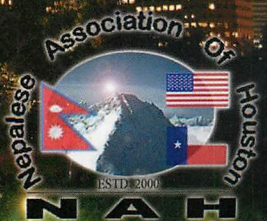




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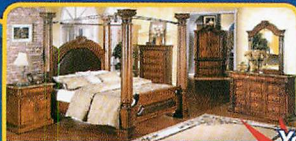
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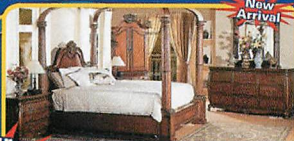
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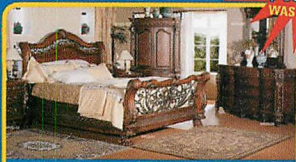
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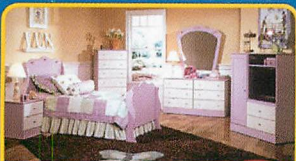
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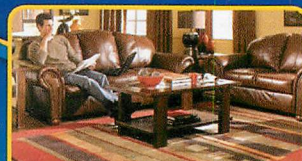


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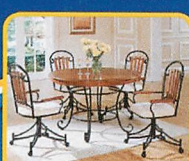
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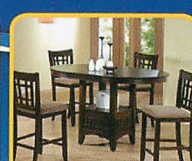
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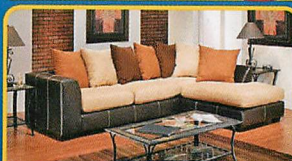
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The views and opinions, unless otherwise noted, contained herein are those of the authors and do not represent the official statements or views neither of the Nepal Vision or Nepalese Association of Houston.

Editorial

Finally, this issue of Nepal Vision Journal is in your hand. We thank you all writers and article contributors, advertisers, designers, printers and above all you the readers as without your interest and support we simply cannot think up making it.

Nepal Vision is the publication of the Houstonian Nepali Diaspora, Nepalese Association of Houston. As the title speaks itself, Nepal Vision is expected to contribute to knowledge about Nepal. Despite our constraint of focused research in Nepal and dearth of writers thereon, we tried to bring you the best in in this aspect and we believe we have achieved that goal.

Dr Ambika Adhikari who brings his background from both Harvard and MIT is with us here to share his thoughts on transfer of knowledge and technology for the development of Nepal. Dr Raju Adhikari who is also a Chairman of Skills, Knowledge and Innovation Exchange Taskforce of NRNA coordinated and helped us bring light on consortium effort of Dr Pramod Dhakal, Dr Ambika Adhikari and Dr Drona Rasali on Open University of Nepal and Science Foundation. As researches have shown Nepal is highly prone to earthquake and recent disaster in Haiti may be an eye opener for us, Dr Rajendra Shrestha, President of Nepalese Association of Houston has taken up this important topic. Ratan Jhaji who was a Coordinator of Fourth NRN Conference held in Houston recently is sharing us his motivational story on becoming passionate about NRN, inspiring chatters and NRN movement.

We in the Editorial Committee, have the responsibility to add variety especially in the context when the magazine becomes the publication of a community with wide readership. We do not read if we do not laugh while reading. We do not read if it makes us sleepy. As always, we have our Bilol Pokhrelji here with a comedy flavored by poems of Ganga Ligalji and Nisha Basnetji. Bitu Baralji has shared her US experience and her attachment to Nepal, a joy and pain of an immigrant. Namrata Guragaiji has shared her moving sale experience a funny, funny reading. Amrita Lamsalji has expressed her opinion on the issue of women and Mukunda Hari ji has presented his viewpoint in our relationship with the God and lessons thereon.

Travel experience of Sunil Aryalji to the United States, Govinda Singh Rawatji to Houston and Dipak Khatriji to Nepal will add curiosity in reading. All of our advertisements are nice pieces of achievements as well as services and products available in NAH community and those are for your reading and records. There are photos and other features that you may not want to miss.

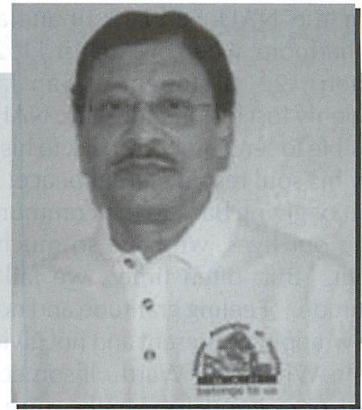
Thank you.
The Editorial Committee of Nepal Vision



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President's Message



Friends, believe it or not, Nepalese Association of Houston (NAH) has stepped into the 11th year since it was formally registered with the State of Texas on March 1, 2000. NAH has come a long way since then - with exemplary accomplishments.

Someone rightly said "Nobody can do everything, but everyone can do something." Absolutely true! We, as a community, have joined hands and come together numerous times to do that something; the most recent one is the NAH leadership and participation in the 4th Non-Resident Nepali (NRN) Regional Conference, held at Marriott Westchase Hotel, May 28 – 30 in Houston, Texas, U.S.A. On that occasion, the Houston Nepali Community came together to accomplish a variety of tasks, including but not limited to, managing the registration desk and printing delegate badges, picking up delegates from the Bush Intercontinental and Hobby airports, packing lunch boxes, scribing the presentations, making sure the audio visuals were ready in the meeting halls and all the programs ran on schedule, decorating the main hall, coordinating, MC'ing and participating in the cultural program, preparing "Pancha Kanyas" to welcome the chief guest and distinguished delegates, MC'ing the Opening Ceremony, co-sponsoring the "Welcome Dinner" with NRN NCC of USA, participating in the panel discussion and workshop, and showing the delegates around the city, in the capacity of the Chair of the Local Hospitality Committee, Event Coordinator, and Platinum Sponsor of the conference. And, the end result was a conference with a grand success. I take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers, Nepalese Student Association, University of Houston at Clear Lake, and the Platinum, Gold and Silver Sponsors of the "Welcome Dinner," for your wholehearted contributions to the success of the 4th NRN Regional Conference. You have made an outstanding impression on our Nepali friends and friends of Nepal from across the globe. The Houston City Mayor Ms. Anees Parker declared May 28 as "Nepal Day" in honor of the big Nepali event and made us all very

proud to be residents of this great city. Let us do it again, when the opportunity arises, because, together, we can make a difference.

Albert Pike once said. "What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us; what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal." I am in total agreement with Mr. Pike. Charity begins at home, but does not end there. NAH has held a number of fundraisers to help the humanity across the globe - at the time of need - over the years. Most recently, NAH has made contributions of \$2,400 in 2009 and 2010 to the Briddhashram (old age home) in Kathmandu, Nepal, run by Ms. Dil Sobha Shrestha. During the visit to Nepal in May 2009, my wife Hema and I took the opportunity to visit the Briddhashram, housing 31 members, who were found by Ms. Shrestha in various states of utter despair: on the road, in the hospitals, and even in the morgues. She had brought them home, turned her home into briddhasram, and provided them with food, shelter and medical attention, and more importantly, the caring they needed. Since the briddhashram was in dire need of financial assistance, I had proposed setting up the "NAH Briddhashram Fund" in a meeting, to which all of you responded positively and made generous contributions leading to a fund of \$1,200 which was disbursed to Ms. Dil Sobha Shrestha on Dec. 12, 2009. This year, NAH came up with a balance of \$3,300 from the "Welcome Dinner" Sponsorship, \$2,100 of which was supplemented to the "NAH Emergency Fund," and the remaining \$1,200 was disbursed to Ms. Dil Sobha Shrestha ji on Aug. 4, 2010.

When two Nepali families unfortunately suffered from a fire in their apartments on Bay Area Boulevard on Nov. 13, 2009, NAH came forward and provided a financial assistance of \$500 from the "NAH Emergency Fund" and was also involved in raising donations of funds as well as household items to assist them. When the World Cyclist from Nepal Mr. Lokbandhu Karki visited Houston, NAH not only organized a "Meet and Greet" program to welcome him, but also held a fund raiser and contributed \$260

from the NAH Fund to financially assist him. Furthermore, when on August 11, 2010, late Pukar Chhetri, 22, a student at San Jacinto College, suddenly lost his precious life, NAH did everything possible to send his body back to his family in Nepal. May his soul rest in eternal peace! Let us keep our spirit of giving back to the community alive!

In our lives, we have so much to be thankful about. But, often times, we fail to express our gratitude. "Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it," according to Mr. William A. Ward. If someone does a good deed or a good job, make sure to offer him a compliment and say "thank you"; it will make that person's day. To this effect, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all of you, including my

family, for putting your unflinching trust and belief on me, as NAH President. Thank you so very much for your continued support, which is indispensable to the growth and sustenance of NAH.

I am very thankful to the Nepal Vision Editorial Committee, the esteemed authors of high-class articles, the advertisement contributors, the Marketing Committee, and the Printing and Designing Team, for a highly commendable job, in bringing out this priceless issue.

Finally, remember, NAH belongs to us - all of us!

With Kindest Regards,

Dr. Rajendra K. Shrestha

नमसिने तरङ्ग



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निरन्तर प्रवाहित
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गोरेटो पच्छ्याई आउ
उर्वरा सृष्टिको वक्षस्थलमा
जिन्दगीको नयाँ माटोलाई
पत्र, पत्र भिजाई देउ
निरन्तर उत्साहित
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ज्ञान गम्यताको निरन्तर
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TECHNOLOGY

Exchange between the Diaspora and Nepal

-Dr. Ambika Prasad Adhikari*
Arizona, USA

The Nepali Diaspora consists of about three million non-resident Nepalīs scattered across the globe. A large number of NRN lives in developed countries, where they began to arrive in significant numbers in the sixties and seventies. Most of them initially landed in these countries in pursuit of higher education, but many stayed on; more continue to come as students while many more are now permanently migrating, particularly to the USA, Canada, U.K., and Australia directly from Nepal or from intermediate points.

The growing push factor in Nepal, created by the political instability, ubiquitous violence, failing economy and unstable administration, coupled with the pull factors of opportunities for higher education, prospects for better jobs and a generally better quality of life in the developed countries, have helped to drastically increase the number of Nepalīs arriving on the shores of these countries. The Diaspora population in these countries has grown many folds especially in the last decade.

This brief report focuses on the NRN's living in North America (USA and Canada), reviews their skills sets and knowledge, and offers a proposal on how they can participate in technology exchange with Nepal.

NRN's in North America

The Nepali Diaspora in North America includes students, professionals, academics, business persons and others working on a variety of fields. Among the professionals most are engineers, doctors, scientists, information technology experts, social scientists, researchers and teachers, many of whom have excelled in their professions. During the last decade, the number of information technology (IT) professionals has grown exponentially.

Although no accurate data is available on the Nepali population in North America, it is widely assumed that this number is approaching 250,000 and it is rapidly growing. Out of this total, more than 235,000 are estimated to be in the US while about 15,000 are believed to be living in Canada.

According to informal sources, more than 1,000 Nepalīs in North America are in faculty and other research positions in universities. Host universities for these NRN's include prestigious Ivy League schools such as, Harvard, Dartmouth and Cornell and other top US universities including Massachusetts Institute of Technology, University of California in Berkeley, University of Michigan and several major state institutions of higher learning. In addition, NRN's are also teaching and conducting research at several major Canadian universities including Toronto, McGill, British Columbia, York, Saskatchewan, Waterloo and New Brunswick. Dozens among this group in North America have attained ranks of full tenured professorship, deanship or associate deanship, departmental chairs and have reached other senior positions in academic administration.

Many Nepali professionals have attained leadership positions in government and private sector corporations including well known government agencies such as NASA, as well as in American flagship industries such as Boeing, IMB, Intel, Honeywell, and Microsoft.

Learning from the overwhelming success of the Indian Diaspora, many Nepalīs have specialized in Information Technology (IT) and as a result, the number of Nepali professionals working in the IT field has been burgeoning since the nineties. For, example more than 1,500 Nepali IT experts are believed to be working in the greater San Jose, California region alone. This region is known as the "Silicon Valley"

and sometimes referred to as the IT capital of the world. In fact, many argue that the Nepalis as a group working in IT sector in North America may be positioned well only next to the Indians who are considered world leaders in IT.

Hundreds of Nepalis have attained senior positions in the international institutions such as the UN, the World Bank, IMF, IFC and other organizations based in North America. They have gained critical comparative knowledge about economic development. In addition, many NRN's have established flourishing businesses across the continent learning valuable insight in the trade and the soft technology of the consumer service.

Need for New Technology in Nepal

Nepal has abundant natural resources that include water, minerals, forestry, bio-diversity, rare flora and fauna, and pristine natural landscape. But these resources have not been well developed for the benefit of the country. In addition to the political and administrative constraints, the lack of capital, managerial know-how, entrepreneurship and technology have severely hindered the full utilization of natural resources to support socio-economic development of Nepal.

The technological, academic, and knowledge base of the North American Nepali Diaspora is a perfect match for the technological needs of Nepal. Numerous NRN's living in North America can provide skilled services to various Nepalis sectors. Information technology promotion is one of them. For example, many Indians who have been trained and learnt the start up of IT business in the US have returned to India (Bangalore and Hyderabad in particular) and taken up important positions in promoting the IT sector. Nepali NRN's can also help the nascent Nepali IT sector to grow into prominence. In fact, some Nepalis have already gone back to Nepal and have established computer training and IT educational centers, building local capacity there.

The Nepali Diaspora in North America can help Nepal in the optimum development of water resources, use of bio-diversity, advance of technical education and support for the planning and management of Nepal's urban and industrial growth. Need for technology in the areas of water sector, industrial establishment, infrastructure development and urbanization are well known. Many NRN's have traditionally specialized in these fields.

Less well known needs remain in the areas of need in emerging bio-technology and environment. For example, the value of bio-resources of Nepal has been

severely underestimated. Further, the potential value of the medicinal plants, the genetic uniqueness of flora and fauna in Nepal is being appreciated only recently. Similarly, the tourism benefits to be derived from showcasing its endemic animals, birds and insects have not been fully realized. Many expatriate Nepalis, with their technical expertise and experience in these fields, are well situated to support Nepal in these sectors.

Similarly, Nepali engineers and scientists have accumulated important knowledge and skill sets in some unique technical fields, such as mountain highways, high altitude farming, agriculture, bio-diversity protection, community forestry, mini and micro hydro power and, tropical medicine many other fields. This knowledge base will be an important source of specialized technology for the Diaspora members that have lived in the more developed part of the world and who have encountered technical problems of a different kind. Thus a mutually beneficial technology exchange is possible between the scientists, and medical and engineering professionals in Nepal and their counterparts in the Diaspora.

An Approach to Promote Technology Exchange

Various programs have been tried to lure the native professionals back to the native countries. Some successful examples have been seen in Japan, Taiwan, Korea and now increasingly in China and India, where the members of the Diaspora have returned to the native country to build world-class technology programs. For example, the computer manufacturing in Taiwan, the new export sector in China, and the science and technology research in Korea have immensely benefited from the returning natives. The Indian Diaspora has played a key role in ensuring the spectacular success of software technology in Bangalore and Hyderabad in the last decade. The NRN's can undoubtedly support Nepal to achieve similar feats.

Although, Nepal continues to be in a lengthy transition of political instability, in the long run, the return of Nepali professionals proficient in various technologies, the potential of technology transfer remains valid. Even in the current political bottleneck in Nepal some Diaspora members have ventured in various activities in Nepal. In near future and with proper incentives many Nepali would be willing to go back temporarily or permanently to help build technology infrastructure in Nepal.

One important basic step to mobilize the NRN's to help in the exchange of technology is to have an inventory of technology and other professionals in North America. Although the NRN population in the US and Canada keeps growing, a good data base can be created and regularly updated to plan successful technology transfer programs. A NRNA task force has begun to improve upon the data base of global Nepali professionals that was begun a few years ago.

Nepal needs to create proper incentives to encourage the NRN's to get involved there. It is critical to have a robust battery of incentives, facilities, recognition and information for the Nepali professional to return home and help implement various projects, studies and research to build the local capacity. The NRN's living in North America are likely to respond to many enticements that include ease of obtaining visa, dual nationality benefits, getting work permit, investment opportunities and due recognition in Nepal. Emotional and sentimental ties do play a role, and many Nepalis are willing to sacrifice high salaries and other material conveniences to contribute towards the development of their birth place. The recent ID card scheme is believed to be encouraging the return of some Diaspora to Nepal for short and long term stays there.

In a small scale, both the government of Nepal and the Nepali community in North America have already been promoting the exchange of technology to Nepal. Many Nepali associations (presently estimated to be more than 350 in North America), and the government of Nepal have been cognizant of these opportunities for the last few years. A few community leaders in North America have recently begun an initiative to support the Government of Nepal establish an Open University in Nepal. If successful, the proposed Open University in Nepal will greatly help remove the barriers to help many marginalized groups to attain higher education.

In addition, third parties have also supported the transfer of technology in Nepal. Notable among them has been the UNDP supported TOKTEN (Transfer of Knowledge and Technology from Expatriate Nepalis) program. Dozens of Nepalis in the US and Canada have participated in this program, and have made valuable contributions to teaching, research, curriculum development, and consulting in Nepal. Programs like the above need to be instituted to help facilitate the technology transfer schemes in Nepal.

Conclusions

The matching of the talents, skills and technical know-how of the NRN's in North America and the

needs in Nepal provides an opportunity for a win-win scenario. Numerous Nepalis in US and Canada have exceptionally well-developed technical, research, teaching, and scientific skills that can be valuable in the many programs and projects in Nepal. Because many expatriate Nepalis want to contribute to the development of the native land, and because many external agencies can support, facilitate and even fund such technology exchange programs, the Nepali counterparts and government do not necessarily have to fully finance such schemes. The Nepali government does, however needs to create an attractive climate for the return of, and work by the expatriates.

An appropriate regime that attracts the NRN's to Nepal can consist of easy visa and work regulations, preferably a dual nationality system, ease of investment and partnership with Nepali firms and agencies, and appreciation of the contribution that expatriate Nepalis might make. The NRN's can also organize themselves to make valuable contributions towards the development of science and technology in Nepal. The Nepali Diaspora has made an excellent start by creating the NRN chapters, and holding regular global NRN meetings. Nepal also needs to develop a list of potential areas where the NRN's can contribute their technical know how.

A program where the NRN's can successfully be engaged in the exchange of technology with Nepal will help the NRN's to achieve emotional satisfaction, gain social stature and bring a sense of fulfillment of their obligations to Nepal. Nepali government agencies and Nepali business community can benefit from the valuable services provided by the NRN's who have world class technology knowledge and who also know the land and who easily connect to the country. On the other hand, NRNs can benefit from the highly specialized knowledge and technology that Nepali people have developed in selected fields.

Nepali government can create an appropriate policy regime consisting of visa, information sharing and recognition of the NRN's. The investment made in such a scheme will facilitate technology exchange with Nepal, and yield high dividends to both Nepal and the Nepali Diaspora.

* Dr. Ambika Prasad Adhikari is a Planner with SRPMIC, and a Faculty Associate at Arizona State University. He earned his Doctorate in Urban Planning from Harvard University, a fellowship at MIT and M. Arch. from University of Hawaii. He has published five books, and numerous articles in various journals.

Mixed impressions: my recent trip to Nepal

- Deepak Khatri,
Houston, TX, USA

During my recent trip to Nepal during the month of June, I had the opportunity to visit the capital city of Kathmandu and the plain terrain city of Butwal. I was making this trip only after a gap of two and half years.

I found many changes in the valley. On a positive note, it was good to visit the city center with some of the finest European and Western touches. The Bhat Bhateni store was equally impressive and only confirmed the progress made by our Nation within the last couple of years.

On the one hand, I was very happy to see all of these progresses but on the other, the not so positive part were the stagnant traffic, the immovable garbage on the streets and last but not the least, the young, dynamic and energetic labor leaving the country every day creating almost a vacuum for the need of these young people who have the true capability and potential to make the difference.

Offcourse, they are leaving because we do not have opportunities within our country and therefore they are forced to leave the nation in search of jobs, grabbing every opportunity that comes on their way.

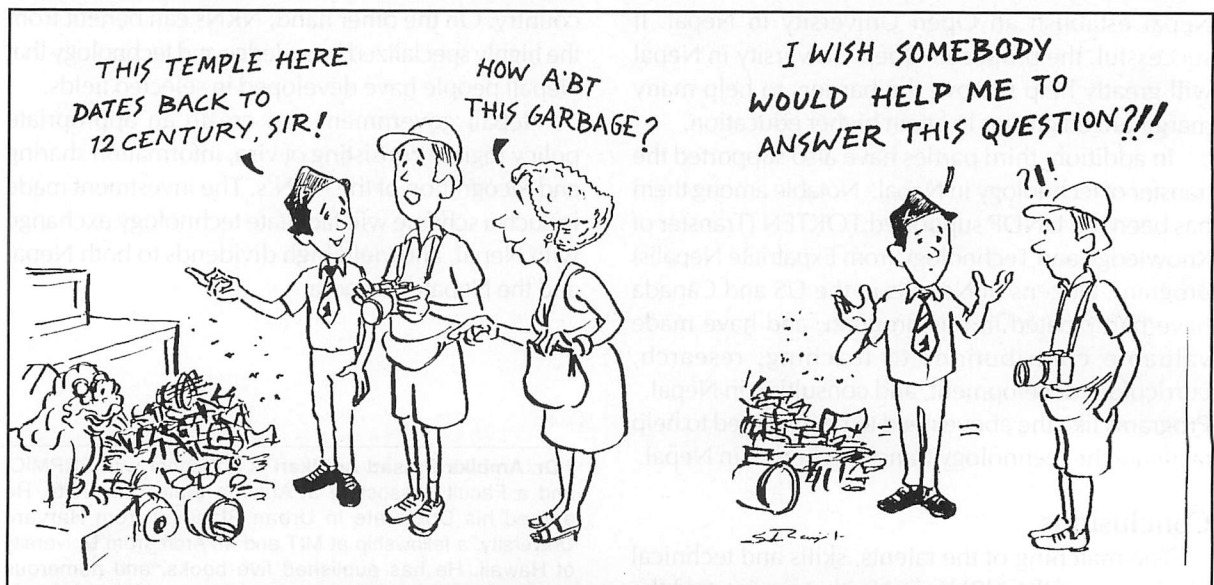
Everything is outrageously expensive and some of the items are comparable with the prices in the

USA. I was almost tempted to think for a moment and said, god this is back to future moment! Once upon a time I used to convert USD to NPR now the trend has changed with a twist of complete 180 deg. I had to convert the NPR to USD?

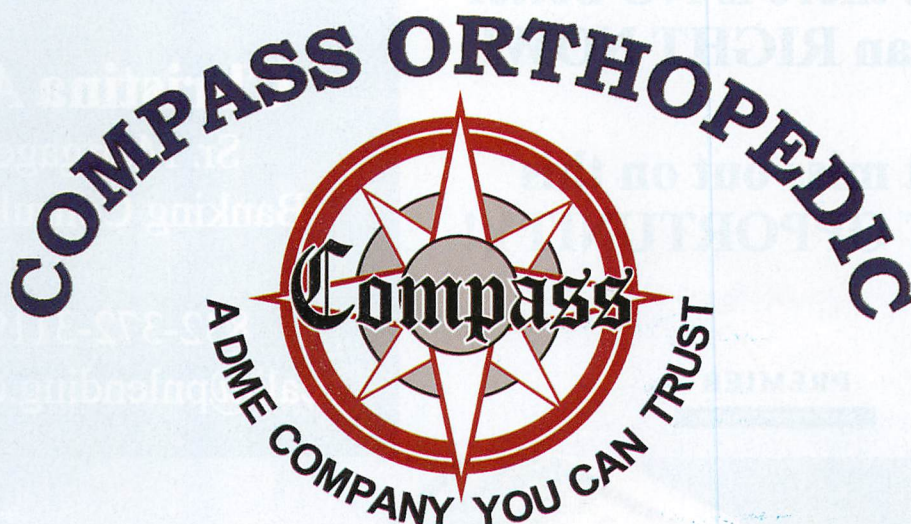
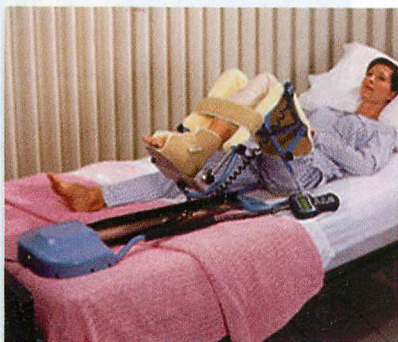
When you get sick and visit the doctor, the feedback you receive is to not drink the mineral water as they have found bacteria in those bottles!

I think it is high time that the Nepalese people take charge with the slogan: **"Afn Rashtra Afn Banaoun"**. Even if we can grab few percentages of the economical boom in the East, Nepal can be prosperous.

Well, I guess, I am not the first one to make these observations but I would like to definitely make a simple appeal with our leaders to give up their small differences, look at the big picture and work towards the peace and prosperity to bring back the lost glory of Nepal. Then we can all proudly say, indeed Nepal is truly a democratic country and the government, elected by the people is really working for the people.



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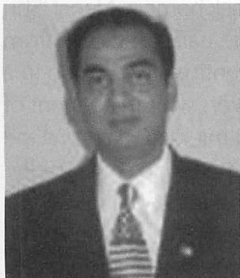


Why NRN

I Got Passionate about

Movement

Ratan Jha, General Secretary NRNA- ICC (2009-11)
Coordinator- 4th Regional NRN Conference



It was April of 2003. I met Mr. Jiba Lamichhane, the current Vice President of the NRNA, in Kathmandu while he was serving as a Managing Director of Kantipur Publications/TV – one of the largest media house founded by a group of soon-to-be NRNs.

He briefed me about the upcoming first global conference of NRNs and the debut of Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) on October 11, 2003. I was intrigued by his passion for doing something for Nepal – which I always found lacking among majority of fellow members of the Nepali Diaspora in America.

Back home in US, I was leading a very comfortable life – a true American dream - with a combined household income in a decent 6-figure, nice house, 2 cars, respectable day-care for kids and frequenting Nepal in every 2-3 years. We had a good standing in the local Nepali community. But somewhere deep inside me, there was always a sense of frustration for not being able to do something meaningful for the motherland. The comfort accorded by American life seemed futile in assuaging the deeply engrained urge for doing something meaningful

for Nepal. Leading a dreamful American life alone did not equate to leading a *life of purpose*.

The Inspiring Chatters

I could not attend the First Global NRN Conference of Kathmandu as I had already exhausted my travel budget for that year. But I was delighted to attend the NRN Forum at the ANA Convention of July 2004 in Phoenix, Arizona (USA). It drew many founders and pioneers of the NRNA including Dr. Upendra Mahato (Russia), Mr. Aditya Jha (Canada), Mr. Jiba Lamichhane (Russia), Mr. Deepak Khadka (Australia), Mr. Bhim Udas (UN), Dr. Jugal Bhurtel (Russia) along with many prominent community leaders from all across America and Canada. It was their first attempt to spread the NRN Movement in America. On the sideline of the conference, there were ample chatters and stories about these pioneers. "He is almost a Billionaire...owns a heavy-equipment factory in Belarus which employs 7,000 people...have 200 millions of investments in Nepal – in telcom, education, media, banking and hydropower...owns a prime shopping mall in downtown Moscow etc., etc." These were all, as many of you may have very well guessed, in reference to Dr. Upendra Mahato. Others were: "he's one of the biggest



civil contractors in HK, built the new airport with 7,000 workers – currently expanding into housing business in Australia and Nepal” – referring to Mr. Dipak Khadka of Australia. “Sold his software company to Sun Microsystems for \$100 Millions” was cited for Aditya Jha of Canada, and the list went on and on...These were all very real, genuine and inspiring stories. Ever since, I had rarely missed any NRN Conferences; and the reverberations of similar chatters never stopped in the subsequent conferences - “...he owns 26 restaurants in Japan and is barely 26 years old...”

So who are these NRNs?

Technically, the constitution of NRNA defines NRN as any Nepali who has lived out of Nepal (barring SAARC countries) for more than 183 days. However, the way I see these NRNs and some of the common characteristics that I came across among these NRNs are as follows:

- ♦ They are Nepali by heart – despite their settlement in a new land;
- ♦ They possess an intrinsic motivation to do something meaningful for Nepal;
- ♦ They are true Nepalese Ambassadors-at-Large;
- ♦ They always care for the well-being of Nepal despite living and working in harsh conditions;
- ♦ They are a mass of more than 2.5 millions Nepali – an economic force to be reckoned with;
- ♦ They, through remittance, helped straighten the backbone of the Nepalese economy when Nepal was at the verge of collapse during insurgency;
- ♦ They put all conventional economic theories at odd by showing an increase in Per Capita Income while nation's GDP went down.
- ♦ Just a small fraction (10%) of them, with a meager amount of \$10,000 each, can raise a massive funds of \$2.5 Billion (equivalent to the national annual budget of Nepal) – which when properly collateralized can provide access to approx. \$10 Billions of capitals – which can easily transform Nepal into a true new Nepal – a developed and prosperous Nepal which all of these NRNs constantly dream for.

Current Status of NRN Movement

A critical mass comprising of willing and intrinsically motivated NRNs has been formed. The NRNA has become the “Network of Networks” with formation national chapters, called National Coordination Council (NCC), in 55 countries around the world covering Asia-Pacific, Middle East, Europe, Africa, Americas and Oceania Regions. The network of NCCs, also called Brain-Circulation Networks, can quickly be activated to act as a super-highway to channel hard-earned advanced skill, knowledge, innovation and investments of the NRNs into Nepal for its rapid development. The recently concluded Houston's 4th Regional NRN Conference carried similar

theme to reflect the current status of the NRN movement - which stated “**Channeling Knowledge and Investments for Rapid Development of Nepal.**”

With the formation of the NRNA- NCC of Canada (called NRN Canada) in 2008, and the recent transformation of Nepalese Americas Council (NAC) into NRN- NCC of USA, a national NRN body formed as per the constitution of the NRNA and in close conformance with 55 other NCCs around the world, the giants have just awakened.

The By-products of the NRN Movement: An Entrepreneurial Spur

Following the popular trend back home in Nepal (Shri 5 ko Sarkar ko jagir), most of the early migrants from Nepal typically preferred a conventional 8 to 5 job in a public or private sectors. However, with the advent of the NRNA movement and greater interaction among the NRNs worldwide, this trend has started to shift rapidly. More and more NRNs are getting into owning and/or operating their own businesses. The phenomenal entrepreneurial and business successes of some of the pioneering leaders of NRNA - notably Dr. Upendra Mahato, Mr. Aditya Jha, Mr. Jiba Lamichhane, Mr. Shesh Ghale and Mr. Dipak Khadka, to name a few, do have tremendous impact on these new breeds of NRNs. They see them as the Mentors who not only “talk the talk” but also “walk the talk.”

The increased entrepreneurial spur among NRNs combined with an enhanced level of trust and confidence between one another has given rise to numerous models for collective investments which can easily be used to transform Nepal while empowering themselves. These models are intended to assimilate all NRNs – be it cash-poor credit-rich North Americans/Europeans or a meager waged worker of Middle East. The concept of collective investment is spreading like a wildfire as all the participants have only one goal – to see Nepal a prosperous nation in their own life time.

In the End....

After actively getting engaged with the global NRN Movement for over 6 years, I have started to see a *life of purpose* getting embedded into my American life. Hope you experience it does same to you. So I wrap up my new experience with rephrasing the famous quotations from Kennedy's inaugural speech of some 50 years ago....

My fellow NRNs,
Ask Not what Nepal can do for You;
Ask what You can do for Nepal.
Ask NOT when Nepal be ready for your Skill & Investments;
Ask How Rapidly you can channel your Skill & investments into Nepal.

एनआरएनले डुलायो हुस्टन शहर



गोविन्दसिंह रावत,
टोरन्टो, क्यानाडा



हुस्टन शहरको नाम धेरै पटक सुनेको थिए । राजन दाई विगत १२ वर्षदेखि त्यहाँ बस्दै आउनु भएको थियो भने पत्रकार मित्र तारा बरालको आगमनपछि दुरभाषबाट हुस्टनसँग सम्पर्क बढ्दै गयो । अचानक रतन भाजीको ईमेलबाट क्यानाडा र अमेरिकाको राष्ट्रिय समन्वय समितिले गैरआवासीय नेपाली संघको चौथो क्षेत्रीय सम्मेलन हुस्टनमा राख्ने जानकारीसँगै सहभागिताको लागि निम्तो पनि पाए । मलाई स्मारिका समितिको सदस्य पनि बनाइएको रहेछ । समितिमा धेरै पटक हेरफेर भई रह्यो तर मेरो नाम स्मारिका तयार भएपछि पनि कुनै काम नै नगरी रहीरह्यो । पछि भारती दिज्जु (गौतम) बाट कवि गोष्ठीको समितिमा पनि राखिएको जानकारी पाए । आफ्नो रुचि र विषयसँग सम्बन्धित भएकोले नाईनास्ति गर्ने कुरै भएन । र यसरी धेरै सुनेको र धेरैलाई चिनेको शहरमा आउने कुरा जुन्यो ।

हुस्टनलाई विद्यार्थीहरुको शहर पनि भनिन्छ र यहाँ तीनहजार भन्दा बढी नेपाली विद्यार्थीहरु अध्यापन गर्दैछन् भन्नेबारे जानकारी पाए । २० वर्ष अध्यापनमा विताएको हुनाले कताकता हुस्टनको गैरआवासीय नेपाली संघको चौथो क्षेत्रीय सम्मेलनमा आफूले क्याम्पसमा पढाएका कुनै विद्यार्थी भेटिएलाकी जस्तो पनि लाग्यो । तर सम्मेलनमा युवा जमातकै कमी देखियो । क्यानाडा र अमेरिकाको क्षेत्रीय सम्मेलनमा सहभागिहरुको भीड देखिएला जस्तो लागेको थियो तर सोचिए जस्तो देखिएन । अमेरिकाका राष्ट्रिय प्रतिनिधिहरुको बारेमा त म अनभिज्ञ नै छु तर क्यानाडाको राष्ट्रिय प्रतिनिधिहरु जसलाई

गैरआवासीय नेपाली संघले NCC अर्थात National Coordinator Committee भन्ने गर्छ र हुस्टनमा क्यानाडाका NCC का अध्यक्ष र पाँचजना कार्यकारिणीको सहभागिता मात्र रहेको थियो । अरु १५ जना स्वतन्त्र रुपमा भाग लिन आएका थिए ।

हुस्टन शहरको रौनकता भनेको फुटपाथमा मान्छे नदेखिनु पनि हो । अचाकली गर्मीको रापमा कोही पनि पग्लिन चाहदैन होला । त्यसैले सबै वाहनभित्र नै हुने गर्छन् । वाहनभित्र वातानुकूलको मज्जा बेग्लै छ । त्यसैले होला अमेरिकाको अरु प्रान्तको भन्दा यहाँ गयास (पेट्रोल) पनि सस्तो छ । २.५६ डलरमा एक ग्यालेन (३.८ लिटर) । क्यानाडामा हामी लिटरको लगभग एक डलर तिर्ने गर्छौं । हुस्टनको अर्को रौनकता हो यहाँ अवस्थित नासाको स्पेस सेन्टर । आर्मस्ट्रोङ्गको टोली पहिलो पटक चन्द्रमामा अवतरण गर्दादेखि अहिलेसम्म ब्रमाण्डमा जानेहरुको सूची राखिएको स्पेस सेन्टर वास्तवमै मानव सभ्यताको अद्भूत उदाहरण बनेको छ । त्यसपछि गल्फ अफ मेक्सिको टाढैबाट हेर्ने मौका पाए पनि सवारी साधन सहित जहाज चढेर आईल्याण्ड भने जान पाईएन । तर आयोजक रतन भाको कम्पनीले आयोजना गरेको जर्ज बस रेन्च एतिहासिक स्थानको भ्रमण पनि रोचक र कौतुहलतामय नै रह्यो । हलिउडको काउब्याई चलचित्रका पात्रहरु जस्तै पहिरनमा विभिन्न चटक देखाईरहेका थिए भने मञ्चमा पनि रमाईलो संगीत पस्किरहेका थिए । पश्चिमान्चल वातावरणलाई प्रेमराजा महतले लोकभाकाका गीतहरु गाएर नेपालीमय बनाई दिएर सबैलाई नाच्न बाध्य पारिदिएको थियो ।

हुस्टन शहरको भ्रमण मेरो लागि अर्को स्मरणीय क्षण बनेको थियो त्यहाँ भेटिएका आफन्त र मित्रगणहरुको भेटपछि। दाइ राजन बराललाई लगभग १२ वर्षपछि भेट्दै थिए भने शैलेश आचार्यलाई दसवर्ष पछि। नेपालमा कलाकर्मी संघमा सभापति र उप-सभापति भएर बस्दा हामीले धेरै नै हलचल मच्चाएका थियौं। शैलेश कलाकर्मी थिए भने तारा बराल संचारकर्मी। उनलाई पनि छ वर्षपछि भेट्दै थिए। त्यस्तै अरु धेरै नै नेपालमा चिनेका मित्रहरुलाई भेट्ने मौका हुस्टन सम्मेलनले जुराएको थियो।

बीसवटा देशबाट लगभग डेडसयजना र सवासय जना स्थानीय गैरआवासीय नेपालीहरुको सहभागिताका साथ सफलतापूर्वक गैरआवासीय नेपालीहरुको चौथो क्षेत्रीय सम्मेलनमा सहभागी हुँदा मेरोलागि दुई क्षण एकदमै स्मरणीय बनेको थियो। चौथो अन्तराष्ट्रिय सम्मेलनदेखि कवि गोष्ठीलाई पनि सम्मेलनको कार्यक्रममा राखेर गैरआनेसंले भाषा साहित्यप्रति रुचि देखाउन थालेको पाइयो भने यसले क्षेत्रीय सम्मेलनमा पनि निरन्तरता पायो। कम समयमा दुईस्रष्टाका तीन पुस्तकहरु - गंगा लिगलका ऐना (कथा संग्रह) र गंगाका गजलहरु तथा हस्त गौतम, मृदुलको "गौतमका गजलको" विमोचन सहीत प्रतियोगितात्मक कवि गोष्ठी गराइएको थियो। २० कविका ३२ कविता वाचन, मञ्चमा आसिनहरुको मन्तव्य, भानुभक्त सम्बन्धी सिडिको प्रचार अनि विमोचित पुस्तकबारे मन्तव्य र पुरस्कार वितरणले कार्यक्रम हतार हतार गर्नु परेको थियो। काव्यस्रोतहरु पातलिदै गएपछि कविहरुमात्र रहेको कार्यक्रममा एकै समयमा दुई/तीनवटा कार्यक्रम जुधाउने गरी राखेको देख्दा आयोजकले कविहरुलाई आ-आफ्नो कविता वाचन गर्दै सुन्ने अवसर दिए भन्ने प्रतीति भएको थियो। महाकवि महानन्द सापकोटाका सुपुत्र सुम्रिन सापकोटाले महानन्द सापकोटा काव्य पुरस्कारका लागि व्यक्तिगत रुपमा पहिलो (गोकुल भण्डारी), दोस्रो (हस्त गौतम, मृदुल) र तेस्रो (गौतम दाहाल) हुनेहरुका लागि नगद पुरस्कारको व्यवस्था गरेका थिए। कार्यक्रममा त्रिभुवन विश्वविद्यालयसंग देशपारीय नेपाली साहित्यको अध्ययन अध्यापन तथा अनुसन्धानकार्यका लागि पहल भई रहेकोबारे जानकारी गराइए तापनि यस तर्फ अझसम्म कुनै गृहकार्य नभएको र साहित्यका गहकिला कृतिहरुको प्रकाशन हुन नसकेको यथार्थ एकातिर छ भने अर्कोतिर अहिलेसम्म स्रष्टा आफैले आफ्नै खर्चमा संघसंस्थाको मण्डलीमा नाममा पुस्तक प्रकाशन गर्ने गरिएकोले विधागत मूल्याङ्कनको कमी देखिदै आएको छ।

अर्को दुःखको कुरा आफै संपादनमा बसेर पनि स्मारिकामा साहित्यिक विधाले ठाउँ नै पाएन। यस्तै

नेपाली कला-साहित्य-संस्कृतिको उत्थानका लागि प्रोत्साहन स्वरुप बाल नृत्य प्रतियोगितामा पहिलो, दोस्रो र तेस्रो हुनेहरुलाई हेम-सरीता प्रतिष्ठानबाट हजार डलर पुरस्कार प्रदान गरिएको थियो। आस्था ओली प्रथम, सोनी पाठक र सृष्टी ढकाल दोस्रो अनि प्रियङ्का शर्मा, सिर्जना खरेल र प्रिंसा राणा तेस्रो भएका थिए भने अन्य अप्रतियोगीहरुका नृत्यहरुले पनि दर्शकलाई आकर्षित पारेको थियो। सांस्कृतिक कार्यक्रममा प्रेमराजा महत, सपनाश्री र तारा गुरुङ्गको प्रस्तुतिले दर्शकलाई नै नाच्न काउकुति लगाई रहेको थियो भने मनोज गजुरेलको हाँस्य प्रस्तुति सम्मेलनको अर्को आकर्षक बन्न पुगेको थियो। सम्मेलनको अन्त्यमा कार्यक्रम संचालन गर्ने सबैले आयोजकबाट धन्यवाद पाएका थिए तर कविगोष्ठी र सांस्कृतिक कार्यक्रम संचालकहरुले भने धन्यवादका एउटा शब्द पनि सुन्न पाएनन्। अझ अमेरिकामा बसोबास गर्ने विभिन्न क्षेत्रका व्यक्तित्वहरुलाई उनीहरुको योगदानको कदर गर्दै सम्मान स्वरुप शिल्ड प्रदान गर्दा अमेरिकामा बसेर नेपाली साहित्यको सेवा गर्ने साहित्यकारले त्यो सम्मान पाउन सकेन भने क्षेत्रीय सम्मेलन सफल पार्न अथक परिश्रमी सहयोगीहरुलाई पनि शिल्डबाट सम्मान गर्दा साहित्यिक र सांस्कृतिक कार्यक्रमको आयोजना र संचालन गर्नेहरुलाई बञ्चित गरिएको देखियो। लाग्थ्यो, गैरआनेसंघ मात्र माथिमाथि पुगेका र व्यापार गर्ने र पैसा कमाउनेहरुको संस्था हो। बरु टेक्सस्को नेपाली समाजका अध्यक्ष डा. प्रेम अधिकारीले उद्घाटनको क्रममा हाम्रो भाविसन्ततीका लागि नेपाली भाषा र संस्कृतिको संरक्षण गर्नु हामी सबैको कर्तव्य भएकोले यस तर्फ ध्यान दिनुपर्ने भन्दै सबैलाई नेपाली भाषा रहेमात्र हामी नेपाली भनेर चिनिन सक्छौं भन्ने जानकारी गराउन पछि परेनन्। सुमन तिमिसनाजी आफै अन्तराष्ट्रिय नेपाली साहित्य समाजसँग आवद्ध रहेर पनि आफ्नो मन्तव्यमा भाषा साहित्यका लागि एउटा शब्द पनि उच्चारण गरेको देखिएन। यो लेखक चाहिँ त्यही सुन्न त्यहाँ पुगेको थियो। सम्मेलनमा कवि गोष्ठी अनि सांस्कृतिक कार्यक्रम अपवादमा आएका जस्तो लाग्थ्यो। तर घोषणापत्रमा भने खै किन हो यसरी घोषणा गरेको पाईयो।

हाम्रो नेपालीपनलाई जिवन्त राख्नका लागि गैरआवासीय नेपालीहरुलाई नेपालको मौलिक भाषा, साहित्य, संस्कृति र कलासंग जोडी राख्नु अपरिहार्य भएकोले नेपाली कला, साहित्य, भाषाको प्रवर्धनका लागि प्रण गर्दै योगदान गर्ने सबैको यो सम्मेलन कदर गर्दछ।

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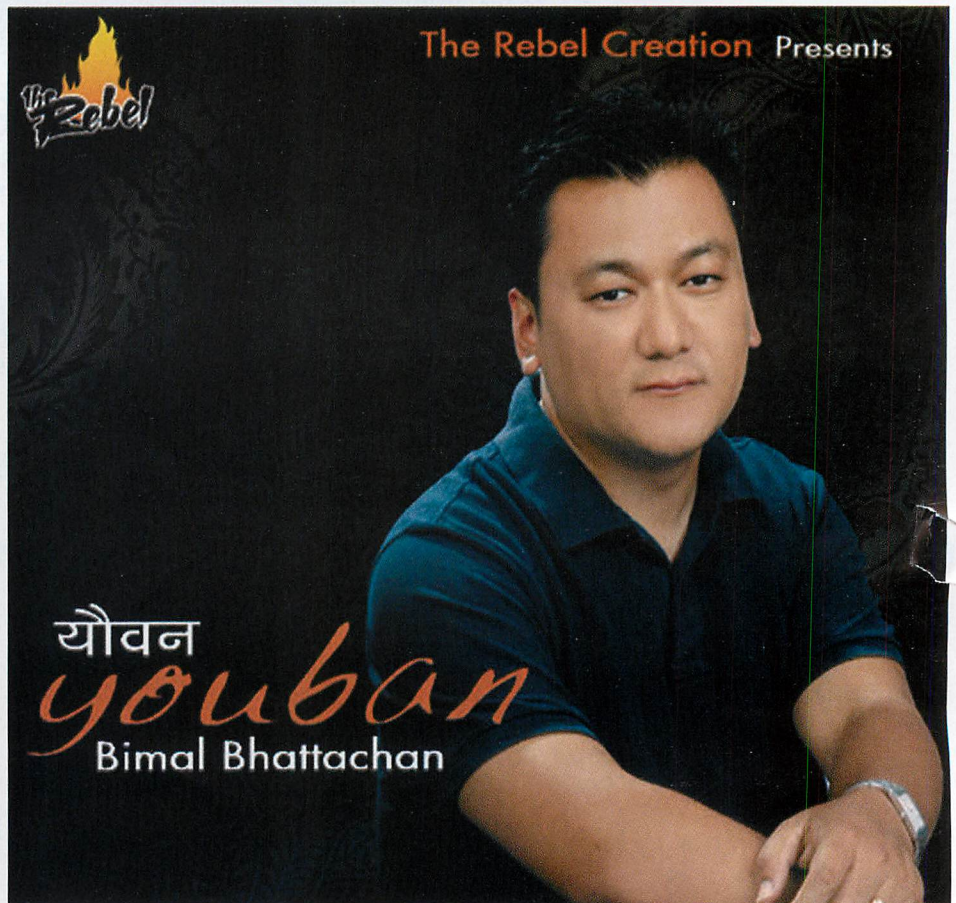
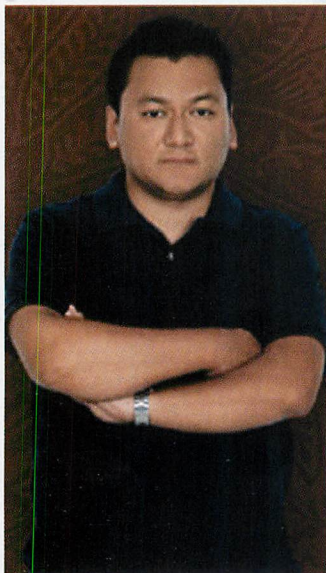
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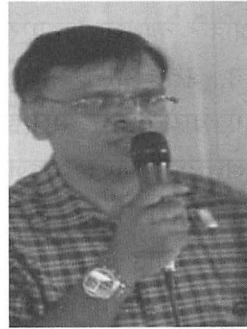
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समष्टीमा हेर्दा भोलीका दिनहरुमा नेपालको विकासका लागि सक्षम र सीप भएका क्षमतावान विज्ञ गैरआवासीय नेपालीहरुको आर्थिक र भौतिक सहयोगको वातावरण बनाउन गैरआवासीय संघले सबै वर्ग र क्षेत्रमा आफ्नो सम्बन्ध बढाउन सक्नु पर्छ । दोहोरो नागरिकताको प्रसङ्गलाई थाति राखेर परिचयपत्रमा अल्मलिएको र व्यापारी वर्गलाई मात्र समेट्न खोजेको आक्षेपबाट जबसम्म मुक्त हुँदैन तबसम्म आम गैरआवासीय नेपालीहरुको सहभागिताबाट हुस्टन जस्तै बञ्चित हुनुपर्छ भन्ने वास्तविकतालाई हुस्टनको सम्मेलनले देखाएको छ । यदी सम्मेलन उपलब्धी मूलक भएन भने घण्टाको दरले आयश्रोत हुनेहरुको सहभागिता पातलिदैजाने र व्यापारीवर्गको मात्र सहभागिता बढ्दैजान सक्छ । अन्त्यमा हुस्टनको संस्था नेपाली एशोसिएसन अफ हुस्टनका अध्यक्ष डा. राजेन्द्र श्रेष्ठको सहयोगबाट सफलता पाएको सम्मेलनको प्रेस विज्ञप्तीमा उनको नामसँग संस्थाको नाम र पद नराखेको र संस्थाबाट आयोजित दिवाभोजमा उनलाई नै धन्यवाद दिईएको देखिएन । सम्मेलनमा २९ मईलाई नेपाली दिवस भनेर हुस्टनका मेयरबाट गरिएको घोषणा स्वागतयोग्य र एतिहासिक घोषणा थियो जसलाई निरन्तरता दिने काम यही हुस्टनको संस्था नेपाली एशोसिएसन अफ हुस्टनले गर्ने छ । त्यसैले यो संस्थाको सहयोग र सहभागितालाई विर्सन हुँदैन । तर जे भए पनि आफ्नो यो भ्रमण नयाँ शहरको अवलोकन, मित्रहरुसंगको भेटघाट र गैआनेसंघका उच्चपदस्थ र विद्वानहरुसंगको कुराकानी रमाइलो नै रहेको थियो ।

प्रमोद काका र



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म

गए साता प्रमोद काकाको फोन आयो । भएपनि नभएपनि सधैं सुखी प्रमोद काकाका संवादमा एउटा अदृश्य उत्सुकता थियो । के विलोल म भन्दा सुखी छ अमेरिकामा ? म नेपाल छोडेर अमेरिका आउने दिनमा प्रमोद काका एका विहानै कतारकालागि प्रस्थान गर्नुभएको थियो । गह भरिको आंशुले विछोडको असह्य घाउ आँखाभरि पोखेको भान हुन्थ्यो । केवल चार महिनामा उहाँ दोहाबाट घर फर्कनुभयो । यता मलाई भने दश वर्ष पछि मात्र पशुपतिनाथको दर्शन गर्ने सौभाग्य प्राप्त भयो । कुरैकुरामा मैले प्रश्न गरें, काका तपाई त एयरपोर्टमा रुन लाग्नु भएका थियो, मेरो माया धेरै छ होइन त ? तेरो माया पनि छ बाबु तर त्यसबेला मलाई आफ्नो धर्ती छोडेर जानु पर्ने वाध्यताको पीडा ज्यादै थियो, जनताहरुलाई सुखसँग बाच्न नदिने कसम खाएकाहरुले देश चलाउँदैछन् भनेर मलाई धेरै पीडा छ । प्रमोद काकाको संवेदनशिल वाक्यहरुले त्यस दिनदेखि मलाई सधैं पछ्याइरहेको छ ।

कति प्यारो हुन्छ आफ्नै परिवेश, २०३६ सालमा आइ कम पढ्थें, वर्ग मित्र शंकरलाई क्षयरोग लागेछ, सधैं म उसको सेवा गर्थें, उसको स्वास्थ्य राम्रो नहुञ्जेलसम्म म उसैको कोठामा बस्थें, अभै संभन्छन् शंकरजी ।

यता एकदिन मलाई सर्दि लागेको थियो । बारबार हाछिँउ आएको थियो, सुजन आएर पुरै अफिसमा एण्टी व्याक्टेरिया छर्न थाली, अनि मलाई भन्छे, मलाई माफ गर विलोल, तर कृपया आज म भएतिर नआइज

हैं । १० नवज्जै महाप्रबन्धक जेम्स मेरो कोठाको ढोकाबाटै संबोधन गर्छ, बिलोल, मेरो विचारमा आज तिमिले घरजानु बेश हुन्छ, मैले सबैको स्वास्थ्यको ख्याल गर्नु पर्छ । कति नाटकीय मृदुभाषी छन् अंगेजी शब्दालंकारका शैलीहरु । भेट्ने वित्तिकै, कस्तो छ तपांइलाई ? सारो परेको भए अहिले कांधमा उठाएर लैजाला जस्तो गरी सोध्छ ब्रायन, अती मिल्ने साथी, कति पार्टीभोज सगै गरियो । ए ब्रायन यार मलाई आज संचो छैन, केहि औषधी र खानेकुरा लिएर आइज न सांभ मैले मित्रताको दृढतामा पुकारा गरें । ' सुन बिलोल, तं विरामी छस् भन्ने सुन्दा मलाई ज्यादै दुःख लागेकोछ, तेरो शिघ्र स्वस्थ लाभको कामना गर्दछु, तर म आउन चाहिँ सक्दिन होला, विश्वास छ तं रिसाउदैनस्, केही चलेन भने सरकारी आकस्मिक सेवाको उपयोग गर्नु पर्छ, यस्ता साना कुरामा साथीभाइलाई किन दुःख दिन्छस्, अस्पताल भर्ना भए भन न, म भेट्न आउँछु । उसका अति सौहार्दपूर्ण संवादशैलीले तत्काल ज्यादा घाउ नबनाएपनि, त्यस भित्रका टर्न अभिप्रायले मलाई भित्रभित्रै चिथोर्ने गर्छ ।

भित्रभित्रैको संवेदनशिल आन्दोलनमा परदेशी जीवनका दिनहरु अग्ला घरहरुविचका चौडा सडकमा महंगा कारका सवारीमा बाहिर बाहिर हाँस्दछन् अनि भित्र भित्र रुन्छन् । मित्र विजयको २८ वर्षको अल्पायुमा निधन भयो, पावन नदीका तटमा चन्दनका लेपमा विशुद्ध मन्त्रोच्चारणमा जीवनको अन्तिम यात्रा तय गर्ने हिन्दु परंपराको बाध्यतापूर्ण विश्राम गर्दै दुईचार जना मलामीले एउटा कोठावाट अर्को कोठामा विद्वतीय चीतामा पार्थिव शरीरको प्रवेश गराएर उनलाई विदा गरे ।

किन? किन? किन? छिमेकी मुलुक भारतवाट सदै सदै गएको यो नेपाली जातको प्रवासी जीवन अरव हुँदै युरोप, अमेरिका, जापान, कोरिया अष्ट्रेलिया गर्दै विश्वभरि नै पीडाको मुस्लो भिरेर बाच्न बाध्य छ ? एकमुठ्ठी मात्रै खाएर पनि एकै जुट भएर बाच्न पाउने परम्परालाई कसले साङ्गलो हालेर कुंज्याएर कैदी बनाएको छ । पृथ्वी नारायणले साना साना राज्य जोडेर एउटा सिङ्गो नेपाल बनाए पनि आज किन अरु कसैले साना साना मनहरु जोडेर एउटा सिङ्गो नेपाली मन बनाउने जमर्को गरेनन्, साना साना बिचारहरुलाई

जोडेर एउटा सिङ्गो नेपाली बिचार बनाउने प्रयत्न गरेनन् । आफ्नै देश भित्र, आफ्नै शहरमा, अनि कतै त आफ्नै घर भित्र ज्यान जोगाउन हल्ले भएपछि, बाच्न पर्ने बाध्यताको शिकार भएर प्रवासी बन्ने ईच्छा पनि नाजायज नहोला भन्छु । दर्शन राजा कताको सवारी हो ? ' मैले सोधें, ' केको राजा यार, अमेरिकामा सबै राजा सबै प्रजा, काममा जान लाग्या, काठमाण्डौमा हामीसंग बोल्न लाज मान्ने महोदय अमेरिकामा एउटा भोजनालयमा काम गर्छन् । मलाई त उनको काठमाण्डौको व्यवहारमा कहिल्यै गुनासो भएन, ' जातैका राजा भनेर चीत्त बुझाउँथें, तर देश छोड्ने बाध्यताका शीकार राजाका कोमल शरीर भान्साघरको उष्ण तापले जलेकोमा मलाई सिङ्गै नेपाल जलेको भान हुन्छ । मेरो भित्री मन कहिले पनि खुसी छैन, यो बाहिरी आडम्बरमा भिटाभिन खाई मोटाएका अमेरिकी मास्सपेशीमा जति तागत छ त्यती त हाम्रा हिमाली कन्दराहरु बिचमा बग्ने पानीले मात्रै पनि दिन्छ ।

प्रमोद काका अबै आफ्नो पुरानो पेशा अंगाली गौपालन गर्नुहुन्छ । दशैं टार्न लिएको ऋण माघमा हिउँदै बाली भित्र्याउँदा चुक्ता गर्नुहुन्छ । गोबरको मलले सिंचेको आफ्नै बारीको सागपातमा रमाउनुहुन्छ, महिना २ महिनामा केहि पैसा जोगाएर मलाई फोन गर्ने गरेको छ । विहानै उठेर आमाको खुट्टा ढोग्नुहुन्छ, गाउँकै मन्दिरमा टीका प्रसाद लगाउनुहुन्छ । अनि वेलावेलामा मलाई भन्नुहुन्छ, ' ए बिलोल, ज्यादै दुःख पाइयो, लौ न बोला अमेरिका तिर शान्तबना दिदै म भन्छु हुन्छ नी काका, तर भित्र भित्रै म उहाँको खुसीको डाढ गर्छु । शान्तिसंग बस्न मात्र पाए हामी को चाहिँ आफ्नो देश छोडेर भाग्ने थियौं होला । मेरो प्रश्न सधैं अनुत्तरितै छ र अबै संभन्छु को चाहिँ ज्यादा सुखी छ, म या प्रमोद काका !

NRNA Launches "OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NEPAL" Initiative As Its Flagship Project

-Parmod Dhakal, Ambika Adhikari, Drona Rasali, Raju Adhikari



Dignitaries and ICC officials sharing the podium during the inaugural ceremony

Dr. Dhakal, Dr. Ambika Adhikari and Dr. Rasali are the core proponents of the Open University of Nepal initiative. Dr. Raju Adhikari is the Chair of SKI. All four are Members of Open University Initiative Strategy Committee (OUSC), Skill Knowledge Innovation (SKI) Exchange Task Force, NRNA ICC.

Contact email: pdhakal@gmail.com

The Fourth NRN Regional Conference was held on 28th-30th May 2010 in Houston, a major industrial and commercial center and energy capital of the USA. The conference was attended by more than 300 representatives from more than 20 countries. A major achievement made by this NRNA conference was the successful organization and execution of a daylong workshop on Open and Distance Education in Nepal, which was geared to debate on a proposal for Open University of Nepal (OUN) and other initiatives that complimented the initiative. The OUN initiative was advanced in the NRNA by OUN core proponent team consisting of Dr. Pramod Dhakal (leader), Dr. Ambika Adhikari and Dr. Drona Rasali. This initiative resides within the NRN Task force on Skill Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (SKI) of NRNA led by Dr. Raju Adhikari.

In his inaugural address, NRNA President Devman Hirachan stated, "Knowledge transfer is critical to the overall success of NRN movement, as it is a long term NRN investment on the advancement of Nepal and its people". He added, "An Open University of Nepal is envisioned as the flagship initiative of NRNA - and we will make it possible through cooperation and collaboration with the Government of Nepal." Dr. Pramod Dhakal, leader of the OUN core proponent team described the objective of the OUN initiative and outlined the scope of the day long workshop and highlighted the main purpose of the workshop; to devise on the academic, management and business aspects in establishing an Open University for Nepal. As the Chair of NRN SKI task force, Dr Raju Adhikari welcomed the participants explained how the OUN initiative fits in the larger SKI task force vision.

In the session, Dr. Renu Khator, Chancellor and President of University of Houston System, Dr. Fritz Panekoek, Chairman of the International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE), and the President of Canada's Athabasca University (OU), Dr. Shankar Prasad Sharma, Nepalese Ambassador to the USA, Dr. Mohamed Ally, Founding Director

of the International Association of Mobile Learning, Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya, Nepalese Ambassador to the United Nations, Dr. Upendra Mahato, Chief-Patron, NRNA, Dr. Carl Stokton, Senior Vice President and Provost of University of Houston – Clear Lake (UHCL), Dr. Mirnal Mugdh, Vice President of Academic Affairs of UHCL, presented their opinions on various aspects of the Open University of Nepal.

Dr. Frits Pannekoek, delivered a lunch time Keynote Speech, thoroughly inspiring the audience with his thoughtful messages that came from his long and outstanding experiences. Starting with the history of distance education movement and the expanding role it is playing in most of the industrialized and developing countries around the world, he emphasized the importance of OUN in breaking the barriers of gender, wealth, and geography in education. He said that it is important to radically transform learning in order to empower ever larger population with higher education and, in turn, bring revolution in education and economy. He offered unequivocal support to develop the business plan of OUN on behalf of ICDE and AU.

Dr Pramod Dhakal affiliated with Carleton University, Canada and ICC member from Canada, as the leader of the OUN core proponent team set the tone of the workshop by explaining the philosophical need for an Open University in Nepal, which can provide university level education to the rural and marginalized groups in Nepal. Dr. Ambika Adhikari affiliated with Arizona State University offered a pre-business plan for the proposal and Dr. Drona Rasali affiliated with University of Regina outlined content development program for the proposed university. Dr. Jeet Joshee, Dean of Continuing Education at California State University – Long Beach, presented paper on academic plan, and governance respectively. These papers were commented by Dr. Alok Bohara, University of New Mexico, Dr. Shiva Gautam, Harvard University, Dr. Mahendra Lohani, Vice-President, Heifer International, Dr. Prahlad Pant, University of Cincinnati, Dr. Gokul Bhandari, University of Windsor, Dr. Kalyani Rai, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Dr. Nalini Chhetri, Arizona State University, Dr. Nanda Raj Shrestha, Florida A&M University, and Dr. Tara Niraula, New School University, Dr. Upendra Mahato, NRNA Founding President, Dr. Pukar Malla, Harvard University.

In the following session on Skills, Knowledge and Innovation (SKI) exchange, Dr Raju Adhikari shared the overall vision and commitment of the SKI in the long term prosperity of Nepal through such flagship projects in Health, Environment and S&T areas. In this session, Dr. Rajendra Shrestha, Dr. Krishna C Prasad, Dr. Hari Dhakal and Dr. Alok Bohara

presented their papers in energy, collaborative degree programs, medical knowledge, and exchange of scholars and scholarship respectively. In an immediate follow-up to the workshop, the conference thanked president Dr. Frits Pannekoek, International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE), Athabasca University (AU), Dr. Mohamed Ally, International Association of Mobile Learning, Dr. Renu Khator, Dr. Carl Stockton, Dr. Mrinal Mugdh, University of Houston, Dr. Jeetendra Joshee, California State University Long Beach, and Dr. Krishna C Prasad, UNESCO-IHE for pledging their support for the establishment of the Open University of Nepal.

On behalf of the NRN and SKI task force, Dr. Dhakal, the leader of the OUN core proponent team and the coordinator of the workshop thanked all the participants and guests for attending and making the workshop a success. He also thanked NRNA leadership and the dignitaries who addressed the workshop sessions, and those individuals and institutions who pledged their support to this initiative. The main points of the workshop resolutions adopted by NRN ICC are as follows:

1. Open University of Nepal Initiative

- ◆ The Open University of Nepal (OUN) is recognised as the Flagship project of NRN.
- ◆ An OUN Strategic Committee (OUSC) was established to take the recommendation of the workshop for further action. The committee has 11 members Dr Pramod Dhakal, Dr Ambika Adhikari, Dr Raju Adhikari, Dr Drona Rasali, Devman Hirachan, President of NRNA, Dr. Upendra Mahato, Chief-Patron of NRNA, Gyan Chandra Acharya, Ambassador to UN, Dr Shanker Sharma, Ambassador, USA, Dr. Bhojraj Ghimire, and Ambassador to Canada, two representatives of Ministry of Education and GoN. Dr Pramod Dhakal was entrusted to be the coordinator.
- ◆ NRNA thanked and gratefully acknowledged the intellectual contributions of scholars, academics and institutional thinkers for their deliberation and pledge of support in the workshop.
- ◆ The OUSC will work closely with the GON to follow up and finalise already submitted MOU and develop collaborative and operational mechanism with GON and other potential strategic partners to help establish the OUN.
- ◆ The OUSC will mobilise resources to prepare a detailed proposal and business plan in the next 6 months with the help of NRN and international experts as deemed appropriate.

Best Wishes

to
ALL HOUSTON'S NEPALI DIASPORA
&
NEPALESE ASSOCIATION OF HOUSTON
on
*the occasion of
Vijaya Dashami,
Deepawali
and
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◆ All formal media communication and press release to be handled by OUSC spokesperson through SKI and president of NRNA.

2. Science Foundation (SF)

◆ NRN approved the establishment of SF to support flagship projects and formation of a SF committee to undertake the registration process and prepare a strategic plan. The Foundation to be registered as an autonomous public trust and the fund to be deposited into a separate NRN ICC SF account until such time and Dr Raju Adhikari to work as the coordinator.

◆ SKI is pleased to join the team of Earthquake and Disaster Preparedness program led by American Society for Nepalese Engineers, America Nepal Medical Foundation, and Computer Association of Nepal – USA.

◆ All SKI workshop presentations to be compiled into a proceeding publication and distributed to GON, NRNICC and other concerned parties.

3. Pledge of Financial Support

◆ SKI acknowledges the financial pledge of USD 10,000 from Aditya Jha for Open University of Nepal initiative and Dr Upendra Mahato (to be disclosed later) for SF. The dignitaries from Athabasca University, University of Houston and Nepali Ambassadors for USA and the UN all pledged support for the OUN initiative.

Please visit an informational website <http://openu.cffn.ca> that is currently evolving and learn more about our mission. For further inquiry and feedback, please send email to pdhakal@cffn.ca or nrnskit@googlegroups.com

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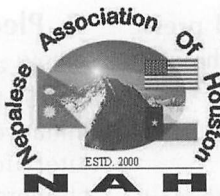
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Nepalese Association of Houston (NAH)

Accomplishments:

April 2009 – August 2010

The purpose of Nepalese Association of Houston (NAH), a non-profit organization, tax exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Revenue Code, is to serve the Nepali Community in the Greater Houston area, bring all Nepali brothers and sisters on a common platform and create a congenial environment of friendship, fellow-feeling and mutual respect to help each other at the time of need, as well as to share the joys and sorrows of life. It also strives to preserve and foster the rich Nepali cultural, traditional and historical heritage. Please visit the NAH Web site www.houstonnepalese.org for details about NAH and its activities.

"Service to mankind is service to God." A majority of activities of Nepalese Association of Houston (NAH) this year and in the past revolved around this motto. On behalf of NAH, we are ever so grateful to Nepalis and friends of Nepal from across the globe for their valuable contributions and active participation in all of its events and programs.

Activities:

- Raised \$12,634.17 for the "NAH Emergency Fund" aimed at providing financial assistance to the Houston Nepali community in emergency situations
- NAH Constitution / Bylaws Amendment approved on Oct. 24, 2009
- Set up the "NAH Briddhashram Fund," disbursed \$1,200 (N. Rs. 89,400) to the Briddhashram in Kathmandu, Nepal, run by Ms. Dil Sobha Shrestha, on Dec. 12, 2009
- Financially assisted two Nepali families who were victims of apartment fire on the Bay Area Blvd., Houston, on Nov. 13, 2009, with a \$500 donation from the NAH Emergency Fund, and a fundraiser
- Provided exhibition materials to Nepali Student Association at University of Houston - Clear Lake, for the Global Expo on Nov. 16, 2009; they bagged the Most Educational Booth Award
- Organized the "Meet and Greet Program" to felicitate the World Cyclist from Nepal Mr. Lok Bandhu Karki and financially supported him through a fundraiser and a contribution of \$260 from the NAH Fund

- Got 200 pieces of NAH Polo Shirts printed in September 2009 with the logo designed by Mr. Niraj Shrestha
- Houston Nepali Soccer Team started in March 2009 with Mr. Niraj Shrestha as Coordinator and Mr. Chej Gurung as Captain
- Served as Local Hospitality Committee Chair, Event Coordinator & Platinum Sponsor of the 4th NRN Regional Conference, May 28 – 30, 2010, Houston, Texas, USA, participated by more than 350 delegates from across the globe
- City of Houston Mayor Ms. Anees Parker declared **May 28 as "Nepal Day"** on the occasion of the 4th NRN Regional Conference
- Disbursed \$1,200 (N. Rs. 88,500) to Ms. Dil Sobha Shrestha's Briddhashram in Kathmandu Nepal, on Aug. 4, 2010, as the second NAH contribution
- Assisted in sending the body of late Pukar Chhetri, who deceased on August 11, 2010 in Houston, to Kathmandu, Nepal
- Held NAH Monthly meetings to obtain the feedback, suggestions, grievances and recommendations from the Houston Nepali Community

Celebrations:

- New Year 2066 B.S. (April 18, 2009), Vijaya Dashami (Sept. 26, 2009), and New Year 2067 B.S. (April 17, 2010)
- Participated in the Teej Celebration in Ashiana Restaurant on Aug. 22, 2009
- Organized the "Congratulate the Graduates" program to felicitate the new high- school, college and university graduates on Sept. 26, 2009
- Held a Farewell Reception for Dr. Bishnu Khanal, NAH Executive Committee Member, in Ashiana Restaurant on Oct. 11, 2009
- Organized the NAH Annual Picnic on Nov. 29, 2009 at Hermann Park
- Observed the 4th Anniversary of Shree Pashpatinath Mandir and Maha Shivaratri on Feb. 13, 2010
- Participated in the International Mother Language Day Celebration on Feb. 21, 2010

BEST COMPLIMENTS



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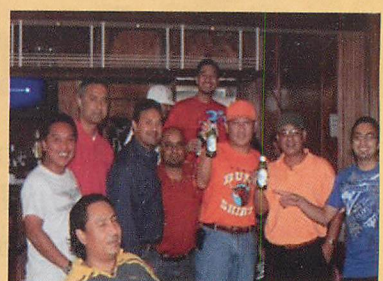
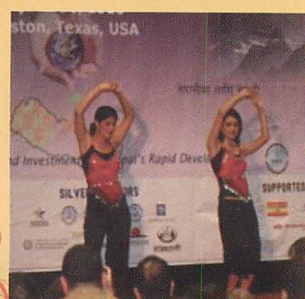
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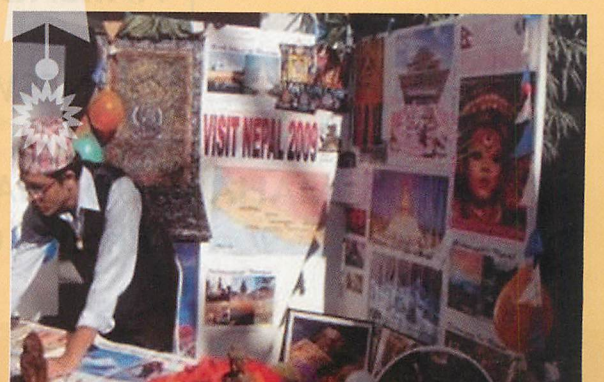
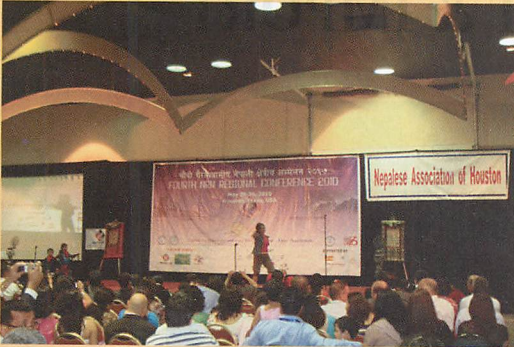
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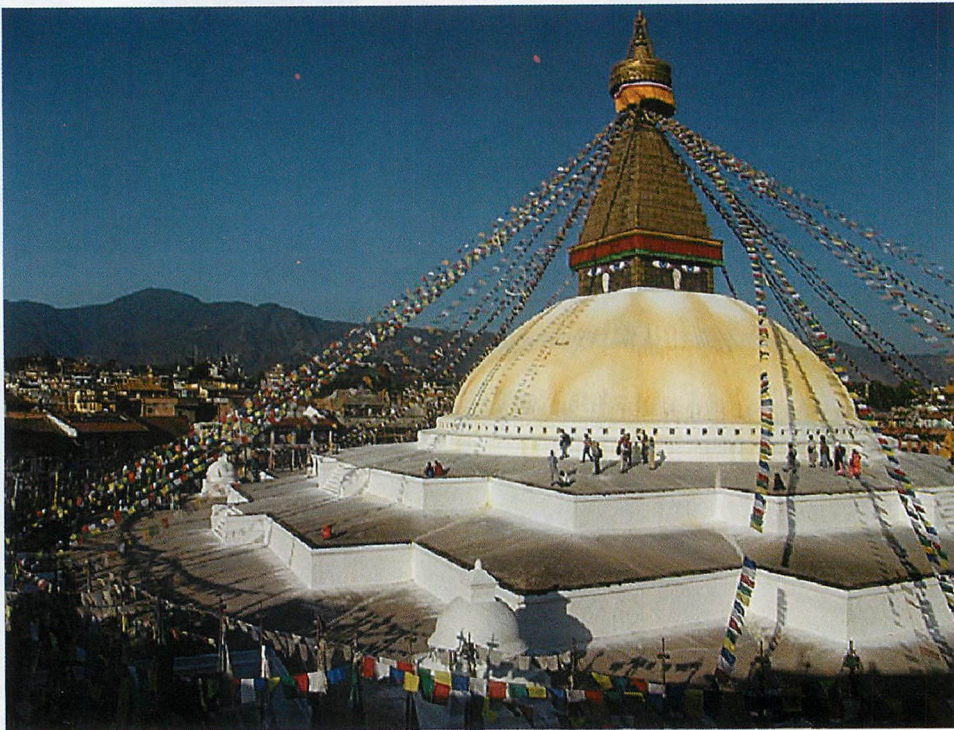
Glimpses of NAH Activities 2009-2010





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Best Wishes to all Nepalese in Houston

Please Contact:
NARENDRA SHRESTHA
OR
GYANESWOR SHRESTHA

MAHABOUDHHA, KATHMANDU, NEPAL
Phone: (832) 816-6448

- Attended the "Cultural Extravaganza" at Univ. Houston Clear Lake on March 26, 2010

Publication:

- Nepal Vision, volume 9, thanks to the article and advertisement contributors, the editorial committee, and the marketing and printing/designing team

Involvement in Nepali Organizations:

- NAH President Dr. Rajendra Shrestha presented the NRN Town Hall Meetings in Houston and Dallas on Aug. 29 and 30, 2009, respectively, and subsequently in Anchorage, Alaska, on June 6, 2010, on behalf of NRN NCC of USA
- NAH President Dr. Rajendra Shrestha participated in the NRN NCC of USA Annual Meeting in Louisville, KY on Feb. 20 – 21, 2010, and is currently serving in its Bylaws Amendment Committee
- Joined the "Earthquake Preparedness and Disaster Relief for Nepal": A Joint Initiative by American Society of American Engineers, America Nepal Medical Foundation and Computer Association of Nepal – USA
- Houston Chapter of International Nepali Literary Society (INLS) revived on May 28, 2010 under the

leadership of Mrs. Ganga Ligal with NAH officers, advisers and members in the executive committee

- NAH President Dr. Rajendra Shrestha elected as Vice President, American Society of Nepalese Engineers, for a two year-term, on July 4, 2010

Grateful Appreciations:

- ConocoPhillips for donating \$500 for NAH Polo Shirts and \$500 for NAH Picnic in appreciation of the volunteer work of Dr. Rajendra Shrestha
- Recognized Mr. Niraj Shrestha, Mrs. Muna Poudyal and Mr. Jyoti Kumar Ghimirey for their significant contributions to the Houston Nepali Community
- To all the generous donors of the "NAH Emergency Fund"
- To all the kind contributors of the Welcome Dinner to more than 350 Distinguished Delegates of the 4th NRN Regional Conference, May 28, 2010, from across the globe
- Houston Provider Management Services (courtesy of Mr. Madhukar G. Amatya and Mr. Dinker G. Amatya) for providing the meeting space and coffee
- To you all for your continued support and active participation

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NAH Executive Committee / Advisors 2008 - 2010

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Who's Who



Gyanshor Shrestha, from Tamghas, Gulmi, came to Houston as a student in 1994. He is a business management graduate and currently is a retail business owner, consultant and a retail real estate investor. He is also a vice president of Nepalese Association of Houston, life member of Lions Club of Nepal and Nepal Red Cross.

Gyanshor is married to Shailaja Kunwar and has two daughters, Arpana and Archana. In his rare free time, he likes to spend time with his family. He enjoys napping whenever he can. Socializing is also one of his favorite hobbies. He loves sharing his college experience at ASCOL and high school hostel experience at Siddhartha Vansthal.

Community Contributor

Hello, I am Manish Pradhan.

I work as an IT Analyst at ConocoPhillips and have been residing in Houston for over two years now. Last year I traveled to Nepal with a group of volunteers from US and Canada to work on a Medical and Dental camp in a remote village of Kamalbari in Salang, Dhading. The camp included general medical, dental



and leprosy clinic, women's health forum, men's health forum, physical therapy session, pharmacy, teachers' forum and kids program. It was organized and funded by Medical Mercy Canada, a non-profit organization involved in running similar projects in Nepal and other south east Asian countries. During this five-day health camp, a total of about 1800 patients were treated and about 800 children were admitted in the kids program.

I was involved as one of the interpreters for the Physical Therapy team, I was also involved in the teachers' forum. The cases the PT team handled included minor knee pain, backaches to severe rupture discs and stroke patients. The cases that we encountered were reflective of hardship of the village life. In one of the cases, a villager came to us with a complaint that he could barely move his right arm after he had an accident few years back. It gave me chill to the bone when I looked at his X-Ray report to find out that his right clavicle bone completely shattered. There wasn't much we could do about this besides advising him to visit the hospital in Kathmandu. There were many such similar stories where the team wasn't able to do much but to recommend them to go to Kathmandu for better treatment. One of the patients who suffered from ruptured disc liked the treatment so much that she made an effort to walk 3 hours to come visit us next day as well.

Although I was involved in the other two programs for brief period, I was really excited to see enthusiasm, hope, interaction and willingness among the teachers to adopt the things they learned in the three days forum. The interaction and feedback we received during this program were outstanding. I believe that's a good sign as after all they are the ones who instill knowledge and education to the future generation.

I truly believe that such effort will make a difference in the life of the people we worked with and will help spread the importance of medical care and education. I am blessed to be a part of this effort. I will be making the trip again this year to relive the wonderful experience, to enjoy and appreciate the simple life and, most importantly, to help the ones in need.

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स्थायी समाधान असम्भव

-मुकुन्द हरि ज्ञवाली, हुस्न, टेक्सास

मेरो मनमा एउटा जटिल प्रश्न छ, समाधानको सम्भावना दिन प्रतिदिन कम हुँदै छ। समयले यसलाई क्षीण बनाउँदैछ। मानव सर्वश्रेष्ठ र बुद्धिजीवी प्राणी हो। उसले सर्वशक्तिमान् ईश्वरको अस्तित्वलाई स्वीकारेको छ। प्राय सबै धर्मावलम्बीका ग्रन्थमा ईश्वर सत्य छ, नित्य छ र सर्वव्यापक छ। पृथ्वी, जल, तेज, वायु र आकाशमा व्याप्त छ। यिनीहरूकै समक्षमा सूर्य-चन्द्रलाई साक्षी राखी विधाताले मानवकर्मको (पाप-पुण्य) अभिलेख राख्छन्। त्यसैले हामीले आफ्नो मन, वचन र शरीरद्वारा गरिने कर्ममा अन्याय अत्याचार असत्य हिंसा आदि पापकर्मबाट बच्नुपर्दछ। आफ्नो कामबाट अरुलाई दुःख पुग्ने, पीडा हुने काम नगर्नु भनेको छ। “अष्टादश पुराणेषु व्यासस्य वचनं द्रुपदोपकारं पुण्याय पापाय परपीडनम्” मन, वचन, कर्म द्वारा अरुलाई दुःख दिनु पाप हो, मन, वचन र कर्मबाट अरुलाई सुख दिनु पुण्य हो, धर्म हो, सदा सत्य बोल्नु, मिठो बोल्नु, नढाँट्नु, नचोर्नु भनी हाम्रा वेद पुराण उपनिषद आदि धर्म ग्रन्थहरूले हामीलाई सधैं खबरदारी गरिरहेका छन्। यस विषयमा विश्वभरीका मानवमात्रको सोचाईमा एकमत छ।

मेरो मनमा बारबार उठ्ने जिज्ञासा के भने आजको विश्व परिवेशमा अनुचित कर्मको प्रगती द्रुत गतिमा भएको छ, त्यसलाई छुट्टै राखेर नेपालका संदर्भमा उल्लेख गर्नु पर्दा हाम्रा देशमा भएका पीडादायक अनुचित जति कुकर्म भएका छन्, ती त्यस्ता व्यक्ति वा समुदायबाट भएका छन्, जो सर्वसम्पन्न छन्, पुराण इतिहासका कुरा बुझेका छन्। परन्तु आफ्नो सुख सुविधा र भोग विलासपूर्ण जीवनका लागि पाप-पुण्य सबै बिर्सेर धर्म निषेधित कर्म गरेर भोलीको जीवनको बेवास्ता गरेका छन्।

हामीले सुनेका छौं, हामीले गरेको कर्मको फल हामीले भोग्नुनै पर्छ र पुराण र इतिहासमा यसका उदाहरणहरू पनि सुनेका छौं। आजको २०औं शताब्दीमानै घटेका घटनाबाट पनि यो सत्य प्रमाणित भै सकेको छ। तर देश र देशवासीका नाममा राष्ट्रका विकाशका पूर्वाधारलाई भत्ताभुङ्ग पारी जनताको नाममा जनतालाई कुट-पिट, लुटपाट, काट-मार गरी तीनीहरूनै देशका शासक बने। सत्ता हत्याउन पुगे। कतिले त वंश विनाशको ताण्डव नृत्य समेत गर्न पछि परेनन्। आफ्नो भलो गर्ने साधु विरालो बनेर आफुनै देशको सर्वहितैषी महापुरुषका रूपमा आफैलाई प्रस्तुत गर्ने महा मानव पनि देखिए। जनताले चिनेका छन्, सत्य के हो असत्य के हो। सत्यका अगाडी असत्यको केही चल्दैन। असत्य टिक्दैन, सत्य डग्लैन। पुराणमा भएका कथामा, मधु-कैटभ शुम्भ निशुम्भ, महिषासुर, चण्ड-मुण्ड, हिरण्यकशिपु,

कंश, रावण आदि महावीर, महावली असुरहरूले अत्यन्त कठोर तपस्या गरेर ब्रह्मादि देवी देवतालाई प्रशन्न पारेर वरदान पाए परन्तु पछि वरदानको सदुपयोग नगरी अहंकार गरी आफ्ना आराध्यदेवी देवतासँग युद्ध गरेर विनाश भएका कथा सुनेका छौं।

सुनेर पनि नसुने जस्तै गरी कुरुर भुक्तै गर्छ हाती अघि बड्दै गर्छ भनेभै आज देशमा ठूला-बडा पार्टीका ठूला-बडा नेताहरूले भोली आफुमा आई लाग्ने विकराल-काल यमराजको काँडे कोराको ताडनाको सामना गर्नु पर्ने कुरा विर्सेर “यावत् जीवेत सुखं जीवेत ऋणं कृत्वा घृतं पिवेत्” भन्ने उक्तिलाई चरितार्थ गर्दै विलासितापूर्ण जीवन विताउन आँखा चिम्लेर लागी परेको पाइन्छ, अहिलेका कतिपय पार्टीका कतिपय नेता। जुन कुरा अत्यन्त निन्दनीय र अक्षम्य छ। जनताको नाम बेचेर भुटको खेती गर्ने भ्रष्ट नेताको अन्त्य पनि अति कष्टदायक हुनेछ भन्ने कुरा कदापि विर्सन हुने छैन।

२०औं शताब्दीका अन्तिम दशकमा र २१औं शताब्दीका प्रारम्भमानै विश्वमानै जनताको रगत पसीना चुसेर डिक्टेटर-तानाशाह कहलाएका भ्रष्टाचारी जनद्रोही राष्ट्राध्यक्षको मरण एक कुरुर विरालाको भन्दा पनि तुच्छ भयो भन्ने कुरा यहाँ उल्लेख गर्नु पर्ला जस्तो लाग्दैन। ती मध्ये एकजना फिलिपिन्सको भ्रष्टाचारी राष्ट्राध्यक्ष फर्डिनाण्डेज मार्कोस हो। उसले अधिकार पाए पछि जनताकै खुन पसीना पनि भनेन, देश सपानुको सट्टा विगायो, आँशु पुच्छनुको सट्टा जनतालाई रुवायो। जनताको श्रापले पोल्या, पापको घडा भरियो। निर्वासित जीवन विताउनु पर्यो, अबौं डलरको भ्रष्टाचारीले सबै दण्ड सजाए तिर्नु पर्यो, भिखारी भै प्रवासमा मर्नु पर्यो। जनताको ईच्छानुसार मृत शरीर पनि स्वदेश ल्याउन दिइएन। उसलाई जनताले माफ गरेनन्।

ईराकी क्रुर भ्रष्ट शासक सद्दाम हुसेन समान्य सैनिक सेवा बाट सेना प्रमुख भै राष्ट्र प्रमुख भएको हुसेनको मरण कस्तो भयो प्रायः बच्चाहरू पनि थाहा भएको कुरा हो। शताको मोह चडे पछि शतान्ध भएको कलियुगी कंशको रूपमा परिचित भएको हुसेनले अरु त अरु, आफ्नो विचार सँग असहमत हुने आफ्नै छोरा-छोरी ज्वाइँलाई समेत हत्या गर्ने, निर्वासित गर्ने जस्ता जघन्य अपराध गर्न पछि परेन। मानव अधिकारका जघन्य अपराध गर्‍यो। न्याय सिद्धान्तका आधार रहेनन्। स्वेच्छाले निर्णय गर्न थाल्यो। अति भए पछि पाप धुरीबाट कुर्यो। अन्ततः उसले पनि जनताको आँशुको मूल्य आफ्नै जीवनमा जीउँदै फाँसीमा चढेर चुकाउन परेको कुरा ताजै छ।

अतः सत् व्यवहारबाट प्राप्त भएको ज्ञान र सदाचरणबाट प्राप्त विचार यी दुवैको मिश्रणबाट गरिएको कर्म द्वारा प्राप्त हुने फल आनन्दमय र सुखमय हुनेमा कुनै शंका छैन ।

सत् निरन्तर सनातन सर्वव्यापक र नित्य छ । कर्मको साक्षी भएर कण-कणमा रहने अदृश्य शक्तिको नाम हो 'सत्' 'सत्' अविनाशी ईश्वर अन्तर्हृदयमा सदा विराजमान छन् भनेर सदा आफ्ना काम कर्तव्य प्रति सजग रहने व्यक्ति नै जनताको हित गर्ने जनार्दन हो, त्यही ईश्वर हो भक्त हो, ज्ञानी पुरुष हो । त्यसलाई न बुझ्ने अज्ञानी हो बुझ्ने पनि नबुझ्ने गरी अन्याय अत्याचार गर्ने व्यक्ति लोभी, पापी हो । प्रजातन्त्रको सत्य अर्थ नै सत हो, सत्को जरो निमोठेर प्रजातन्त्रको वकालत गर्नु पाप हो "अज्ञानेन कृतं पापं सज्ञानेन विनश्यति, सज्ञानेन कृतं पापं ब्रह्मलेपो भविष्यति" ।

अज्ञानमा कुनै अधर्म भएको भए, जाने बुझ्ने पछि, त्यसको प्रायश्चित्त हुन्छ । जानी जानी गरेको पापको प्रायश्चित्त हुँदैन । पापको फल भोग गर्नु पर्छ । पृथ्वीमण्डलमा अति पवित्र भूमि नेपाल, ऋषिहरुको तपोभूमि, अहिंसाका प्रवर्तक बुद्धको जन्मभूमि, जीवनमुक्त राजर्षि महाराजा जनकबाट प्रतिपालित तथा गोरखालीराजाको न्यायभूमि नेपालमा केही वर्ष अघि देखि प्रजातन्त्रका नाममा नेपालको इतिहासमा कहिल्यै नमेटिने कालो इतिहास लेखियो । ठूला नेताहरुको हत्या भयो । सुरक्षा विभागका प्रमुखको हत्या भयो । हत्याको पत्तो लागेन । अझ यो भन्दा पनि लाजै मर्दो घटना भयो दरबार नरसंहार हत्याकाण्ड, विश्वलाई नै स्तब्ध पार्‍यो । तर पनि नेपाली जनताले चित्तबुझ्दो समाधान पाउन सकेनन् । शंका निवारण भएको छैन । उक्त सबै घटनाका जिम्मेवारले आ-आफ्ना कुकर्मको फल पाउनेछन् भन्ने मेरो दृढ विश्वास छ । सत्य लुकाएर कति दिन लुक्ला र ? एक न एक दिन सत्यको सामना गर्नु पर्ने छ, ती कुकर्मिहरुले ।

अतः उक्त प्रायः सबै घटनाहरु प्रजातन्त्रका नामसित जोडिएका र विवेकहीन अप्रजातान्त्रिक तानाशाही स्वार्थी व्यक्ति वा व्यक्तिमुदायबाट नै देशमा यस्तो दुर्दशा भैरहेको छ । प्रजातन्त्रलाई स्वीकार गर्ने सच्चा नेताले त यस्तो जघन्य अपराध शोचन मात्र पनि सक्दैन । प्रजातन्त्रमा प्रजातान्त्रिक भावनाको व्यक्ति विचारको मूल्य मान्यता हुन्छ, विचारको कदर हुन्छ । उ आफ्नो मतको अधिकारी हुन्छ, आफ्नो मत स्वेच्छाले प्रयोग गर्न पाउँछ । नेपाली प्रजातान्त्रिक पार्टीमा सिद्धान्त र व्यवहार फरक हुनाले आज देशको यो हविगत भएको छ । बहुमत ल्याएर सरकारमा पुगेर देश विकास हुने भए प्राय सबै ठूला पार्टीले पाले पालो संसदमा ठूलो दल हुने, सरकारमा जाने मौका पाए । तर यो सबै कुरा भुट सावित भयो । जन जीवन झनै अस्त व्यस्त भयो ।

चुनाव के कस्तो थियो भन्ने दोहोर्याउन भन्दा सरकार गठन गर्ने काम देखि पदविभाजन बाट नै भ्रष्टाचार गर्ने मनसाय जाहेर हुन्छ । पद रोज्ने मन्त्रालय रोज्ने कमिशन तन्त्र हेर्ने प्रकृयाबाट नै व्यक्तिवादी फरियावादी र पार्टीका कार्यकर्ता वादी भै अप्रजातान्त्रिक प्रवृत्ति पार्टी प्रमुखहरुमा देखियो ।

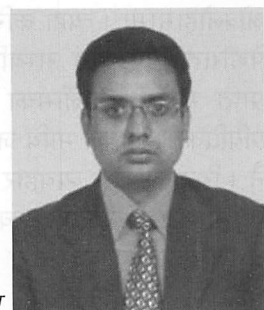
अन्यथा प्रजातान्त्रिक भएर पार्टी चलाउने हो भने चुनावमा धाँदली गर्नु हुन्न । स्वेच्छाले भोट हाल्न पाउने वातावरण बनाउन पर्छ । चुनाव सम्पन्न भएपछिको कार्यक्रम देशको हित, मान, वा अपमान कहाँबाट कसरी भएको छ । यसमा ज्यादै लगनशील भएर लाग्नु पर्छ । कार्यकर्ता कुनै एउटा पार्टीका मात्र हैन हुँदैनन् । सबै देशवासी राष्ट्रका कार्यकर्ता हुन् भन्ने दृष्टिकोण राख्नु पर्छ । आन्तरिक न्यायको पालना गराउनुपर्छ । सरकार भनेको सर्वोच्च संस्था हो । त्यहाँ मेरो कुरा सुनि दिने कोही छैन भनेर निराश हुने अवस्था कसैलाई पनि नपरोस् ।

परराष्ट्र र अन्तराष्ट्रिय सम्बन्धमा पञ्चायती सरकारमा र ०४६ साल पछिका सबै सरकारमा कुनै अन्तर पाइएन । आफु प्रति पक्षमा छँदा सत्तामा पुगेका दललाई लगाउने आरोप आफ्नो पालामा सुधार्नुको साटो आरोप-प्रत्यारोप लगाउनु बाहेक केही भएन । सबैको त्यही हालत भयो । "जुन जोगी आए पनि कानै चिरेको" जस्तै भयो ।

संयुक्त राष्ट्रसंघको वडापत्रमा पास भएको नियम कानुन लागु गर्ने त्यसका लागी कुरा गर्ने कुनै प्रयास भएन, जस्तै भू-परिवेष्टित देशलाई पारवहन सुविधा सामुद्रिक व्यापार सुविधा, सार्वभौम सम्पन्न देशले आफ्नो सीमा सुरक्षा सम्बन्धी कुरा यस्तै नदी कटान, विद्युत उत्पादनका लागी बाँध, सिंचाई र हाम्रा प्राचिन धार्मिक मठ-मन्दिर र साथै महापुरुषका जन्म स्थान धार्मिक, सांस्कृतिक तथा ऐतिहासिक संपदाको अपहरण भैरहेको छ । त्यतातर्फ कुरा गर्ने, हक जनाउने बारेमा कुनै सरकारले सोचेन, त्यसमा चिन्तित भएको पाइएन ।

अन्तमा, मेरो भनाई यति मात्र हो कि जीवन यही मात्र हैन । यो जीव लाखौं जीवनमा घुम्नु पर्छ । हामीले हाम्रा लुगा फेरे सरी देह फेरिन्छ । स्वर्गवासी देवगणले पनि मानव भएर यस पृथ्वीमा पुनः जन्म लिन चाहन्छन् भने यस्तो उच्च दर्जाको जीवन पाएका हामी मानवले सत्यको अनुशरण गरी राजनीतिमा आफुलाई समर्पण गर्नेले देश र जनताको हितलाई प्राथमिकता दियो भने अवश्यपनि सुल्भ्याउन नसकिने कुरा छैन । सच्चा जनसेवक राष्ट्र सेवकको रुपमा आफुलाई समर्पण गरी राष्ट्रको सम्मान र जनताको हित हुने काम गरौं । यसैमा नेता-जनता दुवैको हित छ । देश र देशवासीलाई बेवास्ता गरी आत्मरतिमा रमाउने नेता कदापि सफल भएको छैन । अब पनि हुने छैन । जीवनको एक मात्र लक्ष्य लोकतन्त्र वा प्रजातन्त्र भएको नेतालाई जस्तै महाशक्तिले पनि रोक्न सक्दैन, कुरा यही हो - विषयको लक्ष्य सत्यमा आधारित हुनु पर्‍यो र सर्वजनहिताय पनि । महात्मा गान्धीको आन्दोलनमा तत्कालीन विश्व विजयी महाशक्तिशाली ब्रिटिस सरकारले हार मान्नु पर्‍यो । उनले आफ्नो जीवन चर्चालाई "सिम्पल लिभिङ्ग हाई थिङ्किङ्ग" मा उतारेका थिए । उनलाई भारतीय जनता र सरकारले भारतका राष्ट्रपिता जस्तो गरिमामय पदले सम्मानित गरे । महात्माको यही प्रयासले उपनिवेशवाद एशियाबाट हाराउँदै गयो । दृढ इच्छा शक्ति लिएर राष्ट्रको उत्थानमा लागी परेमा सबै समस्याको समाधान हुने कुरामा कुनै शंका छैन ।

एक महिने यात्रा र अनुभूति



- सुशील अर्याल

विश्वको सर्वशक्तिमान राष्ट्र अमेरिका, विकास र प्रविधिका कारण धेरै नै फड्को मारेको मुलुक । जो कसैलाई पनि एकपटक पुग्ने रहर । त्यसमाथि पनि हामी जस्ता विकासन्मुख मुलुकका सञ्चारकर्मी, एकपटक अमेरिका पुगेर त्यहाको वस्तुस्थितीलाई नजिकबाट नियाल्ने रहर हुनु स्वभाविकै हो ।

यस पटक यस्तै संयोग जुन्यो । अमेरिकी स्टेट डिपार्टमेन्टको सहयोग र नेपाल स्थित आईवार्ड नामक एक सञ्चारक्षेत्रमा क्रियाशिल गैरसरकारी संस्थाको संयोजनमा सन् २०१० को जुन सात देखी जुलाई सातसम्म अमेरिकाको विभिन्न राज्यको भ्रमण गर्ने र नजिकबाट नियाल्ने अवसर प्राप्त भयो । ओक्लोहामामा रहेको ओक्लोहामा कलेज अन्तरगत गेलर्ड कलेजमा टेलिभिजनमा कार्यक्रम निर्माणका बारेमा प्रशिक्षण लिने अवसर जुरेको बेला अन्य क्षेत्रका पनि घुमफिर गर्ने इच्छा पनि पुरा हुन गयो । प्रशिक्षणका क्रममा म सहित नेपालबाट सहकर्मीहरु प्रदीप चापागाई, समा थापा र स्वेता सिन्हाको टोलीले छिमेकी राष्ट्र पाकिस्तान र बंगलादेशका चार/चार सहयात्रीको रमाईलो साथ पायौ ।

सात जुलाईमा नेपाल छाडेका हामी नौ तारिखको दिउसोतीर सिकागो विमानस्थलमा उत्रियौ । हामी सरकारी पाहुनाकोरुपमा अमेरिका गएका थियौ । साच्चै पाहुनाको अनुभूति भयो, सिकागो विमानस्थलमा । कुरा पाहुनाको मात्र नभै संयोजनको थियो । त्यहा सुरक्षाकर्मीले हामीलाई आत्मीय व्यवहार देखाउँदै डि सि जाने विमानस्थल सम्म पुर्‍याई बिदा गरे । नेपालबाट जाने बेलामा अमेरिकी दुतावासका कर्मचारी प्रताप नकर्मिले भन्दै हुनुहुन्थो 'तपाईंहरु राष्ट्रपति बाराक ओबामाको पाहुनाको रुपमा जादै हुनुहुन्छ, नेपाल र नेपालीको पहिचान राखेर आउनु होला ।' हामीले पनि त्यो कुरा राम्ररी मनन् गरेका थियौ ।

सिकागोबाट डिसि विमानस्थलमा उत्रिदा कलेजका कर्मचारी क्याथी एडेम्स कुरेर बसिरहनुभएको रहेछ । उहाको साथ लागेर वासिङ्गटनमा रहेको होटल हिल्टनमा पुगियो । चार दिनको डिसी बसाईका क्रममा अमेरिका लाई नजिकबाट नियाल्ने सुनौलो अवसर प्राप्त भयो । डिसिमा रहदा ओक्लोहामाको कंग्रेसम्यानसंगको भेटघाट, स्टेट डिपार्टमेन्टको भ्रमण र त्यहाका दक्षिण एशिया हेर्ने

जिम्मेवार अधिकारीहरूसंगको भेटघाट निकै उपलब्धीपूर्ण भयो । यसैगरी ओक्लोहामा युर्निभरसिटी एम्प्लोनाई एशोशिएसनका अधिकारीहरूसंगको साँझको बसाई निकै संभनलायक रह्यो ।

अनि विभिन्न ठाउँको दृश्यवलोकन गर्ने क्रममा लिंकन मेमोरियल पार्क घुम्दा त्यहाको सुन्दरताले एकाग्र बनाउनु त स्वभाविकै हो तर पनि मैले झलझली नेपालका विभिन्न ठाउँमा रहेका राष्ट्रनिर्माता पृथ्वीनारायण शाहको शालिकहरु संझिए । आखिर हामी चिन्तनमा पनि निकै गरीब छौ । जसले नेपाल एकिककरण गरेर एउटै धागोमा उनेर राखे, परिवर्तको नाममा उनकै शालिक भत्काउदा हामी गौरवको अनुभूति गरेर रमाउँछौ । आखिर देशको विकास अरुको ईश्या र विध्वंसबाट हुने होईन, सकारात्मक चिन्तन र दृढ ईच्छाशक्तिको खाँचोबाट मात्रै हुने हो भन्ने कुरा चटकै बिसिएका छौ ।

अन्य कुरा सबै विदेशबाट आयात त गर्न सकिएला तर दृढ ईच्छाशक्ति र सकारात्मक चिन्तन त सकाईन, जुन कुराको अभाव हामीकहाँ रहेको छ र त्यो कहिलेसम्म रहिरहन हो अनिश्चित नै छ । न त पूर्खाको ईतिहासप्रति गौरव गर्न सक्थौ, न सुनौलो ईतिहास नै बनाउन सक्थौ मात्र देशलाई स्वदेशी र विदेशको प्रयोगशालाको थलो बनाउने कुरामा नै मुलुक चलाउने अगुवाहरु रमाउन थाले । जसको परिणाम हामी भोगिरहेका छौ ।

मुलुकबाट बाहिरहेकाहरुले क्षणीकरुपमा त्यो पीडाबाट मुक्ति पाए पनि दीर्घकालीन रुपमा भने उहि पीडा व्यहोर्नु पर्ने त छदैछ । कि पीडाबाट मुक्त हुन राष्ट्रियतासंग संभौता गर्नुपर्ने छ । सायद त्यही कारण होला अनिश्चित भविष्यका बिच रहिरहनु भन्दा यतैको ग्रीनकार्डको जोहोमा जुट्नु धेरैले उपयुक्त ठाने । डीसी भ्रमणका क्रममा राजदूत डा शंकर शर्मासंग पनि केही समय भेट भयो । उहा पनि भन्दै हुनुहुन्थो 'राष्ट्र नै कमजोर भए पछि हामीले बल गरेर मात्र यता केही हुदैन । हाम्रो वास्तविक अवस्था हामीलाई भन्दा बढी उनिहरुलाई थाहा हुन्छ । राष्ट्रले नै हामीलाई कमजोर बनाएर पठाएको छ के मात्र गर्ने ।'

हुन पनि कमजोर आत्मबल लिएर अगाडी बढ्दा लक्ष्यमा पुग्न त सकिदैन नी । चारदिनको डिसि बसाई पछि हामी हाम्रो मूल गन्तव्यतीर लाग्यौ अर्थात

ओक्लोहामामा । त्यहा करिब १२ दिनको बसाईको क्रममा पेशागत विषयसंग सम्बन्धित धेरै कुरा सिकने अवसर प्राप्त भयो । तालीमका क्रममा सोचियो हामी न त प्रविधिका हिसाबले माथि जान सक्यौं न चिन्तनका हिसाबले नै । सिकेका कुरा व्यवहार लागु गर्न एउटा संञ्चारक्रान्ति नै आवश्यक छ त्यो तत्काल सम्भव छैन । आखिर देश अनुसारको भेष बदल्न त सकिदैन नी । यहि कलेजमा नै अध्ययन गरिरहेका केही नेपाली विद्यार्थीहरूसंग भेटगर्ने अवसर पनि जुन्यो । नेपाली विद्यार्थीहरु नमिसा, नमिस, किरण, मुरारी लगायतले बेला बेलामा नेपाली कला र संस्कृति झल्कने कार्यक्रम गरी कलेजमा नेपालको परिचय दिने गरेका रहेछन् जुन निकै प्रभावकारी भएको रहेछ ।

औपचारिक र अनौपचारिक कार्यक्रम सकिएपछि ओक्लोहामालाई बिदाई गर्दै हामी टेक्सासको डालसतिर लाग्यौ । जहाँ पुराना मित्र शुरेसचन्द्र पोखरेलको आत्मीय आतिथ्यतामा चार दिन बसियो । बसाईका क्रममा धेरै नेपालीसंग भेट गर्ने अवसर प्राप्त भयो । धेरैको पहिलो प्रश्न थियो हामी माथि-कति भयो आउनु भएको ? परिवार सहित कि एकलै ? काम पाउनु भयो ? अब नेपाल त फर्कनु हुदैन नी ?

म यी प्रश्नहरुको निरन्तर वर्षा पछि केहीबेर निकै सोच्न बाध्य भए । आखिर किन देश प्रतिको वितृष्णा बढ्दैछ । हामी जुन उद्देश्यका लागि आएका थियौं ती सबै कुरा स्पष्ट राखेपछि उहाँहरु भन्दै हुनुहुन्थ्यो 'के गर्ने देशको माया त लाग्छ तर कुनै आश गर्ने ठाउँ छैन । देशका प्रत्येक पुस्ताले प्रत्येक चिजका कठिन संघर्ष गर्नुपर्छ । कम से कम यता संघर्ष गर्दा पछि भविष्य सुरक्षित हुन्छ । स्वदेश छाडेपछि देशको माया बढी हुदो रहेछ ।' धेरै नेपालीमा यस्तै भावना भेटियो ।

उहाँहरुको सामुहिक चिन्ता थियो देश चलाउनेहरुले देशलाई चिन्न नसकेपछि माटोको मायाले मात्र केही गर्न नसकिने रहेछ । मुलुक छोड्दा कोही पनि पक्कै खुसी हुदैन तर पनि कर्मको खोजीमा जहा पुगे पनि त्यही रमाउनु पर्छ । हुन पनि हो देश भनेको राजनीतिक सीमाले छट्ट्याएको भुगोलको रेखा मात्र होईन देश र त्यसका नागरिक भएको गौरव गर्ने वातावरण त हुनै पर्छ त्यही कुराको अभाव नै हामी कहा भै रह्यो । त्यसैले होला स्वदेशमा रहदा हातोमालो गर्ने काममा सहयात्रा नगरेकाहरु विदेश गएपछि सामुहिक भावनाबाट ओतप्रोत हुदारहेछन् । डालस बसाईका क्रममा यहि दृश्य देखियो । नेपालबाट गुरु बोलाई आफ्नो सन्ततीलाई नेपाल र नेपालीको पहिचान गराउन विभिन्न कार्यक्रम गर्ने । आफ्नो संस्कार र संस्कृति सिकाउने । यसैका लागि संञ्चालन गरिएको हिउदे शिविर हेर्ने मौका पनि मिल्यो । जहाँ बिगत तीन वर्षदेखि डा चिन्तामणी योगी करिब १००

जना बालबालिकालाई नेपालको माटो चिनाउने प्रयास गर्दै हुनुहुन्थ्यो ।

दिउसो बालबालिकालाई सदज्ञान सिकाउने र सन्ध्याकालमा एकै ठाउँमा जम्मा भएर भजन कृतन गर्ने कार्यले निकै लोभ्यायो । सायद नेपालमा रहदा यस्ता कार्यकालागि एक मिनेट पनि सोच्न नभ्याएकाहरुले यहा आफै क्रियाशिल भएर कार्यक्रम गरेको देख्दा मान्छेलाई आफ्नो संस्कार सिक्न पनि विदेश नै पुग्नुपर्ने हो कि जस्तो लाग्यो । डालसमा भेटिएका डा चिन्तामणी योगी भन्दै हुनुहुन्थ्यो 'अचेल यताका बालबालिकाहरु **इयाड ईज ब्याड** भन्ने अमेरिकन संस्कारबाट केही हदसम्म भएपनि मुक्त भएका छन् ।' व्यवहारमा पनि यस्तै देखियो बाबुआमा प्रतिको श्रद्धा बढेर गएको छ । गुरु र आफुभन्दा ठुलालाई आदर गर्ने र सानालाई माया गर्ने संस्कार सिकेका छन् । खै अचेल त ती कुराको बरु स्वदेशमा नै कमी हुदै गएको हो की जस्तो लाग्छ ।

हामी चार दिन जति बस्यौं डालसमा त्यस समयमा चारवटा घरमा नै बेलुकी संतंसंग भयो । करिब ५० / ६० जना जति नेपाली भैट भयो । धेरै व्यापार व्यवसायमा होस वा आफ्नै श्रृजनात्मक काममा एउटै नेपालीले २० वटा सम्म ग्यास स्टेसन संञ्चालन गर्नेदेखि व्यवसायिक प्रतिष्ठानहरु संञ्चालन गर्ने सम्मका काममा आफ्नो गौरवाशाली पहिचान बनाएका छन् । धेरैको अनूभूति र बुझाई एउटै छ काम गर्नुपर्छ अमेरिकामा काम अनुसारको दाम र मामबाट बञ्चित हुनु पर्दैन । त्यसैले त होला अध्ययन गर्न गएका विद्यार्थीहरु समेत बचे खुचेको समयमा काम गरेर राम्रै तरिकाबाट जीवन यापन गरिरहेका छन् ।

चार दिनको डालसको बसाईपछि हामी अर्को सहर हुस्टनतिर लाग्यौ । जहा पुराना संञ्चारकर्मी तारा बराल र बिटु केसी बरालसंग भेट भयो भने अर्का मित्र पावन अधिकारीको आत्मीय व्यवहारले साच्चै ऋणी बनायो । नेपालमा रहदा नेपाल टेलिभिजनको अध्यक्षको जिम्मेवारी निर्वाह गरिसक्नु भएका तारा दाईको अमेरिकाको बसाई करिब सात वर्ष भन्दा बढि भई सकेछ । लामो समयपछि नेपालबाट गएका क्रियाशिल पत्रकार भेट्दा उहालाई निकै आनन्दको अनुभव भएछ । हामीसंग भन्दै हुनुहुन्थ्यो 'आज लामो समय पछि चेलीले माईती भेटेको जस्तो भयो ।' नेपालमा रहदा कांग्रेसको राजनीतिमा चल्तापूरामा नै गनिने तारादाई नेपालबाट भौतिक रुपमा टाडिए पनि भावनात्मक रुपमा भने निकै नजिक पायौ । अरुको जस्तै उहाको पनि चिन्ता थियो 'स्वदेशमा नै बस्न र फर्कन त मन छ तर फर्कने कुनै गतिलो आधारमा नै भेटिदैन ।' अरु नेपाली जस्तै उहा पनि नेपाल फर्कनका लागि सकारात्मक आधार खोज्दै हुनुहुन्थ्यो ।

तीन दिनको हुस्टन बसाईका क्रममा नासा सेन्टर पुग्ने अवसर पनि प्राप्त भयो । हामी शताब्दीका हिसाबले

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२१ औ तीर भएपनि प्रविधिक हिसाबले कता हो कता ? नासा सेन्टरमा अमेरिकाले हालसम्म प्रक्षेपण गरेका १७ वटा रकेटको ईतिहास र त्यसका स्वरूप अनि कृतिमरूपमा तयार पारिएको विभिन्न ग्रहहरु भित्र आफुलाई पाउदा बेग्लै संसारमा पुगेको रोमाञ्चक अनुभूति भयो । आखिर वर्षोदेखी पढ्दै र सुन्दै आएको नासा आफनौ आखाले देख्न र अनुभूतिगर्न पाउनु अबिष्मरणीय नै हो ।

तीन दिनको हुस्टन बसाई पछि हामी संसारको राजधानी भनिने चिनिने प्रख्यात सहर न्युयोर्क आईपुग्यौ । न्युयोर्क धेरै नेपालीहरु भएको सहर त्यसमा पनि ज्याक्सन हाईट । त्यता ठट्टाको बिषयपनि बन्दो रहेछ 'यता भारतको सीमामा घुम्न गएको जस्तै हुन्छ । अग्रेजी नजानेपनि खासै फरक पर्दैन हिन्दीले पनि काम चल्छ ।' हुन पनि त्यस्तै रहेछ, दक्षिण एशियाकाबाट जाने अधिकांस त्यही क्षेत्रमा भेटिदा रहेछन् । आधिकारीक तथ्याङ्क नभएपनि अनुमानमा आधारमा १ लाख भन्दा बढी नेपाली त न्युयोर्कमा मात्र रहेछन् । जता भेटे पनि नेपाली, बग्रेल्टी भारतीय, बंगाली र नेपाली रेष्टुरेन्ट, त्यसैले त यता भेटिएका नेपाली भन्दै थिए यो ठाउमा आएपछि होमसिक हुदैन । रमाईलो के भने तिब्बती हुन वा भुटानी र नेपाली बोल्न जान्ने भारतीय नै किन नहुन सबै नेपालीमा गनिदा रहेछन् । कारण नेपाली भने पछि काम पाउन सजिलो । अनि भाषा नेपाली बोल्ने जति सबै नेपाली । न्युयोर्कमा सहृदयी मित्र बिनोद चापागाई, बिमला थापा, ईमु बालेहरुको निकै आत्मीय सहयोग पाईयो । न्युयोर्क पुगेको दिन थकाईले लखतरान परेपनि घुम्ने ईच्छालाई मार्न सकिएन् । त्यसैले राती ११ बजेतिर घुम्न निस्कियो । चर्चित ब्यवसायीक केन्द्र टाईम इस्क्वायरमा । यता पाहुना र बत्तिलाई उस्तै उस्तै मानेका हामीलाई टाईम इस्क्वायर त कल्पना बाहिरको जस्तो लग्यो । त्यो क्षेत्र घुम्ने नै राती रहेछ । लाग्थ्यो केही पनि सुतेका छैनन । सहर पुरै ब्युभेको छ ।

अग्ला अग्ला भवन र त्यसमा पनि बिजुलीको चामत्कारीक प्रकाश, अनौठो सम्मिश्रण थियो । करिव ४ घण्टा घुमेको पतै पाईएन । जब कोठामा फर्कियो अनि पो थकाईको अनुभूति भयो भोलीपल्ट बोस्टन जानु थियो कतिबेला निदाईएछ पतै भएन । भोली पल्ट उठेर बोस्टनमा पुराना मित्र मुकेश बरालकोमा पुग्न थियो । पाँच घण्टाको बसको यात्रा पटकै थकाईको अनुभूति नहुने । यता ढक्कसंग सिटमा बस्न पनि सकस हुने हामीलाई सुबिधा सम्पन्न बसको यात्रा निकै रमाईलो लाग्यो ।

यता हामी चाईजिन समान भनेर नाक खुम्चाउने बानी लागेको त्यता बस र अन्य सामान सबै चाईनिज । अन्य मुलुकका ब्यक्तिहरुसंग कुरा गर्दा पनि भन्दै थिए साच्चै भन्ने हो भने अमेरिका बाहिरबाट आएकाहरुले आजको अमेरिका बनाएका हुन् । उनिहरुको सीप कला

र ज्ञानलाई आ आफनौ देशले उपयोग गर्ने हो भने धेरै देश बिकासको दृष्टिमा निकै माथि पुग्छन् । हुन पनि त्यस्तै रहेछ ।

बोस्टनको ऐतिहासीक सहरका साथै हार्डवर्ड विश्वविद्यालयमा पुग्ने मौका समेत मिल्यो । त्यस विश्वविद्यालयका बिद्यार्थी यति बेफुसदी थिए कि हामीले समुहमा फोटो खिच्न खोज्दा पनि निकै मान्छेलाई खोज्नु पर्‍यो । सबैका हातमा किताब, कसैलाई फुसद थिएन अरुका कुरा सुन्न । अनि पो हार्डवर्डको बिद्यार्थी । घुमघामका क्रममा पाच वर्षदेखी अमेरिका बस्दै आएका मुकेश हामीलाई पर्यटकको शैलीमा नै जानकारी गराउदै थिए भने संज्ञा किनमेलको लागि हौसाउदै थिईन । रमाईलो अनुभूति सम्हाल्दै जुलाई एकमा हामीले बोस्टनलाई बिदाई गर्‍यो । जहा २ तारिखदेखी अमेरिका नेपाली समाजको सम्मेलन हुदै थियो । पूर्व कार्यलातीका अनुसार सम्मेलनमा भने बस्न सकिएन् । फेरी हामी न्युयोर्क फर्कियो । हामी पाच तारिखमा नेपाल फर्कनु थियो ।

न्युयोर्क तीन दिनको बसाईका क्रममा सेप्टेम्बर ११ मा आतंककारी हमलाबाट ध्वस्त भएको वर्ल्डट्रेड सेन्टरको भग्नावशेष र निर्माणाधीन भवनको अवलोकन गर्न पुगियो । यसै गरी अमेरिकी स्वतन्त्रताको शालीक भएको ठाउमा पुगि अवलोकन गरियो । सायद राष्ट्रकोलागि योगदान पुर्‍याउनेहरुकोलागि त्यो अतुलनीय सम्मान थियो । त्यसैले मैले अमेरिकामा पाइला टेके देखि नै साथीभाईबीच ठट्टा गर्दै भनेको थिए 'अमेरिका त्यसै अमेरिका बनेको होईन, नेतृत्वमा केही गर्नुपर्छ भन्ने दृढ इच्छाशक्ति, कानुन प्रतिको प्रतिबद्धता र ठोसरूपमा कार्यन्वयन । यीनै कारणले आजको अमेरिका अमेरिका बनेको हो ।'

मुलुक सञ्चालन गर्नेहरु नेता हुन वा प्रशासक कयौ पटक अमेरिका वा यस्तै अन्य मुलुकको बिकास र त्यहाको अवस्थाको अवलोकन गर्न पुगेका छन् । कतै यही कामकालागि त्यतै होलान् । अभै कति जाने तरखरमा होलान् तर उनिहरुले त्यस्ता भ्रमणलाई परिवारसंग रमाईलो गर्ने, राष्ट्रिय बजेटको दुरुपयोग गर्ने वा ब्यक्तिगत प्रयोजनको लाभहानी बाहेक माथि उठाउन सकेनन् । सारमा एक महिने यात्रा क्रममा नयाँ ठाउँ, नयाँ परिवेशको बारेमा जानकारी लिने, नयाँ अनुभव बटुल्ने काम त हुने नै भयो, तर पनि मुख्य कुरा केही मुलुक बिकास र प्रगतिको मार्गमा एक्काईसौ शताब्दीलाई पनि चाडै नै उछिनेर जाउला भै गरेर लागेको बेला हामी भने यीनै कुराले १९ औ शताब्दीतिर फर्कदै छौ कि जस्तो लाग्यो । आखिर मुलुक चलाउने भनाउदाहरुको चिन्तनमा परिवर्तन आए मात्र हामी अगाडी बढ्ने हो नत्र नागरिक चिन्ताले मात्र त केही पनि हुदैन ।



PUKAR CHHETRI, 22, a transfer student from Northwest Missouri State University, Maryville, Missouri, to San Jacinto College South in Houston, Texas, from Bafal, Kathmandu, Nepal, lost his precious life on August 11, 2010. Late Pukar Chhetri is survived by his parents, elder sister and a younger brother. He was very jolly person, nice to everyone who always liked to joke with friends and family. He was a very hard working person with sound academic background. Help and support from Nepalese Association of Houston (NAH) and many other well wishers and donors was really great help to send his body back to Nepal. His body was flown to Nepal on Thursday, August 26, 2010, and was cremated on the bank of the holy Bagmati River in Arya Ghat by Shree Pashupati Nath Temple, Kathmandu on August 28, 2010. Funds were raised to send his body back to Nepal and the remaining funds will be disbursed to his family in Nepal.

We extend our deepest sympathy to his family and relatives at their greatest loss. May God give them strength to overcome their sorrow at this painful moment. We pray to God that late Pukar Chhetri's soul rest in peace.

Kiran Kasti and friends

Houston, Texas

महिलालाई

हेर्ने

दृष्टिकोण

अमिता लम्साल



अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति बराक ओबामाले हालसालै अमेरिकी सूप्रिम कोर्टमा रिक्त हुन लागेको एक न्यायाधिशको पद पुर्ती गर्ने सम्बन्धमा अमेरिकी सोलिसिटर जनरल एलेना केगनको नाम प्रस्तावित गर्ने वित्तिकै प्रत्यक्ष, अप्रत्यक्ष तवरले एलेनाको व्यक्तिगत जीवनमाथि समेत टिका टिप्पणीको सुरुवात भयो त्यसै क्रममा उनी समलिङ्गी हुन कि? भन्ने चर्चा समेत सुरु भएको देखियो; जून कूराले उनको पदीय दायित्वसंग खासै सरोकार राख्न पर्ने थिएन, यो प्रसंग यहाँ उठाउनुको कारण विश्वको सामू सबै भन्दा धेरै व्यक्तिगत स्वतन्त्रता, मानव अधिकार भएको देश भनेर दावी गरिने अमेरिकामा समेत जब महिलालाई कुनै उच्च पदमा नियुक्त गर्न खोजिन्छ त्यस बखत उनीसँग त्यो पद चलाउन सक्ने गुण र योग्यता छ कि छैन भनेर हेरिने भन्दा पनि कहाँनेर खोट देखाउन सकिन्छ भनेर व्यक्तिगत नालीबेली नै खोजिन्छ भन्ने तर्क प्रस्तुत गर्नु नै हो । एलेना केगन, संसारको कुनै उच्च शिक्षित पुरुष भन्दा अलिकति पनि कम छैनन्; उनी प्रिन्सटन, अक्सफोर्ड र हार्वर्ड ल स्कुलमा अध्ययन गरेकी व्यक्ति हुन र हार्वर्ड ल स्कुलकी डीन पनि । उनी हार्वर्ड ल स्कुलकी डीन हुने बेलामा पनि उनले सो पद सम्हाल्न सकिदैनन् भनेर टीका टिप्पणी भएको थियो । त्यसैगरी अमेरिकी सूप्रिम कोर्ट कै अर्की जस्टिस सोन्या सोतोमायरको नियुक्ती हुने बेलामा पनि उनको शिक्षा र योग्यता भन्दा बढी उनले आफुजस्तै महिलाहरूलाई अभिप्रेरित गर्नको लागि प्रयोग गरेका उत्साहजनक भाषणका अंशहरू भिकेर हाउसमा सूनूवाईका धेरै समय अंशको आशय यस्तो थियो “मेरो विचारमा एक बृद्धिमानपुर्ण ल्याटिना महिला त्यस्तो अवसर नपाएका गौरा पुरुष भन्दा धेरै सक्षम हुन्छन्” भन्ने थियो, जो अनावश्यक रूपमै विवादमा आयो । उपरोक्त उदाहरण र यस्ता धेरै उदाहरणहरू सुनेपछि र देखेपछिका स्थितिमा यो पन्तिकार

यस्तो नीक्योर्ल निकाल्न बाध्य भएँ कि, संसारको जूनसुकै कुनामा जाऔँ त्यहाँ महिलालाई हेरिने दृष्टिकोण उस्तै उस्तै हुन्छन् ? केवल मात्रामा धेरै थोरैको फरक मात्र हो । विश्वको सबैभन्दा शक्तिशाली मूलुकमा महिलाहरूलाई हेर्ने दृष्टिकोणको लेखा जोखा गर्दा गर्दै आफुलाई आफ्नै देशमा २०५३ सालको समयतिरको प्रसंग याद आयो । जूनबेला छोरीलाई पैतृक सम्पत्तिमा अधिकार दिनपछि भन्ने बहस खूबै गर्मागर्मीको साथ चलिरहेको थियो ।

त्यो स्थितिमा विषय छोरीको सम्पत्तिमाथिको अधिकार भएपनि छापामा भने सो अधिकारको तर्किक विरोध भन्दा पनि उपरोक्त अधिकारदिलाउन जोडदार भूमिका खेल्ने महिला नेत्रीहरूको तीन पुस्तै खोतलिदै थियो । जून कूरा वाहियात मात्र होइन कि, सम्बन्धित विषयसंग कुनै सरोकार सम्म राख्दैन थियो त्यतिखेर अधिकारवादी महिलाहरूलाई धेरै गम्भीर आरोपहरू लगाइयो । जस्तो कि, अब हामीहरूसामू रहेको एउटै कूरा समाजलाई ध्वस्त पार्न विदेशीहरू सक्रिय छन् । उनीहरूका एजेन्ट नेपाली आईमाईहरू विदेशी दलालवादी हुन । आजको समाचारपत्रमा २०५३ वैशाख ३ गते छापिएको, बालकृष्ण न्यौपाने लेखबाट उद्धृत । हाम्रो जस्तो शान्तिप्रिय देश । स्वर्गतुल्य पारिवारिक संरचनालाई भत्काउने किसिमबाट प्रेरित भई आज जसले पश्चिमी शैलीको छाडा परम्पराको बीउ रोप्न दूस्साहस गरीरहेको छ तिनका बारेमा समस्त राष्ट्रवादी शक्तिहरूले सोच्न आवश्यक छ । देवप्रकाश त्रिपाठी, पानीको रंग, मान्छेको वंश । छोरीको अंश, घटना । विचार, जेष्ठ १६, २०५३ । त्यतिबेला छोरीलाई सम्पत्ति दिने अधिकारको अगुवाईमा नेतृत्व गर्ने महिलाहरू डाक्टर शान्ता थपलिया लगायतका महिला नेत्रीहरूले अति नै मात्रामा ताडना प्रताडना सहनु पथ्यो ताकि, यो विषय उहाँहरूको हक हितको लागि मात्रै उठेको थियो । त्यो स्थितिमा विषय छोरीको सम्पत्तिमाथिको अधिकार भएपनि छापामा भने सो अधिकारको तार्किक विरोध भन्दा पनि उपरोक्त अधिकार दिलाउन जोडदार भूमिका खेल्ने महिला नेत्रीहरूको तीन पुस्तै खोतलीदै थियो । जून कूरा वाहियात मात्र होइन कि, सम्बन्धित विषयसंग कुनै सरोकारसम्म राख्दैनथियो । त्यतिखेर अधिकारवादी महिलाहरूलाई धेरै गम्भीर आरोपहरू लगाइयो । जस्तो कि अब हामीहरूसामू रहेको एउटै कूरा समाजलाई ध्वस्त पार्न विदेशीहरू सक्रिय छन् र उनीहरूका एजेन्ट नेपाली आईमाईहरू विदेशीहरू डलरवादी हुन् । आजको समाचारपत्रमा २०५३ वैशाख ३ गते छापिएको बालकृष्ण न्यौपाने लेखबाट उद्धृत । हाम्रो जस्तो शान्तिप्रिय देश र स्वर्गतुल्य पारिवारिक संरचनालाई भत्काउने किसिमबाट पश्चिमी शैलीबाट (खासगरी अमेरिकी) आज जो छाडा परम्पराको बीउ रोप्ने दस्साहास भैरहेकोछ । तिनका बारेमा समस्त राष्ट्रवादी शक्तिहरूले सोच्न आवश्यक

छ । (देवप्रकाश त्रीपाठी, पानीको रंग, मान्छेको वंश र छोरीको अंश, घटना र विचार जेठ १६, २०५३) त्यतिबेला छोरीलाई सम्पत्ती दिने अधिकारको अगुवाईमा नेत्रित्व गर्ने महिलाहरू डाक्टर शान्ता थपतिया लगाइतका महिला नेतृत्वहरूले अत्तिनै मात्रामा ताडना र प्रताडना सहनु पथ्यो ताकि, या विषय उहाँहरूको हक र हितको लागि मात्रै उठेको थियो । स्थिति आज पनि त्यही छ, जस्तो त्यतिबेला थियो र जतासुकै त्यस्तै छ, चाहे अमेरिका होस् या नेपाल या पाकिस्तान होस् या अफ्रिका । नेपालको कूरा गर्दा त स्थिती अजै विकराल नै छ । एकातिर संचार माध्यमले खेलेको विश्वव्यापी भुमिका र प्रभावले संसारको हरेक कूनामा घटेका घटना, सोच विचारका कूराहरू नेपालमा सजिलै पसेका छन् भने अर्कोतिर महिलालाई हेर्ने सामाजिक मान्यता र दृष्टिकोण पढेलेखेकै भनीने र समाजलाई प्रभावीत पार्न सक्ने व्यक्तिहरूका नजरमा पनि फेरिएका छैनन् । नेपाली समाजको विकासक्रममा महिलालाई हेरीने दोधारे नीति अझै पनि नामेट भैसकेको छैन, नेपाली समाज एकातिर जहाँ नारीहरूको पूजा हुन्छ, त्यहाँ देवताहरू रमाउँछन् भन्ने खोक्रो” परम्परामा रमाएको छ भने अर्कोतर्फ महिला “पशू र शूद्धहरू एकै हुन्” भन्ने आख्यानलाई व्यवहारिक रुपमा नकार्न मूश्कील नै परिरहेको छ । हुनत, आफु दुई चार अक्षर पढेर जान्ने

सुन्ने भयौं भनेर घमण्ड गर्न खोज्नेहरू यस्ता तथ्यलाई सजिलै पचाउन सक्दैनन् । तर वास्तविकता भनेको लूकाएर लूक्दैन, न त तत्काललाई परिवर्तन भैहाल्छ यदि यसो हुँदो हो त महिला विकासका नाउँमा नेपालमा सयौं संस्थाहरू अझै पनि सक्रिय भैरहन सक्ने थिएनन् । यसै सन्दर्भमा एउटा घटना याद आयो, केही वर्ष पहिलेको कुरो हो, दुई जना वरिष्ठ पत्रकारसंग पत्रकारितामा सक्रिय महिलाहरूको बारेमा कूरा चल्दा आफुले मानेकी एकजना महिला पत्रकारको नाम लिएँ । तर उहाँहरूले सजीलै ती महिलाको विरोधमा बोल्नु भयो, कारण उहाँ सम्बन्ध बीचछेद गरेर बसेकीले “राम्रो पत्रकार”मा दरीनू हुन्न रे महिलालाई हेरिने दृष्टिकोणमा यो भन्दा नपूशक बीचर के हुन सक्ला ? यो त एउटा सानो उदाहरण मात्र दिएको हो, यस्ता उदाहरणहरू कति भेटिन्छन् कति, सबै भन्दा पछिल्लो साँढे विभेको घटना चाही आफूने सहकर्मी त्यो पनि प्रहरी परिवार भित्र बलात्कृत सून्तली धामीको पुरै चरित्रकै धज्जी उडाउने गरि पस्कीएका सामाग्रीहरूको विवरणको त कति बयान गर्नु । त्यसैले भनेको, चाहे विश्वको कूनै कूनामा जाऔं, महिलामाथी गरिने विश्लेषण । प्रतिक्रिया करिव करिव उस्तै हुन्छन्, खाली मात्रामा धेर थोर फरक मात्र आउने हो ।

छोरा परदेश गएको छ



- निशा के. सी. काठमाडौं

साकार पार्न मेरो सपना
छोरा पर्देश गएको छ,
घरबार छोडी परदेशमा
एक्लो-एक्लो भएको छ

चिसो-तातो, घाम-पानी
सबैबाट जोगाउथे,
माया उसको धेरै लाग्थ्यो
मूटू भित्रै लूकाउथेँ

कठैबरा परदेशमा
कति धेरै गाढो होला,
यही देशको सितल सम्झी
उसको मन कति रोला

भोकले पेट दोब्रिएर
आन्द्रा उसका चाउरे होलान्,
प्यास लाग्दा पानी नपाई
ओठ तालू सूके होलान्

कठैबरा परदेशमा
माया गर्ने को पो होला,
यै खोलीको पानी
सम्झी उसको मन कति रोला

स्वर्ग जस्तो लाग्छ भन्थ्यो
मेचीदेखि महाकाली,
वर्णन गरथ्यो कवितामा
यै देशको हरियाली

कठैबरा परदेशमा
कहाँ यस्तो स्वर्ग होला,
यै स्वर्गलाई सम्झिएर
उसको मन कति रोला

राष्ट्रियताले भरीएको
मिठो धून बजाउथ्यो,
देशको माया कति गरथ्यो
मूटू भित्र सजाउथ्यो

कठैबरा परदेशमा
सूनिदिने को पो होला,
निरश आफ्नो जीवनदेखि
उसको मन कति रोला

हिमाल जस्तो तिम्रो विश्वास
सधैं अटल रहिरहोस
सफलताले चूमन पदमा
यात्रा तिम्रो जारी रहोस

आज फेरी सपनीमा
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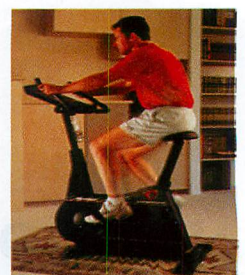


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अमेरिकामा सात वर्ष

बिट्टू के.सी. बराल, हूस्टन, टेक्सास



आफ्ना सबैसंग विदाबारी हुँदै एकलै अनिश्चित भविष्यकासाथ अमेरिका हिडेका ती दिनहरु अबै पनि मेरो स्मरणमा ताजै छु सन २००४ चैत महिना, नेपाल बन्दको दिन थियो त्यो । गलामा आमाले लगाइदिनु भएको बेगम्बेली फूलको माला सहित चण्डोल विशालनगर देखि चाबेलसम्म हतार हतार एयरपोर्ट हिडेको भल्भली आइरहन्छ । मूस्किलले चाबेलमा एउटा ट्याक्सी फेला परेको थियो । बूवाआमासंग एयरपोर्टमा छुट्टिनुपर्दा मूटू नै चूडिजस्तो सारै गाह्रो भएको थियो ।

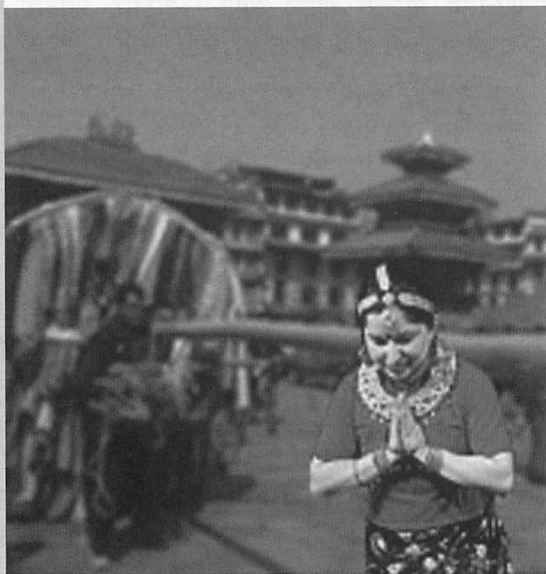
न कुनै सपना थियो, न उमंग नै । समयको बेगले अनयास बगाएको थियो अमेरिकामा । प्राय नेपालीलाई हुने जस्तो क्रेज ममा थिएन । अमेरिका प्रति न त आकर्षण थियो न कुनै विकर्षण । हूनत यो मेरो तेश्रो पटक थियो । २००१ र २००३ मा अमेरिकाको क्यालिफोर्निया र न्युयोर्क घुमिसकेकी थिएँ म । अमेरिकामा लामै समय बस्ने मनस्थिति बनाएको चै तेश्रो पटकमा थियो । त्यसैले पनि यस पटक देश र आफन्तहरु छोड्दा बढी नै नमिठो लाग्यो ।

उदास मन सहित म टेक्सासको हूस्टन शहर आइपुगें । विशाल शहरमा आफू विलिन भएजस्तो लाग्यो । तेसै, तेसै मन हुरक्क भयो । त्यतिबेला आफुले आफुलाई सम्हाल्नु बाहेक मसंग अरु कुनै विकल्प थिएन । आफन्त, नातेदार मेरा भन्नु कोही थिएनन् यहाँ । नातेदार भए नै पनि क्यालिफोर्नियाबाट समय भन्दा पहिले नै बूर्कसी मादै नेपाल फर्केकी थिएँ होमसिक भएर । यो चाहिँ दोश्रो पटक अमेरिका भ्रमणको कुरा हो । यस पटक पनि अमेरिकामा टिक्न सक्ली भन्ने आफैलाई नै पूरा विश्वास थिएन । रहदै बस्दै जाँदा थाहै नपाई म हूस्टनसित घुलमिल हुन थालिछु । दिपक उप्रेती दाईको अभिभावकत्व नपाएको भए शायद यो त्यति सहज हुने थिएन मेरोलागि । जाडो नहुने मलाई यहाँको गरम हावापानीले सूनमा सुगन्ध थपिदियो । घरजम भयो । घुमन्तेबाट स्थायित्वको प्रमाणपत्र पनि प्राप्त गरियो । तर मन भने अचम्मकै हुँदोरहेछ । कूटकूट खाइरहने, स्वदेश पिडाले छटपटाइ रहने । ख्वाइ पनि स्वदेशी खोज्ने, लगाइ पनि स्वदेशी खोज्ने सकेसम्म । नयाँनौलो जूनसूकै ठाउँमा गएपनि यो चाहिँ नेपालको पोखरा जस्तो, यो विराटनगर, यो काठमाडौँ जस्तो भनिरहदो रहेछ यो मन । नेपाली समाजसंगको चिनजानि, छरछिमेक र साथीभाईहरुसंगको भेटघाटले बिस्तारै, बिस्तारै हूस्टन रमाइलो लाग्दै गयो ।

नेप्लिज एशोसिएसन अफ हूस्टनले यहाँ भएका नेपालीहरुलाई समेट्ने प्रयास गरिरहेको रहेछ । नयाँ वर्ष र बडा दशैँलाई नेपालीहरुको ठुलो जमघटकासाथ मनाउने रहेछ एनएचले । नयाँ वर्ष मनाउने क्रममा पहिलोपल्ट मेरो एनएचसंग परिचय भएको थियो । बिस्तारै, बिस्तारै यस संस्थामा सम्लग्नता र सक्रियता बढ्दै गयो । साच्चै भन्नु भने एनएचको माध्यमबाट नेपाली समाजमा मिसिन पाउँदा खुशी र सन्तोष लाग्नुको साथै परदेशिनुको पीडा धेरै हदसम्म कम भएको मैले महसूस गरेकी छु । एनएच मात्र नभइ कुनैपनि नेपाली संस्थाका गतिविधि र कार्यक्रममा सहभागी हुँदा आफु नेपालमै भैरहेजस्तो लाग्दो रहेछ ।

एनएचको सहयोगमा यसपालि हूस्टनमा आयोजना भएको गैर आवासीय क्षेत्रिय सम्मेलनमा धेरै राम्रा कुराहरु जान्ने अवसर प्राप्त भयो । स्कुल बनाइदिएर, पुस्तकालय खोलिएर, अस्पताल खोलेर विभिन्न किसिमले परदेशमै बसेर पनि देशकोलागि केही गर्न सकिन्छ भन्ने उदाहरण प्रस्तुत गरेका थिए । विभिन्न देशका गैर आवासीय नेपालीहरुले । २१ देशका करिब ४०० नेपालीहरुको ऐतिहासिक सम्मेलनमा सहभागी हुँदा खुशी लाग्यो, गैर नेपालीहरुको नेपालप्रतिको प्रसंसनिय कार्य देखेर गौरव लाग्यो । तीन दिन मात्र भएपनि यो भेलामा विदेशमै बसेर नेपाली संस्कृति, भाषा, भेष र विभिन्न प्रतिभाहरुसंग साक्षात्कार हुन पाउँदा मन गद्गद् भैरह्यो ।

सात वर्षको अन्तरालमा दुईपटक नेपाल पुगेर आएँ । पहिलो पटक सन २००७ मा साढे तीन वर्षपछि आफ्नो परिवार र साथीहरुसंग भेटघाट हुँदा अत्यन्त खुशी लागेको थियो । सन २०१० मा चाहिँ दोश्रो पटक नेपालमै फर्कनु पर्यो भन्दा आफन्त र शूभचिन्तकहरु सहमत हुँदैनन् । देशको परिस्थिति औल्याउँदै उल्टो प्रश्न गर्छन्, किन आउने यहाँ बस्ती छैन, पानी छैन, रोजगारी छैन, सुविधा छैन, अवसर छैन । धूलो छ, फोहोर छ, हिलो छ, अशान्ति छ, राजनितिक अस्थिरता छ, अस्तव्यस्त छ नेपाल फर्कन हुन्न सूभाव दिन्छन् उनीहरु । सूभवूभ भएको मगजले फाईदा र बेफाइदाको जोडघटाउ गर्छ । उनीहरुको सूभावलाई ठीक मान्छ तर यो सरल मन नेपालकै निश्चल प्रकृतिमा रमाउ भन्छ, हिलो र धूलोमै मूसिन्छ भन्छ, माटोकै सुगन्धमा श्वास फेर्न चाहन्छ । आखिर मन नै त हो, फर्किउँ आफ्नै ठाउँ भनेर बेलाबेलामा घच्चच्याई रहन्छ ।



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Sukunda & Khaadaloo

TRADITIONAL OIL LAMPS OF NEPAL

- Dhurba K. Deep

Sukunda is a typically traditional Nepali oil lamp made of brass. The front part of this lamp shows a tiny icon of Ganesha, the God of good luck and success. In its front is a tiny cup fixed in the shape of Yoni to put the wick in it. Fixed on the back of the lamp is a fascinating loop handle designed with a five headed serpent raising its head in a very watchful attitude. A small spoon with a nagakanya a top is generally used for replenishing the oil from the reservoir.

The artistic work on this unique oil lamp reflects the remote past of a very famous Buddhist legend. Here is the story:

THE LEGEND OF SUKUNDA AND KHAADALOO

Long time ago Kathmandu valley was a large lake in habited by nagas (snakes). In the middle of the lake was a beautifully blooming thousand petalled lotus flame. When Buddhisattwa Mahamanjushree heard all about this, he rushed to the valley all the way from China to pay homage to the flame. The entire valley rang up with the thundering strike of his magic sword on the southern hill of the lake which drained the entire lake water leaving the valley floor open to all. The most famous Buddhist stupa of Nepal locally known as Swayambhunath is believed to have originated from the same legendary lotus flame.

It is quite interesting to note that the word, Sukunda, means a beautiful lake in Newari language. The Sukunda story in many ways sounds like an artistic fact in fiction. It is said that the oil reservoir of Sukunda represents the legendary lake and its wide open mouth represents the full blown thousand petalled lotus and the cup attached to it in which the lamp is lighted represents the self existent divine lotus flame. The snake hood over the Sukunda and the snake spoon half dipped in its oil reservoir symbolizes the nagas (snakes), original inhabitants of the legendary lake. The Yoni lamp cup symbolizes Swayambhu Jyotir-linga meaning the self existent divine light. The lamp lighted in this yoni-cup symbolizes the great union of Shiva (Swayambhu) and Shakti and Lord Ganesh in front represents great guru who is there to teach one and all about the supreme acts of God and his changeless inner nature. This is one of the reasons why Lord Ganesha is entitled to receive the first worship by his devotees before they begin any ceremony. It is quite interesting to note that no socio-religious ceremony in Nepal, big or small, ever starts until Sukunda is lighted and set up at the ceremonial spot.

KHAADALOO

Khaadaloo, this traditional Nepal oil lamp, a little different Sukunda in size and shape, is derived from a Newari name which generally means a hanging window lamp. Centuries ago, when the electricity was unheard of this significantly simple and serene oil lamp was used for lighting shrines and the streets of Kathmandu. Many in Nepal use the hand spun cotton wick to make this lamp.

Nevertheless one can still see this oriental brass chandelier hanging from many old styled Nepali houses though now it is lighted only on festive occasions. This oriental oil lamp has a couple of mythical dragons watchfully guarding its flame from both ends of the loop handle a top forming a sort of miniature arch above the lamp tray.

This shade less open air lamp is usually made of brass. Though, very much like Sukunda, it is basically designed after the full blown lotus which is widely used in this country to this day.

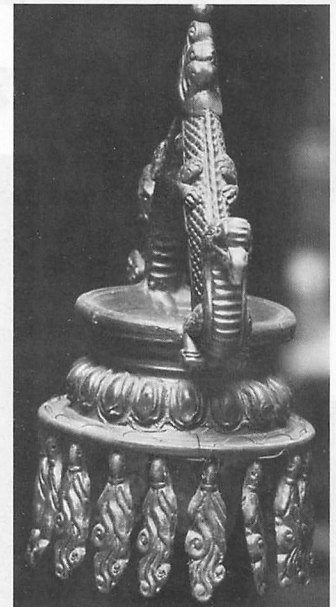
The surface of this circular brass lamp has in its middle a small sink which is filled up with mustard oil. Elderly people call it an evening lamp. This lamp is supposed to be lit as soon as it gets dark.

As the age old custom would have it, only house wives should light this lamp. Many still believe that those who do not bother to do this even after it gets dark, Laxmi, the goddess of wealth, would never be pleased with them.

There is a very old prayer line which is recited while performing the evening lamp ritual.

Shubham Bhavatu Kalyanam Aarogya
Dhanasampati mamashatru vinashaya deepajyoti
namastutey.

[You, the great doer of welfare for your devotees, bestower of health, happiness and wealth and the destroyer of enemies (darkness and ignorance) saluation to you, the great divine light.]





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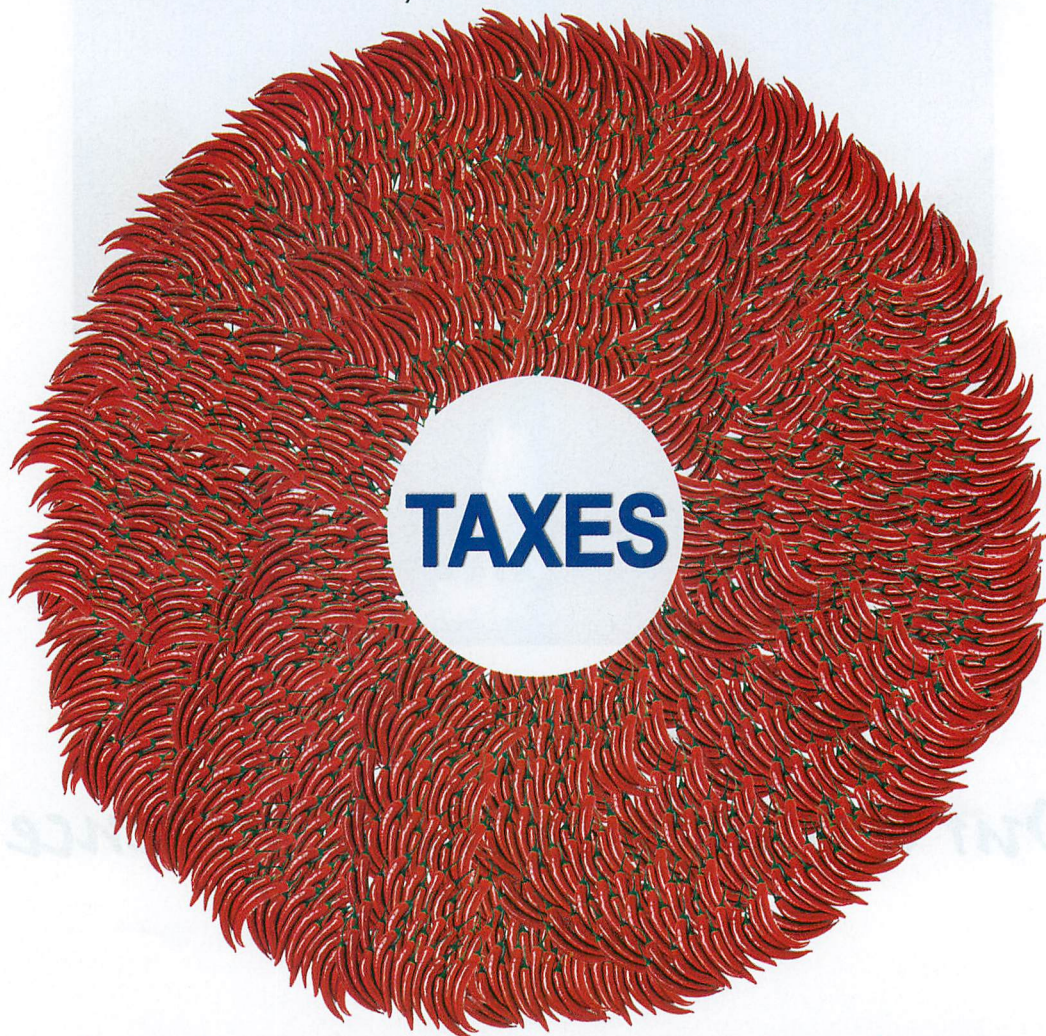
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EXPERIENCE MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

Necessity of Earthquake Preparedness in Nepal

Dr. Rajendra K. Shrestha

It is not possible to prevent earthquakes from occurring, but safety measures intended to mitigate the severity of its effects can save lives and properties. Establishment of the Disaster Preparedness Plan and Disaster Relief Plan has the potential of making a tremendous difference in the earthquake-prone regions, when the catastrophes occur. This is observed in two Latin American countries: Haiti and Chile. By comparing these countries to Nepal and taking a closer look at Nepal's situation, it is evident that Nepal is in need of a solid mitigation plan.

Haiti and Chile Comparison

Haiti was struck by a 7.0 magnitude earthquake on Jan. 12, 2010 that took more than 230,000 lives and billions of dollars worth of properties, and rendered another 1.5 million people homeless. In contrast, Chile was hit by a much more powerful earthquake of magnitude 8.8 and lost over 700 people on Feb. 27, 2010. The Chilean Earthquake was nearly 100 times stronger than the one in Haiti, based on the Richter Magnitude Scale. It is a base-10 logarithmic scale that calculates the amount of energy released by an earthquake. For example, a magnitude 5 earthquake is ten times stronger than a magnitude 4 one.

The stark difference in the impact of earthquakes in these two countries lies in the fact that Chile had an earthquake preparedness plan; Haiti did not. Chile had even established a national emergency office. Most buildings in Chile withstood the trembles of the quake; whereas, the buildings in Haiti – poorly constructed -- were unable to cope with the earthquake-tremors. The relief efforts in Chile were quick and fast, but it took a much longer time to transport the relief materials to the victims in Haiti.

Unfortunately, Nepal has a situation that is more similar to Haiti than Chile. The building standards in Nepal are very low because the building codes are not strictly followed. On top of that, the infrastructure is inadequate and dwindling, and the disaster preparedness plan in the country is almost non-existent.

Nepal's Infrastructure

In the Kathmandu Valley, approximately 2.5 million people inhabit in poorly constructed buildings situated on a former lake bed. The existing few farm lands are being rapidly replaced by concrete jungles with multi-storey buildings. Kathmandu has only one airport and three roads connecting it to the outside world. In the event of an earthquake, these roads are most likely to be damaged rendering unfit for transportation. Moreover, landslides and avalanches pose a great threat in the mountainous terrain during the earthquakes. To make matters worse, many major cities in Nepal are vulnerable to large earthquakes. The non-profit organization "Geohazards" ranks Kathmandu at the highest risk for earthquake fatalities than any other city in the world.

Nepal's Earthquake History

A 6.5 magnitude earthquake in 1988 struck an area between the Kathmandu Valley in the west and Ilam on the east, killing more than 700 people and damaging thousands of buildings. The Great Earthquake in 1934 of magnitude 8.4 with the epicenter at the Nepal-Bihar (India) border devastated the entire region including the Kathmandu Valley where thousands of people lost their lives and thousands of houses and historical and religious monuments collapsed.

Geological Considerations

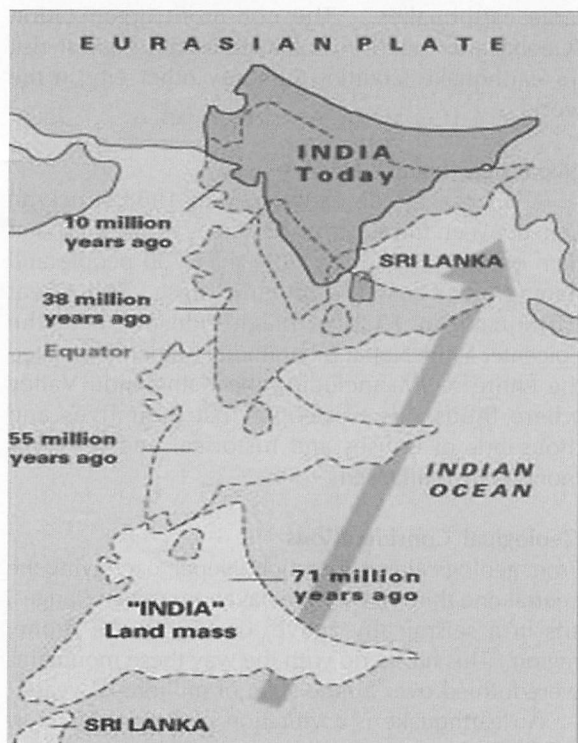
From geological consideration, Nepal, occupying the central one-third of the Himalayan Mountain Ranges, sits in a seismically active, or earthquake prone, region. This has to do with the way these mountains were formed over a time span of millions of years.

An earthquake is a vibration of the earth's crust produced by a rapid release of energy caused by a sudden movement along an active fault. A fault is a planar discontinuity in a rock volume across which significant displacement takes place. The planet earth consists of more than a dozen massive tectonic plates that move slower than a snail's pace, i.e., a few centimeters a year, according to the Plate Tectonics

Theory. However, these plates can move thousands of miles over a period of millions of years. During the movement along faults, these tectonic plates collide against each other and get deformed, or get separated and rearranged, causing constant transformation of the face of the globe.

The Himalayas originated from the northward movement of the Indian plate and its subsequent collision with the Eurasian plate around 55 million years ago. The Indian plate continues its northward push against the Eurasian plate at an average rate of 56 millimeters per year at present. The crustal shortening and extensive deformation as a result of the plate movement has produced Himalayas, the highest and youngest mountain chain, rising at a rate of 5 millimeters per year, and Tibet, the highest plateau, on earth. The impact of the collision between the Indian and Eurasian plate is felt north of Tibet as far as the Tarim basin in China. Nepal sits right at the boundary of these two huge plates and is part of a geologically and seismically active belt of the Himalayas. Figure 1 exhibits the Indian and Eurasian plate movements.

Figure 1. The Indian Plate moves northward and collides with the Eurasian plate over millions of years forming the Himalayan Mountain Ranges (Source: US Geological Survey).



Nepal's Earthquake Risk

Therefore, the earthquake risk in Nepal is more of a reality than a myth. The seismic activity in an area is determined by the earthquake data collected by the seismological networks. Nepal has a National Seismological Network comprising 23 short period

telemetric seismic stations that started with the first seismometer set up at the top of the Phulchoki Hill, 14 km southeast of the city of Kathmandu, in 1978. This network constantly monitors the seismic activities in Nepal and across the globe.

is one thing to monitor the earthquakes; but to forecast its occurrence is a totally different task, because it is extremely difficult to predict the timing of these quakes. This, in essence, calls for adequate planning for the preparedness and mitigation of the main earthquakes and the aftershocks, and organization of the relief efforts, in advance. Generally, the main quake is followed by aftershocks of similar or lesser magnitude. These aftershocks are known to bring plenty of panic and misery to the victims already suffering from the main quake.

Disaster Preparedness Plan

The main aim of this plan is to launch awareness campaign about the earthquake risk and safety tips to mitigate its impact to the general public. This can be achieved through the establishment of Disaster Response Centers and communication with people through meetings, rallies, exhibitions and Web sites. Mobile camps equipped with photos and movies can impart the first hand knowledge about the earthquakes. Workshops on first aid and CPR procedures can also be conducted in these camps. The informal lectures about steps for earthquake preparedness followed by mock drills with the help of the fire and health department officials will help heighten the awareness about the impending disaster. In addition, the officials from the concerned departments and their staff need to be trained about the ways and means to handle the earthquake situation.

The implementation of proper seismic design and the earthquake-resistant building codes by the concerned authorities of the Government of Nepal is extremely important to prevent collapse of the buildings so people can safely get out of the houses during the earthquakes.

Adequate measures should also be taken to retrofit the public-service buildings such as hospitals and schools to make them earthquake-resistant. This is going to be a monumental task in which the Nepali diaspora can help by providing the technological and financial assistance as well as the relevant resources.

The National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET) – Nepal, established as a non-governmental and non-profit organization in 1994, has been actively pursuing the earthquake risk and mitigation planning and earthquake awareness projects. This organization has also been involved in retrofitting school buildings to render them earth-quake resistant. Partnership and joint ventures with NSET-Nepal and close coordination with the Nepal Government authorities can provide a viable approach toward the earthquake preparedness plan.

Disaster Relief and Recovery Plan

The most urgent need in the aftermath of an earthquake is food, medical care and shelter. During an earthquake, the communication and transportation infrastructure and water supply system are likely to be disintegrated and disrupted. Chalking out a plan for mobilization of these essential elements and equipment as well as repair and restoration of the infrastructure in the event of an earthquake will be very helpful and life-saving. The Disaster Response Center should be adequately equipped with blankets, tents and non-perishable food items.

Earthquake victims most commonly suffer from crushing injuries that can cause kidney damage due to the breakdown of skeletal muscle cells, called "Rhabdomyolysis" in medical terms. Needless to say, first aid on site and transportation of the crushing victims to the medical centers should be a very important part of the relief operation.

Conclusion

In the wake of the 2010 Haitian earthquake, the Nepali diaspora in the United States has realized the potential of a large earthquake in Nepal any time in the near future, and therefore, is planning to join hands to come up with a blueprint and mobilize the resources for preparedness and mitigation of pre- and post-earthquake events in Nepal. At present, a joint initiative to this effect proposed by the American Society of Nepalese Engineers (ASNEng), Computer Association of Nepal-USA (CAN-USA) and America Nepal Medical Foundation (ANMF), with the support of several other Nepalese organizations including Nepalese Association of Houston (NAH), is in the works. In this context, an ASNEng/ANMF/CAN-USA joint committee on "Earthquake Preparedness and Disaster Relief in Nepal" has already been established, in which the author is a member. The author took the opportunity to present an update on the action plan of the committee and outline the steps that need to be taken in planning for the earthquake preparedness/mitigation and relief/recovery operations in Nepal, in a panel discussion on "Earthquake Disaster Preparedness for Nepal" on May 28, 2010, jointly organized by ASNEng/ANMF/CAN-USA in the 4th Non-Resident Nepali (NRN) Regional Conference, Houston, Texas, U.S.A.

(The author is President and Founder, Nepalese Association of Houston, Vice President, Non-Resident Nepali (NRN) National Coordination Council of USA, and Vice President, American Society of Nepalese Engineers.)

मुभिङ्ग सेल

नर्थ क्यारोलाइना, अमेरिका – नम्रता गुरागाई



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नेब्रास्कालाई छोड्नू पर्ने भएकोले
शनिवार र आईतबार मुभिङ्ग
सेल राख्ने पक्का गर्यौं हामीले ।
सूरमा आउने वित्तिकै मुभिङ्ग
सेल भनेको सामान हिंडाइरहने

होला चटपटे बेच्नेले ठेलागाडामा चना, मटर, आलू, पिरो खोरसानी, अमिलो हालेर हिंडाएजस्तो भन्थानेको थिएँ । बूझ्दै जाँदा त मान्छेले आफु एक ठाउँबाट अर्को ठाउँमा सर्न पर्यो भने आफ्ना पुराना सामान सस्तोमा बेच्ने रहेछ । आफुपनि उनीहरूको ग्राहक भएपछि पो थाहा पाइयो मुभिङ्ग सेलको महत्व हा... हा... । काइदाकै हुँदा रहेछन् नी, हेर्दापनि राम्रै, काम पनि चल्ने, त्यसमाथि सस्तोपनि । सस्तो र बलियोपनि चाहिएको आफुलाई त्यो भेटेपछि अरु के खोज्नु र, किन नयाँलाई धेरै खर्च गर्नु र होइन ? कि कसो ? मुभिङ्ग सेल र राख्ँ तर पुराना सामानको मूल्य कति राख्ने होला भनेर खुल्दूली जाग्यो । पैसा धेरैले ग्राहक भड्किने हुन कि, थोरै पनि त के राख्ँ हामीले पनि पैसा तिरेरै ल्याएको हो क्यारे भनेर सामानकी मालिकनी भाउको फूर्ती देखाउँदै म सामानको मूल्य लेखेर टास्न स्टीकर किन्न गएँ । स्टीकर किनेर ल्याएपछि छोरा छोरी मन लागी नम्बर लेख्न थाले । छोराले मामू सोफालाई देखाएर यसको कति लेख्ने १ डलर कि १००० डलर भन्छ । उसलाई नम्बर भन्न साढेँ मन लाग्ने भएकोले जतिपनि भनीरहन्छ । उसलाई एक डलर र एक हजार उस्तै लाग्छ मात्र सून्ना फरक त हो नी । तर त्यो सून्ना फरकले कति फरक पार्छ विचरा उसलाई के थाहा र । आफू के मा व्यस्त छु उ भने कराइराहन्छ, न एक डलर भन्नु न त एक हजार । काले सोफालाई एक डलर भनेपनि लाँदैन्न होला न त एक हजार नै, ठीक्क लेख्नु पर्छ पख आउँछ भन्दै म अरु भोली बाहिर निकाल्ने सामान ठीकठाक पार्न थालें । छोरी अर्को स्टीकर ल्याउँछे र मामू यसको कति लेखौं भन्छे । कूने २५ सेन्ट कूने ५० सेन्ट कूने १ डलर गर्दै हामी टास्न थाल्यौं अघिल्लो दिन बेलुका ।

छोराछोरीहरू आफ्ना सामान अधिल्लो दिनसम्म त दिन मानिराखेका थिएनन् । पछि स्टीकर पाएपछि भने सबैमा टास्न थाले, अब सबै नयाँ किन्नू पर्छ, यी सबै पुराना भैइसके बेचौं मामू भन्दै । उनीहरू दिदी भाई भोली धेरै पैसा बनाउने सामान बेचर अनि नयाँ खेलौना किन्ने भन्दै जोड घटाउ गरिरहेछन् बेलूका, सूतने कूनै छाँट नै देखिदैन म । विहान छिटो उठ्नु पर्छ निन्द्रा पूग्दै छिटो सूत भनेपछि सूतन कोशिस चाहिँ गरे, घरी कस्ले के गर्छ घरी कस्ले निन्द्रा आए पो निदाउनु । एकदिन अगाडीसम्म हिउँ परेको र असाध्यै चिसो पनि भएकोले मान्छेहरू नआउने पो हुन् कि भनेर डराइरहेकी थिएँ म । कतिपल्ट वेदर च्यानल नै हेरी सकें सामानका पीरले त्यहीँ मपनि जब्बरजस्ती सूतन कोशिस गरेँ ।

भोलिपल्ट मार्च २०, २०१० शनिवारको दिन बिहान अलि चाँडै उठेर मूल्य लेखेर टास्छु भनेर सामानहरू बाहिर भिक्न आउँदै थिएँ मान्छेहरू त आएको पो किन्न ग्वार ग्वार्ती । लौ घर भित्र पसे फर्निचर छ ? भन्दै । ओ...हो... कति सामानको मूल्य टाँसेकै छैन के भन्ने होला भन्दै थिएँ । हामी लान्छौं कतिमा दिन्छौ ? भन्न थाले । हामी बूढाबूढी मूखामूख गरेर एउटा नम्बर भन्न थाल्यौ स्टीकर नटाँसेका सामानहरूको । उनिहरूले त तुरुन्तै उठाए । तौ सस्तो पो दिइयो कि क्या हो भन्नुला भैं भयो यो लोभी मनलाई । भटाभट सामान उठाउन थाले पछि म बूढालाई चिमोट्न थालें अलि धेरै भनन भनेर । यस्ता थोत्रा सामानको के लोभ गर्छेउ बूढी धन्न लगे भनन भन्छन् बूढापनि । हा...हा...लौ पसल थाप्न त मजा आउँदो रहेछ किन्ने मान्छे आए भने ।

केटाकेटीले चलाइराखेका सामानहरू बेच्दा चाहीं कता कता अलि भावुक पनि बनायो मलाई तर भावना र व्यवहार फरक हुँदोरहेछ । हामीले चाहेर पनि लान नसकिने तिनीहरू । तर उनिहरूले पनि गए अब हाम्रा सामानहरू भन्दा चाहिँ मेरो भावुकताको डिग्री भन् माथि माथि चढ्यो । गला अबरुद भयो, अलि अलि त राखिदिएकी थिएँ, लान पनि सकिने थिएनन् तिनिहरू सबै, कति कूराको माया गर्नु । माया गरेर राख्दा राख्दै यति धेरै भएछन् कि धन्न मान्छेले लगे भन्नूजस्तो ।

पोइसो हातभरी पारेर मपनि निकै फूर्ती देखाउन थालें । यस्तो धेरै त उहिले दशैँमा टिका लाउँदा हुन्थ्यो हातभरी, गोजिभरी । त्यो बेला कसले छुन सक्ने मलाई,

म मेरो संसारै किनिदिन सबथेँ होला तर यो बेलाको हातभरी भएको पैसाले धेरै थोक नआउने ।

मान्छे पनि कार्टूनमा भएका सामान चाहिँ धमाधम वोक्ने तर खुल्ला चाहिँ हेर्दै छोड्दै गर्दा रहेछन् । आफूलाई भने खुल्ला भएकासमेत लगिदिए हुन्थ्यो भएको छ । सायद कार्टून भित्रका सामान कम चलाएको विश्वास गर्छन् होला उनीहरू । हून पनि कति त नचलाएका नै थिए, पछि चलाउला भनेर राखेका । अर्को कूरा कार्टून भित्रका सामानको पैसा चाहिँ जति लेखेको छ त्यति नै दिँदारहेछन् तर बाहिर राखेकाको चाहिँ घटाउन खोज्दारहेछन् मान्छेहरू ।

हामी दुईजना एकजनाले भित्र फर्निचर बेच्ने एकजनाले बाहिर राखेका बेच्ने गरिरह्यौं । छोराछोरी भित्र र बाहिर गरीराखे । उनिहरूलाई भिन्दै रमाइलो भयो आउने जानेसंग कूरा गर्न पाउँदा । बिहानै मान्छेले धेरैजसो सामान लगिसकेकाले बाँकी रहे एउटा खाट, भान्साको केही सामान र केटाकेटीका खेलौना । थोरै सामान त्यसमाथि पनि धेरै खेलौना देखेर होला पछिपछि त मान्छेहरू गाडी अलिक स्लो गर्दै, सामान हेर्दै जान पो थाले । आउन छाडे मान्छेहरू सामान भित्र लैजाउ भनेर केटाकेटी बाटामा हिड्ने मान्छेलाई बोलाउन थाले । कूनै कूनै सामानको त पसलमा सेल लागेको बेला भनेजस्तै एउटा किनिस् भने अर्को सित्तैमा दिन्छु पनि भने तर पुराना सामान लिन आउने मान्छेहरू नबच्ने जति भनेपनि के गर्नु र । छोराछोरी पनि आउ सबै लैजाउ सित्तैमा दिन्छौ भन्न थाले हा...हा... । बाबू त्यसो भन्नू हुँदैन भन्छु अनि किन नआएका त सामान किन्न, मेरो खेलौना लगेकै छैन भन्छु । मेरापनि लगेनन् नी भन्छे छोरी, उ उता ठुस्स पर्छ । लौ मान्छे किन्न आएनन् भनेर रिसाउन पो थाले छोराछोरी त । हूनपनि खेलौना देखासाथ मलाई बहूला कूकूरले टोकेको छ र फेरी खेलौना किन्छु भन्नुलाभैं गरेर हुइकिन थाले मान्छेहरू । ग्राहकहरू आउन छाडेकाले छोरो भड्की हाल्यो किन नआएका त तिनीहरू भन्दै । ए अचम्म हामीले उनिहरूको पिडालूबारी त फाडी लिएको थिएननी सामान किन्न आउ पो भनेको त, म पनि पो भोकिएछु छोराछोरीसंगै हा....हा.... ।

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