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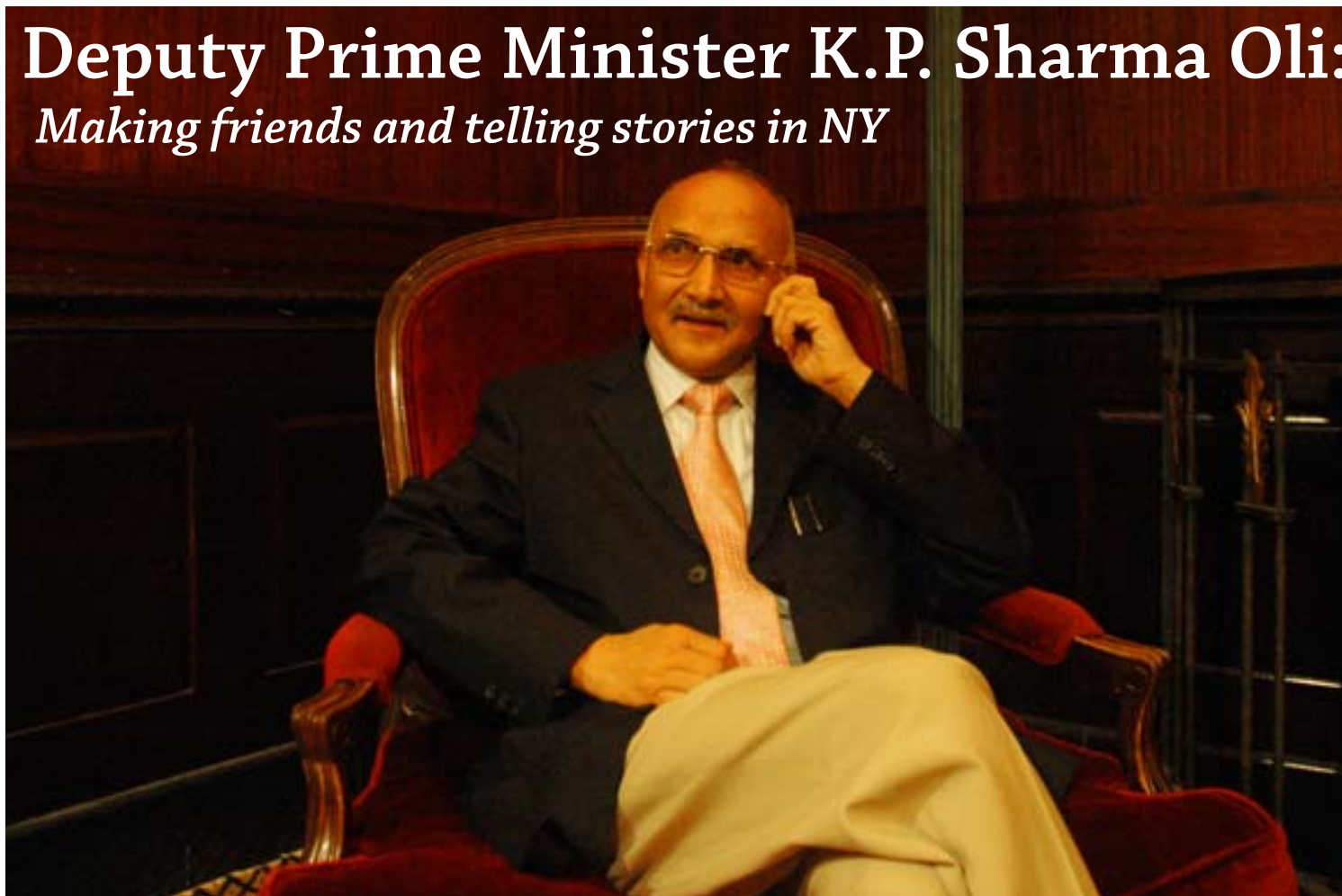


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Nepali Aawaz
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FREE

नेपाली आवाज

Deputy Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli: *Making friends and telling stories in NY*



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nepal, K. P. Sharma Oli, takes a call during the Nepali Aawaz photo shoot at the Crowne Plaza's lobby. Photo: KASHISH DAS SHRESTHA

Kashish Das Shrestha

At the UN General Assembly 2005, the Nepali delegate desperately tried to find support for King Gyanendra's regime, one that eventually fell after a popular people's uprising in April this year accompanied by tremendous international pressures. September 2006, however, has seen a stark contrast in Nepal's international relations.

The 14th Non-Aligned Movement Summit (11- 16 Sept.) in Havana, Cuba, followed by the UN General Assembly (19-29 Sept.) here in New York, has made for an intense month of diplomacy and confidence building for the Nepali delegate headed by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli, who, as it turns out, is also a great story teller and a hard working diplomat.

THE DIPLOMAT:

23 Sept. At the Hotel crowne Plaza, a stone's throw away from the UN headquarters, DPM Oli is relaxed. It's a wet Saturday morning in New York and DPM Oli arrives from his room at the hotel's lobby for our scheduled interview fashionably late and sharply dressed. The Pink tie is particularly progressive.

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Special Report

Tragic accident puts Nepali student in jail



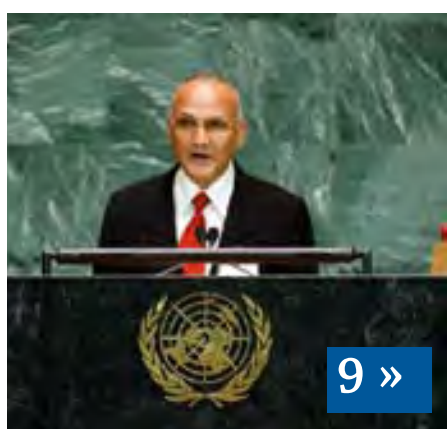
Photo: UNIVERSITY OF INDIANAPOLIS

Anup Kaphle

Four years after coming to the United States, the life of one Nepali student stands at the brink of catastrophe. In an unprecedented case, Subash Chandra Rai, a senior at University of Indianapolis majoring in economics/finance has pleaded guilty and sits in jail-awaiting trial after accidentally shooting his colleague Ghamdan Mohammed Abolohom, a Yemeni citizen, on May 14, 2006.

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Nepal's case at the UN GA



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सिलगुडीमा ठगिदैछन् नेपाली

धरानमा देशको एउटा ठूलो अस्पताल- वीपी कोइराला स्वास्थ्य विज्ञान प्रतिष्ठान र विराटनगरमा क्षेत्रीय अस्पताल बन्ने तरखरमा रहेको कोशी अञ्चल अस्पताल छन् । तर पनि यस भेगका धेरै नेपालीहरू तिनको उपचारमा विश्वास नगरी भारत, पश्चिम बङ्गालको सिलीगुडीस्थित निजी नर्सिङ होम र अस्पतालहरूको 'दुहुना गार्ड' बनिर हेक्का छन् । त्यहाँ एक पटक भर्ना हुने विरामीले रु.१ लाखदेखि ६ लाखसम्म खर्च गर्छन्, तर कतिको त लाख मात्रै नेपाल फर्किन्छ ।

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सवारी बढ्दै यात्रु मद्द



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Summer in Ocean City

28-hour work shifts. Late night parties. Sexual Assault and jail time. Reality check and pay checks. Bunk beds but no sleep. Media slandering. Making of bitter experiences and fond memories. Just a few accounts of lives of Nepali students in a summer in Ocean City, MD.

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This October, Nepali Aawaz celebrates its first anniversary.



Special issue coming soon.

Days in Nepali History

28 Sept. 2001

The news portal Nepalnews.com reports, "Yet another woman charged for witchcraft was murdered by neighbours in Mohottari district, family members said. Malechhiya Devi, 57, died of injuries after being lynched by villagers at Bela Ekdara in Mohottari district Thursday. Villagers Wednesday dragged Malechhiya Devi out of her house and beat her severely and left her to die by the roadside. She died en route to hospital at Jaleshwar for treatment. Neighbours fed her human feces before the murderous assault."

29 Sept. 2001

The news portal Nepalnews.com reports, "A family of three were killed by lightning in Thahalaha of Morang district Thursday, police said. The deceased are identified as Bhinu Sardar, his wife Murti Devi and their 11-year old son Jeevan. Police said the lightning killed them while they were sleeping at home. The house was completely destroyed. Similarly, another house in the same district caught fire because of lightning."

1 Sept. 2002

"The London High Court issued a showcase notice to the British defence ministry for denying tens of thousands of pounds in compensation to the British Gurkha army men held as prisoners of war by Japan, Radio Nepal reported quoting agencies," news portal Nepalnews.com reported. "The case

was registered on August 12 on behalf of about 400 prisoners of war and their families in Nepal. The UK government had decided in November 2000 to pay compensation to army men and their widows."

16 Sept. 2004

The Royal Nepal Army declares they will recruit women officers in its service. A policy declaring that 5% of the Army should be women already existed. However, all the approximately 300 women in the armed forces were actually recruited only for non-combatant positions. The RNA has also declared that women may become the chief of the the Army staff.

Note: The Royal Nepal Army was renamed as the Nepal Army after the pro-democracy People's Uprising of April 2006.

16 September 2005

Nepalis gather outside the UN headquarters in New York and protest against King Gyanendra's regime as his delegate headed by Minister of Foreign Affairs Ramesh Nath Pandey, who was headed the delegates head after the King decided to not come himself as originally planned.

Note: King Gyanendra stepped down from power on 27 April this year after a popular people's uprising in the country and an increasing isolation from the international community.

In Quotes

"The people of Nepal deserve due recognition from the international community for their unprecedented courage and determination with which they have defeated autocracy and restored democracy."

- Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, **K.P. Sharma Oli**, appealing to the international community to support Nepal's candidature for a temporary seat in the UN Security Council, during his speech at the 61st UN General Assembly on 25 Sept. 06.

"We thought we had seen it all, until Saturday's helicopter crash... One of the few things this country can be proud of in the last 30 years was the calibre and experience of our environmental and biodiversity experts.

People like Harka Gurung, the authority on Nepal's human geography, Chandra Gurung who masterminded the unique model of ecotourism-based conservation in the Annapurnas,

Tirtha Man Maskey who ensured that Nepal's national parks were sustainably preserved for future generations, or Mingma Sherpa whose conservation expertise from Nepal was sought after worldwide."

- **Kunda Dixit**, Editor of Nepal Times, in his editorial "Still Among Us" talking about Nepal's streak of badluck, including the most recent fatal helicopter crash in Ghanshu on Saturday that had some of the key figures in nature conservation in Nepal amongst its 24 passengers and crew.

"They loved to act like kids... I was like, 'Don't run! Don't run! You make so much noise, I can not stand [it]!' All the time they would beat each other ... over small, small things like the TV channel. They were good friends."

- **Mamta Ghale**, a University of Indianapolis student who roomed with Subash Rai remembering Rai and Ghamdan Abolohom in an essay titled "Friends, faith dear to Abolohom" by Ruth Shirley, Feature Editor. Rai has pleaded guilty to "accidental homicide" after Abolohom was accidentally shot by him on 14 May.

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Special Report

Tragic accident puts Nepali student in jail



(Left) Subash Rai, while still in college. (Right) Ghamdan Abolohom after the May 6 commencement exercises with fellow students Mandir Rana of Nepal (left) and Mirzohid Mamasidikov of Uzbekistan Photo: UNIVERSITY OF INDIANAPOLIS

Anup Kaphle

Four years after coming to the United States, the life of one Nepali student stands at the brink of catastrophe. In an unprecedented case, Subash Chandra Rai, a senior at University of Indianapolis majoring in economics/finance has pleaded guilty and sits in jail-awaiting trial after accidentally shooting his colleague Ghamdan Mohammed Abolohom, a Yemeni citizen, on May 14, 2006.

Rai is in custody at the Marion County Sheriff's Department and was facing charges on two counts, reckless homicide and pointing a firearm, the latter of which was dropped after he pleaded guilty. He will be facing sentence here in United States after the incident was declared as a reckless homicide by the authorities.

Both Rai, 21, and Mohammed, 23, were playing out in Rai's front yard in his Carson Avenue apartment, a mile away from the university, according to Lt. Brian Moore at the Marion County Sheriff's Department. At some point, Rai brought out his handgun and bullets and he put a bullet and lined it so that it would line away from the trigger. "This would turn the trigger away," said Moore. Abolohom then took the gun from Rai and put it away. According to Moore, Rai went back into his apartment to get the gun. "But this time, he put the bullet lined along the trigger." While they were chasing each

other around, Rai was pretending to shoot Abolohom and he accidentally fired the gun at Abolohom. Rai was also said to have attempted to perform basic CPR. Abolohom was pronounced dead after being taken to the Wishard Memorial hospital.

"He is very remorseful and feels sad about what happened that evening," said Geri Watson, International Student Advisor at University of Indianapolis, who worked closely with Rai. "Subash's intent was never against Ghamdan. He was his best friend."

The accident took place during what Watson called "play fighting" between Rai and Abolohom, which they were often involved in, only this time with a loaded handgun.

Rai wants to apologize with Abolohom's family but hasn't been able to because of legal restrictions. "He is glad that he will get a chance to apologize during his hearing on October 20," she said.

In his four years in school, Watson says that she never remembers Rai get in any kind of trouble. "He was very diligent with his responsibilities," she said. "He followed all the rules and regulations and made good grades in classes."

Rai had 12 more credits hours to complete his degree in economics and finance. However, he will not be allowed to get back to campus. "When he gets released from the sentence, he will have to be deported, according to the law," said Watson. Abolohom was

majoring in international business and economics/finance and was completing his requirement to receive his diploma.

Rai will be sentenced on October 20. According to Indiana law (Indiana code 35-42-1-5), any person who recklessly performs an action of taking the life of another human being, is charged with a Class C felony. Rai could be facing a two to eight year jail sentence, as defined by this law.

Rai hasn't been allowed to see any of his friends except Geri Watson, his international adviser, according to Deep Gurnani, a graduate of University of Indianapolis and a close friend of Rai who talks to him frequently in jail. "Subash initially put two people's name on the visitor's list and now the officials are not allowing him to extend the list," said Gurnani. Rai put Watson and Mandir Rana, another Nepali student's name on the list expecting assistance and encouragement while he was in jail.

"Subash is extremely depressed and guilty," says Gurnani, "and I am concerned about his mental state." Gurnani also said that Rai has passed a message to all his friends asking them to keep him in their minds and stay in touch.

Rai does not have any kind of criminal history and was known as a fun-loving person full of energy, among his friends. "He was a very enthusiastic person," said Sudeep Bajracharya, Rai's long time friend who went to school together at Brihaspati Vidyasadan in

Naxal for almost 10 years. "We shared the same room while in dormitory at Brihaspati," he recalls. Rai loved music and played guitar during his school days in Kathmandu. Bajracharya had visited Rai in Indianapolis during March. "He called me the Sunday before the incident and I told him I would call him back," said Bajracharya. "The next day was a tragedy."

"Every time he made a new music sitting down in his room, he used to call me and play the music over the phone," recalled Kumud Khakurel, another good friend of Rai who went to school together for eight years. "He also tried to start a band while he was in Little Angels School." Rai had visited Khakurel in his Boulder, Colorado home three weeks before the accident.

Dividing his time between school and guitar, Rai had also made a CD of his music while at college, according to his colleague Gurnani. "He did not have time to spare," he said. "He went to school, worked hard and played guitar."

Like Bajracharya and Khakurel, Gurnani feels that Rai was a good-hearted person. "Subash definitely cared about people," he said. "He was a trustworthy person and a reliable friend."

Rai is the elder son in the family and has a younger sister. A resident of New Baneshwor, Rai came to the United States in 2003 after finishing his higher secondary education from Little Angel's School in Hattiban, Kathmandu.

Diaspora

Nepali films at Seattle's 3rd Independent South Asian Film Festival

The 3rd Independent South Asian Film Festival to be held in Seattle (27 Sept.- 1 Oct.) will host three movies based in Nepal. The first to be shown during the festival, on the opening night, will be *The Last Race* (23 min.), a short film by Alex Gabby (UK) and Subina Shrestha (Nepal). The movie is set on the life of two friends who come of age and are caught between dilemmas on the Nepal/Tibet border. On 30th Sept., Dil Bhusan Pathak's (Nepal) documentary *Suk Bahadur Class VI* (23 min.) will be shown. The film is based on the life of Suk Bahadur who worked as a driver in India for 50 years from Colonial period to post-independence. After he returned home, Kaski district, he decided to go back

to school. One of his classmates? His own grand daughter. The third and last Nepal based film that will be shown during the festival is *Punam* (28 min.), also a documentary. Made by Lucian Muntean and Natasa Stankovic (Serbia/Nepal), the film is based on the life of nine-year-old Punam Tamang of Bhaktapur who lost her mother when she was only five. Ever since, she has had to take care of her younger siblings while their father works from dawn till night. The festival will be held at the Broadway Performance Hall (1625 Broadway), Seattle, WA 98122. The three films will be shown at 7 pm, 2 pm, and 4:30 pm respectively. For more information, Isaff.tasveer.org.

Raju's Angels tour the US

The entourage of artists that arrived in the US for this year's ANA Convention have been busy all summer touring North America. Raju Lama is one of the artists on the tour. "I started my band in 1990," Raju recalls, the same year they recorded their first single 'Joon Chamkirahecha' while the full album 'Maun Jeevan' was released by Music Nepal the following year. In 1992, he also won the Rara Nepali Pop Competition for the song 'Dherai Dherai Chaheko Thiye' and in 1994 their first album. Over the last decade and a half in the industry, he has gone to release four studio albums but Raju enjoys bring out on the road more than in the studio. Proof? "I must have done over a 1,000 concerts by now," he tells us proudly. Of some of his recent bigger tours, he was in Hong Kong in 2000,



2001 and 2005. But Raju is not just about taking center stage and he is also one of the most sought after session musicians in Nepal, and so he has worked with some of the most popular artists in the industry, including pop veteran Harish Mathema with whom he toured this summer. Raju is hoping his band do a few more shows here in months to follow.



Nepalis gather for the volleyball contest organized by Alliance for Human Rights and Democracy in Nepal on 13 Aug, at a park in Queen, NY.

Chicago convention re-elects Jha as ANTA president

A joint convention of Association of Nepali Terians in America (ANTA) and ANMA-NASeA, held recently in Chicago has re-elected Ratan Jha, Houston, Tx. as the president of ANTA. Jay Mandal has been elected vice president while Biplav Yadav of Ohio has is the general secretary of the eight-member executive committee. Mukesh Singh has been nominated the spokesman for the organization.

Speaking during the convention, Nepali Congress leader Shushil Koirala

quoted late B P Koirala "the people from madhes (plains) possess the highest level of pride in their nationality". He raised various problems faced by madhesi people – including the current citizenship issues and discrimination in Nepal Army, among others. He also promised to raise these issues in the Nepali congress party and the government. The convention was followed by a cultural program.

Source: Nepali Post Report (9 Sept.)

Canevisoin: Canada's first Nepali TV

Canada's Nepali community is growing fast. They already have a magazine, a radio show and a cultural center. And recently, an organization called Canada Nepali Vision (Canevisoin) have launched the first Nepali television channel in Canada, although it is currently broadcast only on the web, i.e. it is still a webcast on their website Canevisoin.net. The website currently has the show's fourth episode as the

default file on its homepage. And the show's format is quite simple, a host introduces the show and talks about Canada, plays music videos and in between Nepalis talk about their life there. The show needs a lot of improvement in its content and production still. But It is, however, a good start. The website also features photos from various Nepali events in Canada.

Nepali organization's annual picnic

Nepali students from Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM) have a tradition of organizing a picnic to welcome new Nepali students every year as a way of orienting the new comers. On 9 Sept., the students organized this year's picnic. This picnic also marked the first event undertaken by the newly formed Nepali Student Organization of MSUM. But the event is by no-means limited to students of MSUM, and this year students from North Dakota State University and Concordia College also participated. A total of about 45 people came to the event while many more couldn't show up because of work



schedule. During the event, the Nepali Student Organization of MSUM also announced their plans to organize a cultural night in February next year.



Diaspora

Sushil Koirala meets diaspora



Guests of honor and chief guest Hon. Sushil Koirala (speaking). Photo: AFDHR in NEPAL

The Nepalese Democratic Youth Council in USA (NDYCUSA) organized a community reception and an interaction program with the veteran democratic leader, a Member of Parliament and Vice President of Nepali Congress Party, Hon. Sushil Koirala, at Jackson Height, Queens, on 9 Sept. The program was organized on the occasion of Mahamanab late B.P. Koirala's 93rd birthday, one of the most revered democratic leaders of Nepal. The program was moderated by Dr. Tara Niraula, a Professor at Columbia University. During the event, Trailokke Pratap Sen, former President of Nepali Congress Party Gulmi District of Nepal, and Ram Chandra Pokharel, a leader of Nepali Congress Party and a member of Nepali Congress Party's Foreign Department, also expressed their views and thanked Nepali people living in here for the contribution they made during the democratic movement of Nepal and urged the Nepali Diaspora Communities to continue their support for Nepal. Hans Cheze, Former General Secretary of Socialist International Organizational, and a very good friend of late B. P. Koirala, reminded the audience about the day when he met late B. P. Koirala first time in 1969. He mentioned that, since his first meeting with late B.P. Koirala, he has supported the democratic movement of Nepal.

The chief guest of the function, Hon. Sushil Koirala, on behalf of his personal capacity and Nepali Congress

Party, expressed his sincere thanks to the NDYCUSA and its members and Nepali people living in the USA for their outstanding contribution in support of democratic movement of Nepal. He mentioned that the role of Nepal people living across the globe are vital to a peaceful and prosperous Nepal. He defended the views of Prime Minister G. P. Koirala, his first cousin, about keeping ceremonial monarchy in Nepal. He explained the decision on ceremonial monarchy was in fact passed by the reinstated parliament and not an individual as opposed to claims being made by some political parties. He assured the audience that he would play a role of goodwill ambassador and raise a voice in the parliament regarding NRN issues including dual citizenship amongst other things.

Besides his programs in New York, Hon. Koirala visited Washington, DC, and Baltimore and spoke in front of Nepali communities there also. He participated in and addressed the Association of Nepalese in Midwest America (ANMA) and the Nepalese Association of South-East America (NASeA)'s Joint Convention 2006 in Chicago as well. Hon. Koirala also met the US Congressman Hon. Joseph Crowley and thanked the Congressman on behalf of Nepali Congress Party and Nepal Government for his and the US government's support for Nepali people's struggle for democracy.

First Nepali temple in Canada

The Pashupatinath Nepali Canadian Community Center (PNCCC) has established the first Nepali Mandir and Culture Center in Canada on the day of the Teej festival on 26 Aug. The Mandir and Culture center was jointly inaugurated by Honorary Consul General of Nepal Dr. Kunjar Mani Sharma and social worker Radha Basnyat. Pandit Krishna Regmi conducted the 3-hour long worship on the Shiva idol donated by Dr. Lila Bhandari. More than 500 Nepalis gathered for the event who contributed to the \$ 3000 in donations collected during the day.

During the event, Namaste Radio's President Anil Thapa, called on all Nepali organizations to come together and establish a Nepali identity in Canada's diverse community. He also urged those present to listen to Namaste Radio, the only Nepali broadcast media in Canada, every Sunday from 9 am to 10 am on Canadian Multicultural Radio 101.3 FM. The show can also be heard online at Namasteradio.org. Nepalese Canadian Community Service's Secretary Mina Dhamala said their organization is eagerly supporting new members to the community and briefly talked about the Nepali Mela held on 27 Aug., at Nathan Phillips Square, Toronto. Nepalese Canadian Network Center's Board Member Manoj Pokharel congratulated PNCCC for their achievement during the event while PNCCC's advisors Bhes Jung Thapa and Kumud Sharma



recalled that when they arrived in Canada in 1972, that they could hear a Nepali voice unlike today when they can hear Nepalese voice in every Canadian party they attended. Dr. Kunjar Mani Sharma and Radha Basnyat asserted the need for the community's support to sustain the temple. Omkar Shrestha, Former Minister of Nepali Congress, said he was impressed by the Nepali community who have come a long way in establishing themselves so far away from home. Later that night, 200 Nepali women attended "Dar Khane Night" to celebrate the Teej festival by singing and dancing the night away in their traditional red saree and jewelry the Tilhari. For more details: Pnccc.ca



Nepalis gather at the first Nepali Mandir and cultural center in Canada on Teej as the pujari performs the puja (top).

Politics



CONTINUED FROM PG.1 >

Photo: KASHISH DAS SHRESTHA

He speaks softly, leaning towards the recorder, gently stirring his black tea in a spotless white cup and saucer. He was offered coffee, but he opted for tea instead. He takes long pauses before answering, and sometimes half way through the answer. During the course of the interview his cell phone rings a high pitched default melody in full at least 3 times as the DPM looks at the number and decides to put the phone back into his coat pocket instead. He did not realize, it seems, he could drop the call and cut short the prickly ringer instead. He did take three of the numerous calls, one of which was particularly long. Last year too, the head of the Nepali delegate to the UN General Assembly was interrupted by his cell phone during a meeting. Then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ramesh Nath Pandey, was talking about how primitive the Maoists were in their ways and ideology around which time his phone burst into the then-brand new "Hello Moto" ring-tone at the serious meeting in Columbia University.

"I met with a lot of world leaders in Havana," DPM Oli says gleaming. "And in the last three days in New York, we have established diplomatic ties with three new countries." Congo, "a very important African nation" and two smaller European countries. The DPM, who is clearly enjoying this new found role of a high-level diplomat, also gushed that "America's premier" and him spent a few minutes talking

at the General Assembly and on the 28th of September he will be meeting the Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice. But his diplomatic stance is not just for international events such the two he has attended this month.

"It's fantastic," he says with a sudden raised voice and eyebrows when asked about the state of Indo-Nepal relations. "We have great relationship with India today." What about Nepal's relations with china? "They are an important ally and we have great ties too." Just how important the relationship with the giant northern neighbor is made clear when discussing the Tibetan community in Kathmandu. In January 2005, the Home Ministry shut down the Tibetan Refugee Welfare Office in Kathmandu and in the past, the Police have often disrupted or cut-short Tibetan events or events related to the idea of a free-Tibet in the city. "We cannot, we just cannot let any anti-Chinese movement take shape or form in our country," he says with great emphasis. He fidgets and his forehead bunches up as we talk about Tibetan refugees in Nepal and their right to travel abroad. "They can travel for things like medical reasons," he says. Earlier this month, local newspapers in Kathmandu had accused member(s) of the current government of helping Tibetan refugees obtain such permit for a financial compensation in return.

"We don't see a particular country as being a great friend, but rather we like

to have good relations with everyone," he explains diplomatically when asked who Nepal's biggest ally might be today. But still, some countries care for Nepal more than others.

Nepal recognizes the states of Palestine as well as Israel. We give refuge to Tibetans and even issue them permits to travel out of Nepal but we deny them the right to organize. We protest against the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Control and Punishment) Ordinance at home but say nothing as the Bush administration pushes to endorse something very similar in America. And as much as it is America's domestic issue, there is no denying the devastating global repercussions it could have, including for Nepali soldiers on international missions. DPM Oli is also reluctant to comment on many international issues, including President Bush's assertion of the world being safer today than it was five years ago. Instead he launches into a brief spontaneous speech on the importance of democracy, human rights and such that somehow feels rehearsed. The political and diplomatic reasons are clear, but apart from reassured beliefs in "democracy," "human rights," "peace and stability," Nepal's real stand on issues seem a lot less clearer. And Nepal's ability to take a definite stand on issues, not necessarily on ones listed above, might become particularly crucial as the country campaigns for a temporary seat the UN Security council

for 2007-2008.

"We are hoping to be a temporary member of the Security Council," the DPM says anxiously. Although his earlier answer to the question of what the Nepali delegate would be taking back for Nepal from the conferences in Havana and New York isn't particularly clear, this later revelation paints a firmer picture of perhaps one of Nepal's bigger agenda here in New York. The last time Nepal held that seat was almost 20 years ago.

As the interview ends, the DPM accepts our request for a quick photo shoot. No sooner had four awkward photos been taken, he gets another phone call that he is willing to ignore but accepts after we urge him to answer it. He is more relaxed, smiling occasionally, as he talks on the phone during the shoot.

THE STORY TELLER:

24 Sept. Its 5 pm and Nepalis have begun to trickle into the Satya Narayan Mandir in Woodside Avenue in Jackson Heights, Queens. Many Nepalis are at the nearby Eagle cinema hall in watching the Nepali movie, Taal. In fact, it was to accommodate the movie's schedule that the interaction program with Khadga Prasad Oli, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Narendra Bikram Nemwang, Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Pradeep Nepal, Member of Parliament, Anand Prasad Dhungana, Member of Parliament, Tek Bahadur Chokhal, Member of Parliament and Mahendra Bahadur Panday, Member of Parliament, was moved from four to five.

The Nepali delegate, the evening's guests of honors, arrive at the venue a little after five and are immediately greeted by the small crowd of Nepalis gathered outside the mandir. As they enter the mandir's hall on the first floor, more Nepalis that had come for the event greet them. The DPM and other ministers and MPs spend sometime personally meeting and talking to as many people as possible. The welcome speeches and introductions are perhaps not what the high-profiled guests had expected: event MC Sailesh and Sunil Parajuli, President of Alliance for Human Rights and Democracy in Nepal, on the behalf of the Nepali community, clearly express their skepticism and disappointment and many other grievances about the current Nepali government and the way they are handling the crisis in Nepal, as the guests listen on, take notes but don't seem taken back at all. The tone of the

Politics



The guests of Honor, Nepal's delegate to the UN's 61st General Assembly, at an interaction program in Queens, NY, with Ananda Bista (far right) of Nepalese Democratic Youth Council in USA. Photo: KASHISH DAS SHRESTHA

evening, it seems, was set: the guests are put on the defensive.

Everyone promises to speak for a shot while, nobody believes them. But through the long winded, animated, familiar sounding speeches, one thing resonates clearly: the government is obsessed with solving the Maoist problem politically, and is more than just a little frustrated with how difficult the Maoists are making the process.

The final speaker of the evening is, of course, DPM Oli. As opposed to his reserved and soft-spoken ways during his interview with Nepali Aawaz, today he is charged up, gesturing aggressively with his hands and animating his speech tone in that particular way which Nepalis have become used to hearing from Nepali politicians. He is not holding back, after all, throughout the evening the MC has consistently counterattacked each speaker while introducing the next with a short satire. To everyone's surprise, DPM Oli begins to tell a story, a page from his childhood memory of time he spent with his grandmother. "I thought I was safe in that dark jungle path because my grandmother was there, and what can a tiger or a ghost do with my grandmother there," he says. "But as we got out of the jungle path I heard my grandmother's sigh of relief and I asked her why. She told me that she was terrified while crossing the jungle

path," he ends the story, smiling. The moral being that people have great faith and expectations from their leaders but don't realize that the leaders themselves have their own shortcomings and fears. The crowd is pleased. No one can recall the last time a Deputy Prime Minister evoked a story from his childhood, with his grandmother as the protagonist, to explain to the public how the leaders themselves are feeling.

"They told us to buy them an elephant, so we bought them one," he says, as he tries to explain the deadlock with the Maoists. "Then they want us to buy them a bag, so we buy it for them," he continues. "But when they ask us to put that elephant in the bag, that is just impossible to do, it's not practical. We cannot do that. And this is the problem. The government took off the terrorist label, didn't ask for anything in return. We pulled back the Red corner notice that was issued against them without asking for anything in return. We even released imprisoned Maoists and didn't ask for anything in return. But we have to draw the line at one point and we cannot hold elections while they are armed."

The crowd is reassured. "Including the Maoist in the government means they too will have a stake over all government bodies and its organs, including the security forces. And they also want their own army to be in place.

So if the Maoists are in the government, who will the Maoists negotiate with? Will we have to send Prachanda to negotiate with Mahara? You don't see the government negotiating with the congress or the UML because we function as one.... The Maoists took up arms at a time when other democratic and political options were still available," he adds denouncing the Maoists' violent rebellion and unwillingness to give up arms.

He goes on to refreshingly tell few more stories and use euphemisms, even tell a few jokes, all to make one point and one point only: leaders have their own shortcomings but are trying to do everything they can to diffuse the Maoist situation and hold constituent assembly so that Nepal can get out of this deadlock.

The mood of the audience becomes clear during the brief Q & A sessions: more anxiety over the government, lack of faith in Nepali politicians who have always been "great story tellers", the question of how much control the government really has over the army and the management and transparency of campaign funds. DPM Oli fields all the questions and answers them articulately, and at times bluntly, 'the government can't do everything at once.'

After the program ends, members of the audience stand next to the

DPM and get their photos taken with him. They express their faith in the government and compliment his story telling and speech. There is a sense of skepticism still, but it seems everyone wants to believe that this time it's for real. History is a great storyteller too. Corruption, party politics, other vested interests and unrepresented and misled Nepalis. These are stories that history tells us. What of the stories of leaders of their word, commitment and representation of people? These are stories that Nepalis across the world are anxiously waiting for. While political violence in the country has reduced drastically, lawlessness is becoming apparent, as crime rate seems to be rising. The peace process does seem to be at a deadlock as it has been for four-months now. Stories are always great, and for sometime now Nepal has dying for one that ends with a "happily ever after." Or something like it. But only fairy tales have magic-wands and genies that grant wishes. "Democracy" isn't either of those. But it is close and people of Nepal restored it in the country not too long ago. The pressure on the government to do something, and do something fast is immense at home and abroad. And here in New York, DPM Oli and the Nepali delegate have expressed the Nepali government's commitment to making it happen.

Politics

Nepal's case at the 61st United Nations General Assembly



K. P. Sharma Oli, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Nepal, addresses the general debate of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, at UN Headquarters in New York. Photo: UN PHOTO/MARCO CASTRO

On Monday, 25 Sept., Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Leader of the Delegation for Nepal, K.P Sharma Oli, took the podium at the general assembly hall at the United Nations headquarters in New York. He was the third speaker of the day, the first and second speakers being H.E. Dr. Thongloun Sisoulith (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Head of the Delegation, Lao People's Democratic Republic) and H.E. Mr. Hor Namhong (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Cambodia) respectively.

Last time Nepal was here, it asked for an international support for King Gyanendra's idea of democracy. This time, in a near 22 minutes speech Nepal made clear what it wants; increased international attention and support to further strengthen the democracy earned by the people of Nepal, a temporary seat in the UN Security Council (2007-2008) and an Asian Secretary-General at the UN. The latter two would quite possibly help the first cause greatly.

WHAT HE SAID:

The speech, expectedly, talked about the importance of democracy and the need to respect human rights no matter what and Nepal's dedication to these two ideals. And almost immediately he reminded the international community that Nepal looks forward to more

support for a post-conflict scenario. His emphasis on multilateralism was in line with the opinions expressed by many European leaders while his case to reform and further strengthen the Security Council was also echoed by West African countries. And his stand that remittance funds alone cannot help develop Nepal's socio-economic situation and that the international community and world bodies have to help developing countries reach their millennium goals was along the lines of the case made by Bhutan's Prime Minister Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk.

He did particularly well in his recurring reminder of Nepal's long standing relationship with the UN and its significant role in and commitment to its Peace Keeping missions in some of the world's worst crisis. "Even when it [Nepal] had its own internal conflict, Nepal never gave up sending its troops to UN peacekeeping missions," he reminded the international community. There are over 3,500 Nepali troops serving the UN missions currently. He also talked about the need to make the Security Council more democratic and inclusive. Nepal's campaign for a temporary seat at the Security Council for 2007-2008 was eloquent and apt. "People of Nepal deserve due recognition," he said and requested other countries to lobby for Nepal's seat at the Security Council. The last time Nepal had a seat at the Security Council was 20 years ago and Nepali soldiers

have played a key role at various UN missions since.

The Deputy Prime Minister also lobbied for an Asian Secretary-General at the UN. Amongst the candidates campaigning for the position is also the Indian nominee Shashi Tharoor who has been with the world body for almost 30 years.

An important part of the campaign for a seat at the Security Council, and a further emphasis to show Nepal's commitment to the working with the United Nations in all its capacity was spelt out clearly when the Deputy Prime Minister insisted, "We have offered to host the UN Regional Center for Peace and Disarmament for Asia and the Pacific in Kathmandu. Despite our long-standing commitment and sincere efforts, the Center is yet to be relocated. I wish to reiterate that the Government of Nepal is ready to sign the host country agreement as per this Assembly's resolution as soon as the UN Secretariat provides it with a draft. We urge the Secretariat to conclude the necessary procedure for the relocation of the Center to Nepal without any further delay."

The platform was also perfect to bring up the issue of Bhutanese refugee crisis in Nepal. "In essence, this is a problem between the government of Bhutan and its citizens. Nepal has come to the picture simply because it has provided shelter to fleeing refugees on humanitarian grounds. The issue cannot be resolved in the absence of a genuine willingness to resolve the problem on the part of the Government of Bhutan. The international community must assert positive influence to break the impasse. ... Nepal also supports the democratic aspiration of the people of Bhutan and urges Bhutan to accommodate the plight of the refugees in their political dispensation," he stated, urging the Bhutanese government to take action and responsibility. Only one member of the Bhutanese delegate could be seen present during the event's live webcast.

Oli was also not standing alone when he declared "rights of migrant workers must be protected in all situations." Dr. Alberto G. Romulo, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Philippines had called on member states of the UN to back the creation of an informal Global Forum on Migration and Development, a standing, non-binding body in which countries will be able to discuss and exchange the best ideas and practices

on the issue. After standing, non-binding body in which countries will be able to discuss and exchange the best ideas and practices on the issue. In June, Secretary General Kofi Annan had outlined the proposal for the Forum and last week Belgium offered to host the forum's first meeting next year.

He ended his speech with hopes for a strengthened relationship with the world body, saying, "The United Nations today is fraught with lack of credibility, inability to arrive at important decisions, weak implementation of its own declaration and decisions, and slowness in responding to challenges that require its most pressing attentions. We need to change this situation. Together, we can make our organization better equipped to respond to these challenges."

WHAT HE DIDN'T INCLUDE:

The Deputy Prime Minister touched on many important national and international issues during his speech. But one important issue that he failed to address was that of global warming and the environment and what Nepal has done in the past and would like to do in the future in that area. Dangers of global warming and the development of alternative energy sources have been key global agendas not only at the General Assembly but also at the Clinton Global Initiative conference organized by former U.S President Bill Clinton, timed to coincide with the UN event. And Nepal should make it a point to be a part of all major initiative, national and international, involved in these two causes, or at-least remind the world of our nature conservation efforts. Delving into the topic, one that many other world leaders emphasized on during the general assembly, would have also given an opportunity to pay brief condolences to the Nepalis and foreigners, many of whom were leading figures in nature conservation in Nepal, that died in the recent helicopter crash in Nepal, if the Nepali delegate had so wished. It was, after all, not only a national tragedy but also an incident that led to the death of several members of the international community. But that aside, Nepal perhaps should have taken the opportunity to express its commitment to nature conservation and asked the world what help it could offer and what help we could get in that area.

You can watch the speech online at:
UN.org/webcast/ga/61/gastatement25.shtml

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नेपालमा बढ्दो फेशन डिजाईनर क्रेज



Models parade a bright collection at a fashion show in Kathmandu. Photo: ANUSHIL SHRESTHA

Anushil Shrestha

१० वर्ष अघि दिल्लीमा फेशन डिजाईनर्स कोर्स गरेर १९९७ मा नेपालमा फेशन डिजाईनीङ स्कुल आइडिसी सुरु गर्दा नै शैलजा अधिकारीले यहाँ फेशनेवल पहिरनको भविष्य उज्वल देखेकी थिईन। सुरुवातमा कडा परिश्रम गर्नुपरे पनि बजार देखेरै लागेको उनी बताउछीन। भन्छिन “ढीलो चाडो फेशन डिजाईनको महत्व सबैले बुझ्छन भन्ने विश्वास ममा थियो।” दश वर्ष अघि फेशन र डिजाईनका पहिरनबारे चासो नभए पनि अहिले यो युवाहरूको करिअरको भरपर्दो माध्यम बन्न थालेकोमा उनी दंग छिन। डेढ दशकअघिसम्म राजधानीका अभिजात्य वर्गहरूबीच मात्र सिमित रहेको राजधानीका बुटिकहरूमा अहिले सर्वसाधारणको समेत सहज पहुच पुग्न थालेको छ।

३५ जना विद्यार्थीबाट शैलजाले सुरु गरेको फेशन डिजाईनिङ एण्ड इन्टेरियर डेकोरेसन स्कुल आइडिसीमा अहिले ४४६ विद्यार्थी

अध्ययन गरिरहेकाछन। जसमा फेशन डिजाईन पढ्ने २६६ छन्। हाल सम्म ११ सय डिजाईनर्सहरू उत्पादन गरिसकेको शैलजा बताउछिन। उनका अनुसार राजधानीमाका अधिकांश बुटिकहरू आइडिसी बाटै प्रशिक्षण लिएका डिजाईनरहरूले संचालन गरेकाछन्। राजधानीमा ४९ बुटिक र १६ डिजाईनर्स टेलर्सहरू उनका विद्यार्थीले संचालन गर्दै आएकाछन। तरुणीका महतो, विष्णु गौतम, सूर्य लक्ष्मी श्रेष्ठ, संगीत श्रेष्ठ, शुषमा सिंह, आर्सीया बानो लगायतका नाम चलेका धेरै डिजाईनरहरू आइडिसीकै उत्पादन हुन भने संगीता थापाले लण्डनमा समेत बुटिक खोलेकीछिन।

डिजाइन गरिएका पहिरनको माग बढेपछि युवाहरूका लागि यो लोभ लाग्दो पेशा बन्न थालेको छ। नेपाली चलचित्रहरू, राजधानीका, क्यासीनो, एयरलाईन्स कम्पनी, जोन प्लेयर्स जस्ता टप गार्मेण्ट्स, बैंकहरूमा समेत डिजाईनरहरूले काम पाउँदै आएकाछन। राजधानीमा आइडिसी बाहेक लर्ड बुद्ध एजुकेशन, लकोरिया ईन्स्टिच्युट, क्रिप्टल, नमुना कलेज अफ फेशन डिजाईनिङ

लगायतका फेशन डिजाईन प्रशिक्षण केन्द्रहरू रहेकाछन। इण्डियन इन्स्टिच्युट अफ फेशन डिजाईनिङ (आईआईएफटी)को समेत काठमाण्डौ-फ्रेञ्चाइज यहाँ संचालनमा छ। काठमाण्डौमा मात्र हाल सम्म २०० जति बुटिकहरू संचालनमा छन भने हरेक वर्ष यस्ता प्रशिक्षण केन्द्रबाट हजार जति डिजाईनरहरू तयार हुँदै आएको देखिन्छ। ईन्स्टिच्युटहरूमा ६ देखि १५ महिना सम्मको कोर्समार्फत डिप्लोमा इन फेशन डिजाईनीङ र कलेज अफ फेशन डिजाईनीङमा स्नातक सम्मको कक्षा संचालनहुँदै आएकाछन। डिजाईनर बन्नका लागि प्रशिक्षण लिनेहरूमा ३० प्रतिशत पुरुष छन भने महिलाहरूमा १८ देखि ५० वर्ष सम्मका रहेकाछन्।

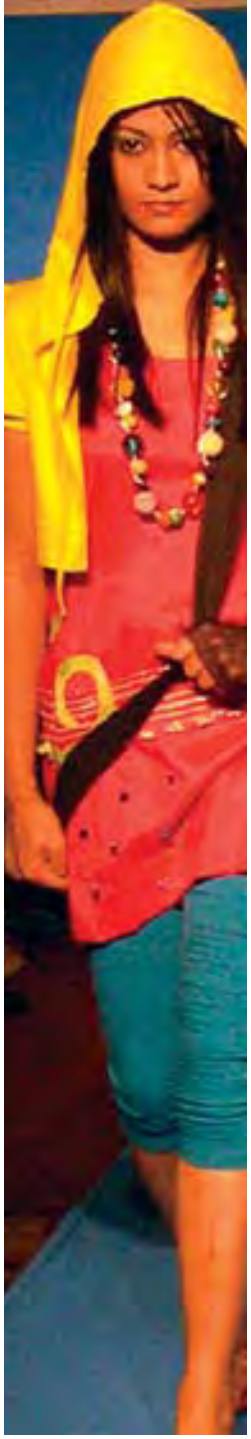
फेशन डिजाईनको बजार राजधानी बाहिरका शहरहरूमा समेत छापिएको छ। आइडिसी ले नै राजधानी बाहिर पोखरा, बिराटनगर, वीरगञ्ज, जनकपुरमा आफ्नो शाखा विस्तार गरेको छ। ति सबै शहरहरूमा गरी २०० जति विद्यार्थी अध्ययनरत छन। धरानमा भने १० वर्ष अघि देखि नै संचालित बुटिकहरूले गरेको डिजाईनर

को बजार समुन्द्र पारी सम्म पुगेको छ। धरानमा समय समयमा फेशन शो र डिजाईनर्सहरू बीच नै प्रतियोगिता समेत हुँदै आएको छ। राजधानीको बागबजार स्थित आइडिसी को आयोजनामा हरेक वर्ष सनसिल्क फेशन सप्ताह हुँदै आएको छ जसमा राजधानीका अन्य फेशन स्कुल, बुटिक सँगै बाहिरका डिजाईनर पढिरहेका विद्यार्थीको समेत संलग्नता रहने गरेको छ।



Society

सनसिल्क फेशन सप्ताह



A mix of traditional and contemporary styles at the Sunsilk Fashion Week in Kathmandu. Photos: ANUSHIL SHRESTHA

Anushil Shrestha

साउनको अन्तिम सातामा राजधानीको हायत रिजेन्सीमा सम्पन्न भएको फेशन महोत्सव मानिने सनसिल्क फेशन सप्ताह-२००६ मा फेशन डिजाइनरहरूका लागि महत्वपूर्ण रट्यो।

इण्डियन एजुकेशन सेण्टर अफ फेशन डिजाइनिङ एण्ड इण्टेरियर डेकोरेशन (आइइसी) को आयोजनामा १४ नेपाली र ८ भारतीय गरी २२ मोडलहरू ७०० भन्दा बढि पहिरनमा ५ दिन सम्म न्याम्पमा प्रस्तुत भएका थिए। नयाँ पुराना १३४ डिजाइनरमा आर्सीया अपेरियल, इमेजीन, वुमेन्स प्लानेट र आकर्षण बुटिकले समेत सहभागीता जनाएका थिए।

फेशन सप्ताहमा यसपटक भारतीय ग्लार्डस मोडल हण्टका विजेता सुपर मोडलहरू समेत रहेका थिए। मोडलहरूसँगै नायक-नायिका, गायक-गायिका, टीभी एडकर जस्ता सेलीब्रिटी लगायतका डिप्लोम्याटहरू समेत न्याम्पमा प्रस्तुत भएका थिए। आयोजनास्थलमा डिजाइनर

पहिरन, घडी, ज्वेलर्स, कस्मेटिकका ३२ स्टलहरू समेत राखीएका थिए। फेशन सप्ताहमा भारत तथा युरोपीयन देशहरूका समेत दर्शकहरू उपस्थित भएको आयोजक संस्था आइइसी का शैलजा अधिकारी बताउछिन्।

सहभागी १३४ नयाँ पुराना फेशन डिजाइनर मध्येका काठमाण्डौकी प्रतिष्ठा, मनिका, शालीनी, धनकुटाकी शुष्मा र मोरङकी सरिता आइइसी मा विगत ८ महिना देखि प्रशिक्षण लिईरहेका विद्यार्थी हुन्।

करिअर देखेर डिजाइनर बन्न तर्फ लागेकी दरबारमार्गकी प्रतिष्ठा श्रेष्ठको चाहना बुटिक खोल्ने छ। मोरङबाट फेशन डिजाइनिङ नै पढ्न भनेर आएका सरिता बोहोरा र चावहिलकी मनिका श्रेष्ठले पनि आफ्नो करिअर यसैलाई बनाउने सोचेका छन्। कम्प्युटरमा रुची भएकी शालिनी अग्रवालले आइइसीमा डिजाइनर कोर्स गर्न थाले पछि चाहना बदलिएको छ। भन्छिन् “हामी जस्ता नया जेनेरेशनका लागि यो पेशा राम्रो छ।” ब्याचलरको पढाई सकेर फेशन डिजाइनिङमा केहि गर्ने सोच बनाएर लागेकि धनकुटाकी शुष्मा श्रेष्ठ सिक्दै गएपछी आत्

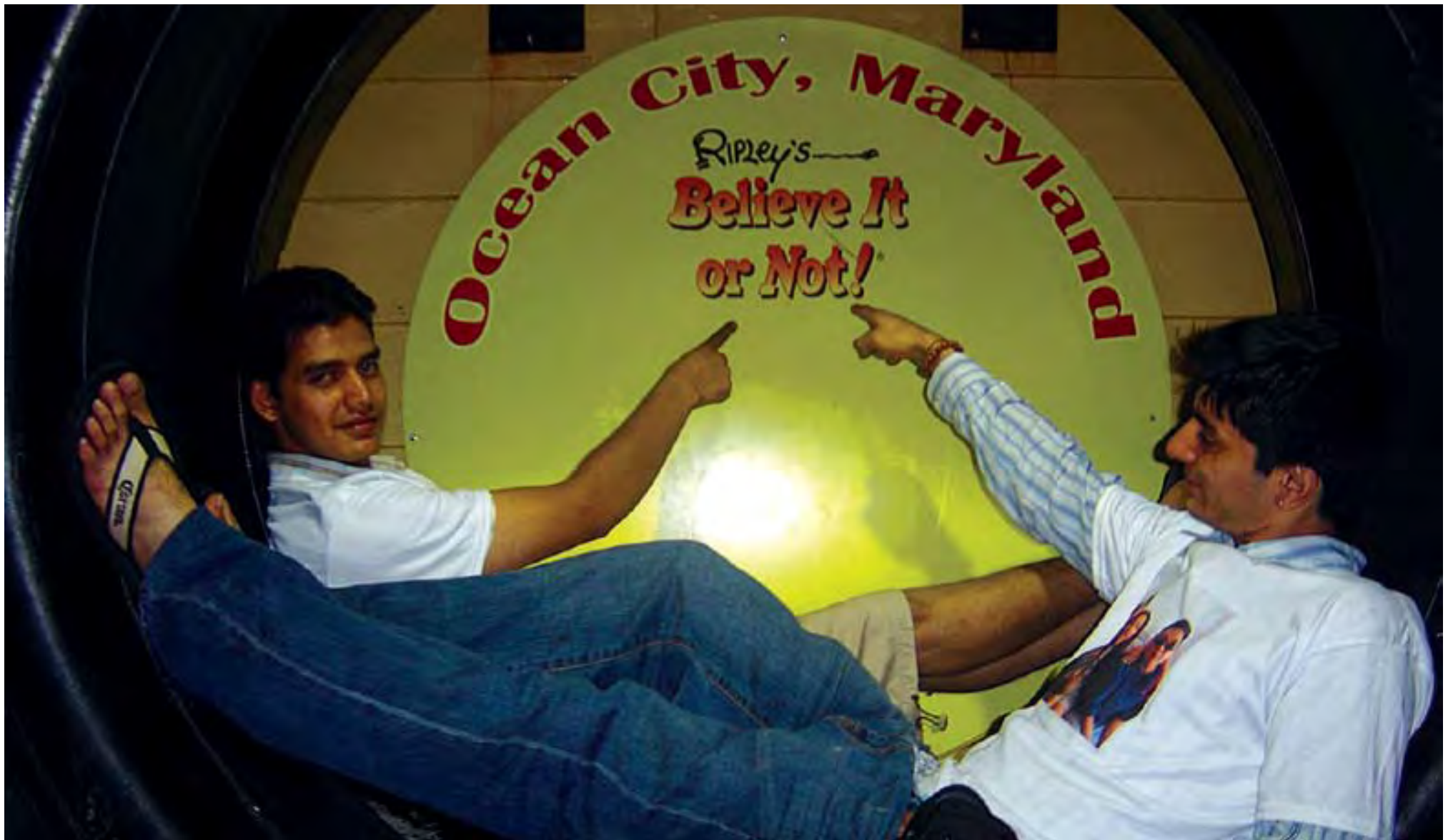
मविश्वास बढ्दै गएको बताउछिन्। भन्छिन् “पहिले सामान्य रुचि थियो तर अहिले यो क्षेत्रमा धेरै सम्भावना देखेको छु।” शुष्मा आफुहरू नयाँ सिकारु भएकोले धेरै मेहेनत गरेर सनसिल्क फेशन सप्ताहका पहिरनहरू तयार पारेको बताउछिन्। फेशन सप्ताहमा दुई महिना अघिदेखि मात्र डिजाइनर तालिम लिन थालेकी शर्मिला थापा देखि ८ वर्ष अघि नै यस क्षेत्रमा आएका आर्सीया वानु सम्मका डिजाइनरहरूका पहिरन एकै साथ प्रस्तुत भएको थियो।



Society

Summer in Ocean City: Tales of a hard day's night

28 HOUR WORK SHIFTS. LATE NIGHT PARTIES. SEXUAL ASSAULT AND JAIL TIME, REALITY CHECK AND PAY CHECKS. BUNK BEDS BUT NO SLEEP. MEDIA SLANDERING. BITTER EXPERIENCES AND FOND MEMORIES. JUST A FEW ACCOUNTS OF LIVES OF NEPALI STUDENTS IN A SUMMER IN OCEAN CITY, MD.



A Nepali student in Ocean City's Ripley's Believe It or Not museum. Photo: NEPALI STUDENT ORGANIZATION OF MSUM (NSOMSUM)

Bibek Bhandari in Ocean City

The American summer break; rightfully glorified in cinemas and songs and one of the most anticipated three months on the calendar. But it's not all fun in the sun. The three month-long summer break has always been a hot-season to find work, especially in American tourist areas. One such area that is infamously overwhelmed by Nepalis during the summer is the small strip of sand and sea, Ocean City, Maryland.

International students are allowed to work only 20 hours per week on campus, usually at minimum wage. For Nepali and other international students who pay for college themselves, their work on campus would barely come close to meeting their financial needs. For them, then, summer seems the best time to kick off stretching hours of work and save up for the academic year ahead.

One of the popular destinations among many international students, Nepalis students to be precise, is Ocean City, Maryland. A small resort town in the shores of the Atlantic Ocean, three hours east of Washington D.C., it is a small peninsula that comes to life in the summer. As the heat soars, schools and colleges close by the end of May, international students from many countries, including Nepal, swarm into this small city in an unprecedented number. The small Greyhound station at 2nd Street, otherwise a sleepy outpost, is flooded with students with their backpacks and luggage.

It is not just the students that wait for the summer though. Ocean city's innumerable businesses gears up for the season too. Hotels, motels, clothing stores, restaurants, and clubs within the city and along the three mile long Boardwalk right across the beach are the major places that require a large manpower to manage the rush for summer. And it's these very places that become the first stop for many

Nepalis to begin their hunt for work. The breezy coastline is soon abuzz with the humming of the popular question, "Are you hiring?" During the initial days, when the business hasn't picked up, it is somewhat difficult to find a job but once the season starts the hotels, restaurants and stores do start hiring.

A number of Nepalis who have already worked a job past summer tend to get the same job with a higher pay, making the whole deal seem easy. On the other hand, for the ones who have landed in the city for the first time, scouring for work store to store, in hotels and restaurants becomes a full-time work itself. The ones who luckily get hired usually start working from that very moment while for the rest it's yet another day of job hunting. By the end of the week, many students will have found work while other find dead-ends and frustrations. One student who had come from Minnesota couldn't find a job for two weeks. She lost hope after walking the boardwalk everyday, knocking on every door, so she gave up

and made her way to Boston instead. Its not uncommon for many students to go back to their schools or other cities after striking out in Ocean city, but for the ones who do find something, its a long stretch of work every hour, every day.

In every corner and in every street till the 142nd Street, Nepali students can be found working. Many of them work at restaurants and fast food chains and have mixed feelings about the experience. McDonald's, Burger King, Popeye's are some of the places where a large number of Nepalis are hired. A Nepali student working at McDonald's was disappointed. "It's not what I had thought I would be doing in America. But I need money and so I am sweating in front of the grill making fries here", he grumbled. "I am not coming back to this place", he added with a dull expression. Meenu of West Virginia worked at Burger King for the entire summer. Her 12-hour shift lasted from 5 am to 5 pm. But at times she had to work overtime till 12am, stretching her

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A Nepali student is dwarfed by the shelves in the shop where she works. Photo: BIBEK BHANDARI

work day from 12 hours per day to 19 hours. She was less pessimistic. "It's very difficult standing up the entire day and taking orders, and in some cases there are people who get mad at you. But it's all a part of work", she sighs. Anil Shrestha of Iowa is spending his second summer here. He is working two jobs, one at a french-fries cafe and another at a hotel. "My first job is very difficult but I suppose I have to work, but the second one is quite easy. For three days I have to work continuously with hardly any sleep. But I have two days off at both my jobs and that's when I catch up on my sleep and have fun at the beach", he says.

There are a number of Nepali students who work as housekeepers in hotels and waitresses and bus boys in many of the hotels and restaurants here. Nepalis also work in clothing stores at the Boardwalk. Places like Sunations and the T-Shirt Factory hire a number of Nepali students where they work as salesperson or stock keepers. "It's busy during summer and we need maximum employees to keep up with our business", one of the Israeli owners of a T-shirt Factory explained. "We hire a lot of people but Nepalis are more trustworthy. They come on time and work sincerely", he added. Deepak from Alabama worked in one of the T-shirt Factory stores in 1st Street as a stocker. He only worked for nine hours. When asked if that was enough he replied, "Well, I tried to get more hours but they already had enough people. I also looked for a second job but couldn't find one though I walked through the

Boardwalk and the city every morning. At least I do have some work that pays me and so I am okay with it I suppose," he consoled himself.

In Ocean City, overtime working during the summer is a norm. Nepali students work from a single shift of eight hours to doing double shifts and even more. Many of them usually have two jobs leaving them no time to rest and relax. Manish, who worked at a pizza place, is one of the latter. He worked for twenty hours everyday without any break, and sometimes during rush hours his schedule stretched up to twenty eight hours. "There's no other option. I need money for school and so I have to work. There's no way out," he says coldly.

Despite all the work and over work, Ocean city is an ocean front after all and Nepali students are never shy of partying, especially after long work days. The bustling nightlife of the city provides ample opportunity to forget the hectic day and join the party crowd at the innumerable clubs and bars till the wee hours of the night.

Living in Ocean city is not cheap. It is a summer vacation spot after all, so prices for apartments are as high as \$5,000 per month per one-bedroom. The only solution then is to share the room with friends and split up the cost. Many Nepali students make their own groups to share an apartment with. In one case, as many as forty people were living together under one roof. But usually ten to fifteen people share a two bedroom apartment. Suffice to say, comfort and privacy is not on

the priority list. The apartments are furnished with a number of bunk beds, kitchen, couches and even TV with cable connection, but the amenities also depend on what one pays. "The thing is, everyone spends more time at work than in their apartment and so it really doesn't matter how many people stay together", says Kritika from Nebraska. "But sometimes the apartment gets real messy as no one seem to be caring since everyone is here only for summer," she adds.

Tensions between various groups looking for work in a small place are bound to flare up, or at-least be noticeable. This year, an estimated 3000 Nepalis were working in and around Ocean City. Most of the Nepali students come from surrounding states of West Virginia, Virginia, and Maryland itself. A large number of Nepalis also flock

from Alabama, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska amongst other states. Apart from Nepalis, many European students also make their way to Ocean city for work, particularly Russians. Most of the European students also seem to come with a work permit for the summer. A local newspaper dated 22 June, 2006, reported Nepalis as "illegal immigrants" who are seizing away job opportunities from their European counterparts who have the right documents to work. But Nepalis continue to get hired for their reputation of being good workers. One cannot, however, not consider the fact that undocumented workers can be paid less than documented ones, not to say such practice occurred here in this case.

However, the reputation of Nepalis is not the best. The news of fights among Nepali counterparts at some parties can be heard every now and then. News of gang fights between Nepalis and people from other communities isn't a surprise or secret either. One particular incident proved to be particularly embarrassing for Nepalis in Ocean city this year. According to The Dispatch, 11 August, 2006, Sachindra Nepal, 25, was arrested by the Ocean City Police and charged with second, third and fourth degree sex offense, and second degree sex and misdemeanor assault. He supposedly lured a highly intoxicated 18 year old girl to going into bed with him in a hotel room. Nepal possessed a permanent resident card. The DNA evidence proved Nepal guilty and he was being held at the county jail on a \$500,000 bond.

While some Nepalis have a wonderful summer and return with a handful of good memories and savings, others are not even in the mood to share their memories. "I am not coming back to this place again", said one of the Nepali students before getting on the bus. A couple of other group of students who claimed to have a good summer said, "We made good savings and simply loved the place. So we might just come back again. It's a good summer break even though we have to work hard."

Ocean City is merely an example, nonetheless, a reality of the hardship that many students have to go through in America. The American dream that most of us imagine in Nepal alters significantly once we land here. America becomes a place with mixed challenges. The reality is that you have to work hard, you have to do it on your own, and you have to prove yourself a winner at the end.



Nepali students in their communal apartment (top), at the beach (center) and with the boss (bottom). Photos: BIBEK BHANDARI and NSOMSUM

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This issue, Nepali Aawaz begins a series of investigative reports from Nepal in association with the Center for Investigative Journalism, Nepal.

ज्यान र धन स्वाहा : सिलगुडीमा ठगिदैछन् नेपाली



Mrs. Bhandari holds up the photo of her late husband, a victim of medical malpractice. Photo: ANUSHIL SHRESTHA

Anushil Shrestha in Silguri

धरानमा देशको एउटा ठूलो अस्पताल- वीपी कोइराला स्वास्थ्य विज्ञान प्रतिष्ठान र विराटनगर मा क्षेत्रीय अस्पताल बन्ने तरखरमा रहेको कोशी अञ्चल अस्पताल छन् । तर पनि यस भेगका धेरै नेपालीहरू तिनको उपचारमा विश्वास नगरी भारत, पश्चिम बङ्गालको सिलीगुडीस्थित निजी नर्सिङ होम र अस्पतालहरूको 'दुहुना गाई' बनिर हेका छन् । त्यहाँ एक पटक भर्ना हुने विरामीले रु.१ लाखदेखि ६ लाखसम्म खर्च गर्छन्, तर कतिको त लाश मात्रै नेपाल फर्किन्छ ।

कलेजोको उपचार गराउन गत २८ माघमा सिलीगुडीस्थित डाक्टर चाडको डा. च्याड डाइग्नेसिस एण्ड एमआरआई सेण्टर नामक क्लिनिकमा भर्ना गरिएका धरान-१५ का ६० वर्षीय थामबहादुर राईको आईसीयुमा राखेको

तीनदिनपछि बोली बन्द भयो । डा. चाडले १२ दिनको समय मागे, तेन्नाँ दिन विरामीको देब्रे हात चलन छाड्यो । उता बिल भने भारु.५० हजार नाघिसकेको थियो । विरामीकी बहिनी गीता भन्छिन्, "त्यसपछि डाक्टरलाई सोध्न जाँदा उल्टै रिसाएर दिनहुँ सोध्ने भन्दै कर्कन थाले ।" अवस्था भन्-भन् चिन्ताजनक हुँदै गएपछि नर्थ बंगाल क्लिनिकमा उपचार गराएका थामबहादुर को खर्च उस्तै भए पनि स्वास्थ्यमा सुधारआयो । "डाक्टर चाडले छुनासाथ विरामी निको हुन्छ भन्ने कुरा हल्ला मात्रै रहेछ", गीताले भनिन्, "त्यहाँ उपचार हैन, रकम असुल्ने काम मात्र हुन्छ । चाडको कुरा मानेर अरु राखेको भए विरामी ज्यूँदै नफर्कने रहेछ ।"

डेढ वर्षअघि कलेजोको उपचार गर्न सिलीगुडीको प्यारामाउण्ट नर्सिङ होम गएका धरान-१५ का ६० वर्षीय लाखमान तामाड भारु.८०० बेडशुल्कका साथै दैनिक सरदर रु.४ हजारको दरले डेढ लाख रुपैयाँ खर्च गरेर निको

भएर आएका थिए । लाखमानलाई निको भएको देखेर पछि प्यारामाउण्ट नर्सिङ होममै गएका उनका छिमेकीहरू तुइलाल खड्गी (५८) र गोमा गिरी (४५) भने जिउँदो फर्केनन् । खड्गी र गिरी परिवारले उनीहरूको 'उपचार'मा क्रमशः अढाइ लाख र डेढ लाख रुपैयाँ स्वाहा पारे ।

दुई वर्षअघि ब्रेन ट्युमरको उपचार गर्न डाक्टर चाडको क्लिनिकमा लिएका धनकुटा-७ का ६१ वर्षीय डम्बरसिं लिम्बू पनि बाँचेनन् । उपचारमा साढे ६ लाख रुपैयाँ सिद्धिएको बताउँदै उनकी श्रीमती दुर्गाकुमारी भन्छिन्, "ब्रेन ट्युमर को उपचार यतै भइदिएको भए त्यति धेरै खर्च र दुःख हुने थिएन होला ।"

यी केसहरूमध्ये ब्रेन ट्युमरको उपचार त्यतिवेलासम्म धरान र विराटनगर दुवैतिर नहुने भएकोले सिलीगुडी लिएको थियो । तर आफ्नै क्षेत्रमा राम्रो उपचार गर्न सकिने लिभररोगको लागि उता जानु जरुरी थिएन ।

किन जान्छन् सिलीगुडी ?

यहाँ 'राम्रो उपचार हुँदैन' भनेर विरामीहरू सिलीगुडी लैजाने चलन व्यापक छ । तर, धरानको वीपी प्रतिष्ठानमा ५५० बेडको अरु पतालका साथै २४ घण्टा आकस्मिक सेवा, जनरल ओपीडी र सुपर स्पेशलिष्ट क्लिनिकहरू छन् । अहिलेसम्म नभएको न्यूरोलोजी क्लिनिक पनि अब शुरु गरिँदैछ । कोशी अञ्चल अरु पताल, विराटनगरले ३३३ बेड सहित स्वास्थ्य सेवा प्रदान गरिरहेको छ । तर आममानिसमा यी अस्पतालका राम्रा सेवा र सुविधाको भन्दा पनि 'लापवाही' र 'नकारात्मक कुरा'को बढी प्रचारबाट प्रभावित भएर मानिसहरू धरान र विराटनगरमै उपचार हुने रोगका लागि समेत सिलीगुडी जाने गर्दछन् ।

प्रतिष्ठानका उपकुलपति डा. लोकविक्रम थापा उताका केही निजी नर्सिङ होमहरूले एजेण्ट नै राखेर प्रतिष्ठानका बारेमा नकारात्मक

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Silguri, where Nepalis are becoming victims of medical malpractice at an alarming rate.

प्रचार गर्ने गरेको बताउँछन्। उनको भनाइ छ, “वीपी प्रतिष्ठानले मान्छे मान्यो, केश बिगाच्यो भन्ने हल्लाको पछि लागेर सिलीगुडीतिर गएर मानिसहरूले दुःख पाइरहेका छन्।” वीपीमा र राम्रा डाक्टर छैनन्, सिकारु डाक्टरले हेर्छन्, बढी लापवाही हुन्छ भन्ने यस्तै प्रचारको प्रभावमा पारेका विरामी र परिवारका सदस्यहरू डाक्टरले ‘यहीं ठीक हुन्छ’ भन्दाभन्दै पनि सिलीगुडीतिरै लाग्छन्। वीपी प्रतिष्ठानको सिटी स्क्यान मेथिन बरोबर विग्रिनु र न्युरोसर्जन नहुनुको कारणले पनि यसमा केही काम गरेको देखिन्छ।

प्रतिष्ठानमा अहिले मधुमेह, मुटु, मिर्गौला, क्यान्सर, जेनेटिक, छाती, ट्रिपिकल रोग आदिको उच्चस्तरीय उपचार हुन्छ अस्पताल प्रमुख डा. प्रल्हाद कार्कीका अनुसार ब्रेष्ट क्यान्सर को मेमोग्राफी सेवा काठमाडौं बाहिर धरानमा मात्रै छ, जेनेटिक क्लिनिक त काठमाडौंमा पनि छैन। हाडजोर्नीको उपचार सबैभन्दा राम्रो यहीं हुन्छ। न्यूरो पनि शुरु हुँदैछ। तर यहीं उपचार हुनसक्ने विरामीलाई पनि अनाहक सिलीगुडी लगेर मानिसहरू दुःख पाइरहेका छन्। टाउकोको शल्यक्रिया गर्नुपर्ने दुर्घटनाका अधिकांश घाइते र अन्य विरामीहरूलाई पूर्वमा न्युरोसर्जन नभएको कारण सिलीगुडी जाने गरेका छन्। डा. कार्की भन्छन्, “नेपालमै न्युरोसर्जन कम रहेकाले हामीले चाहेर पनि राख्न सकेका थिएनौं, तर अहिले प्रतिष्ठानकै खर्चमा पढ्न गएका डा. यामबहादुर रोक्का अर्को वर्ष आउँदैछन् भने भारतका न्युरोसर्जन डा. अमित अग्रवालले काम शुरु गरिसकेका छन्।”

कोशी अञ्चल अस्पताल प्रमुख डा. गणेश गुरुङ पूर्वका मानिसहरू कति फेशनका कारण त कति यहाँ भएका सेवासुविधाहरू समेत नबुझी लहैलहैमा लागेर सिलीगुडी जाने गरेको बताउँछन्। गुरुङ भन्छन्, “हामीले ती नर्सिङ होमको जस्तो विज्ञापन गर्ने र दलालहरू राख्ने गरेका छैनौं। त्यसैले कतिपय मान्छेहरू उताका बनावटी हल्ला सुनेर पनि गइरहेका छन्।”

‘सुनको फूल दिने मुर्गा’

पूर्वका नेपाली तथा सिक्किम र दार्जीलिङबाट आउने नेपाली मूलका विरामीहरूलाई सिलीगुडीका नर्सिङ होमहरूले ‘सुनको फूल दिने मुर्गा’ मान्ने गरेको स्थानीय समाजसेवी राजन सुवेदी (शर्मा) बताउँछन्। उनी भन्छन्, “यहाँका नर्सिङ होमहरू पैसा कसरी असुल्ने भन्ने व्यापारिक ध्याउन्नमा हुन्छन्। टाउको दुःखेर नर्सिङ होम गयो भने २० हजारको बिल बनाउँछन्। ती नर्सिङ होमको भन्दा राम्रो उपचार त सरकारी अस्पतालमा हुन्छ। निजीमै पनि सिलीगुडीमा ५० हजार लाग्ने उपचार बरु कोलकातामा २० हजारमै हुन्छ। यतिको खर्चिलो र खतम उपचारका लागि किन नेपालीहरू यहीं ओइरिएका हुन्, अचम्मै लाग्छ।”

नेपालबाट आएका कैयौं विरामीहरूको मृत्यु भएको र भार २-३ लाखसम्मको बिल तिर्न नसकेर आफूहरूले नर्सिङ होमवालाहरूलाई बिल घटाइदिन भनसुन गरिदिनु परेको बताउँदै सुवेदी भन्छन्, “नेपालीहरू बिल तिर्न नसकेर लाश छुटाइदिन चाहिँ हामीलाई गुहार आउँछन्, तर उपचार गर्नुअघि सोध्न चाहिँ आउँदैनन्। म त नेपाली दाजुभाइहरूलाई यहाँ उपचार गर्न आउँदैनआउन सल्लाह दिन्छु।”

सिलीगुडीमा नेपालीहरूलाई “दुहुना गाई” बनाएर चम्किएका नर्सिङ होमहरू एक दर्जन जति छन्। नेपालीहरू सबैभन्दा बढी डा. चाडको डाइग्नोसिस एण्ड एमआरआई सेण्टरमा जान्छन् भने शान्ति, आनन्दलोक, सनराइज र मित्र नर्सिङ होम तथा नर्थ बङ्गाल क्लिनिकमा जानेहरूको चाप पनि बढी नैछ। प्यारामाउण्ट, मदनगंगा, नाइट र आशीर्वाद नर्सिङ होम तथा वासु क्लिनिकमा पनि नेपालीहरूको ठूलै भीड लाग्छ। यी नर्सिङ होमहरूभन्दा स्तरीय उपचार गर्ने सिलीगुडी सदर अस्पताल र नर्थ बङ्गाल मेडिकल कलेजतिर प्रायः नेपालीहरू जाउँछन्।

सिलीगुडीका नर्सिङ होमहरूको जनरल बेड शुल्क नै भार ६०० र आईसीयुको २ हजार सम्म छ। बाहिर गराइएको सीटी स्क्यानलाई त्यहाँ मान्यता दिइँदैन। डाक्टरले प्राथमिकता दिएर नियमित विरामी नहेर्ने गरेको पीडितहरू बताउँछन्। नर्सिङ होमहरूले विरामी तान्न एम्बुलेन्स र रिक्सा चालकसम्मलाई कमीशन दिने तथा धरान र विराटनगरका अस्पतालहरूमा एजेण्ट राख्ने गरेका छन्। धरानकी गीता राई सुनाउँछिन्, “वीपी प्रतिष्ठानमा आकस्मिक कक्षमा भर्ना हुनेवित्तिकै केही मान्छेहरू आएर ‘यहाँ ठीक हुँदैन, राम्रा डाक्टर छैनन्, विरामी मर्छ सिलीगुडी नै लानु राम्रो’ भन्न थाल्छन्।”

पूर्वी क्षेत्रका राजमार्गमा हुने सडक दुर्घटनाका ६० प्रतिशत गम्भीर घाइतेहरू पनि सिलीगुडीका नर्सिङ होमहरूमै पुऱ्याइन्छन्। दुर्घटनाबाट घाइते हुने क्रम बर्सिँ बढेको छ। टाउकोमा चोट लागेका कतिपय घाइतेहरूलाई सोकै सिलीगुडी लैजाने गरिन्छ भने। रिफर नगरिकनै विरामीलाई सिलीगुडी लिएर जाने क्रम दुर्घटनाका घाइतेबाहेक अन्य विरामीमा पनि छ।



Indra Bahadur Rai (Left) and Saru Tamang (right) are both victims of medical malpractice in Silguri. Indra Bahadur Rai's was fatal. Mukesh Shah (bottom), standing with his family, is a victim too. Photos: ANUSHIL SHRESTHA



Nation



Dr. Chang Nursing Home in Silguri is fast earning an ill-repute. Photo: ANUSHIL SHRESTHA

डा. चाडकहाँ दुःख पाउने धेरै

खाटबाट लडेर उपचार गर्न डा. चाडको नर्सिङ होममा पुऱ्याइएका धरान-१३ का इन्द्रबहादुर थापा जिवित फर्किएनन् । नौ वर्षदेखि पक्षघातका विरामी थापाको खाटबाट लडदा टाउकोमा सानो चोट लागेकोले त्यहाँ लिएको थियो । अस्पताल पुग्नुअघिसम्म चिया-विस्कुट खाँदै गरेका विरामी चाडको आईसीयुमा राखेपछि बेहोस भए र १४ दिनपछि उनको मृत शरीर त्यहाँबाट निस्कियो ।

थापाको मृत्युपछि शव पाउन पनि परिवारले निकै ठूलो कष्ट व्यहोर्नुपरेको बताउँदै उनका भाइ शिवशङ्कर थापा भन्छन्, “नर्सिङ होमले लडेको विरामी भनेर उनको शव प्रहरी थाना पठाइदियो र पैसाको मोलमोलाइ गर्न थाल्यो । त्यसपछि मेडिकल कलेजका मूर्दाघरका कर्मचारीहरू समेत शव दिन पैसा माग्नु थाले । सबैलाई रुपैयाँ बाँड्दा-बाँड्दा हैरानी र सास्ती खाएर बल्लतल्ल लाश नेपाल ल्याउन पाइयो ।” विरामीको सास रहुञ्जेल नर्सिङ होमले रकम दुहुने अनि मरेपछि अरूलाई लुछाचुँडी गर्न दिइने गरेको अनुभव गर्नु थापा परिवारले सिलीगुडीमा । मृतकका छोरा बसन्त थापा भन्छन् “डाक्टर चाडले छुनासाथ विरामी ठीक हुन्छ भन्ने हल्लाको भरमा लागेर जाँदा यस्तो सास्ती खेप्नु पर्‍यो, यस्तो गल्ती अरूले नगरुन् ।”

अन्य नर्सिङ होमहरूमा लामो समयदेखि काम गर्दै आएका चिनियाँ मूलका डा. चाडले पछि सिलीगुडीको प्रधान नगरमा आफ्नै ‘डा. चाड डाइग्नोसिस एण्ड एमआरआई सेण्टर’ खोलेका हुन् । उनको क्लिनिकमा विरामी रुड्न जानेले दिसा-पिसाव गरेकोदेखि नुहाएको र हात-मुख धोएकोसम्म पैसा तिर्नुपर्छ । बेडमा रहेको विरामीले ओछ्यान फोहोर गरेमा नयाँ तन्ना किनेर दिनुपर्ने गीता राई बताउँछिन् । उनको अनुभव छ, “त्यहाँ पैसावाहेकको कुरै हुँदैन । उनीहरू विरामीलाई औषधि धेरै भिडाउने र आईसीयुमा धेरै दिन राखेर रकम असुल्ने धुनमा हुन्छन् ।

” डा. चाड २०५६-५७ सालतिर धरान नर्सिङ होममा साताको एक पटक आउने गरेकाले पनि नेपालीहरू माफ लोकप्रिय भएका रहेछन् । उनलाई ‘न्यूरो विशेषज्ञ’ भनिए पनि उनको नर्सिङ होममा सबै किसिमका विरामी पुग्छन् ।”

गएको २२ साउनमा ब्रेन ट्यमरेज भएका विराटनगर-७, रामपुरका ३० वर्षीय मुकेश साहका आफन्तहरू चाडको नर्सिङ होममा राखेर हेको भए विरामी त नफर्कने नै, ऋणको बोझ अरू बढ्ने थियो भन्छन् । विराटनगरको कोशी अञ्चल अस्पताल र धरानको वीपी प्रतिष्ठान हुँदै सिलीगुडी पुऱ्याइएका मुकेशलाई दुई पटक गरी ३६ दिनसम्म त्यहाँ राखियो र आफन्तहरू थप खर्च गर्न नसक्ने जस्तो देखिएपछि ‘उपचारै हुँदैन’ भनियो । मुकेशका ससुरा सुकदेव साह विरामीलाई भन्दा पैसालाई बढी महत्त्व दिइएको बताउँदै भन्छन्, “रकम धुत्नसम्म धुतेर विरामीलाई अरुतिर लैजानु भन्यो । पहिले किन निको हुन्छ भनेर राखेको, पैसा तिर्दिन भन्दा प्रहरी थानामा गएर पैसा तिरेर आउनु र विरामी लैजानु भनेर पुलिसको डर देखाइयो ।” मुकेशका आफन्तहरूले ऋण गरेर नर्सिङ होमको दुई लाख रुपैयाँको बिल तिरेका थिए । सिलीगुडीबाट जिउँदा लाशको रूपमा फर्काइएका मुकेशलाई सत्य साई हेल्थ इन्स्टिच्युट, वैङ्गलोरमा निको हुन भार.२० हजार पनि लागेन । सुकदेव भन्छन्, “विरामी लिएर सिलीगुडी जाने हो भने घरजग्गा नै बेचेर गए हुन्छ ।”

५ माघ ०५५ मा मोटरसाइकल दुर्घटनामा परेर टाउकोमा चोट लागेपछि डा. चाडकहाँ लिएका इटहरीका सुरेशकुमार राईको २३ दि(नपछि मृत्युहुँदा रु.५ लाख सकिएको थियो । राईकी श्रीमती हेमकुमारी त्यहाँको उपचार गर्ने शैली ठीक नलागेको बताउँदै भन्छिन्, “ठीक नहुने विरामीलाई पनि ठीक हुन्छ भनेर राख्न लगाई रुपैयाँ असुलिने रहेछ । विरामीको लागि हरेक दिन भार.१५-१६ सयको औषधि लिन लगाउँथे र आफैँ लिएर जान्थे, हामीलाई विरामी भएको ठाउँमा बस्नै दिँदैन थिए ।”

टाउकोको विरामी, चिरियो पेट

सधैँ टाउको दुःखी रहने समस्या भएर सिलीगुडीमा उपचार गर्न लिएकी धरान-१५, ज्ञानचक्षु मार्गकी १२ वर्षीया सरु तामाङको छाती र पेटको बीच भाग चिरिएको पाएर परिवार अचम्ममा पर्‍यो । नातिनीको चिरिएको छाती देखाउँदै हजुर आमा देवीमाया तामाङले भनिन्, “अढाई इञ्च जति चिरिएको छ । किन चिरेको हो भन्दा उपचारकै लागि हो भनेर टारिदिए, प्रष्ट केही बताएनन् । शुरुमा पिनास, पछि ब्रेनट्युमर र पानी जमेको छ भन्यो र दुईवटा

अप्रेसन गर्‍यो । उसको टाउको अझै दुखिर हुन्छ र पहिले एकदमै चञ्चले मान्छे, त्यसपछि सुस्ताएकी छे (हे.तस्विर) ।”

दुई वर्षअघि ‘उपचार’ गरेर फर्कदा उनलाई बीच-बीचमा फेरि ल्याउनु पर्छ भनिए पनि परिवारले पैसा नभएर लैजान सकेको छैन । सरुको टाउकोबाट घाँटी हुँदै पेटसम्म लिएको पाईप शरीर भित्रै छ । डा. चाडकहाँ एक महिना

राखेर छोरीको उपचार गराउँदा रु.२ लाख ऋणमा डुबेका उनका बाबु बमबहादुर तामाङ काम गर्न साउदी अरब पुगेका छन् ।

‘अब सिलीगुडी जानै पर्दैन’

उपकुलपति लोकविक्रम थापा, वीपी कोइराला स्वास्थ्य विज्ञान प्रतिष्ठान पूर्वी क्षेत्रका धेरै मानिसहरू वीपी प्रतिष्ठान र कोशी अञ्चल अस्पताल हुँदाहुँदै उपचार गर्न सिलीगुडी जान्छन् नि ?

हाम्रा सेवाहरूको पर्याप्त प्रचार र जनचेतना नहुनुको फाइदा त्यहाँका निजी स्वास्थ्य केन्द्रहरूले उठाएका हुन् । हामी जनतालाई राम्रो सेवा दिन लागिपरेका छौं, तर तिनले हाम्रैबारे नकारात्मक हल्ला फैलाउने एजेण्टहरू राखेका छन् ।

तपाईंहरूकहाँ सिटी स्क्यान जहिले पनि विग्रेको हुन्छ रे ! १२-१२ वर्षसम्म एउटा न्यूरोसर्जन राख्न सक्नु भएन ।

सिटी स्क्यान एक पटक विग्रेँदा तेस्रो दिन बनिस्केको हुन्छ । तर त्यही एक पटक विग्रेँएको सिटी स्क्यान सधैँ विग्रेँएको हल्ला चलाइन्छ । हामीले गरेको हजार उपचारमध्ये एउटामा केही खराबी भयो भने त्यसको बढाइचढाइ हल्ला गरिन्छ । उनीहरूको एउटा केस सफल भयो भने वर्षौं प्रचार हुन्छ । यहाँ न्यूरोसर्जन नहुनुको पनि फाइदा लिएर उनीहरूले । दक्ष सर्जनको अभावका

कारण हामीले सेवा दिन सकेनौं । तर, अहिले हामीले भारतबाट न्यूरोसर्जन फिकाएका छौं । अब नेपालीहरूले सिलीगुडी गएर दुःख पाउने पर्दैन ।

अब न्यूरोको सबै उपचार धरानमै हुन्छ त ?

हामीले सात वर्ष वैङ्गलोरमा काम गरेका न्यूरो सर्जन डा. अमित अग्रवाललाई तीन वर्षका लागि ल्याएका छौं । अब हेड इञ्जुरी, ट्रमाका सबै विरामीको अप्रेसन यहीं हुन्छ ।

अरु रोगका विरामी पनि त सिलीगुडीतिर गएका छन् नि ?

हाम्रो उपचारबारे आम मानिसले अझै थाहै पाएका छैनन् । जनता सोझ छन्, यहाँ के-केको उपचार छ भन्ने बुझ्नेनन् र हामीकहाँ अत्यन्तै न्यून शुल्कमा उपचार सेवा उपलब्ध भएर पनि सिलीगुडी गएर लाखौं-लाख रुपैयाँ खर्च गर्छन् । कतिलाई नर्सिङ होमका एजेण्टहरूले डर-त्रास देखाएर र हाम्रोबारे नकारात्मक हल्ला फैलाएर पनि जान प्रेरित गर्छन् ।

- यो रिपोर्ट खोज पत्रकारिता केन्द्रको सहयोगमा तयार पारिएको हो ।

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विरोधका बीच कटुवाल नै प्रधानसेनापति

अन्ततः व्यापक जनविरोध र आलोचनापछि प्रधानमन्त्री गिरिजाप्रसाद कोइरालाले नवनियुक्त प्रधानसेनापति रुकमाङ्ग कटुवाललाई २ असोजमा पद तथा गोपनीयताको सपथ ग्रहण गराएका छन् ।

सिंहदरवारस्थित राष्ट्रिय योजना आयोगको सभा(कक्षमा सपथ ग्रहण गराइएको थियो । यसअघि सेनापतिलाई राजाले सपथ ग्रहण गराउने चलन थियो । पछिल्लो राजनीतिक परिवर्तन एवं पुनःस्थापित संसदको ४ जेठको ऐतिहासिक घोषणालाई आत्मसात गर्दै सेनापतिले सपथ गरेका हुन ।

यसअघि सांसदहरूको विरोधकाबीच प्रधानमन्त्री गिरिजाप्रसाद कोइरालाले कटुवाललाई २५ भदौमा दर्ज्यानि चिन्ह प्रदान गरेका थिए । र राष्ट्रिय योजना आयोगको सभाकक्षमा प्रधानमन्त्रीले चिन्ह प्रदान गर्दा एमाले र जनमोर्चाका मन्त्रीहरू भने उपस्थित भएनन् । उपप्रधानमन्त्री अमिक शेरचनले संसदमा काम भएकोले आफू अनुपस्थित भएको प्रतिक्रिया दिएका थिए । जनआन्दोलनमा सेनाले दमन गरेकोले संसदमा कटुवालको विरोध हुनु स्वभाविक भएको पनि शेरचनले आफ्नो निजी प्रतिक्रिया दिन भने मानेनन् ।

दर्ज्यानि चिन्ह प्रदान गर्ने कार्यक्रमको तयारी भईरहेको बेला प्रतिनिधिसभाको बैठकमा भने सांसदहरू लिलामणि पोखरेल, नवराज सुवेदी लगायतले कटुवालको बहुवाको चर्को विरोध गरिरहेका थिए ।

व्यापक विरोध भईरहँदा प्रधानसेनापतिको फूली लगाएपछि कटुवालले लोकतन्त्रप्रति प्रतिवद्धता जनाउँदै भनेकाथिए “नेपाली जनतामाथि अन्तर्घात हुने काम कदापी हुँदैन ।” सेनाले नेपाल सरकारको आदेशको पूर्ण पालना गर्ने उनले बताए । सेनाको लोकतन्त्रकरणको बारेमा उनको भनाई थियो “सरकारले जे गर्छ, सेना त्यही अनुसार चल्छ ।”

यसै विच, राजा र नेपाली सेनाबीचको सम्बन्ध अन्त्य गर्ने प्रावधान सहितको सैनिक ऐन संसोधन प्रस्ताव प्रतिनिधिसभाको ६ असोजको बैठकले सर्वसम्मतिले पारित गरेको छ ।

संसोधनले सेना लाकतान्त्रिकरण हुनुका साथै राजाप्रतिको उसको वफादारिताको अवस्था अन्त्य हुने विश्वास सांसदहरूले व्यक्त गरेका छन् । संसोधित ऐनमा सैनिक अदालतको निर्णय विरुद्ध पुनरावेदनको निमित्त गैरसैनिक व्यक्तिको अध्यक्षतामा सैनिक विशेष अदालत गठन हुने, निश्चित मुद्दामा बाहेक सैनिक अदालत खुला हुने, सैन्य भर्नामा लोकसेवा आयोगले परिक्षा लिने लगायतका प्रावधान छन् । यस अघि राजा सेनाको परमाधिपति रहने व्यवस्था थियो ।

त्यसैगरी, पुनरावेदन अदालतको न्यायाि धशको अध्यक्षतामा हुने सैनिक विशेष अदालतमा रक्षा सचिव र सेनाको प्राड विभाग प्रमुख सदस्य रहने छन् । ऐनमा सैनिक अधिकृतको लिखित परीक्षा लोकसेवा आयोग र तल्लो तहको परिषद



Nepal's Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala (L) confers General Rukmang Katwal as the new Nepali army chief at Singha-durbar in the Nepali capital Kathmandu September 10, 2006. REUTERS/Gopal Chitrakar

गामा आयोगको प्रतिनिधि रहने व्यवस्था गरिएको छ ।

प्रधानमन्त्री तथा रक्षामन्त्रीको तर्फबाट कानून, न्याय तथा संसदीय व्यवस्था मन्त्री नरेन्द्रबिक्रम नेम्वाङले प्रस्तुत गरेपछि उक्त संसोधन प्रस्ताव संसदले पारित गरेको थियो । र राजा महेन्द्रले सेनालाई आफुप्रति वफादार बनाउन २०१६ सालमा बनाएको उक्त ऐन पहिलो पल्ट संसोधन भएको हो ।

“थाइल्याण्ड जस्तो ‘कु’ हुँदैन” त्यस्तै, प्रधानमन्त्री गिरिजाप्रसाद कोइरालाले थाइल्याण्डमा भएको जस्तो सैनिक ‘कु’ नेपालमा हुने सम्भावना नरहेको बताएका छन् । ४ असोजमा पत्रकारहरूसँग संक्षिप्त कुरा गर्दै उनले थाइल्याण्ड र नेपालको परिस्थिति फरक रहेको बताए ।

नेपाल र थाइल्याण्डको राजसंस्थाको अवस्था तुलना गर्न नमिल्ने बताउँदै उनले भने, “यहाँ राजा सम्पूर्ण अधिकार कटौती भएको छ ।” प्रधानमन्त्रीले थाइल्याण्डको घटनालाई दुर्भाग्यपूर्ण बताए । उनको भनाई थियो “नेपालको सार्वभौम र राजकिय सत्ता जनतामा निहित छ” असोजको पहिलो साता थाइल्याण्डमा सेनाले सैनिक शासनको घोषणा गर्दै जंगि कानून लागु गरेको छ । प्रधानमन्त्री निवासलाई सैनिक ट्याङ्कहरूले घेरेका थिए । नेकपा एमालका महासचिव माधवकुमार नेपालले पनि थाइल्याण्डको सैनिक ‘कु’ लाई दुर्भाग्यपूर्ण भनी टिप्पणी गरेका छन् । काठमाडौंमा आयोजित एक कार्यक्रममा बोल्दै उनले उक्त घटनाले नेपालका प्रतिगामी शक्तिहरूको मनोबल बढाउने बताए । तर लोकतान्त्रिक शक्तिहरू सदैव चनाखो रहेको उनले जनाए । त्यसै गरी पूर्व प्रधानमन्त्री शेर बहादुर देउवाले पनि थाइल्याण्डमा भएको सैनिक ‘कु’ प्रति जोडदार आपत्ति जनाएका छन् ।

किरातीहरूले नै बिसिएका किरातकालिन दरबार

Rabin Giri in Dharan

धरान : रातो भण्डा र रातै तुलले धरान अबै राताम्य छ । माओवादीसंगको सहकार्यमा रहेको किरात राष्ट्रिय मोर्चाको गएको साता सम्पन्न दोस्रो राष्ट्रिय सम्मेलनमा जातिय मुक्तिका चर्का तर्क विर्तक भए । तर,जातिय रूपमा शोषण र अधिकार कुरा गरिरहदा कार्यक्रमस्थलदेखि मुस् किलले दुई किलोमीटर उकालो विजयपुरमा र हेको प्राचीन किरातकालिन दरबारको बचेको अवशेष संरक्षण तर्फ भने यसपटक पनि कुनै किरातीको ध्यान गएन ।

सबैका बेवास्ताकै कारण होला,पछिल्लो समयमा यसलाई भताभुंगे दरवारका रूपमा चिनिन थालिएको छ । इतिहासकारहरूका अनुसार भने राजा पृथ्वीनारायण शाहले विजयपुरमा विजय प्राप्त गर्नुअघि सन् १७७३ सम्म यहा किराती राजा बुद्धिकर्ण रायको राज्य थियो ।

गएको असारमा माओवादीद्वारा घोषित किरात जनसरकारका अध्यक्ष गोपाल किराती स्वयंले आफु प्रथम पटक सार्वजनिक हुने कार्यक्रमको नाम हाड बुद्धिकर्ण सभा जुराएका थिए । तर संरक्षण तर्फको कुनै काम गरिएको भने पाइएन । किरातीको भनाईमा बुद्धिकर्ण किरात जातिकै प्रथम शहीद हुन ।

इसाको १२ औं शताब्दिको अन्त्यमा किरात जातिमध्येको कोचेवंशीका सन्तान विजयनारायणले मोरङको वारातप्पावाट आफ्नो राजधानी विजयपुरमा सारेको र उनैको नामवाट विजयपुर नाम रहन गएको बताईएको छ ।

किरात ईतिहासकार इमानसिंह चेम्जोङले आफ्नो पुस्तक ‘किरात इतिहास’ मा उनै विजयनारायण राजावाट पराजित किराती राजा मुरेहाङलाई मन्त्री बनाइ ‘राय’ पद दिएको र मुरेहाङकै सन्तान विचित्रचन्द्र रायले तत्कालिन विजयपुरका राजा कामदत्तसेनलाई अपदस्त गरि राज्य आफ्नो हातमा लिएको उल्लेख गर्नुभएको छ । चेम्जोङकै भनाईमा उनै रायका छोरा बुद्धिकर्ण रायले सन् १७६३ देखि सन् १७७३ सम्म विजयपुरमा राज्य गरेका थिए । गोर्खाका राजा पृथ्वी नारायण शाहले राज्य एकिकरण गर्ने क्रममा भागेका बुद्धिकर्णलाई राजा प्रतापसिंह शाहका समयमा समाति विजयपुरमै हत्या गरिएको बताईन्छ । केहि इतिहासकारहरूको तर्कमा अहिले विजयपुरको बुढासुब्बा मन्दिरमा पुजा गर्ने गरिएको माटोको ढिस्को उनै बुद्धिकर्णको समाधि हो ।

सन् १८१८ मा फ्रान्सिस ह्यामिल्टनद्वारा ढँचबलअष्क जर्कपतियल० प्रकाशित एन एकाउण्ट अफ किगडम अफ नेपाल८ ब्ब अअयगलत या तजभ प्लनमफ या लभउर्वा० नामक पुस्तकमा समेत विजयपुर किरातकालिन राज्यको राजधानी रहेको र किरात राजाले गोर्खाली आक्रमणको अन्यसम्म राज्य गरिएको भनी उल्लेख गरिएको छ ।

बुद्धिजीवी कृष्ण प्रसाद श्रेष्ठ किरातीहरूले हिजो किराती राज्य भएको बलियो प्रमाणको रूपमा रहेको त्यो क्षेत्र र आफ्नो विभूती प्रति बेवास्ता गरेको बताउनुहुन्छ । भग्नावशेष संरक्षणमा जातिको प्रथम दायित्व त छुदैछ, सरकारले समेत चासो नदिएकोमा भने उहाँ दुःख व्यक्त गर्नुहुन्छ ।



A beaten down fence and a door marked "Conserved Area" leads into an ancient forgotten Kiranti palace. Photo: RABIN GIRI

Nation

सवारी बढ्दै यात्रु मर्दै



Locals watch other locals trying to find bodies in the river after a bus crashed on the highway and drove off it. Photo: BHIM

RABIN GIRI

पूर्व क्षेत्रमा गएको आर्थिक वर्ष ०६२/०६३ भित्रमा मात्रै सडक दुर्घटनाबाट एक सय ८१ जनाको ज्यान गएको छ। यस क्षेत्रमा दुर्घटनाबाट मृत्यु हुनेको यो संख्या अहिलेसम्मकै उच्च हो। आव ०६१/०६२ मा यो संख्या एक सय ७६ थियो भने त्यसअघिको वर्षमा एक सय ६६ ले दुर्घटनाबाट ज्यान गुमाएका थिए। वर्षको वृद्धिसँगै दुर्घटना र यसबाट मृत्यु हुनेहरू थपिने क्रम पनि उसैगरी जारी छ। तर, यसप्रति कसैको ध्यान पुग्न सकेको छैन। बढ्दो दुर्घटनाको दोषी को? कुनै यस्तो निकाय छैन जो यसप्रति जिम्मेवार होस्।

ईटहरीस्थित क्षेत्रीय टाफिक प्रहरी कार्यालयले पूर्वका कोशी, मेची र सगरमाथा गरि तीन अन्चलको सडक दुर्घटनाको तथ्यांकमा गत आर्थिक वर्षमा सडक दुर्घटनाबाट अगंभग हुनेहरूको संख्या पनि अघिल्लो वर्षको तुलनामा अधिक छ। आव ०६१/०६२ मा यस्ता वर्ष यस्ता घाइतेहरू आठ सय आठ जना थिए भने

आव ०६२/०६३मा यो संख्या बढेर आठ सय ४४ पुगेका छन्। अझ आव ०६०/०६१ मा घाइते हुनेहरू कुल सात सय तीस मात्र रहेको थियो।

२१ मंसिरको सबेरै सुनसरीको भादगाँउ सिनुवारी गाविसतर्फ कम्प्युटर कक्षाका लागि आउँदै गरेका ईनरुवा, मधेसाका दिदीबहिनी २० वर्षिया मनिता श्रेष्ठ र १८ वर्षिया रमा श्रेष्ठको तित्रिवन चौकमा बसको ठक्करबाट मारिएको घटना होस या २६ वैशाखमा सोही गाविसमै एकैपटक २७ स्कुले नानीहरूहरू लिएर आइरहेको टेम्पो चतरा नहरमा खस्दा १३ बालबालिकाको मृत्यु भएको घटना होस। सम्बन्धित निकायले मृत्युको तथ्यांक राख्ने बाहेक केहि काम गरेको देखिदैन।

दुर्घटना किन बढिरहेको छ त? सडकको अनुपातमा सवारी अत्याधिक हुनु र सडक प्रयोगको बारेमा ज्ञान नहुनु, यी दुईमा प्राय सबै सहमत छन। टाफिक प्रहरी कार्यालयको अनुसार तीन अन्चलमा कालोपत्रे सडकको कुल लम्बाई आठ सय ६१ किलोमीटर मात्र छ भने बस, टक, कार, जीप, टेम्पो, टयाक्टर र मोटरसाइकल

गरि कुल दर्ता सवारीको संख्या पैसट्टि हजार भन्दा बढि छ। यसबाहेक क्षेत्रीय टाफिक प्रहरी कार्यालयका प्रमुख प्रहरी नायब उपरिक्षक शेखर कोइराला खुला सडकमा तीव्र गतिमा गाडि चलाउने चालक र यातायात व्यवसायीको अति नाफामुखी सोचाइ दुर्घटना बढनुका कारणहरू रहेको बताउछन। दुर्घटना रोक्न उनीहरू जिम्मेवार हुन नसकेको कोइरालाको आरोप छ।

नेपाल यातायात व्यवसायी महासंघका पूर्व अध्यक्ष हिरा उदाश भने सवारी दुर्घटना कम गर्न बसेका टाफिक प्रहरी र यातायात व्यवस्था विभाग आफै ऐनको कुन दफामा आफुले लाभ लिन सकिन्छ त्यसैमा व्यस्त भएकैले दुर्घटना बढेको बताउछन। सार्वजनिक यातायात संचालनबारे सरकारको प्रष्टको अभावका कारण नै दुर्घटना बढेको बताउछन। श्रम तथा यातायात मन्त्रालयले मान्छे विदेश पठाउने बाहेक सार्वजनिक यातायात संचालनका समस्याबारे कुनै महत्वपूर्ण निर्णय गर्न नसक्नु पनि दुर्घटना बढिरहेको मुल कारण रहेको उदाशको तर्क छ। कति सडकमा कति सवारी साधन गुड्ने भन्ने सामान्य नियम समेत सरकारले तय गर्न सकेकोले नै यो

हविगत भएको हो, उनी भन्छन्।

यातायात व्यवस्था विभागका निमित्त प्रमुख युवरज पौडेल विभागको काम भनेको नयाँ सवारीको दर्ता, सवारी अनुमति पत्र वितरणसँग सम्बन्धित काम मात्र भएको बताउछन। दुर्घटना रोक्ने काम हाम्रो त्यो काम नै होइन, त्यो काम त प्रहरीको हो, उनी भन्छन्। सवारी तथा यातायात व्यवस्था ऐनमा भने विभाग भएको जिल्लाका प्रमुख जिल्ला अधिकारीको संयोजक र विभागका प्रमुख सदस्यसचिव रहने यातायात व्यवस्थापन समितिको व्यवस्था गरिएको छ। पौडेल आफै गएको डेढ वर्षदेखि समितीको बैठक बस्न नसकेको स्वीकार गर्छन।

यातायात मजदुरहरूको प्रतिनिधीमुलक संस्था नेपाल यातायात स्वतन्त्र मजदुर संगठनका कोशी अन्चल समितीका सचिव भीम राई दुर्घटनामा चालक मात्र दोषी देख्ने परम्पराको अन्त्य हुनुपर्ने बताउछन। सरकारी निकाय कसरी दुर्घटना रोक्ने भन्दा पनि कताबाट चालक र मजदुरलाई आर्थिक शोषण गर्न सकिन्छ त्यसतर्फ लाग्ने गरेको छ, अनि कसरी हुन्छ त? उनको आरोप छ।

Entertainment

नया रुपमा रामकृष्णको आगमन

युवा गायक रामकृष्ण ढकालले गीत गाउन थालेको २० वर्ष नाघेपनि धेरै कुरामा उनको आगमन भर्खरै भएको छ। २० साउनमा क्यान्सर विरुद्ध चेतना जगाउदै सहयोग जुटाउन एकल कार्यक्रम प्रस्तुत गरेर उनले सार्थक कामको थालनी समेत गरेकाछन्।

वीरेन्द्र अन्तराष्ट्रिय सम्मेलन केन्द्र काठमाडौंमा साउनको तेस्रो साता सयौं सङ्गीतप्रेमी माफ आधुनिक सङ्गीतका स्थापित युवा गायक रामकृष्ण ढकालले विरह र खुशीका डेढ दर्जन गीतहरू प्रस्तुत गरे।

उनले आफ्नो तेश्रो एकल साङ्गीतिक साँझको आरम्भको निमित्त 'विहान उठ्ने वितिकै हिमाल देख्न पाईयोस' भन्ने राष्ट्रिय भावनाले ओतप्रोत गीतबाट गरेका थिए।

तीन घण्टाको कार्यक्रममा आधा समय 'मनपराउने हजार भेटिन्छन्', 'चरीले त छाडेर गैगयो, गैगयो', 'मलाई यो जिन्दगीले कहाँ पुऱ्यायो', 'देव तेरो मायाको खेलाले, आज मेरो यो गति पारदियो' र 'वचन तोडे कमस नै तोडे, सत्य-सत्य ढाँटदिन भन्नेले' जस्ता विरह र वियोगका गीत गाए। स्वरसम्पन्न नारायण गोपालका गीतहरू 'तिम्रो जस्तो माया मेरो पनि', 'एउटा मान्छेको मायाले पनि' र 'प्रेयसीका यादहरू' गाएर ढकालले नारायणको सम्झना गरएका थिए। उनलाई युगल गीत 'छिट्को गुन्यु तिमिले लगाउँदा' मा जुना प्रसाई र 'मायालुको मुहारै हैसिलो' मा माण्डवि त्रिपाठीले सघाएका थिए।

कार्यक्रममा 'आगमन' नामक नया अल्बमको विमोचन गरिएको थियो। एल्बमको लोकार्पण वरिष्ठ सङ्गीतकार अम्बर गुरुडबाट भयो। ढकालले एल्बममा समेटिएको 'माया गर्नेको चोखो माया पनि देखियो' र रामकृष्णकै सङ्गीतको 'दिलको कुरा नगर दिलमाया' गीतको म्युजिक भिडियो प्रस्तुत गरियो। तीन वर्षअघि वैवाहिक जीवनमा बाँधिएका रामकृष्णले सबै माफ अर्को समाचार पनि सुनाए, "हाम्रो घरमा छिट्टै नयाँ पुस्ताको पनि 'आगमन' हुँदैछ।" भदौको पहिलो साता उनकी श्रीमती निलमको गर्भबाट छोरीको आगमन पनि भएको छ।



राजधानीमा सूत्रको फरक कला



The Sutra theatrics in Kathmandu. Photo: ANUSHIL SHRESTHA

राजधानीका ग्यालरीहरूमा हरेक हप्ताजसो हुने कलाप्रदर्शनीहरूभन्दा भिन्न कला प्रदर्शनीको आयोजनामा हालै भयो। सधैँजसो दर्शकहरू ग्यालरीसम्म धाउनु पर्नेस्थितिभन्दा फरक तरिकाले पाटन दरवार स्क्वायरको खुला स्थानमा गएर १० जना नेपाली र ६ जना विदेशी कलाकारहरूले प्रतिस्थापन कला प्रदर्शनी गरे।

'सुत्र अन्तराष्ट्रिय कला कार्यशाला पाटन २००६' नाम दिइएको यो प्रदर्शनी गत साउनको दोस्रो साता दश दिन सम्म भयो। यसको आयोजना गरेको थियो रङ्गसंस्था 'सूत्र' ले र सहभागीता रहेको थियो बंगलादेश, इजिप्ट, ग्रीस, भारत, श्रीलङ्का, दक्षिण कोरिया र नेपालका कलाकारहरूको। प्रदर्शनीको विशेषता भन्नु नै फरक पृष्ठभूमिका कलाकारहरूले एकै थलोमा गरेका प्रयोगहरू थिए। कलाकार संगी श्रेष्ठ र गोपाल कलाप्रेमीको कवितामाथीको गरिएको प्रतिस्थापन कला होस्, चिराग वाङ्गेल वा सुजन चित्रकारको 'पब्लिक आर्ट' होस्, यीनका आ-आफ्नै मौलिकताहरू थिए।

ग्रीसका सहभागी कलाकार हर्बर्टले बुढलाई

काँडेतारभित्र अनुहार छोपेर कैद गरिएको दृश्य पनि निकै प्रभावकारी देखिन्थ्यो। जलेका तस्वीरहरू, फ्रेमहरू, काँडेतार, बुढको मुर्ति आदि सामग्री उनले प्रयोग गरेका थिए।

आयोजक संस्था सुत्रले हरेक २ वर्षमा 'अन्तराष्ट्रिय कला कार्यशाला' गर्ने योजना बनाएको छ। यसअघि काठमाडौं, भक्तपुर र पोखरामा पनि यस्ता कला कार्यशाला र प्रदर्शनी भइसकेका छन्। सुत्रले विदेशी कलाकारहरूलाई नेपालमा बोलाइ नेपाली कलाकारहरूसँगै राखी सामूहिक कला प्रदर्शनी गराउँदै आएको छ। सुत्रका कलाकार सुजन चित्रकार भन्छन्, "यो पटक इन्स्टलेशन आर्टसँगै पब्लिक आर्ट र पर्फोमिङ आर्टमा पनि काम भए। यस्तो प्रदर्शनीले नेपाली कला र कलाकारलाई अन्तराष्ट्रियस्तरमा चिनाउन समेत मद्दत गर्छ।"

प्रदर्शनीमा रङ्गकर्मी अनुप बरालद्वारा स्थापित 'एक्टर्स स्टुडियो' का प्रशिक्षार्थीहरू पूजा गुरुड, शिवानीसिंह थारु, रामबाबु रेग्मी लगायत २० जनाले 'पर्फोमिङ आर्ट' प्रस्तुत गरेका थिए।

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राजधानीमा गाईजात्राको रन्को



यसपल्टका गाइजात्रे कार्यक्रमहरूमा नेपालका प्रायः सबै हास्य कलाकारहरू गाइजात्रे प्रस्तुतिहरूमाफर्त दर्शकहरूसँग प्रस्तुत भए। अडियो, भिडियोमाफर्त दर्शकका घर-घर पुगिरहेका कलाकारहरूका लागि समेत गाइजात्रा दर्शकमाफ्र प्रत्यक्ष पुग्नेसजिलो माध्यम बन्यो।

राजधानीमा यो वर्षका गाइजात्रे कार्यक्रमहरू मूलतः दुई समूहमा देखिए। वानेश्वरस्थित वीरेन्द्र अन्तराष्ट्रिय सम्मेलन केन्द्र र नेपाल प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठानमा क्रमशः मह गाइजात्रा र तीतेजिरे गाइजात्राका नाममा अलग अलग

समूहले आफ्नो कौशल देखापरे। यसपल्टका गाइजात्रे कार्यक्रमहरू परिवर्तित राजनीतिक अवस्था र विगतको शाही सरकारका कुशासनका सन्दर्भहरूमा बढी केन्द्रित छन्। नयाँ आकर्षण चाहिँ राजालाई पात्रका रूपमा उभ्याई गरिएका व्यङ्ग्यप्रहारहरू हुन् जुन विगतका वर्षहरूमा देख्न पाइन्थ्यो। व्यङ्ग्यकलाकारले समातेका थप विषयहरू हुन् आठ दलका शीर्षस्थ नेता, शाही सरकारका मन्त्री र तिनका विसंगत क्रियाकलाप। कलाकार मनोज गजुरेल राजा ज्ञानेन्द्र र प्रचण्डकै रूप र हाउभाउमा मञ्चमा प्रस्तुत भए

दुई वर्षपछि 'टुबोर्ग मह गाइजात्रा' लिएर दर्शकसामु प्रस्तुत भएको मह जोडीले प्यारोडी, दोहोरी र प्रहसनमाफर्त दर्शकलाई मनोरञ्जन दिए। मह जोडीलाई किरण के.सी., नरेन्द्र कंसाकार, शिवहरि पौडेल, सुरेन्द्र के.सी., कमल मैनाली तथा जापानबाट फर्किएकी अभिनेत्री गौरी मल्लले साथ दिएका छन्। कार्यक्रममा अर्जुन पराजुलीको व्यङ्ग्य कविता र सङ्गीतकार सुरेश अधिकारीको प्यारोडी गीतलाई पनि दर्शकले निकै मन पराए।

प्रज्ञा भवनमा भने नेपाल टेलिभिजनबाट प्रसारण भइरहेका लोकप्रिय हाँस्यश्रृङ्खला 'तितो सत्य', 'जिरेखुर्सान्नी' र 'मेरी बास्सै' का कलाकारहरूले संयुक्त रूपमा 'तिते जिरे गाइजात्रा महोत्सव' साथमा 'मेरी बास्सै' माफर्त दर्शकसँग साक्षात्कार गरे। दिपकराज गिरीको समुह, जितु नेपाल र दमन रूपाखेतीको समुह र 'मेरी बास्सै'का धुर्मुस (सीताराम कट्टेल) र केदार घिमिरेको जोडि यसका आकर्षणहरू हुन्। यी तीनै समूहले समसामयिक राजनीतिक विषयलाई नै आफ्नो प्रस्तुतिको मुल विषय बनाए। दिपकराज गिरीले देशको शासनव्यवस्था अस्पतालबाटै सञ्चालन भएको प्रसंगलाई प्रहसनमा समेटेका

थिए। उनलाई दीपाश्री निरौला, निर्मल शर्मा, गोपाल नेपाल फिस्टे, निराजन सिग्देल आदिले साथ दिएका थिए।

गाइजात्रालाई डबली र चोकहरूबाट उठाएर महोत्सवको रूपमा भने २०३३ सालदेखि मनाउन थालिएको हो। २०४७ सम्म नेपाल प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठानले प्रतियोगितात्मक 'गाइजात्रा महोत्सव'को आयोजना गर्दथ्यो।

हाँस्य कलाकारहरूले गाइजात्राको सन्दर्भ पारेर रङ्गमञ्चीय प्रस्तुति मात्र गरेनन्, उनीहरू गाइजात्रे अडियो र भिडियो निर्माण र टेलिभिजन कार्यक्रममा पनि भ्याड नभ्याई लागिपरे। यो वर्ष दुई महिना अघिदेखि नै एक दर्जनभन्दा बढी अडियो तथा भिडियोहरू बजारमा देखिए। यीमध्ये जितु नेपाल र दमन रूपाखेतीको 'गणतन्त्रिक खँडो', कमल गाउँलेको 'नछोड जनता नछोड', केदार घिमिरे र सीताराम कट्टेलको 'श्रीपेचको पेच', रेशम चौधरीको 'भैसी जात्रा', विनोद थपलियाको 'घरवारदेखि दरवारसम्म', नारायण त्रिपाठीको 'तुरे सरकार', शेखर खनाल र शिवशंकर रिजालको 'कफ्यु', गोपाल नेपाल फिस्टेको 'नयाँ दुलही', हरि कार्कीको 'वार कि पार' चर्चामा रहेका छन्।

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Ananda Koirala in Dharan

भण्डै हजार कुशल खेलाडी उत्पादन गरिसकेको सुनसरी जिल्लाको एक मात्र कबर्ड हल हाल जीर्ण अवस्थामा पुगेको छ।

धरान ८, कलेजरोड स्थित कबर्डहल मर्मत तर्फ कुनै निकायको ध्यान जान सकेको छैन। भत्केको भ्याल,भेन्टिलेसन,चुहिने टिनको छानो सहित जीर्ण पर्याप्त त्रसका विच खेलाडीहरू अन्य विकल्प नहुँदा त्यहिं प्रशिक्षणरत छन्। दैनिक अवस्थामा रहेको कबर्डहलमा दैनिक सय खेलाडी प्रशिक्षणमा तल्लिन रहन्छन्। ३१ वर्ष अघि २०३२ सालमा तत्कालिन अञ्चल खेलकुद परिषद्को नाममा स्थापना गरिएको कबर्डहल हाल सम्म एक पटकपनि मर्मतसम्हार गरिएको छैन।

भवनमा विजुली र पानीका लाईन लामो समयदेखि काटिएका छन्। कबर्ड हलले विद्युत प्राधिकरणलाई मात्र एक लाखको हाराहारा मा महशुल बुझाउन बाँकी छ। यस्तै पानीको बिलपनि बुझाईएको छैन। सरकारी स्वामित्वको जग्गा भएका कारण मालपोत समेत ४० सालदेखि नतिरीएको कर्मचारी स्रोतले बतायो। जिल्ला खेलकुद परिषद् अन्तर्गत ४ जना कर्मचारी सहित १७ प्रशिक्षक तथा प्राविधिक कार्यरत रहेका छन्। दैनिक प्रशिक्षणमा आउने खेलाडी तथा कर्मचारी प्रशिक्षकबाट चन्दा उठाएर विजुली र पानीको व्यवस्था गरिएको छ। परिषद्ले हाल

सम्म मासिक तलब बाहेक चौमासिक रूपमा भैपरि आउने कार्यालय खर्च वापत् ८ हजार रूपैया पठाउने गरेको जिल्ला खेलकुद विकास समितिका नायव सुब्बा बलराम शर्मा बताउछन्। ' भैपरि आउने खर्चपनि नियमित नहुँदा कार्यालय सञ्चालनमा कठिनाई हुँदै आएको छ ' शर्माले भने।

प्रशिक्षार्थीहरूले कबर्डहल प्रवेश गर्दा र निस्कदा पर्खाल भत्किने खतरा बढेको जिल्ला वक्सिङ प्रशिक्षक अनुप लामा बताउनु हुन्छ। दैनिक चिन्तामा रहेर खेलाडीले प्रशिक्षण गर्नु परेको उहाको गुनासो छ। तत्काल मर्मतसम्हार गरिनु पर्ने माग खेलाडी र प्रशिक्षकले राख्दै आएका छन्। त्यस्तै खानेपानी र विजुलीको तुरुन्तै व्यवस्था गरिनुपर्ने प्रशिक्षक लामाले बताउनु भयो।

जिल्लाको एकमात्र कबर्डहलमा कराते,तेक्वान्दो, भारत्तोलन, टेबल टेनिस र ब्याडमिण्टन लगायत खेलका भण्डै सय प्रशिक्षार्थीहरूको जमघट हुने गरेको छ। जीर्ण कबर्डहल लाई भाडामा दिई नयाँ हल निर्माण गरिनुपर्ने अन्य प्रशिक्षक र खेलाडीहरूको माग छ। जीर्ण हल मर्मत गर्नु भन्दा नयाँ आधुनिक शैलीको हल बनाउदा बढि प्रभावकारी हुने प्रशिक्षकहरूको सामुहिक दावी छ। जीर्ण हल पुनःनिर्माण सम्बन्धमा परिषद्ले ध्यानाकर्षण गराउदा हाल सम्म कुनै पहल नभएको कार्यालय प्रमुख तथा नासु शर्माले नेपाल समाचार पत्रलाई बताए। हल पुनर्निर्माण सम्बन्धमा प्रमुख जिल्ला



अधिकारी शारदाभक्त पौडेलले तत्काल पहल गर्ने बताएका छन्। जिल्ला खेलकुद विकास समितिका अध्यक्ष समेत रहेको प्रजाप पौडेलले खेलकुदको विकासमा कटिबद्ध रहने बताए।

जिल्ला खेलकुद विकास समिति नाम मात्र सुनसरी खेलकुद विकास समितिको नाममा हाल कुनै भौतिक सम्पत्ति छैन। कार्यालय,साईन बोर्ड र कर्मचारी मात्र। कार्यालय स्रोतका अनुसार डेढ दशक अघि कोशी अञ्चल खेलकुद विकास समितिको नाममा रहेको कबर्डहल सहितको दुई कठ्ठा आठ धुर

र धरान रंगशालामा रहेको सात विघा एघार धुर जग्गा हाल सम्मपनि हस्तान्तरण नगरी अञ्चलकै नाममा राखिएको छ। खेलकुद परिषद्को लापरवाहीका कारण त्यसतर्फ पटक पटक कार्यालयले ध्यानाकर्षण गराउदा कुनै पहल नभएको कार्यालय स्रोतले बतायो। अञ्चलका नाममा रहेको जग्गा सहितको भौतिक सम्पत्ति हाल जिल्लाले उपभोग गरेतापनि उचित संरक्षण र मर्मत सम्हार गर्न सकेको छैन। जिल्ला खेलकुद समितिले ०५८ सालयता जिल्लामा कुनै प्रतियोगिता समेत सञ्चालन गर्न सकेको छैन।

तनहामा नेपालकै ठूलो रक क्लाइम्बिङ

Arju Bista Salyani in Tanahu

पश्चिमाञ्चलमा पहिलो पटक तनहुँमा चट्टान आरोहण गर्ने नयाँ बाटो अर्थात रक क्लाइम्बिङ रुट खोलिएको छ। तनहुँ जिल्लाको विमल नगर नजिकैको दक्षिण पट्टिको राजमार्गसंगै जोडिएको चुनपहरामा उक्त चट्टान आरोहणको बाटो खोलिएको काठमाडौँ बाट बाटो खोल्न अनुसन्धानमा आएका पदम घलेले बताउनु भयो। २ दिन लगाएर बाटो खोलिएको हो।

अन्तराष्ट्रिय स्तरमा एउटा शाहसिक खेलको रूपमा पनि प्रख्यात रहेको रक क्लाइम्बिङ नेपालमा प्रशस्त संभावना भए पनि व्यवसायिक नभएको यस क्षेत्रमा लागेकाहरूले बताएका छन्। विदेशमा यसको माग अत्यन्तै बढि र महत्व भएको अन्तराष्ट्रिय माउन्टेन गाईड सुनार गुरुडले बताए।

यो नयाँ पत्ता लगाईएको पहेरो आरोहण गर्ने बाटो नेपालमै सबैभन्दा उत्कृष्ट र लामो भएको टोलिले जानकारी दिएको छ। ठिक ८० डिग्रीको उचाई भएको चुनपहरा यूरोपियन देशका पहेरा भन्दा पनि उच्च कोटिको चट्टानले बनेको यूरोपका विभिन्न देश घुमेर आएका

नेपाली टोलिका प्रमुख पदम घलेले बताउनु भयो।

नेपालमा रक क्लाइम्बिङलाई खेलकुद तथा पर्यटन विकासको अंगका रूपमा विकास गर्न सकिने नेपाल पर्वतारोहण संघका केन्द्रीय उपाध्यक्ष घलेले जानकारी दिनुभयो।

यस्तै स्थानिय पर्यटन व्यवसायी लाल कुमार श्रेष्ठले यस क्षेत्रमा रक क्लाइम्बिङको संस्थागत विकास गर्नका लागि पहल भई रहेको र अन्य संभावना खोज्न सकिने जानकारी दिनुभयो। उहाँले तनहुँकै विमल नगरमा रहेको एशियामा नै ठूलो मानिएको र प्रचारप्रसार नपाएको सिद्ध गुफा भित्र पनि रक क्लाइम्बिङ गर्नका लागि एउटा काठमाडौँको टोलिलाई सर्वेक्षणका लागि पठाउनु भएको बताउनु भयो। टोलिले सकिने जनाउ दिए पछि गुफा भित्र पनि रक क्लाइम्बिङ गर्न सकिने छ। स्मरण रहोस् सिद्ध गुफामा करिब २ सय ५० मीटर भित्र सम्म जान सकिन्छ भने विभिन्न स्वरूपमा आकृतिहरू त्यहाँ हेर्न सकिन्छ। अत्यन्त फराकिलो गुफा राम्रोसंग घुम्न ३ घन्टाजति लाग्छ। कतैकतै ब्याडमिन्टन खेल्न सकिने जतिका तलाहरू पनि छन्। यो गुफालाई २०४४ सालमा पत्ता लगाईएको थियो।



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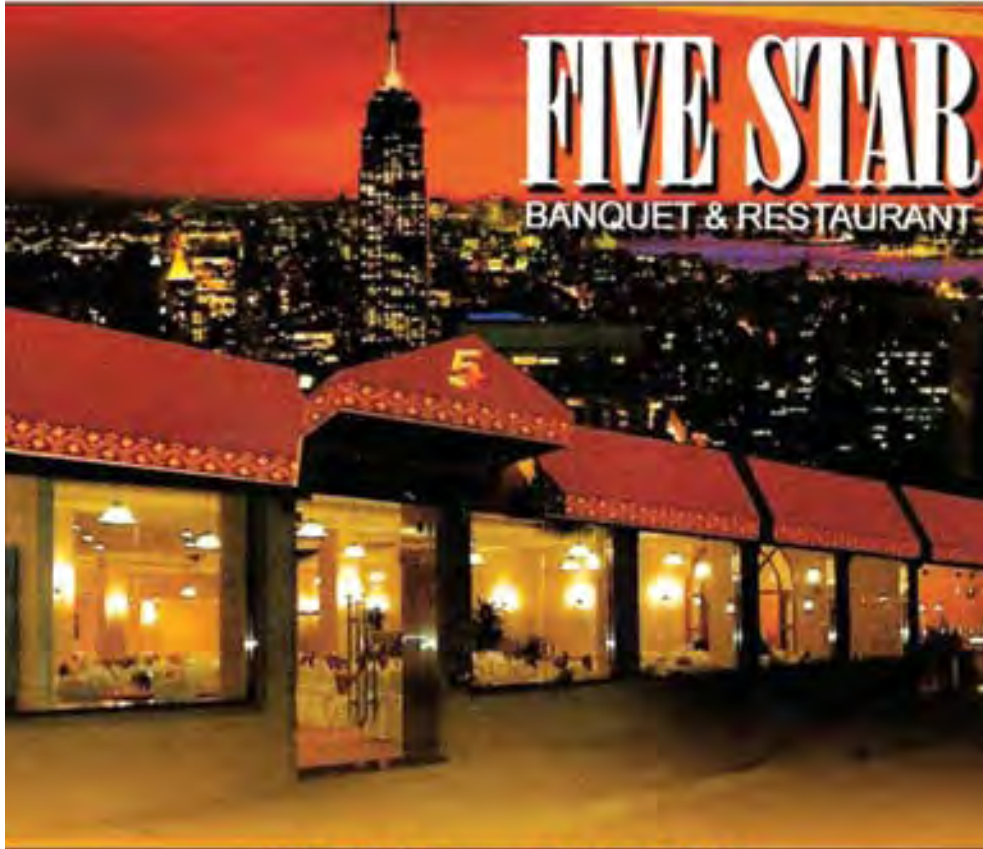
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