global brotherhood. Mastery of this vast knowledge, understanding the principles and philosophy behind them, and drawing guidance from them in solving contemporary social, political, economic and natural resources problems in order to realize sustainable peace, prosperity, human welfare and clean environment is the great spiritual resource for our society. It is also our moral obligation and responsibility to understand these scriptures, preserve the knowledge of Vedic philosophy and utilize them for the betterment of whole world and the Mother Earth. The global significance of Vedic knowledge is ever increasing as a harmony between the increasing human population and the environment has become absolutely critical for sustainable development of our society. Various Vedic practices such as worshipping, *pada yatra*, celebrations, temple visits, *satsangs*, teachings, and prayers are geared towards achieving spiritual awakening, nature conservation and maintaining a clean environment.

Spiritual awakening can be viewed as developing consciousness on a broader aspect of human life, society and the world. Spiritual awakening frees people from short sightedness, greed, anger; and transforms them into individuals who appreciate humanity, brotherhood, peace, clean environment and healthy nature. While the modern world is fighting against poverty, environmental degradation, hunger, illiteracy, policy failures, and many other social evils, sustainable solutions to these problems can only be obtained by developing a strong link between science and spirituality. Because the modern society is relying more and more on rules and regulations for solving these major problems without embracing and valuing the power of spirituality, such problems are increasing day by day. Corruptions, malpractices, nepotism and lawlessness have become routine in many societies. We seek for immediate gratification rather than long-term benefit to the society. In order to attain sustainable society, it is absolutely important to view and solve these problems through the realm of spirituality and science.

Initiatives that combine both the spiritual and scientific problem solvings are becoming rare in modern Nepal. However, some of these initiatives can still be seen in the actions taken by Shree Vindhyavashini Adhyatmik Sangh. This spiritual organization was founded by Pujya Shree Nepali Baba Jagatacharya Pandit Tej Nath Sharma in 1984 A.D. The main objective of this organization is “world peace, human welfare and clean environment” (<http://vindhyavashini.org.np>). The Sangh has acquired 28 ropanies (1.42 hectares) of land for the construction of a nine-storied Shree Vindhyavashini Temple, a conference hall, a guest house, a Vedic University, a spiritual hospital, and *Anna Kshetra* (free feeding scheme) at Satungal, Kathmandu. The construction of an administrative building has been completed. With the view of disseminating Hinduism among the Nepalese people and devoting his life to the betterment of common citizens, Shree Nepali Baba completed his trek (*Pada yatra*) of the 75 districts of Nepal in 121

days in 2045 B.S. There were a total of 217 people joining Baba in this *Pada yatra*. Baba planted 100 to 200 trees every day during this trek and laid the foundation stones for Sharaswoti temples in several schools. Baba accomplished another trek from Muktinath in Nepal to Kanyakumari, the most southern tip of India, in 118 days in 2048 B.S. The next trek of Baba was from Kanyakumari via Dwaraka in Gujarat to Badrinath in Uttarakhand in the period of 168 days in 2050 B.S. Baba has covered more than 81,500 Km during his treks, disseminating Hinduisim, spreading the word of peace and global brotherhood (*Basudhaiva Kutumbakum*). Baba has been involved in Yagna from 2034 B.S. He has performed over 1,014 Yagnas in Nepal and India. In India, Baba has performed Yagnas in Vindhyavasini, Kolkatta, Jamnagar, Bhubaneshwar, Bhopal, Mumbai, Delhi, Banarash, Patna, Ludhiyana and other places. In Nepal, Baba completed nine days Gayatri Purascharan Yagna by 108 Brahmans in Ramdi, Palpa in 2034 B.S. Another Gyatri Purascharan Yagna was completed with 1,188 Brahmins in Ridee, Palpa, Nepal in 2037 B.S. Baba conducted Gyatri Purascharan Mahayagna in Biratnagar for 25 days in 2042 B.S., which culminated in the development of currently running Gayatri Sanskrit Madhyamic Bidhyalaya. For global peace, Shree Nepali Baba conducted a remarkable and most sacred Sanga Gayatri Purascharan Yagna with 11,000 priests lasting 31 days in Vindhyavasini, India in 2043 B.S. This was a very popular and famous Yagna. Coincidentally, after the completion of this Yagna a peace agreement was signed between President Reagan of USA and General Secretary Gorbachev of USSR. Then, Shree Nepali Baba was awarded a very rare title of Jagatacharya (meaning the teacher of the universe) by World Religion Parliament, New Delhi, India (only six others have ever been recognized with this award). Baba has recently been awarded the title of the Ambassador of Peace by the Universal Peace Federation, Washington D.C., USA. In addition, Nepali Baba is the member of the Religious Council of the prestigious World Hindu Federation International. Baba dreams of "*Swornam Sworga Nepal*" and believes that Nepal will turn into a "*Ratna ko dallo*" one day. Baba very eloquently said when I met him about a couple of months ago in Nepal, *Lok kayian* – 'good of the people' is the main principle of our philosophy and we should be happy, we should make our family happy, then we should make our society and the nation happy.

Nepal is experiencing massive environmental degradation due to deforestation, pesticide contamination, dust and smog, vehicle exhaust, lack of effective programs and policies for environmental restoration, lack of public awareness, and negative impacts of climate change on the environment. In recent years, local communities are experiencing drying up of streams and water sources, lack of fodder and forages for livestock, emergence of new diseases and parasites for livestock, disease epidemics among humans; crop failures, changes in rainfall patterns, rise in temperature, and decline in precipitation. Villagers are truly feeling helpless, lonely, and abandoned. Similarly, our cities are congested, dust and smoke pollution have reached intolerable levels, and urban areas are turning into unsafe places. The city of Kathmandu continues to experience unimaginable levels of dust and smoke pollution, congestion, water shortages, and unthinkable water pollution. Rivers and streams in the city of Kathmandu are clogged and filled with sewage sludge, human waste, dead carcasses and garbage. Stinky garbage piles are common in every corner of the city. Reckless throwing of trash, building construction encroaching on public lands, not abiding by city codes, bribing officials, polluting air, evading taxes, and negligence to natural and public resources such as rivers, streams, forests, public structures, temples, etc. are some of the examples of our lack of spirituality, absence of a sense of community and carelessness in relation to environmental protection.

In order to save Nepal and the whole world from such unprecedented environmental disaster and build a healthy, optimistic, positive, and cooperative society, Shree Nepali Baba intends to conduct an unprecedented, exceptional, and previously unimagined kind of *Prakriti* prayer (Yagna) in the near future. In which 12,000 Brhamins will chant Vedic *mantras* from four Vedas for 30 days. There will be 1,200 Brhamins chanting Vedas. Baba believes that it will restore *prakriti's* health and the environment for next 1,000 years. I was intrigued by Baba's noble plan for conducting Yagna for curtailing climate change impacts, enhancing environmental quality and restoring *prakriti* for the whole world. Baba's '*prakriti* Yagna' has profound meaning and relevancy to our society and the world. It will raise public awareness and compel global authorities in developing and implementing appropriate programs and projects in order to save the world from the negative impacts of climate change and environmental degradation. This Yagna will help to revive spiritual environmentalism in Nepalese society, which will result in the large-scale planting of trees, restoration of water sources, reduction of green house gases, environmental conservation, and promotion of many environment friendly activities and behaviors among the general public. Once we adopt environmentally sound behaviors and practices in our daily life, climate change impacts will be controlled; rivers, atmosphere, air, and whole *prakriti* will be back on track, and Mother Earth will be replenished. She will continue cultivating humanity, ensuring happiness, prosperity, peace and well-being. According to Baba, this Yagna will "cultivate spiritual leadership, foster humanity, and save the world from natural disasters." Baba says that through this Yagna "we will be able to donate 100,000 times more benefits to the world than we have received as donations from various countries to date." Shree Nepali Baba also mentioned that environment clean-up includes not only cleaning up the physical environment so that all creatures in the world would benefit, but also means cleaning our "within environment", which means overcoming greed, anger, ego and other bad things. We should have clean environment both inside and outside. For effective environmental conservation, Nepal certainly needs to involve the entire citizenry in an extensive, mega-scale environmental restoration plan and implement it as soon as possible. It is important that every Nepalese citizen enjoys clean water, clean air, fresh fruits and vegetables, enough food supply, aesthetics, sacred groves, and lives fully in harmony with Nature. Therefore, development of a strong collaboration among various spiritual associations, NGOs, community organizations, universities, governmental agencies, businesses, private enterprises, and individuals for environmental restoration is necessary. Such a coalition will facilitate collaboration, coordination and communication of environmental restoration and conservation activities nationwide. Spiritual activities pertaining to environment organized by Nepali Baba has deeper meaning and value to us and our society. Therefore such activities should be promoted and fully supported. With highly coordinated environmental restoration plan and activities, Nepal can enhance environmental quality fully and bring *prakriti* back to order. Then, Nepal will become economically sound, peaceful, strong, and will continue as a sacred *tapobhumi* with a happy and prosperous society. Hopefully, the Nepalese society will wake up sooner rather than later in responding to this noble, extraordinary, pious, extremely necessary, and urgent task of environmental restoration in Nepal. Nepalese Diasporas in USA and all over the world have unique and historic opportunities and responsibilities for meaningful contribution to the preservation and development of our Vedic heritage, scientific advancement, environmental protection, global brotherhood, peace, human welfare and economic development.

The Making of Nepal Festival



Dancing Lakhe and Kumari in the Festival

For the first time in the history of Nepali community in the United States, two large billboards stood proudly in two major interstate highways displaying 'Nepal Festival' in a metropolitan of the United State. The billboards said 'Nepal Festival' organized by Nepalese Association in Southeast America with support from its partners. The historic Nepal Festival was held amid fanfare on March 03 this year where performers, guest, vendors and participants came from all over the from including Florida, Baltimore, New York, Seattle, Canada and from Nepal.

We wanted Centennial Olympic Park situated in the heart of Atlanta as the venue for the Nepal festival; and it was not an easy task to get it. The park is visited by millions of people each year, was built in the heart of Atlanta to mark the success of the summer Olympic in 1996. It is highly coveted place for events and programs so it is always busy. Fortunately, our application was approved by the park authority to hold Nepal Festival here and that's when the real preparations began. That was just two months from the set date of the festival on March 03.

A spectacular parade began from the front the front gate of the park. The parade was almost 2 mile long and it comprised of dignitaries, different people representing ethnic and language groups of Nepal including Magar, Tamang, Newar, Bahun/Chettri, people carrying banner that read 'Everest, the Highest mountain in the world, is in Nepal', 'Nepal is the birthplace of Buddha', 'Nepalese Association in Southeast America'. Some carried traditional Nepali household items including Jato, Dhikki, Naglo. In the parade there was 'Lakhe', the spiritual Nepali dancer, and this was acted by Yagya Man Shakya. He caught the attention of hundreds when he danced throughout the length of the parade. Kumari, the living goddess of Nepal was played his daughter, Lochani Tara Shakya, and she too walked in the parade.

The parade was preceded by opening ceremony where the Nepalese Ambassador to the US, Dr. Shankar Prasad Sharma inaugurated the festival. Different dignitaries spoke including AC Sherpa, the climber of all the mountains above 8000 feet, Alex Xu, the former president of Asia Pacific American Council, Pranaya

-Sanjeeb Sapkota

President, NASEA

Chairperson, Nepal Festival 2013



Lama, the president of Nepalese Association in Georgia, Raja Ghale, former president of NASEA, Bimal Nepal, Tara Pun, Saunak Ranjitkar and a participant from France.

There were booths circling a large open amphitheater. Food booth with different ethnic and traditional Nepali food was very popular. Other booths had handicrafts, clothes, TV display of Nepalese touristic places, face painting of Nepali flag etc.

The festival ended with a grand cultural program where invited and local artist performed cultural dances, patriotic song, comedy. Nalina Chitrakar, Pawan Kali, Prem Raja Mahat, Aparajita Rijal, Sweta Kandel, Rapana Shrestha, Srijana Sharma, Sabina Sapkota performed dances among other. God dance, Manju Shri dance, Kumari dance were highly appreciated. Sushma Bajracharya coordinated an exciting children fashion show with Sauriyana, Sauzaas, Slissha, Sunischit, Nilav, Abhinav and other children performing. Many people worked day and night for the festival and they include Gobinda Shrestha, Bijendra Gurung, Tara Pun, Dipendra Thapa, Bimal Nepal, Jash Tamang, Suanak Ranjitkar, Sushma Bajracharya, Shailendra Bajracharya, Mohan Kandel, Sangita Dongol. The budget of the festival was \$13000 and with our hard work we were able to raise sufficient funds from sponsors and generous donors some of who were His Excellency Ambassador Shankar Pd Sharma, Dr. Prahlad Pant, Honorary consular general Rishi Dhakal, CK Parajuli,

For the entire list of sponsors, volunteers and other information please visit <http://nepalfestival.naseaonline.org/> With limited time, resources, Nepali community could pull together a major festival with jam-packed activities. This inspired many in the community and made them proud. The community is already thinking of Nepal Festival 2014!

Photos are by James Camp, Birendra Gurung, Dhana Thapa
For detail <http://nepalfestival.naseaonline.org>,
www.naseaonline.org



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony



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*My best wishes for the grand success of the
convention organized by
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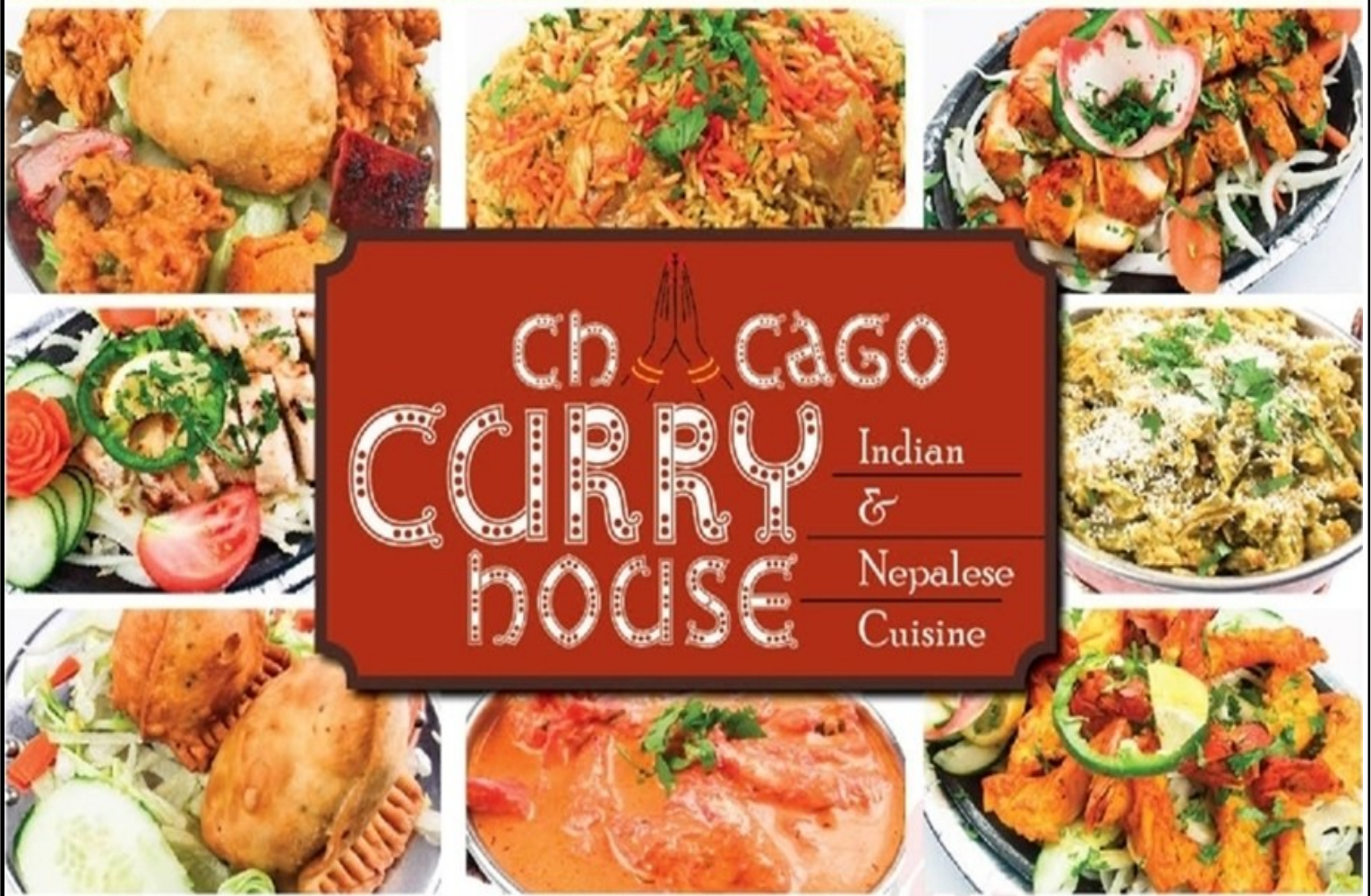


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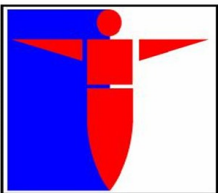
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सिमान्तकृत दुर्दशा

गोमा पराजुली

हाम्रो गाउँ छ दुर त्यो शहरको संसारभन्दा पर
बस्छौं त्यै घरमा सशक्त बनी हुन्छौं सधैं थरथर
आफ्नो हो घर त्यो परन्तु परको छप्की सहन्छौं सधैं
पर्छन् ऐँठनमा जसै दशगजा संव्रस्त हुन्छौं सधैं

आफ्नै हो कि कतै निवास अरुकै मैदान हो खेलको
मान्छे हो कि कुनै बिशन्त मनको फोहोर हो भेलको
भुझ्दैनन् जनता आफैपनि कुनै बेअर्थका भाषण
कस्तै गर्छ कहाँ, कता, कुन दिशा नेपालमा शासन।

हुन्छन् भोज उता यता गरिबको झुप्रो सधैं जल्दछ
माती घुस्छ सधैं अजिङ्गर यता धेरै भुँडी भर्दछन्
खाई टन्न अघाई ढल्फल भैइ डुक्नछ साँदै बनी
हाम्रो शान्त समाज, मौलिक कला हेपिन्छ जैले पनि ।

पस्छन् पल्लिरका सुटुक्क घरमा पापी लुटेरहरु
रुन्छन् घायल भै यता गरीबका झुप्रा कटेराहरु
रक्षास्त्रमभ बनी कतै भनिदिने भेटिन्न कोही पनि
रोटीन्छन् मनभित्रभित्र सपना बेकार भो जिवनी ।

उध्निन्छन् घरमा बिनाकसुरमा छोरी बुहारीहरु
हेछन् लज्जित भैइ बिभत्स घटना लाचार आँखाहरु
आफ्नो दरदराजको घर बसी बाँच्नै नसक्ने भयौं
छोड्यो होश हवास यो वदनले कंकाल जस्तै भयौं ।

प्यारो रुम्जाटार

-राजा घले, हाल एटलान्टा अमेरिका

म जन्मेको खेलेको ठाउँ, मनभित्रै छ सदावहार
आमाजस्तै माया लाग्छ, मेरो प्यारो रुम्जाटार ।

जसका खोला झरनाहरुले, मैले पिउने पानी पिलाए
बन पाखा र खोलाहरुले, सुन्दर-सुन्दर गीत सुनाए
त्यहि गाउँको सेवा गर्ने, लाग्दछ मनमा सधैं रहर
आमाजस्तै माया लाग्छ, मेरो प्यारो रुम्जाटार ।

जसको छाती वालक-कालमा, मैले खेल्ने धर्ति थियो
असल काममा चित्त लगाउने, जसले दिव्य अर्ति दियो
यस्तो मेरो पूण्य-भूमिको, सम्झना आउँछ बारम्बार
आमाजस्तै माया लाग्छ, मेरो प्यारो रुम्जाटार ।

अब छैन रहर मलाई, खोक्रो नाम र दाम कमाउने
मेरा बान्धव साथीसहेली, छुट्टीएर एकलो रमाउने
जन्मथलोको माया प्रेमले, तानिरहेछ तारम्तार
आमाजस्तै माया लाग्छ, मेरो प्यारो रुम्जाटार ।

आमाको स्पर्श पाउँ कहाँ?

जगन्नाथ देवकोटा

छंग छंग झर्ने सुन्दर छहरा, गुरासले रंगिएका मेरा ती पहरा
रोऊँ कति कल्पेर कोइलीको गीत, कुडिन्छ मन बिरानो ठाउँमा।
नागबेली काली लड्बदिदै होलिन, हासेका हिउँचुली काखमा
टोलाउछन् आखाँ सम्झेर ल्याउँदा, कटुस टिपेको पाखामा।

बेची आफैलाई पलपलमा यहाँ, जीउनु पर्ने उराठ दुनियामा
सभ्यता संगै चोरिए भावना, खुसी खोज्न जाउँ म कहाँ?
ठुलो बन्न बिरानिदा आफ्नैसंग, भौतिक सुखको मोहमा
छुटे सबै साथी संगी, आमाको स्पर्श चुम्न पाउँ म कहाँ?

आमा मेरी

लक्ष्मी कडेल -बोका रटन फ्लोरिडा

आमा मेरी जगतकी जननी,
त्यागकी मूर्ति, ममताकी खानी
पवित्र, संवेदनशिल, निर्मल, मनकी रानी ।

बालहठसँग दिक्क हुँदा पनि मलाइ माया गर्ने,
जे जस्ता गल्ती गरेपनिमलाइ माफ गर्ने
एकछिन रिसापनि अंगालोमा बर्ने ।

चौतारो हो तिम्रो विशाल हृदय, मेरो दुःख बिसाउन
एक जुनीमा कहाँ सकुला ? तिम्रो ममताको मूल्य चुकाउन ।

म छु सात समुद्रपारी तैपनि आर्शिवाद पठाईरहन्छिन्
संझिन्छिन् रातदिन, मलाइ संझि आसु बगाउछिन् ।

तिम्रो माया, ममता स्नेह त्यो घर छोड्ने रातको
सुझाव, सहानुभूति, दुःखमा दिएको साथको ।

संकिन्न तिर्न दूधको मोल यो छोटो जीवनमा ,म के गरु,
अर्काे जन्म देउ हे भगवान, आमा तिमै कोखमा परु ।

नेपाली सुन तथा चांदीका गहनाहरू अर्डर
बमोजिम बनाउनु परेमा सम्झनुहोस ।

हिमालयन एल एल सी,

प्रबंधक

दीपक गजमिर

फोन ६७८-८८७-३०७१

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My Grandparents' Janku (Bhimrathrohan)

- Rujula Shrestha

This summer, I went to Nepal to celebrate my grandparents' 'Janko.' I learned a lot about my culture while I visited Nepal. And it was fun learning more about my culture.

Janko is a celebration of being of age - 77 years, 7 months and 7 days. There are four more Jankos up to 105 years of age. The first Janko at the age of 77 years old is called 'Bhima Ratharohan.' What is Janko? Janko in Newar culture means a celebration of long life. It also means ordinary person turning into something like God with age.

My grandparents' Janko started on May 12th, 2013 and lasted for four days.

1st day: In the evening, we worshipped our ancestors.

2nd day: In the morning a sacred fireplace was prepared. They also brought two decorated chariots. Then, the priest did fire ritual called 'Yagna.' My grandparents were dressed like a bride and a groom. Then my mom and dad, being the eldest among the family, started prayer 'Pooja.' It was followed Poojas by everyone from our big family. After the long Poojas our grandparents were seated in the chariots. Everybody pulled the chariot to the Ganesh temple. It was a lot of fun to me. My grandfather had turban of white long cloth on his head like a hat. That hat looked funny to me. Then my dad and my uncles also got similar turbans like my grandfather.

3rd day: All close relatives brought 'Sagun' and lots of gifts to my grandparents. There was a big crowd in our house. We love to be with our relatives for such a nice traditional celebration. We had fun talking to them. I was able to communicate very nicely in Nepali language and felt myself very proud.

4th and last day: There was a party reception where my grandparents gave blessing to all people by putting red 'Tika' on their forehead before the dinner. In the party we had lots of Nepali and Newari music going on for dance. I had a lots and lots of fun. I met so many

relatives and everybody was nice to me. We ate many new dishes in the party. They were all delicious.

This is our one of the most important Nepali culture to respect elder people in our society, who gave us so many things directly and indirectly. This is also one way to show our love and respect to our grandparents. I had such a great time which I cannot explain in words and this is why I like to go to Nepal. I hope you have enjoyed reading this.

Source:

<http://culture-newasrijana.blogspot.com/2012/05/Janko-bhimrathrohan.html>

<http://houseofbhaktal.com/images/Janko%202012.pdf>



Picture of my Grandparents in Janko

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We appreciate the following individuals who have kindly sponsored hotel rooms to accommodate some of the invited guests and artists to the NASEA ANMA Convention in Spartanburg, South Carolina

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Dr. Prakash Malla - one room night

Dr. Narayan Raj Bhandari - one room night

Ram Dongol/ Sanjeeb Sapkota - One room night

Madhav Mainali/ Bala Ghimire - One room night

Bala Pant - One Room Night

Mount Everest

By: Jay Bhatta,
Cary North Carolina

Mount Everest is the highest mountain in the world.

Mount Everest is in Nepal.

Mount Everest is 29029 feet or 8848 meters in height.

In 1953 Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay climbed Mount Everest for the first time.

It is really hard to climb this mountain.

When you get high you will need breathing mask to breath.

When I grow up I want to go on the very top of the Mount Everest



अतितको स्मरण गर्दा

गायत्री खतिवडा

हिजो जस्तो मात्र लाग्छ त्यो बाटो पारी मान्छे झुण्डिएर मर्यो रे ----- भन्दै सधैं घरमा दूध दिन आउने दूधवालीले ह र र र खबर ल्याई । मंसिरको महिना थियो मेरी देवरानी, म र मेरी छिमेकी साथी सहित आँगनमा घाम तापिरहेका थियौं । साथीले भनिन् जाउँ न भाउजु ती नजिकै त होनी हेरेर आउँ अनि म र उनी हत्त पत्त दगुरेर गयौं । हामी पुग्दा नपुग्दा निकै मानिसको भिड जम्मा भई सकेको रहेछ । हामी दुईले पनि भिडमा च्यापिँदै झ्यालको प्वालबाट हेर्न कोशिश गर्यौं तर पंखामा झुण्डिएको मानिसको छाया मात्र भित्तामा देख्यौं । अनि त्यहाँ भेला भएका मानिसहरूका आफ्ना आफ्ना विचार, तर्क, अड्कल, अन्दाज अलि अलि सुन्यौं र घर तिर लाग्यौं । बाटा भरी हामीलाई पनि निकै नरमाइलो लाग्यो । झन् राति भएपछि त दिनभरीका कुराहरूका असर मेरो दिमागमा चलन थाल्यो । आफ्नो पनि त श्रीमान पाँचै वर्ष अघि अचानक बित्तु भएको त्यो दिन पछि परिवारबाट आफुले भोग्नु परेको तिता, मिठा, मान, अपमानहरू अनि संकोच, अभाव । अस्त ब्यस्त, जीवन अतृप्त भएर होला मलाई पनि झुण्डिदा त सास जाँदो पो रहेछ भन्ने विचारले मुटुमा घर बनाउन थाल्यो । यस्तै तर्क बितर्क गर्दा गर्दै रात बित्यो । बिहान सबै उठे बाहिर पिँडीमा टुसुक्क बसेर विचार गर्दै मात्र के थिए परबाट छिमेकीका एक बथान कुखुरा सु लु लु लु जुठेल्ना तिर लम्किए । त्यो दृश्यले मेरो विचारमा बाधा पुर्यायो र तिनीहरूको गतिविधि तिर मेरो ध्यान बाटियो । ती कुखुराहरू मध्ये छ वटा बिकासे चल्ला ल्याएर पालेका रछन अनि पाँच वटा चल्ला पोथी माऊ ओथारो बसेर काडेकी रछे । रातिको जुठो धन्दा गर्दा रहेका भातका सितासिती टिप्न त छाड की म छाड गर्न थाले । यतिकैमा एउटा कागले कहाँबाट एउटा मरेको मुसो तुन्डुङ्ग झुण्ड्याएर ती नजिकैको किम्बुको हाँगामा बस्यो र काक मात्र के गरेको थियो मुसो भुईँमा झर्‍यो । त्यो देख्ना साथ ती बिकासे चल्लाहरू दगुरेर च्याप्न के पाएका थिए पोथी कुखुरीले झम्टिएर ठुङ्गदै सबै बिकासे चल्लाहरूलाई लखेटी र आफ्ना चल्लाहरू र आफु मात्र खाई । बिना बाबु आमाका ती बिकासे चल्ला पर बसेर टुकुर टुकुर हेरिरहे । मैले त्यो दृश्य जब देखे तब आफ्ना अबोध बलख छोरा छोरीहरूको अनुहार झल्यास्स अगाडि आयो अनि भित्रबाट मैले त मेरा छोरा छोरीहरूलाई बिकासे चल्लाहरू जस्तो अलपत्र पो पार्न लागेछु जस्तो भान भयो । अघि मनमा जुन नराम्रा बिचारहरूले जरो गाडेको थियो त्यो माटो सहित उखालेर अट्ठाइस वर्षको उमेरमा पढ्ने निर्णय लिएँ । त्यस समयमा घर परिवारबाट पनि सजिलै अनुमति दिईएको थिएन । तीन जना छोरा छोरीकी आमा त्यो पनि बिधवा स्वास्नी मान्छे झोला बोकेर दिउसो स्कूल जानु समाजको निम्ति हाँसो र रमिता नै थियो र पनि मेरा छोरा छोरीको भविष्यकालागि हिम्मत गरेर आफ्नो लक्षमा पुग्न सफल भए । आज म जुन ठाउँ मा छु त्यस ठाउँबाट अतीतलाई फर्केर हेर्दा त्यो दिनको सम्झना र त्यो समय हिजो अस्ति जस्तो लाग्छ ।

My Country; My Pride

Crowned by the top of the world
which lies between two big soul
full with exquisiteness and admiral nature
gives the fragrance of the fauna and floral

You are the greatest motherland
Gautama Buddha was born in this land
He preaches to everyone
How to live in peace and free mind

What is bravery the world has known
that has came from Nepalese home
Victory cross and Kalapaani Jung
got and fought by Gorkha's son

I just lastly want to tell
Our country never colonized and fail
Rectangular flags found everywhere
However, Triangular flag found only here!



- Shestruma Parajuli

Grade: 10
Columbia, SC



Nepal Wireless Networking Project - 2012 and 2013

- Mahabir Pun

In 2012 and 2013, the project worked to connect several villages of Lamjung, Tanahun, Syangja, and Gorakha district of Nepal. In Lamjung five schools in Duradanda area were connected with the financial support from a NGO called Choice Nepal and a former Peace Corp Volunteer named Francis Chamberlin from California. The wireless link to Lamjung was brought from Pokhara via a relay tower at Tandrangkot of Tanahun district. Two new schools in Tanahun were connected with the financial support of the people in Keshavtar area now living in UK through One dollar a month program. That was the extension of the link made in 2010 to connect Keshavtar village. Three schools in Sirubari area and four schools in Majhkot area of Syangja district were connected in 2013. The links to Sirubari area were made with the financial support of a Rotary Club in Kathmandu. The link to Majhkot area of Syangja was made with the contribution of local people. The financial support through "Donate One dollar a month" that came from Atlanta was used to upgrade the power backup system in relay stations of Myagdi, Mustang and Kaski. Friends from New Zealand sent their contribution through One dollar a month was spent to build a relay station in Dhading district to connect the remote areas in Manaslu region of Gorakha. This year's biggest project was the wireless network in four VDCs of Manaslu region. A total of \$35,000 was received from an INGO called SNV and about \$10,000 were collected from difference sources. With the support of Corning Rotary Club of New York, four schools in Jhapa district were connected to the Internet.

Wishing Nepalese Association in Southeast America (NASEA)

and

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*a Grand Success for
the Joint Convention*

in

Greenville/ Spartanburg, South Carolina

Aug 30 - Sep 1, 2013

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welcomes everyone to the NASEA ANMA Joint Convention*

*Hosted by SCAN in Greenville/ Spartanburg,
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Shaubhagya Lal and Ganga Shrestha

*Wishing the very best for the
Grand Success
of NASEA ANMA Convention in
Spartanburg, South Carolina*

**Bimal Shrestha
Los Angeles, California**

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Dilip Dahal
Manager
South Asian Market Clarkston, Georgia

My Gunyo Cholo

- Ozashwee Ghimire, Grade 7
Lee County Middle School.
Leesburg, Georgia

Once upon a time, my parents told me my family was going to Nepal. At first, I didn't believe them. But as time went by, I realized they were serious. We were actually going to Nepal. As the day of flight was approaching, we began packing and 'Skyping' Nepal more. In many conversations I heard the words, "Gunyo Cholo." I didn't know what it meant, but usually it followed my sister's or my name. So I did some digging and learned it was a traditional ceremony held to appreciate the growing up of a girl. The ceremony must take place before the menstrual cycle starts. My sister and I were so excited to have a day all about us! But when the flight day came by, I was actually very nervous. What if no body in Nepal like me? What if I mess up my Gunyo Cholo ceremony? I was going through a mixed emotions by the time we got off the plane in Kathmandu. Anxiety, nerves and excitement were the main ones. But one of my worries was lifted when I met my extended family. They were great! We picked up straight where we left off, and everybody was having fun. Everything was slowly falling into the place.

To say I was nervous on the day of Gunyo Cholo ceremony was an understatement of the century. However, when we reached the 'Party Palace', where we were hosting it, my nerves calmed down. I met a lot of people, and learned a lot of new things. I even saw (and helped) my sister chase and catch a chicken. At my Gunyo Cholo, my sister and I were supposed to wear 'Saree' for the first time. We thought that was pretty cool. However, we decided they were too mundane and itchy as well. So we had a new idea. We wore Gunyo Cholos to our Gunyo Cholo ceremony! However, not only did my Gunyo Cholo come to end, but soon our entire trip to Nepal as well. But I had fun and good memory of that milestone of my life. So as Dr. Seuss would say, "Don't cry because it is over, smile because it happened!"

Reminiscing four years in the USA.

- By Neelam Khanal

August 16, 2009 was the day I first stepped into the US and it has almost been four years now. These past four years in the US have been an exhilarating journey in many ways. Now that I think about it, I am actually not even sure what my expectations were when I first got here. All I can remember is that I was really excited for a new beginning in life. I was happy to have found some sense of direction towards an uncertain future. My initial years here were full of learning moments as I was getting accustomed to new culture, new lifestyle, new environment and new kind of people. It was really a great feeling to be a part of something new. I really enjoyed the experience of understanding an unfamiliar society and learning the ways to adapt into it. One of the most amazing things about the US was that I could interact with people from different parts of the world. The diverse society present here truly fascinates me as I could physically interact with people from all across the globe. This opportunity somewhat changed my perspective on the way I view the world. For instance, after meeting a friend from Spain, I no longer associate Spain as some European country. Rather, Spain has now become a hometown of a friend. Knowing people from all across the globe definitely enriched my perspective of the world.

However, it would be a lie if I claim that the process of getting adapted to the American society was a smooth one. Of course, it was not. I guess my excitement of being in a new place started to fade away once I got used to the society here. The whole notion of new became irrelevant and I could not stop myself from reminiscing about my old times in Nepal. It was first time in my life that a single word "Nepal" could evoke so many emotions with me. It was truly surprising to see the effect of that one word. Intuitively, I also started to make comparison between the differences in American values and Nepali values. The more I realized about the huge difference in the values of these two societies, the harder it got for me to define myself in this new place. Living alone all by myself, I could only associate myself as a single entity. I was no longer a daughter, a sister, a niece or a cousin. I was just "me", a person; and that feeling of being just "a person" amidst many people around you is truly the worst feeling ever. I think the convoluted feelings generated by the amalgam of the memories from "the old me in Nepal" and "the present me in US" was the most difficult thing to handle as these feelings always lead to one important question, "Who am I now?" I still find it hard to answer that question. I know I have changed with time and place but still there is no way I can comprehend the extent of change within me, leaving that mighty question unanswered. But, knowing how to carry on is also an important part of adapting and everybody including me has to learn to live with that question one way or the other. Thus, these four years in the US have been a journey to explore a "new" environment and be nostalgic about "old" memories. This strange symphony of "old" and "new" has made these four years memorable in many ways.

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Anita and Baikuntha Sharma



My Nepal Journal: Trip to Pokhara and Chitwan

Sauriyan Sapkota

7th Grade, Crew's Middle School,
Lawrenceville, Georgia

Finally, the day arrived to take this long awaited trip to Pokhara, Bandipur and Chitwan and to get out of the pollution trap of Kathmandu. Frankly, I would rather go anywhere than just sitting and watching the workers build our house in Kathmandu. We woke up and got in some last minute packing. My Mom, Dad, my brother and I are all going. Our grandparents, cousins, and aunts were all there to say goodbye. We quickly had breakfast and brought our luggage down. Sharad uncle, my *Phupaju* in Nepali to be precise, has prepared a VIP package for us that includes, hotel rooms, a car with a personal driver, and cable car tickets to *Manakamana* temple. The driver pulled up his car, a brown TaTa Manza. The driver oriented us and we took our seats, I took advantage of the front seat. He said he was a tourist guide for many years and had taken many tourists to hiking and trekking to beautiful places of Nepal.

The road of the mountains from Kathmandu valley was narrow, snake-like and looked scary from the window. It was nothing compared to the roads in the United States. There were traffic jam along the way and drivers had their own rule. There was no traffic police to guide us out of the jam. Then we came to *Naubishe*, the base of mountain. From here the road was straight and was carved along the bottom of the mountain. My dad pointed out to a gorgeous river, named *Trishuli*, and said that he had gone rafting in the river when he was in high school.

Next, we arrived at the cable car station, which leads to *Manakamana* temple, on top of the mountain. Back then people had to walk all the way up to the top of the mountain to the temple. I cannot imagine walking all this distance.

Legend says that Goddess *Manakamana* grants anything that a person desire from the heart. *Manakamana* means 'fulfilling the desire' in Nepali. I noticed that some people had chickens and goats to take up to the temple. My Mom said they were the offerings to the tiger on which the goddess sits. We saw a lot of people in the temple and everyone was pushing and pulling to get a glimpse of the Goddess. It was actually funny to see adults shoving like preschoolers. People were throwing flowers at the statue, lighting candles and chanting prayers.

Next, on our way to Pokhara we stopped at the restaurant at the junction where river *Trishuli* meets River *Marsyangdi*. The view was spectacular! Pokhara was the most

beautiful place I've ever seen. With lake Fewa and the Himalayas soaring in the background, I thought I could live here forever if I could. We made our way into the city and found our hotel. Our VIP package made the hotel manager think that we were real VIPs! He showed us our rooms, which had a balcony facing the lake and we had quite a view. After we freshened up we walked to the lake front.

We put our feet in the water hoping that small guppies would come! The water was quite warm so lots of people were there.

Me and my brother decided to go on a small canoe into the lake but the boat operators were on a strike so we could not. Seeing our gloomy faces, my Dad was determined to get us a boat ride. He found a teen boy getting ready to set off to his home in boat across the lake. He convinced him to give us ride along the shore. That was sufficient for us to take a few snaps in the boat. My Dad handed 150 rupees in the boy's hand. After that, we were quite hungry so we decided to have Momo in one of the roof top restaurant from where we could see bustling street below.

On the way to Chitwan we went to Bandipur. The road leading to Bandipur on mountain top was narrow and winding. On the way, we saw goats being raised in the goat farm. In Bandipur, my brother surprised us all by walking all the way to the top of the hill without resting! To my Mom and Dad that was a huge accomplishment. Walking up the mountain took a lot of time so we were late to go to Chitwan. We quickly came down and the driver was ready at the base. We quickly sat in and we were off. Then we got some glimpse of Mt. Makalu as the cloud yielded for your vision. When we arrived in Chitwan, we missed the Tharu dance, one fun thing in the package that Sharad Phupaju has arranged. In Chitwan, the temperature was 97 degrees Fahrenheit at night! We slept uncomfortably. The next morning, we headed to elephant ride through the jungle. We did not see rhinoceros or tiger as I was hoping to, but settled on couple of deer that we saw along the way. Then came the most fun part: the elephant bath! Me and my brother rode on one elephant and my Mom and Dad were on the other elephant. The elephant splashed water on us continuously until we said 'no more please to the Mahout. We were all wet!

We headed out back to Kathmandu. This ended our two night three days whirlwind travel around Pokhara, Bandipur and Chitwan with Manakamana on the way. That's all folks!



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Anita and Dhurba Shrestha

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Anita and Gaury Adhikary

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Nita and Rajendra Khatiwada

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Maya and Sohan Khatiwada

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Wendy and Sharada Thapa

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Ek Narayan and Tulsa Subedi

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Raghu and Gayatra Acharya

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Hemanta and Srijana Bhetuwal

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Purushotam and Kamala Bohora

Don't Get Digested

If a tiger hunts, eats and digest a prey, one does not say the tiger and the prey 'flowed into one another to produce a better one', or both 'changed for the better.' Rather, the food of the tiger becomes a part of the tiger's body. The prey is broken down and obliterated. "The Dharmic traditions and wisdom are compromised or even obliterated once they can be substituted with Western equivalents which are not capable of accurately representing the dharma", writes Rajiv Malhotra in his book "Being Different." This statement accurately captures the state of Dharmic traditions ever since the colonization of India by Britain and Western ideas imposed upon Dharmic concepts. Anything of worth is being actively stripped off the Dharmic traditions of Hinduism, and cleverly being appropriated by the West by 'innovative' history writing and the slogan of universalism. On the other hand, anything seemingly not worth appropriating is blamed on Hinduism. Going back to the tiger and the prey analogy, while any part of the prey that is palatable to the tiger is consumed and digested, the undesirable parts are left as belonging to the prey. The left over parts also decay and disappear or become unrecognizable over time leaving behind no trace of the prey. Similarly, by associating just the bad cultural practices with Dharmic traditions and shaming the Dharma followers can eventually lead to the obliteration of Dharmic civilization.



Dasharath Lohar

The digestion of the Dharmic civilization is at full speed, often with active partnership of western religious institutions, their academic backers and some gullible Hindus. Take for example the case of Yoga. Yoga has been an integral part of Dharmic traditions for spiritual and physical well beings since Vedic times. However, there is a concerted effort to dissociate it from Hinduism either by citing manufactured history or under the garb of universalism. The universalists argue that 'Yoga benefits everyone, so it belongs to the whole of humankind not just Hinduism.' And unfortunately many Hindus buy that argument. The disagreement is not with the practice of Yoga for the benefit of any and all of humankind, but with breaking Yoga from its Dharmic roots. There are three fold harms caused by uprooting Yoga from Hinduism, first it gets ready for digestion by the West, second the Yoga practitioner benefits only partly (just physical fitness, no spiritual benefit), and the third it does not evolve since it is broken from its roots. The first harms only Hindu culture, but the other two harm the whole of humanity. Some Hindus applaud the digestion of Dharmic practices by the West as assimilation, acceptance or even acculturation, unaware of the harm caused by this process. In this instance, the 'Take back Yoga campaign' launched by Hindu American Foundation since the last several years is laudable. Even from scientific viewpoint, cultural homogenization of the whole human race cannot be a good idea. Nature creates and maintains diversity, which is beneficial in the long run. Therefore, cultural digestion of Dharmic traditions in order to create homogeneous cultural and spiritual practices needs to be opposed by all well-wishers of progress and civility.

Followers of Dharmic traditions living in the west such as in Unites States are vulnerable and exposed to digestion by the host country's dominant culture and religion. In this case, both the individual identity and cultural practices are in danger of being digested. A loss of cultural identity can lead to rootlessness leaving the person to nowhere. It is particularly true for the young generation from immigrant families. Practice of the Dharmic culture and spirituality at home and in the community can be a big support to our young generation for them to remain rooted in Dharma. However, it does not mean that we have to be hostile to the host country's traditions. We must be completely dedicated to the cause of our adopted country. Mutual respect is the way to live and progress together. Dharmic traditions are inherently pluralistic, celebrating diversity of paths, and hence never have had any problem adjusting to unfamiliar territory. Sri Madhav Sadashiv Gowalkar, known as Guruji, was a noted intellectual and advocate of the preservation of native culture in India. He wrote letters to his colleagues living in western countries on how to preserve the Dharmic identity. Here, I would like to point out some of his thoughts for the benefit of our Nepalese community in the US.

Maintain the Dharmic culture. Practice it at home and in the community. Explain to our children the reasons behind the practices that we follow. Speak your native language with your kids at home. Remember that your language is the best means to communicate your culture. Describing a culture in a foreign language sometimes may sound absurd. If you can make your children learn your native language, more than half of the work of passing your culture to your children is done!

Do not blindly adopt the western culture. Try to understand whether it can lead to the digestion of your cultural practice or whether it will have some unintended consequence for the family and yourself. One example is beef. Beef is plentiful here, and is a staple for the native culture. However, for Dharma followers from Nepal, it is a taboo. Should we start consuming beef? One question to ponder would be whether it is necessary to consume beef to survive or thrive in the US. The answer would be no. There are plenty of food choices even of meat other than beef available. Additionally, we have also heard of problems associated with beef consumption such as cancer, depression and mad cow disease.

Do not fragment the Dharma community based on national origin, regional or linguistic affiliation, or *jati*. As it is said, *Sanghe Shakti Kaliyuge*, meaning in present day of Kaliyuga, the power is in unity. Dharma followers are a minority in this country, and if we sub-divide further it will be hard to make our voice heard. A strong united community also enforces the validity of the cultural practices not only to the children born and raised here but also to the first generation immigrants. Remember that this country is your 'karma bhumi', the land of your actions and opportunities. Work hard and progress within the rules of the land. Be with your country in the time of need. This is what Dharma teaches to all its followers.

Also keep in mind that Dharma and Hindu culture has lot more to offer to the world. Yoga, Meditation, Ayurveda and spices are not the only Hindu things that can benefit humanity at this time. The Hindu concepts such as respects for multiple paths to divinity, respects and conservation of nature, service to the humanity are as relevant today as ever before. So champion the salient features from Hindu culture and share with people around you.

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Uma and Chandra Shrestha

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Prabhat and Anita Pokharel

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Ananda Tiwari

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Sarita and Keshav Parajuli

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Tara Deepa and Needha Pokharel

मानवीयता हराएका हामीहरु

रेखाकुसुम रेग्मी

अखबारका पानाभरी देख्नु
कलिला कोपिलाहरु चिमोएका,
आँखा नखुल्दै सालैसँग फ्याकिएका
काँडाले घोच्दा कस्तो भयो होला,
कमिलाले टोक्दा कति रोयो होला ।

टिभिका पर्दाभरी हेर्छु,
संगै जीउने श्रीमानले गला रेट्यो अरे ।
बाउले नै छोरीलाई श्रीमती बतायो अरे
अनि, तेत्तिले नी पुगेन अब,
ढुब्न लाको हजुरबुवाबाट नातिनी बलात्कृत भई अरे ।
बालिका नै अब आमा बनिन् रे ।

अनि रेडियोले त फुकेको फुक्यै छ,
पल्लो गाउँकी फुकी बज्यै बोसी भनि कुटिडिन् रे ।
उनको सेतै कपाल पनि बाकि राखेनन् अरे ।
थलिएको शरिर त झन उठ्न नसक्ने भयो अरे ।
न त बोल्न सकिन उनी न त हैन भन्न नै रे ।
भुन्टी सानीको कस्तो भाग्य?
डेढ वर्षे कलिलो उमेर,

तातो पानाीमा जीउ पारिन्
अस्पताल पुगिन पियन भेटिन
आमाको बुबु चुस्दै थिइन,
आँखाभरी आसु झार्दै सुई लाईन्
तर न त फेरी बुबु चुसिन
नत फेरी घर फिरिन् ।

अनि अनलाईन पानामा त झन के के हेर्नु,
के के देख्नु, के के सुन्नु,

साईला दाईको मन आज किन दुंगा दुंगा बन्यो,
मनभित्रको सहिष्णुता, ममता किन कता हरायो ।
साईली दिदीको मनको माया कता बिलायो
अरु रुदा खस्ने आसु कता हरायो ।

तिमी के थियौ, म के थिए, के पो भईयो अहिले ।
माया, ममता, सदभाव, भाईचारा सबै थियो पहिले ।
मान्छे भएर के गर्नु अब ? मानवियता हराएका हामीहरु ।

चौध नेपाली

युवराज उप्रेती, मायामी, फ्लोरिडा

मेची खोलाको पुर्वी सिमा सुरक्षाको जिम्मा लिएको छ
कोशीले मलिलो पानी छरेर अन्नबीज हुर्काएको छ
अनि सगरमाथाले विश्वको शिर बनेर देशको गौरव बढाएको छ ।

जनकपुरले न्याय र धर्म बाड्न सिता र जनकलाई जन्माएको छ
नारायणीले आफ्नो बेगमा देश र जनताको कष्ट बगाएको छ
बागमतीले पवित्र पानी छरेर सम्पूर्ण नेपालीलाई आशिर्वाद दिएको छ
अनि गण्डकीले तेज गतिमा बगेर शत्रुलाई होशियार गराएको छ ।

लुम्बिनीले बुद्धलाई चिनाएर स्नेहको बाटो हिड्न सिकाएको छ
भेरीले आफ्नो निश्चल वेगमा बीरताको ईतिहास सजाएको छ
राप्तीले आफ्नो छातीमा नेपालको प्रेम बोकेर बगेको छ
अनि धौलागिरिले अटल बनेर बाहादुर बन्न सिकाएको छ ।

कर्णालिने घुम्दैफिर्दै बगेर सहिष्णुताको सन्देश बाँडेको छ
सेतिले अन्धकार गहिराईमा पनि शान्त भएर हिड्न सिकाएको छ
अनि महाकालीले पश्चिमको सिमा अडिग भएर रंगेको छ ।

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Bob Gerzoff

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Dr. Narkaji Gurung & Mrs. Draupadi Gurung

*Wishing Nepalese Association in Southeast America
grand success in
9th NASEA ANMA Convention,
Spartanburg, South Carolina*

CK Parajuli

**Former President, Nepalese Association of Georgia
Manager**

**Natural's Ice Cream, Yogurt &
Smoothies at CNN Center, Atlanta**



*Best wishes to the organizers and host of
9th NASEA ANMA Convention
in Spartanburg, South Carolina*

**Mohan Timilsina
CHEVRON at Pleasant Hill, Georgia**

माटो मुनीका सपनाहरु

दिवाकर सिग्देल- मायामी, फ्लोरिडा

मध्य रातमा, एकान्त कोठामा,
इट-काठ मसंग बोल्दै छन् ।
जुटेका छौ हामी साथ,
गारो ठाडो पार्न आज ।
छौ तिमी किन घोर निराश,
देश ठाडो पार्न आज ।

सोची सोची ब्याकुल छु म,
रुनलाई आशु छैन,
निन्नलाई थुक छैन,
समयको पिटाई सिहरहदा
मुटुमा घाउको अर्थ छैन ।
चिट चिट पसिना आउँछ,
बुलुक बुलुक कान बल्किन्छ,
किरी किरी किराहरुको साथमा,
चारैतिर ओईलाएको आशमा,
भाग्य खोज्दै छु म ।

ओछानबाट घमण्डले,
म कठै ईट भन्थे ।
आज अचानक उनीहरु,
करणा हस्टी छर्दै छन् ।
मेरा शरीरका हात-पाउ,
ब्यथै पलाएको ठान्दाहुन् ।
संकीर्ण बिचारको भुमरी भित्र
सर्बत्र जकिडएको देख्दाहुन ।
दया भावले एक फिलिंगो
ज्ञान झोस्न खोज्दाहुन ।

मध्य रातमा, एकान्त कोठामा,
इट-काठ मसंग बोल्दै छन् ।
भेला हुने चौतारोले,
आज तिमीलाई डाक्दै छ ।
कुल्ची हिँड्ने गोरेटोले,
तिमीलाई द्वार खोल्दै छ ।
तिम्रोलागी सुबास छर्न,
फूलहरु फुल्दैछन ।
माहुरीहरु तिम्रै लागि
मह जम्मा पार्दै छन ।

कर्मभूमि तिमी नेपाल,
तिमीलाई नै खोज्दैछ ।
हजार स्वप्न संसार चिहाउन,
कर्मठ हात पखिरहेछ ।
एउटा फूलको बोटलाई सोध,
माटोमुनी छन् कती स्वप्नहरु !
फूल बनि सुबास छर्न त्यहाँ,
तछाड मछाड र भिडन्त छ ।
आऊ तिमी पाखुरा लडाऊ,
यो भुमीमा नौरंगी फूल फूलाउ !!



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Dr. Bishwa Acharya and Renu Acharya

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Dr. Prakash Malla and Anju Malla

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Avi and Poonam Malla

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Dhan & Anita Thapa Magar

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Sanjeeb and Sushmita Baral

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Dr. Bhaskar Kunwar

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Prem Kunwar & Mrs. Raju Kunwar

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Dhundi Raj and Rashmi Ghimire

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Samir Upadhaya

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Mani Nepali Paneru

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Yogeshor Karki

धुलोमा रमाउदा

चूडामणि खनाल
मायामी, फ्लोरिडा

आज भन्दा करीब २५ - ३० वर्ष अगाडी होला, म कक्षा ६ मा पढ्थे, अरनिको प्रस्तावित माध्यमिक बिध्यालय दुर्गापुरीमा । हाम्रो घर खेति अठियाबारी (मोरंग उर्लाबारीबाट दक्षिण- करिब एक घण्टा पैदल यात्राको दुरी) मा भएकोले हामी त्यहिँ बस्थ्यौ । सुन्दर दाईले एउटा लेखमा भने जस्तै, हाम्रो अवस्था God most be crazy भन्ने फिल्ममा चित्रण गरिएको एउटा अनकन्टार अफ्रिकी गाउमा एउटा कोकाकोलाको बोतलले ल्याएको हंगामा जस्तै थियो । अनकन्टार बस्ति, प्रशस्त रुखहरु, कोकिलको चिरबिर, ढुकुरको कुर्ल्याई अनि टाढा टाढा कुकुर भुकेको र मिल चलेको सुनिने शान्त गाउँ थियो मेरो अठियाबारी ।

दर्शै ताका थियो, सयपत्रीका कोपिला भर्खर फुट्न लागेका थिए । पोहोर साल त क्यात्तुकेले आंगनै ढाकेको थियो, यसपाली चै धेरै नै थुंगे फूल होला जस्तो छ, आमा खुसी देखिनु हुन्थ्यो । बिद्यालय बन्द थियो, वातावरण पनि रमाइलो नै ।

यसपाली पनि दमाई काकाले हाम्रो दर्शैको लुगा ट्याममा नसक्ने होला भनेर सारै चिन्ता थियो । गाउँका सबैले कान्छो दमाई भन्थे तर म आफु भन्दा ठुला सबैलाई काका भनेर सम्बोधन गर्दथे । माथला घरे मेघराजको लुगा हिजै आइपुगेकाले उसको भुइँमा खुट्टा थिएन । बजगाईको छोराहरुको दर्शैको लुगा लिन बुवा गई सक्नु भएको गाउँ भरी हल्ला छ । आफ्नो भने पोहोर साल टिकाको भोलिपल्ट मात्र दर्शैको नयाँ लुगा लाउन पाइएकोमा अझै सम्म पीर लागिराछ ।

अहिले सम्झिँदा, म अलि बदमास पनि न भएको होइन । सार्है धेरै खोप्पी र गुच्चाको नशाले गर्दा मेरा ढाडमा बुवा-आमाको सुम्लाहरु पनि नपरेका हैनन् । जति कुटाई खाएपनि खेलन चै छोड्न सकेको थिएन । मेरो ब्रतबन्ध भर्खर मात्र भएकोले होला मलाई खोप्पी र गुच्चा खेलेको देखेपनि बुवा आमाले नदेखे जस्तो गर्नु हुन्थ्यो, अर्थात् खै कसरी हो, खेलन छुट थियो केहि दिनलाई । म भन्दा धेरै छुराहरु (जान्ने) हुदा हुदै पनि त्यस ताका सायद ब्रतबन्धको भगवानको कृपाले हो या किन हो म सधैं जित्थे । संयोगबस पढाईमा पनि अगाडि नै हुन्थे । कुनै कुरामा पनि मलाई कसैले जित्यो भने मलाई सह्य हुदैन थियो ।

उर्लाबारी र दुर्गापुरी जोड्ने मूलबाटो भेट्न हाम्रो घरबाट करीब २० मिनेट जति हिड्नु पर्थ्यो । एक दिन को कुरा हो, आयो आयो भन्दै ४ - ५ जनाको एउटा हुल हाम्रो घर हुदै मूल बाटो तिर हान्नियो । त्यसैमा एउटा साथीले भन्यो- चूडामणि.. आयो आयो .. जाने होइन ? म पनि आँखा चिम्लेर संग संगै कुदी हाले । नभन्दै टडक चलेको आवाज सुनियो टाढा कहिँ क्षितिजमा । मास्तिरबाट आएको हुनाले त्यसलाई भेट्न तल्लो बाटो छड्के हान्दै हामी कुद्यौ । धन्न हिलो थिएन त्यो खोल्सो सजिलै काट्यौ अनि मकैका ढोड भाचदै, घसेटा पन्छ्याउदै स्याँ स्याँ र फ्याँ फ्याँ गर्दै दौडी रह्यौ । मेरो स्वास्थ्य अवस्था त्यति राम्रो थिएन र त्यति सारो कुद्न पनि सकिदैनथे । सबै साथीहरुले छोडेर दौडे । अरु साथीहरुले जितेको देख्दा झन् सह्य भएन र न्वारान देखिको बल लगाएर दौडे । यसै त स्वास बढी राखेको बेला झन् म आलीमा ठेस लागेर लडे पछि अब भने उनीहरुलाई टाढेबाट हेर्नु शिवाय अरु विकल्प थिएन । साथीहरु मूल बाटो पुग्नु पनि, त्यो टडक ठ्याक्कै आइपुग्यो अनि साथीहरु त्यस टडकको पछि पछि दौडिरहेको दृश्य मैले मनले नमानी नमानी पनि हेर्नु पर्यो । सुक्खा मौसम, कच्ची बाटो र त्यो टडकले उडाएको धुलोमा साथीहरु रमाउदै र त्यसको धुवाँको मज्जा लिदै उनीहरु धेरै पर सम्म त्यो टडकलाई पछ्याउदै गए । आँफुलाई अझै आस भएर होला घस्रदै घस्रदै भएपनि मुलबाटो भेटे । धुलो प्रसस्तै भएपनि धुवाको बास भने न्युन थियो । केहि समय पछि साथीहरु फर्केर कति रमाइलो गरेको, कति धेरै धुवा सुघेको र टडकलाई छोएको पनि कुरा सुनाए । मैले पनि सुघे बुझिस... मैले गफ दिन थाले किनकि मलाई सानो हुनु थिएन । आफुलाई अरुले जितेको भन्दा पनि त्यो टडकको धुवाको मज्जा लिन नपाएकोले धेरै दिन सम्म पिरोलिरह्यो ।

त्यो धुलो आफ्नो थियो, त्यसमा मातृभूमिको सुवास थियो । त्यो संसार धेरै रमाइलो थियो । भाग्यरेखाको लहरामा लत्रिदै आज यो मरुस्थल भनौ या कर्मभूमिमा बजारिन पुगियो । धन्य छ मेरो जन्मभूमि जसले मलाई यति धेरै माँया दिएर मलाई ऋण लगायो जुन मलाई तिर्न यो जुनीमा धेरै गार्हो पर्ला तर तिम्रो प्रेम र मेरो बालापनका स्मृतिहरु मेरो मानसपटलमा सधैं रही रहने छ ।

Nepali Delicacies

By Srisa Bhatta, Cary, North Carolina

There are many Nepali delicacies, but those most eaten ones are rice rings (sel roti), rice pudding (kher), and fulaura (bara). I have noticed that Nepali delicacies also depend on families and which part of Nepal they are from. The listed delicacies are the ones my family and many other Nepali families I have seen make and consider as delicacies.

Rice rings are also called "sel roti" in Nepali. These are circular sweet items made from rice batter and other things. I think rice rings are the hardest of all sweets to make. To make rice rings, the ingredients needed are, rice, butter, sugar, oil, and any good smelling spices (e.g., cardamom, fenugreek seeds). To make rice rings, you first have to grind wet, a few hours water soaked rice into a thick paste. While you are grinding, you add some butter, sugar and good smelling spices.



Then, you have to heat oil in a deep, thick metal pan. Then you put some of the rice batter on your hand and slowly pour into a circular shape and deep fry until crisp turning frequently in medium heat until rice rings turn golden brown. Rice rings make a great snack any time of the day, and goes great with milk or tea. Sometimes, I have seen my family eat this with potato salad (aloo ko aachar). I think making rice rings by hand is an art. My grandmother makes the best ones in the world using her hand. I can eat at least three when they are fresh and hot. A lot of Nepali people make rice rings during Tihar religious festival.

Rice pudding is another Nepali delicacy enjoyed by a lot of Nepali. It is also called "kher" in Nepali. To make rice pudding, you need rice, milk, sugar, butter and other ingredients like cashews, raisins and saffron as preferred. Rice, milk and a little bit of sugar are a minimum ingredients needed and other ingredients you can include as you like. In a deep, thick pot, boil milk for 15-20 minutes. Then, you put raw rice. Make sure not to use too much rice. If too much rice is used, rice pudding will turn out like a regular rice at the end of cooking. You can add cashews, raisins and saffron at the end when cooked rice and milk is a little pasty. Rice pudding makes a great dessert after a big dinner. I am not a big fan of rice pudding but I have seen rice pudding made for many religious events.

Fulaura is the only delicacy that does not have rice in it. My dad's family calls them "bara". To make fulaura, you need maas ko daal, water, salt, cumin and ginger and oil for frying. A day ahead, you have to soak maas ko daal in water. Next day, you have to drain the water, take some of the black cover from soaked daal and grind it. Mix other ingredients into ground daal. This should be a thick paste where you can make ball shaped items. Heat oil in a thick, wide pot for frying. Then, make ball shaped items from mixed ingredients and drop them carefully into the hot oil to deep fry them. You have to cook them in low heat and cook them properly. Let it cool down before you eat them. They can be eaten with any spicy sauce or aachar. I have seen my family make them when we have any religious event at our house.



I hope you like the delicacies that I have described above or you may have your own. Please share with rest of the Nepali community if you have any different delicacies in your family.

If you need to contact me please email at
srisa.bhatta@gmail.com

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Arjun Mainali

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Dr. Damoder Poudel

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Dr. Paras Bhattarai

Our Adoptive Journey to Nepal

Angela Payton and Douglas Gray
Florence, SC

The decision to adopt was an easy one to make when we decided to have kids. We sort of thought we would have one, then adopt one. But our plans changed, and we were fortunate to adopt two from Nepal.

At the time of our journey, we had no clue that Nepal was available. We began with Cambodia (but it shut before we could get paperwork in) and moved on to India as we have good friends from there.

The paperwork to adopt can take anywhere from 3-6 months to collect: it is called the dossier. Our dossier had been in India for just a couple of months when our agency called and asked if we would consider Nepal. We said sure. That was in October of 2002.

In January of 2003, our agency sent us photos of a nearly 2 year old boy. We accepted immediately. As he was in a private orphanage, we would have to take two trips. My husband arrived on Feb. 15, one day after our son's 2nd birthday. It was love at first sight. Now we had to wait for Nepal to complete its paperwork.

The second trip occurred in May. We arrived on a Sunday, Mother's Day to be exact. And like my husband, I fell in love with this little shy guy. We completed the paperwork with Nepal and the US embassy, and he arrived in the US on May 23 via LAX airport. His first American food: McDonald's french fries.

And now in 2013, that little boy has grown into a pre-teen: tall, handsome, and quite creative, having written 3 screenplays (horror ones of course). He is starting 7th grade today -- middle school. He is a little nervous but looks forward to making new friends and learning new concepts. He is our precious son for which we are grateful to Nepal for trusting us to care for one of their own. And though his name is Bibek -- he prefers to be called Bek instead.

Our second adoption was more difficult than our first as the country was in turmoil over the Maoists -- with many strikes. Her adoption was a long one: 18 months from submitting the dossier to the agency to arriving in Nepal to bring her home. And I was highly concerned about her medical issues, though our pediatrician (who was an adoptive parent too) felt that once in the US, many of her conditions would be resolved. And he was right.

At first in Nepal, Kiran was a quiet child, like she was assessing us: were we worth her time, and the first person to get her to laugh as she was quite leery of being with this odd couple was her brother. She took a hot bath, which I think must have been her first because she looked like a super happy fish in the water, and also learned from her brother the peanut butter and jelly song, which we have a video of -- quite adorable.

But it was after the bath, in clean pajamas that Kiran relaxed -- her brother got her to do so by playing hide and go seek in the curtains. She laughed and laughed and was very sad when it had to end for bedtime to come.

Prior to getting Kiran, we were told she was girl who knew how to get what she wanted. She is one of the most spirited, outgoing, compassionate child we know. She is also a very athletic: having taken 4 years of gymnastics, taken swim lessons at the Y and hopes to join their swim team. Her greatest goal in life is to be a veterinarian, a goal she has voiced for over three years. Her compassion for animals will make her a very loving and skilled vet. Her strength of will and motivation will work in her favor in achieving these goals.

Today both children are very well: well adjusted, healthy (nearly never ill except for some sinus issues), truly brother and sister as far as we can tell from the sibling rivalry. They love each other, unless fighting for the TV or Xbox. People tell us how lucky the kids are -- we always correct that and tell them we are the lucky ones; we are lucky because Nepal took a chance on us to raise two of their beautiful children.



The above images are 16x16 tiles embossed with images of us taking from when we returned from Nepal with our daughter. Dad is a professor of arts-ceramics, and Mom is a publications editor at the same university.

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Uma Thapa

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Radesh Pandit

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Shekhar Dhungel

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Ram and Indira Basyal

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Narayan and Roja Neupane

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Teertha and Jaya Ghimire

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Binaya Regmi and Luna Sharma

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Gokarna and Prabha Aryal

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Rajeev Shrestha and Barsha Nagarsenkar

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Suresh and Anju Basyal

Lumbini

In my trip to Nepal during May, 2013, I went to many fascinating places. One of the most interesting places I went was Lumbini.

Lumbini is a holy area where Gautama Buddha was born in the full moon -day of April about 2556 years ago. In Sanskrit language Lumbini means lovely. Lumbini has lots of big and small temples, pagodas, and monasteries. The major parts of Lumbini are Mayadevi temple, the Ashoka pillar, the "Puskarni" pond (Photo 1), and a sacred Bodhi tree. The Mayadevi temple is the place where Buddha was born. When I was there, I saw the exact location where Buddha was born, which well preserved. The "Puskarni" pond has a historical value because Mayadevi took a shower there before giving birth to Lord Buddha. The Bodhi tree is next to the pond. It is a huge fig tree, commonly known as Peepal tree in Nepal. On the right side of the Mayadevi temple there is a tall pink sandstone pillar called the Ashoka pillar. This pillar is six meters tall. It is called Ashoka pillar because an Indian king named Ashoka established this pillar to commemorate his visit in about 245 BC. Besides these structures, the Lumbini has ruins of ancient monasteries (Photo 2). Since 1997, it has been accounted for UNESCO World Heritage Site because of its beauty and cultural significance.

Lumbini is located at 300km west of the capital city of Kathmandu. The total area of Lumbini is two square miles. Inside the holy site of Lumbini, there are many nice gardens. Peace garden is the most famous one. This beautiful garden is full of different varieties of flowers. One interesting fact about Lumbini is that in the monastery zone people are not allowed to build shops, hotels, or restaurants. In Lumbini, there are big and beautiful temples and monasteries from many different countries. Some of the temples are still under construction. The Chinese, Japanese, Burmese, Thai, and German's peace pagodas are completed.

Lumbini is very important and well-known because Buddha was born there. Here's the story of Buddha. He used to be known as Prince Siddhartha who lived more than 2,500 years ago. His father was King Suddhodana, and his mother was Queen Mayadevi. They lived in a city called Kapilavattu in Nepal. One day, when Queen Mayadevi was visiting her mother who lives in Lumbini, she gave birth to Prince Siddhartha. Days after that she died. At the age of 16, he married Yasodhara. At the age of 29, he left to become a monk to understand why all creatures suffer. At the age of 35, Siddhartha became the Buddha, the Supreme Enlightened One.

Lumbini, the Birth Place of Lord Budha is a must-visit place in your lifetime. The holy environment, the artistic pagodas, temples, monasteries, beautiful birds, and gardens just make you feel that Buddha is still here, watching over us, helping us out.



Summit Pradhan

**First Place Winner: Elementary School 5th Grade:
Morrisville Elementary School Cary, NC**



*Mr and Mrs Anup Srivastav wish the very best for the Grand
Nepali Convention in Spartanburg, South Carolina
organized by NASEA and ANMA and
hosted by South Carolina Association of Nepalese.*

Celebrating Deepawali (Tihar)

In Nepal people celebrate Tihar in November. It is a special festival that we celebrate for five days. Each day is celebrated for a different reason. We celebrate this festival by decorating our home and temples with lights and colors.

Hello, my name is Suhani Dhungel and today I will tell you about Tihar (also known as Deepawali). The first day of Tihar is called "Kaag Tihar". On this day, we cook food and sweets and put it outside so that crows can enjoy it before we eat. The crows are considered as the Lord of Death (Yamaraj). When the crows "caw", it is said that it is a sign for sadness approaching. The goal of Kaag Tihar is to keep the crows happy and pleased that day.

Next, I will talk about the second day of Tihar, "Kukur Tihar." People in Nepal do a puja for their dogs on this day and put "tika" and flower garlands on them. The dogs are also offered special food. The reason we do this puja is because we want protection from our dogs. Even the stray dogs are treated with respect on this day.

Now I will tell you about the third day of Tihar which is known as "Gai Tihar", and the day of the "Laxmi Puja". According to our Hindu religion, it says that the "Gai" (cow) is holy. People in Nepal use the cow for many reasons and this animal also resembles wealth. This is why on this day, people thank the cows by doing a "puja" for them and feeding them with lots of grass. Then, in the evening, we celebrate the goddess "Laxmi" who represents wealth. We celebrate her by decorating our homes with lights and lamps and we also put on fireworks shows.

Finally, I will talk to you about the fourth and fifth day of Tihar. This day can be celebrated in a different way, depending on what your family traditions are. Some people celebrate it as "Goru (Oxen) tihar". Some also celebrate it as "Gobardhan (Cow dung) Puja" or as most Newars celebrate it... "Mha (Self) Puja". On the next day (which is also the final day), it is "Bhai Tika". This is the day where sisters put colorful tika on their brothers to give their brothers a long and happy life. In return for their prayers, the brothers give the sisters gifts and money. After the puja ceremony is over, the whole family gets together to enjoy each other's company.

In conclusion, I think that Tihar is an awesome Nepali holiday. It shows how important family is, and lets us learn more about our culture. I am glad that I am Nepalese because I get to do cool things like light the lamps, and get presents from my brother on Tihar. I can't wait for this year's Tihar!



Suhani Dhungel

**Second Place Winner: Elementary School
Morrisville, NC**



Congratulations Shristi Gupta



Annual Prahald and Bindu Pant Scholarship Award of \$1500 managed by Nepalese Association in Southeast America (NASEA) has been awarded to Shristi Gupta of Greenville, South Carolina. The selection criteria is the financial need of the student and her/his family. Students who have graduated from high school but have not yet entered college are eligible for the award. This award has been established in 2013 and the call for application went out in July. The next call for application will go out in July, 2014 and the selection will be made in August, 2014.

Tihar: The Best Celebration



Sampada Acharya

Third Place Winner: Elementary School
Grade 5th Grade: Laurel Park Elementary School
Apex, NC

"YES! The day is finally here!" I shouted. I was very excited because it was Tihar. Tihar is very important for us because we honor our brothers, sisters and animals that help us every day.

Tihar is the second largest festival in Nepal to be celebrated. The celebration lasts for 5 days. It comes soon after Dashain. It is also known as Deepawali, and the Festival of Light because every house is lit with candles.

The two flowers Sayapatri(Marigold) and Makhamali(Globe Amaranth) are very important for this festival so we can make mala (garland) for Tihar. We have always had a relationship with animals, but in the first 4 days, we honor cows, dogs, crows, and oxen.

The first day is Kag Tihar. On this day, we worship crows. As offerings, we put rice with butter for the crow. The reason we do that is because in Hindu mythology, the cawing of the crows symbolizes sadness and grief. We give the food, so the we can avoid grief and death in the family. The second day is Kukur Tihar. On this day, we worship dogs. We put garlands around its neck and put tika on its forehead. We also give rice and butter to the dog to eat. Dogs are believed to be the messenger of Lord Yamraj (the god of death).

The third day is Gai Tihar and Laxmi Puja. On this day, we worship cows. We benefited a lot from cows. We show respect by putting mala on their neck and tika on their foreheads, offering them with grass and giving rice flour with sweetened selroti. In the evening, we perform Laxmi Puja. We would string lights and light candles to help goddess Laxmi(goddess of wealth) find her way to the household.

The fourth day is Goru Tihar, Mha puja, and Goberdhan puja. We celebrate Goru Tihar. Some celebrate Goberdhan puja, and others perform Mha Puja, to wish themselves to have a good and a long life.

After finishing all the rituals, the last day of celebration is called BHAI TIKA! This is a day to worship brothers and sisters. Brothers would travel long distances to meet their sisters, so I did.

I went to Nepal to celebrate with them. The day before Bhai Tika, my two sisters and I made mala of Makhamali and Sayapatri flowers to all of us. Next day, we put tika and gave Makhamali garlands to our brothers first, then they did the same to us. We gave fruits, nuts, sweets, selroti, and gifts. Our brothers presented us with money.

We prayed for our brother's long and happy life. They did the same for us. Then we ate, danced and sang together. I think that Tihar was a lot better in Nepal. Giving food to crows and dogs, putting tika on oxen and cows was real fun, but best of all, I got to celebrate Bhai Tika with all of my cousins.



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Manish and Dipti Guragain

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Sradha and Kiran Adhikari

Bringing Nepal into America

Being yourself is more important than being who others expect you to be. Being a Nepali-American, we are expected to follow both Nepali and American cultures concurrently. Often times, it is tough to follow both cultures while maintaining your identity. Over time, I learned that no matter what people think, it is crucial to preserve your origin and identity. Even though we are living in America, we are still Nepali at heart. We shouldn't be afraid to show people the real you. I learned this the day I wore a BHOTO-SURUWAL to my school.

It was winter time in Nebraska and it was snowing hard. We had just come to America so I was still wearing my Nepali clothes. I started going to school after my jet-lag was gone and it was quite fun. One day, teacher told us that we were having a pajama day. She told us to wear our favorite pajamas. As my school in Nepal had uniforms, we didn't have pajama day there. So I didn't know what pajama day meant. I asked my friends about it and they told that pajama day is when we wear our favorite pajamas to school. I went back home thrilled and told my mom to get my pajamas ready. At first, my mom was perplexed to hear about pajama day at school. After I explained about this American tradition, she got convinced and told me to pick my lovely pajamas -the green and red BHOTO-SURUWAL.

BHOTO-SURUWAL is a traditional Nepalese sleep-wear often worn by babies and children. Since I had just arrived to America, I didn't have American pajamas yet. I was nervous about wearing a BHOTO-SURUWAL to school. I was terrified about what people would think of me, or if I would be teased. I thought deeply about all the possible consequences and my inner desire about my origin and identity made me not to care about what people would think of me. I am Nepali by heart so therefore I will dress like the one no matter what others would think. Finally, it was the pajama day. I went to school with my lovely pajamas on, little shy, little excited and little nervous from outside; while determined and dedicated to reveal my identity to my friends and teachers from inside.

When I saw my friends' reactions, I was very amazed. I was expecting them to laugh at me, tell me that I was weird. Surprisingly, their reactions were totally opposite. They thought my pajamas were so cool and different. One of them even asked me where I got them from. When I told them that I come from Nepal and these are the common children dresses, they were so interested. They thought it was the coolest clothing in the world. I was very pleased. All day, people glared at me. At times, it got awkward because I didn't know what they were thinking. Some kids were even making fun of me. However, I knew that not everyone in the world is nice to you and I just ignored the rude comments and criticisms. I knew what I was doing, so any comment or teasing would mean nothing to me. I was very proud that I was successful to show-case one of the most common clothing from my country to a handful of people in America. I had many appreciations and good words. For a little 2nd grader, it was a great pride to represent my country here in America.

I am so glad that all this happened. This event boosted my confidence way further. It proved that being yourself is very important and you have to live your life the way you want. Being a Nepali-American, you may encounter several hard times trying to be good at both cultures. Some people might make this even harder. Whatever the circumstances come, never compromise on your identity and origin. Even a little bit of work to promote and show-case our tradition and culture from every individual of us would ultimately make a big impact to preserve our identity. Never feel insecure and shy, always live your life as yourself and never compromise on your origin and identity.



Ayushma Sharma

**First Place Winner: Middle School
Grade 7, West Cary Middle School
North Carolina**

*Association of Nepalese in Midwest America (ANMA) Family
welcomes everyone to the NAsEA ANMA Joint Convention
in
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Bringing Nepal into America

This summer I had a chance to go to Nepal. I noticed various differences and some similarities compared to America. Different media talks about Nepalese culture, political situation and Nepal is also mentioned in many books. I still believe that majority of people don't know about Nepal. Now I've seen Nepal a lot, I am planning to write about uniqueness of Nepal for my essay.

Nepal is the only country who worships the living Goddess called "Kumari". Kumari is a pre-pubescent girl who is revered and worshiped by some of Nepal's Hindus and Nepalese Buddhists, though not Tibetan Buddhists. There are many Kumaris throughout and sometimes many in one city. The most known Kumari is the Royal Kumari in Kathmandu. She lives in a palace in the center of Kathmandu called Kumari Ghar. Every year the king of Nepal would seek out the blessing of the Royal Kumari. Now the ritual has changed since Nepal became the youngest republic country in the world, this year the president asked for the Royal Kumari's blessing. All Kumaris are from the Shakya clan. The Kumari of Bhaktapur, Sajani Shakya, was stripped of her title after coming to America to watch the premier of the movie "The Living Goddess". The elders thought that she had been tainted in America. The temple authorities in her hometown retracted their previous statement because Sajani was willing to go through a cleansing treatment. This is interesting to me and my friends because she was the only Kumari to be stripped of the title.



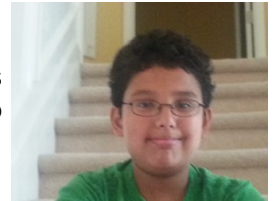
Nepalese topi is very unique. It is called Dhaka topi. I have a Nepalese Dhaka topi and I can wear that to any international functions. I also wear at Nepalese conventions. If anyone asks what it is I can explain to them that it is a unique topi from Nepal that represents Nepal. My black topi which is also called bhadgauley topi has two khukuris crossed behind the word Nepal.

Another uniqueness of Nepal is it is the birth place of Gautama Buddha. There are many Buddhists all around the world. Many people do not know that Gautama Buddha was born in Lumbini, Nepal. He was a sage whose teachings are still popular today. He taught to achieve enlightenment that we have to separate our self from worldly things and sorrow. Buddha is translated as "The Enlightened One". He is thought to be the ninth reincarnation of Lord Vishnu and Krishna being the eight.

Some of the tallest mountains are in Nepal. The tallest mountain of the world is Mount Everest. The Himalayan mountain range has shaped the culture of Nepal a lot. It also has many mountains that lead of it like K2 and Lhotse. The Himalayan mountain range has many important rivers that lead of it like the Ganges River. The two points on the Nepalese flag are representing the highest peaks in the Himalayas, and the moon represents the coolness of the Himalayas.

Nepal is very rich in Culture. We celebrate many festivals all year around. All my friends and teacher ask about red tika that I have on my forehead during one day on October. I explain to them that this is the Goddess Durga's blessing and I got it from my parents. My birthday also falls on Vijaya Dashami day. Every year I tell them that it is a blessing for my birthday and a blessing for Dashain and since Dashain or Dushara in India is well known in America because there are many Hindus here, some teachers show their students videos about Dashain and then my class understood.

After visiting Nepal this summer, I came to know that I can bring more of Nepal to America. I can always talk about Nepalese cuisine, different idols, temples, and Nepalese culture to my American friends.



Saurav Ghimire Sharma
Second Place Winner: Middle School
6th grade
Atlanta, GA



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Shubarna and Sisilia Pradhan

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Dhurba and Chanda Bhattarai

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Khagendra and Rajani Thapa

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Mukesh Singh and Sarala Pandey

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Shambhu and Sabita Panta

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Vijaya Shrestha

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Ramesh and Sudha Amatya

Bringing Nepal into America

Have you ever thought about bringing Nepal to America? How? Well I thought about bringing Nepal's money to America then I realized that America already has a lot of money and Nepal is not a rich country. So, how to bring Nepal into America? Religious harmony? Culture? Respect for life? Hard working tradition?

There are many religions living in Nepal from long time. Though Hindus are in majority, Buddhist, Muslim, Christians and other minorities also live in harmony. They participate in each other's festivals and live with harmony respecting religious values of each other. Most of the Hindu festivals are equally celebrated by Buddhists and almost all Buddhist festivals are celebrated by Hindus as well as most of the other minor religious groups. Buddha jayanti, krishnastami, Vijaya dashami, dipawali, Christmas, losar, holi purnima, maghe sankranti, saraswati puja, Chat are some of the very popular, largely celebrated festivals of Nepal.

Nepal has centuries old, very rich and unique cultures. From centuries all the different religions are prospering giving respect to each other. Nepal's culture accommodates diversities of its ethnic, social groups and is visible in its typical music, arts and crafts, food and drinks. Although a small country diverse communities were different traditional clothing in Nepal. Daura Suruwal, Sari, patuka (shawl), Bakku (Tibetan dress), Dhoti, Kurta Suruwal, Chaubandi choli are some of the popular traditional clothings wore in Nepal by all cultural groups.

Nepal has many historical places with temples, statues, places constructed with very fine art works in stone, wood, metals. Those amazing works as Darbar square of Bhaktapur, Patan, Kathmandu, Budhanilkantha, metal works in temples show how fine art works were done by Nepalese when machines were not there. The terrace farming done in mountains show how hard working Nepalese are. Nepalese should be pride for all these works and should bring Nepali pride to America.

Culturally, with different believes, life of all the animals and plants are also respected in Nepal. As for example there are days when cows, dogs, crows are also worshipped - teaching people all the animals are important for human beings well being. Isn't it in the line of modern humane society's values? Nepal has these traditions from centuries. Everybody should learn from it.

Nepal has very unique musical instruments as madal, harmonium, sarangi, basuri, special instruments made from fresh leaves etc. it has many dancing and singing events as doharigeet, Lakhe dance, rodi ghar etc. Neighbors celebrate and increase harmony among themselves with different cultural events as deusi bhailo (dance and singing tradition in one of the most celebrated festival tihar where everybody gives best wishes to each other through song and dance. All these cultures make Nepal culturally very rich and should respect for.

Respecting elders are one of the most important traditions in Nepal which are very important to all human being in the world to learn. Guru purnima is celebrated to respect teachers, father's day is celebrated to respect father, mother's day is celebrated to respect mothers. People celebrate every stage of life in Nepal. There is celebration when babies becomes ready for solid food (pasni), when boys and girls goes to puberty (nealy at that time) as Bratabanda (for boys), Surya darshan (for girls). In different cultures special event are culturally performed when people becomes 77 years, 7 months, 7 days, 7 hours old (Bhimratharohan 1) , when people sees his or her 1000 full moon in life (Bhimratharohan 2) , when people are 88 years, 8 months, 8 days, 8 hours old (Bhimratharohan 3) ... Isn't it truly amazing??

And these are the things, I would want every Nepali to bring to America from Nepal and show the world the pride of Nepal.

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Pandit Investment LLC

(Radhesh Pandit, Shila Pandit), Quat City, Iowa

Preserving Nepal's Heritage in the Melting Pot of America

I was like a deer in headlights when I first arrived in the U.S. because it was really different than Nepal. I was disappointed when I figured out that I had to adjust in a completely unusual culture. I assumed that I had no other option than to Americanize myself, but I realized I was extremely wrong about my assumption once I started to attend school. The diversity at my school made me realize that I didn't have to change myself at all, and I quickly became friends with people from numerous cultural backgrounds such as Mexico, Brazil, China, India, Japan etc. I wasn't aware about the value of culture when I lived in Nepal, but the encounter with my friends helped me to appreciate Nepali culture more than I ever had before because I recognized the importance of traditions, beliefs, values, and customs. Thus, the best way to preserve our culture is through festivals, food, language, and dance since cultural heritage is the legacy of our past that defines who we are as a person, where we come from, and what we believe in.



Monica Acharya

**First Place Winner: High School
Tucker, GA**

Since I attended a diverse school where culture was given a large amount of importance, I started to become more interested in Nepali culture. I began to learn many new things about Nepal through my parents, relatives, books, and the internet. My friends at school frequently mistook me as Hispanic, but I politely said, "No, I am Nepali, and I am from Nepal." Then they would ask me, "Where is Nepal?" I always replied, "I am from the country where the world's tallest mountain, Mount Everest, is located." I would flip my agenda-planner to the map section page, and I would show them where Nepal was – between China and India. Although Nepal appears tiny on a map, my friends looked at it curiously and asked me to tell them more about it. I gave them a lot of information about Nepal such as our country has eight of the world's ten tallest mountains; Gautama Buddha was born in

Lumbini, Nepal; Our national flag is the only non-quadrilateral flag in the world; Nepal has the highest number of Hindu followers in the world; Pashupatinath Mandir is one of the most significant Hindu temples of Lord Shiva in the world which is located in our capital city – Kathmandu; UNESCO has listed Chitwan National Park, Sagarmatha National Park, Kathmandu Upatyaka (Valley), and Lumbini as World Heritage Sites. My parents have played a major role in order to help me understand Nepali culture better. First of all, they ensure that we celebrate and understand the significance of Nepali festivals such as Dashain and Tihar. When I was younger, I thought of Dashain and Tihar as a way of receiving money and presents, but my parents taught my brother and me that Dashain indicates the triumph of virtue over evil which is symbolized by the victory of Goddess Durga who killed Mahishasura, a demon that disguised as a water-buffalo and intimidated the Earth. Similarly, Tihar is celebrated to worship Goddess Laxmi for wealth, success, and fortune; it also signifies the importance of sisters' worship for their brothers' long life. Secondly, my mother makes dal-bhat-tarkari at home, and we eat it as a family. She has taught me to make many other Nepali foods like aachaar, masu, roti etc. because she believes that culture is built around food, and it is a powerful factor that can bring many people together. Lastly, my parents force my brother and me to speak in Nepali at home instead of English. They fear that we might get detached from our culture if we forget to speak in Nepali since language is an important part of a culture.

Besides maintaining Nepali culture at home, I've done various things to promote it outside for example by volunteering at the NASEA/ANMA Joint Convention in Atlanta, and the International Heritage Festival at Encore Park; performing a dance at Nepali New Year party, and Youth Culture Festival at Lanier High School; teaching Nepali to children at the Nepali School of Atlanta; serving Nepali food at my school during International Day; participating in an international fashion-show at the Asian Cultural Experience event; giving a power-point presentation about Nepal at the Gwinnett Convention Center etc. I will continue to attend various events in the future where I can represent Nepal because the more people know about our culture; the longer it can be preserved. In conclusion, whether it is through food, music, dance, or festivals, I have promised myself that I would do everything I can to preserve our Nepali heritage because it means preserving ours and our ancestor's identity. I will pass down our traditions to my children so that the future generations will always remember their heritage. I will never forget my cultural roots as it has made me who I am today; I feel proud to be called Nepali since it makes me stand-out. After all, Nepali people were born to be unique, not to fit-in.

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Uma Thapa

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Raju and Lekha Kharel

Cultural Fusion and Identity Crisis for future generation to the people of Nepali Origin in North America

i) Background

America has traditionally been referred to as a "melting pot," welcoming people from many different countries, races, and religions, all hoping to find freedom, new opportunities, and a better way of life. American history began with waves of immigrants, bringing their own cultures and traditions to the new country. No other place in the world has such a diverse population and ethnicity. This diversity makes America what it is and, at the same time, creates the challenges it faces. Today the trend is toward multiculturalism, not assimilation. "The old "melting pot" metaphor is giving way to new metaphors such as "salad bowl" where mixtures of various ingredients that keep their individual characteristics. Immigrant populations within the United States are not being blended together in one "pot", but rather they are transforming American Society into a truly multicultural nation. they are transforming American Society into a truly multicultural mosaic." Joyce Millet. There are more than forty seven cultural groups in US according to the website of culturalssavvy.com. But within a few generation many cultural groups have been disappeared and assimilated in the mainstream American society. Being a person of Nepali origin, I have been watching the influence of American culture in many ways to the Nepalese community in America .

Aditya Dhakal

**Second Place winner: High School
Cary High School
Cary, NC**

ii) History of Nepali Immigrants in North America:

Though there is not long history of Nepali immigrant it is estimated that it started since the mid of 20th century or after second world war. Nepali Public Affair council writes that in the early fifties and sixties, few Nepalese came to the US for temporary stays as students and very few of them decided to live here permanently. In the seventies, the trend of moving to the US on a permanent basis really started and by the end of seventies, there were a few thousands Nepalese. The number gradually started to increase in the eighties and a few Nepali organization were established by that time like ANA(The Associations of Nepalese in the Americas) and ANMA (Associate of Nepalese in Mid West America). By the end of the nineties there were about one hundred thousand Nepalese in the US . In the 2000's, with the advent of the Diversity visas, mass movement of Nepalese to escape Maoist insurgency and conflict in the country , and the resettlement of Bhutanese Nepalese refugees in the US, the number of Nepalese increased exponentially. Though the last census of US in 2010 shows the number of Nepalese are around sixty thousand, it is believed far more than this number, "it is currently estimated to be more than 500,000 (five hundred thousand) and some expect it is to reach a million by 2025"-Nepali Public Affair Council. If the population of Nepali origin is reaching a million in near future in USA, it is a significant number and we should focus to maintain our identity and to be recognized as a decent community with its own distinct culture and customs. There should be activities which can help to preserve the culture heritage. If we do not initiate sincere efforts in time and wait for last hours it will be too late while new generation forget their origin being fusion in American culture.

iii) Growing in Numbers but lowering ancestor values and cultures:

In the one hand, people of Nepali origin are growing in numbers but on the other hand we are leaving our culture . In early days of migration to America, Nepali families used to be engaged in Nepali cultural activities and festivals much more than now. In recent days, programs of community organization have been influenced by American culture. In these days in Nepali program, I listen English songs instead of Nepali I watch American dances not Nepali dances. While I go to birthday parties in my Nepali friend's house I listen Hindi songs rather than Nepali songs. To be honest, I myself have read only few books and rarely watched Nepali movies . Isn't it a vital question? if we do not involve in such influential means of cultural transformation like feast and festivals, books and movies songs and dances then how we can pass Nepali culture in second generation in our new homes in North America and preserve our the identity of Nepali origin. I am afraid whether there will be crisis for identity in future generation to the people of Nepali origin . There is high risk either they will be blended to the main stream of American culture or assimilated with Indian groups losing self identity of Nepali origin.

The activities of Bhutanese Nepalese to promote Nepali language literature in North America are praise worthy regarding in this issues. As they were forced to leave their native country Bhutan due to following Nepali culture and speaking Nepali language they are more determined to preserve Nepali culture for their children even in USA. Certainly establishment of Nepali schools and essay writing activities of Neasa (Nepalese Association in Southeast America) help to preserve the cultural values of Nepal and Nepal language in our communities in America. I would like to thank to the sponsor and coordinator of such activities.

iv) Conclusion

In this way, there are opportunities and challenges to the new immigrants in US. In the one hand they have to cope in the new environment and they need to adjust their life style according to American way, on the other hand they have responsibilities of preserving the culture of their origin. If there are supports of US government in balancing between assimilating to the immigrants in new culture and preserving their forefather's values rather than focusing in melting pot and homogenous society, will be win- win situation to US government and to the immigrants . The immigrant won't have fear of identity crisis in future generation and in the same way for the government the culture brought by immigrants from the culturally rich country like Nepal will also be an asset of America in future.

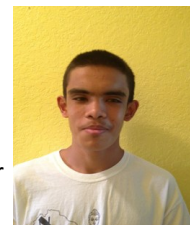
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Indian Groceries (Chicago)

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(Mr George)**

Remembering Our Roots: Carrying on Nepali Tradition in America



Swochchhanda Shrestha

**Third Place Winner: High School
Grade 9, Suncoast High School
Riviera Beach, FL**

Even though we are living in America, we are all still Nepali at heart. It is imperative that we stay true to our Nepali roots even while living thousands of miles from our homeland. We must continue to maintain our Nepali identity and uphold our traditions. It is important for us to keep our cultural identity alive and pass it on to the next generation. After all, if we forget our Nepali values, customs, and traditions, then we forget our true identity.

Primarily, we must maintain our Nepali identity to remember our traditional Nepali values. Without a doubt, Nepali tradition has taught me many values that “American” tradition would not have taught me. For instance, I have learned to always respect my elders. I reminisce of many Nepali gatherings where everyone paid their respects to the elders that were present. Of course, my parents also instilled this respect of elders within me as part of the Nepali tradition. Nepali culture has also taught me to always display compassion and kindness for others. For me, the most prominent example of this value has been my father. Over the course of the last several years, I have witnessed my father donating countless hours of his time, as well as money, to non-profit organizations and charity. Obviously, I have also seen this same value reflected in many other Nepali people. Additionally, Nepali culture has shown me the value of hard work. To me, my mother is the most striking example of this classic Nepali value. Day after day, regardless of the conditions and circumstances, I have seen her labor tremendously both at work and at home. She truly gives her full effort to any task that she is faced with, so I see her as an embodiment of the Nepali value of hard work. Of course, in order to pass on important Nepali values like these, we must preserve the Nepali culture.

In addition, I believe that the Nepali culture needs to be preserved to continue our traditional everyday customs. The most important custom of the Nepali culture is probably the actual Nepali language, which I believe every Nepali should know, regardless of where they live, where they work, and their status. Personally, I have attempted to maintain the custom of speaking the Nepali language by attending a Nepali school (called Pathshala) here in Florida and by always speaking Nepali when I am at home with my family. Another important custom of the Nepali culture is food. To maintain the Nepali culture, my mother always prepares a “Nepali” meal at least once a day. Typically, this meal consists of “dhal bhat” and vegetables, sometimes with chicken as well. Eating this food everyday helps us to stay true to our Nepali culture. Finally, yet another important custom of Nepali culture is having faith in yourself, others and God. Obviously, religion is very crucial to having this faith, so I try to stay true to Nepali religion as well. Once again, my mother helps me to maintain this Nepali custom by holding puja every day and taking my family to a bhajan every week. Additionally, I read the “Hanuman Chalisa” a few times every week to maintain the traditional Nepali religion. These traditional Nepali customs, like the rest of the Nepali culture, are satisfying and help us to remember who we are.

Even though traditional Nepali values and customs are great, my favorite part of the Nepali culture is probably the festivals. Throughout the year, we celebrate dozens of fascinating Nepali festivals. However, the most important festivals are Dashain and Tihar. Like all other Nepali festivals, Dashain and Tihar highlight the importance of family and friends. During Dashain, Nepali family and friends gather together to celebrate the goddess Durga’s victory over demons and the victory of good over evil in general. This festival is a fun time for all Nepali people as they have fun with their close ones. Also, the elders present at the gathering will bless the younger people with tika, jamara, and some money. Similarly, Tihar is also a festival that emphasizes the value of friends and family. Tihar is particularly famous for Dheusi and Bhailo, which involve going around singing songs with your friends. Tihar is also the time when we light up our houses so that they will be protected from all evils. Tihar is also famous for bhai tika, which is when the brothers of the family are blessed and given gifts by the sisters of the family. This tradition is performed so that the brothers may have prosperity and longevity in their life, as well as for their protection. In turn, the brothers also offer money or gifts, to thank the sisters for all that they do. In addition to these key festivals, there are also many Nepali festivals to pay respect to those who are important in our lives, such as festivals honoring gods, fathers, mothers, and teachers. In the Nepali culture, our festivals serve as a way of showing our respect for various different things and expressing our gratitude and appreciation.

As you can see, I am very proud to be a Nepali and particularly proud of my Nepali culture. I have experienced marvelous festivals and tremendous traditions, as well as learning valuable virtues, as part of the Nepali culture. These customs and the Nepali culture as a whole have not only benefited me, but have also helped me to remember my roots and true identity. Therefore, I strongly encourage this generation of Nepali people living in America to continue with these Nepali traditions so that they may be passed on to the next generation. Honestly, I believe that we would be robbing the next generation of an opportunity if we did not keep the Nepali culture alive for them. That is why we should formulate a plan to create a method of educating the next generation about our Nepali culture, values, traditions and festivals.

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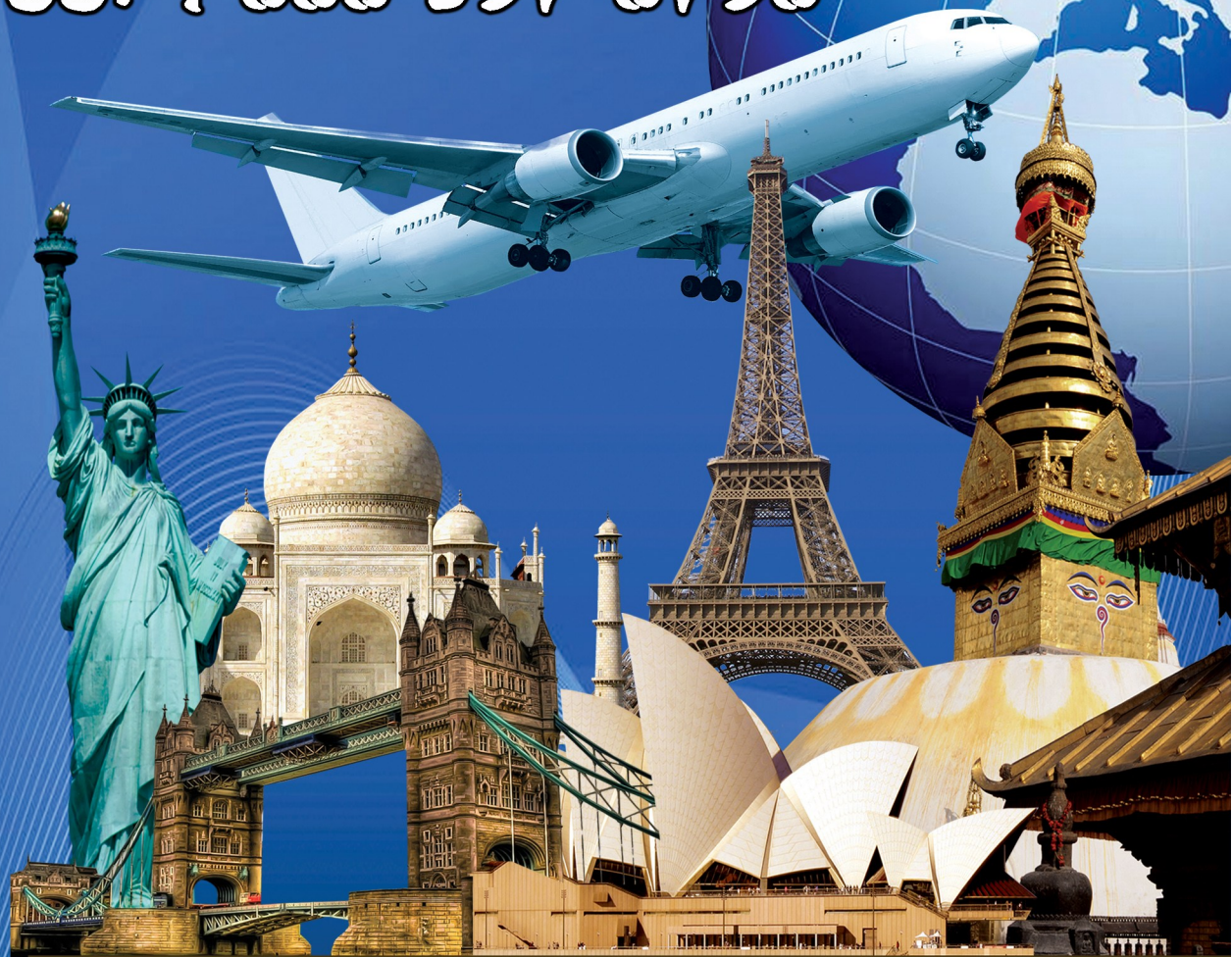
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