

SANGALO

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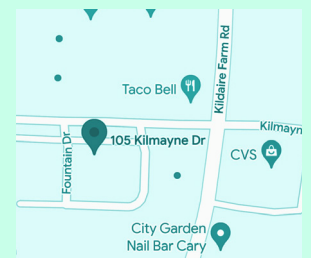
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EDITORIAL



The editorial board is pleased to present the 24th edition of Sangalo - the annual publication of Nepal Center of North Carolina (NCNC). On behalf of the editorial team, I would like to wish our readers happy Vijaya Dashami, Deepawali, Mha Puja, Chhath Parva, and other festivals celebrated by members of the community during the festive season.

While upholding the tradition of publishing a bilingual magazine, we have made a sincere effort to improve the quality of the articles and revamp the design of Sangalo. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the authors, editors and reviewers, all of whom have volunteered to contribute to the publication of Sangalo. I am also thankful to Mr. Kashyap Shakya and the team at Pycus Holdings Pvt. Ltd, Nepal for translating our vision of a new design into reality.

The Nepalese community in North Carolina has seen an unprecedented growth in the past year with a significant increase in the population of teens/young adults and the elderly alike. These two groups experience struggles and mental health issues unique to their respective age groups. Challenging the stigma surrounding mental health is a social imperative and providing a voice to the vulnerable population is a collective responsibility that we must shoulder. With this in mind, we have adopted mental health awareness as the central theme of this issue. In addition to the articles submitted by authors, a spotlight series on the mental health struggles of teens/young adults and the elderly have been included in this issue.

NCNC has carried out numerous activities to engage the growing population including sports activities, annual Nepal day celebration, educational initiatives, among others. A highlight of the activities is presented in this issue. NCNC has been committed to preserving and promoting Nepalese art, culture and tradition. A testament to the commitment has been the collaboration with Pashupati Buddha Mandir of North Carolina (PBMNC) to establish a community center. A dedicated feature article is presented in this issue highlighting the effort.

This publication would not be possible without the unwavering support of our generous patrons. The infomercials, advertisements, and personal greetings form an integral part of Sangalo. We would like to thank all local businesses and entrepreneurs for their patronage. As part of our gratitude, we have included a feature highlighting the achievements of some of the women entrepreneurs in the area.

We are particularly excited to present this issue due to the enthusiasm exhibited by our authors, especially children, teens and young adults. It is our hope that we have matched their gusto and are able to increase the readership of Sangalo among all age groups.

Sincerely,
Dr. Pallavi Sharma
Editor-in-chief, Sangalo 2024

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear NCNC Community,

As we gather to celebrate another year through our annual publication, Sangalo, I am both honored and inspired to serve as your President for the 2024-2025 term. With heartfelt sincerity, I extend my warmest wishes for a joyous Dashain, Deepawali, and all upcoming festivals. May these occasions fill your homes with happiness, prosperity, and a spirit of togetherness that reflects the core of our rich Nepali traditions.

I want to take a moment to express my deep gratitude to our dedicated editors. Your hard work in keeping the tradition of Sangalo alive, along with your innovative transformation of its design, has made this publication a true reflection of our vibrant culture. Thank you for your unwavering commitment.

I also wish to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of our board members, volunteers, donors, and sponsors. Your support is the backbone of our initiatives, enabling us to foster a thriving community that celebrates our identity while embracing collaboration with others.

At NCNC, we are more than just a center; we are a dynamic hub where Nepali communities blend and foster relationships with one another and with the broader community of North Carolina. Together, we strive to safeguard the cultural heritage, traditions, and customs of Nepal. Through a variety of cultural events and celebrations, we aim to pass on the richness of our traditions to future generations.

Our commitment to promoting Nepalese arts, literature, music, and dance is unwavering. Our activities are designed not only to showcase the beauty and diversity of our artistic expressions but also to inspire pride in our heritage.

We believe in holistic community development. Our educational initiatives, charitable endeavors, social interactions, and sports activities are all aimed at creating a well-rounded and thriving community. Recently, we began an exciting collaboration with Pashupati Buddha Mandir of North Carolina (PBMNC) to establish a community center. I invite your support and feedback as we embark on this important endeavor. Moreover, our commitment extends beyond borders. We actively assist in enhancing the welfare of people in Nepal, contributing to positive change and development. In our pursuit of nurturing a qualified and dynamic next generation, we have introduced various initiatives targeting our youth, including the NCNC Teen Council, which ignites critical conversations about personal development, self-esteem, and goal setting among high school students.

Recognizing the challenges faced by our growing community, we are dedicated to addressing the needs of newcomers and bridging the generation gap. To this end, we have hosted stress management and mental health awareness events tailored for both parents and their children. We also extend our commitment to senior citizens and college students, striving to serve a diverse community with varied needs.

As your President, I am deeply committed to playing an active role in preserving our rich culture and heritage for future generations. Together, let us build a vibrant and united Nepali community in North Carolina. I look forward to collaborating with each of you to achieve our shared goals.

Thank you for your unwavering support.

Sincerely,
Dr. Bikash Shakya
President, NCNC



Dear Nepalese Community,

September 13, 2024

I am honored to have the opportunity to thank you on behalf of the Morrisville Town Council for your friendship and contributions to help make North Carolina a great place to live and raise a family. In Morrisville we recognize our strength is in our diversity, and we value every member of our community. Our residents come from different parts of the United States, and from different parts of the world, and we each bring our own unique perspectives and traditions.

The greater Morrisville region is fortunate to have a vibrant Nepalese community that dedicates time and energy to helping others and building connections. Your contributions are impressive, ranging from organizing Teen Council Workshops and blood drives, to leading Adopt-a-Highway/trail litter sweeps along Louis Stephens Road and the Apex Community Park Loop. NCNC also awards student scholarships, host a weeklong celebration for International Women's Day, and organize community Holi celebrations. NCNC has led mindfulness and mental health events, and this past year you have received numerous Nepal Day Proclamations, celebrating this auspicious occasion for the 8th time with over 2,000 attendees at Church Street Park in Morrisville. You've also introduced your first STEM Robotics Show and Tell at HSNC, hosted citizenship clinics, numerous Dance Mantra sessions, hiking club outings, tennis tournaments, and a sand volleyball fundraiser for Duke Children's Hospital. To top it off the NCNC Annual Picnic and a voter registration drive, inspiring us and many others.

We want to thank you for choosing to make your home in North Carolina. Every time you share a smile or conversation with a neighbor, each time you bring people together through your numerous events and programs, we are a stronger community. Thank you for your continued contributions to the rich tapestry of cultures which has helped Morrisville be a vibrant, welcoming, inclusive community, and great place to raise a family.

All the best,
TJ Cawley

Mayor of Morrisville on behalf of the Town Council of Morrisville



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My Dear Nepalese Brothers and Sisters,

SEPT 14 2024

A few years ago I attended the musical Alexander Hamilton at the Rodgers Theater in New York City, a moving musical tribute of an immigrant, who would go on to become the nations' ten dollar founding father, serving at the side of President George Washington. On a personal note, I cannot think of a better time than now than to celebrate this great American story than to celebrate Vice President Kamala Harris, the daughter of an Indian immigrant, being only one step away from the Presidency, the highest office in our land.

As I look at the growing Nepalese American community in the Triangle Region, I see many Alexander Hamilton's. Americans, like you, who have left their motherland, to take their shot to greatness in North Carolina and the United States of America.

As an elected official in Wake County, I am very proud of the remarkable cultural, economic, and spiritual transformation each of you are bringing to the State of North Carolina. Nepal Day is one of the best celebrations in our town and of course, we value the great community work you do every day.

Your remarkable flight in North Carolina will continue to soar to the greatest of heights. First in Flight Always!

Thank you for coming together, staying together, and working together to inspire us every day and to bring positive change to our region, state and country.

Komal, Sonia, Rayan and I wish each of you a very Happy and Prosperous Dashain and New Year!

Sincerely,

Steve Sandeep. Rao, JD
Council Member At Large, Town of Morrisville
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SPOTLIGHT SERIES:

A brief look at the state of mental health of the Nepalese community in USA

Part I: Teens and young adults



Dr. Pallavi Sharma

Editor-in-chief, Sangalo 2024

Disclaimer:

This article is based on references available in literature accessible by the general public. This article is neither a critique on the parenting style of Nepalese Americans nor an indictment of the society in general. It is merely a step towards starting a dialogue on mental health - a subject still considered taboo by many in the community. It is a step towards taking initiatives that benefit all the concerned parties and the community at large.

The Nepalese population is one of the fastest growing Asian populations in the United States. According to the latest census data, between 2010 and 2020, the Nepalese population increased by 296%. In North Carolina, the Nepalese population continues to grow not just in cities such as Raleigh and Charlotte, but also in suburbs and satellite townships surrounding the metro areas. This unprecedented growth has contributed towards an increase in the number of teens and young adults that live and attend schools and colleges in the region. Nepalese American teens form an under-researched group that faces a unique set of mental

health challenges due to societal and cultural factors, experiencing discrimination at school or workplace, and the lack of experienced mental health professionals to address their concerns. This article highlights some of the factors contributing to the mental health challenges of Nepalese American teens/young adults with the aim of providing a path forward for addressing pertinent issues.

Establishing identity: who am I?

Identity formation starts in the formative years and continues through late adolescent years of a person's life. Adolescence is a crucial period where many aspects of identity such as cultural identity, ethnic and national identity, religious identity, and gender identity are developed in an individual. A strong sense of identity has a positive impact on mental health through adulthood.

A common practice in the United States is the treatment of the South Asian American population as being a monolith, despite the national, cultural, ethnic and linguistic differences. A direct manifestation of this practice is the grouping with and treatment of Nepalese Americans as Indians. Within itself, the Nepalese American population includes a fairly heterogeneous group of individuals based on their geographical origin within Nepal, language, ethnic, religious and cultural traditions. Teens and young adults alike are expected to navigate ethnic, cultural and religious identities while adhering to the dominant American culture they live in. This acculturation process can be very challenging and children may feel the stress of maintaining connection with their families while simultaneously espousing values that make them feel connected with their peers.

Unrealistic expectations: the model minority stereotype

As with other Asian American groups,

Nepalese American teens often face pressures associated with the model minority stereotype – an unrealistic stereotype that assumes academic excellence based on discipline, docility and conformal behavior. The stereotype often generalizes Asians in the United States as being intelligent, well-off, and able to excel in fields such as math and science. The stereotype often puts an undue pressure on the youth to meet unrealistic expectations without any room for imperfections and/or failures. Due to the model minority myth, teens needing support (academic or otherwise) find it difficult to speak up about their struggles. Due to the myth, children can also experience difficulty in building relationships with peers who have preconceived notions about them. This can foster feelings of exclusion and lead to detachment in teens/young adults. Additionally, overemphasis on perfectionism in formative years can lead to a debilitating fear of failure in adulthood. As part of the broad Asian American group, Nepali American teens and young adults are not immune to the pressures of perpetuating the model minority stereotype.

Addressing discrimination and racism

Like many other minority groups, Nepalese American teens/young adults experience subtle forms of discrimination whether it is in the form of pre-existing assumptions due to the model minority stereotype or due to microaggressions in school settings or beyond. Oftentimes, parents in the Nepalese American community have been shown to prioritize ethnic socialization over discussing challenges related to racism and bias. This gap can be due to many factors. Parents who have emigrated to the United States may feel overwhelmed with their responsibilities and be focused on the logistics of building their lives in an entirely new country and, in general, not be willing participants in conversations related to racism and bias. In such situations, children can feel discouraged to report instances

of bias and racism that they experience whether at school, at social events or among peers. For parents who have not experienced discrimination themselves, it can be challenging to discern whether an event qualifies as racial discrimination. Even when children report instances of discrimination, parents can encourage their children to cope with such situations by ignoring it or avoiding it. Due to the lack of awareness and the necessary skills to deal with the nuances of discrimination among Nepali American parents, teens can feel ill-prepared and ill-equipped to deal with discrimination in their lives.

Stigma surrounding mental health

As with other Asian American groups, within Nepali American families, the perceptions of mental health are significantly influenced and informed by socio-cultural belief systems. Mental health is generally considered to be a taboo subject and discussions regarding emotions are often avoided by parents. Parents might often mischaracterize their child's inability to meet expectations as not trying hard enough or having a lackadaisical attitude. In addition, they might not think of issues such as anxiety, stress and depression as being pertinent. It is widely reported that Asian Americans are less likely to pursue mental health services than other ethnic and cultural groups in the United States. Even when there is an environment for open discussion regarding mental health and seeking therapy at home, given that there aren't many psychologists/psychiatrists who identify as South Asian, let alone Nepali American, few teens in the Nepalese American community can find a therapist with similar backgrounds or shared experiences. In therapy, teens and young adults might find it difficult to express themselves and fail to establish a bond with mental health professionals with different racial and cultural backgrounds than their own.

The path forward: how can we be of help?

The psychological issues faced by Nepali American teens and young adults are complex and interrelated. They are often related to sociocultural expectations, feeling pressured to perpetuate the model minority stereotype, navigating discrimination and bias, and establishing their identities. As they straddle two cultures: one of their family and of mainstream American culture, parents and the broader community must understand that children may pick and choose aspects of cultural identity, while rejecting or disowning other ideas. Parents should practice acceptance and not pressure their children to fit into unrealistic stereotypes. Through community engagement, parents can also learn to create a space for children to explore and integrate their multifaceted identities. Attending workshops and discussions centered on racism can help parents understand and develop the skillset necessary to address discrimination experienced by their children. Given the paucity of Nepalese American or South Asian therapists, parents should search for therapists that practice cultural competence to provide the necessary care and to better address the mental health struggles of their children. Understanding the unique set of challenges that Nepalese American teens/young adults are facing can help provide them the support that benefits them the most.

As a community, NCNC has taken significant strides towards promoting mental health among Nepalese Americans in the area. The month of May was observed as Mental Health Awareness Month where NCNC members and the general public were encouraged to share their experiences surrounding mental health. An event on anxiety, depression and suicide was held where mental health professionals discussed the issues affecting the Nepalese population. NCNC Teen Council, a youth-oriented initiative, has been promoting community engagement among

Nepalese American teens in the area by organizing various events for personal and professional growth.

Challenging the stigma surrounding mental health is a social imperative and providing a voice to the vulnerable population is a collective responsibility that we must shoulder. The initiatives undertaken by NCNC to promote the discussion around mental health is definitely a step towards the right direction.

A brief look at the state of mental health of the Nepalese community in USA

Part 2: The Hidden Struggles of Elderly Nepali Immigrants in the U.S.



Sarojani Neupane
Editor, Sangalo 2024

The journey of migration to the United States is often painted as a path to unprecedented opportunities and a brighter future. For many Nepali elderly immigrants, however, this journey is fraught with unique challenges that are seldom discussed. As they settle into life in a new country far from their homeland, they confront a series of cultural, social, and economic hurdles that impact their daily lives and overall well-being. In this article, we delve into the specific struggles faced by elderly Nepali immigrants in the U.S. and explore the ways in which their experiences paint a vivid picture of adaptation and

resilience.

Language Barriers: Lost in Translation

Imagine moving to a new country where the language spoken is as foreign as the landscape. For elderly Nepali immigrants, English is often not just a new language but a daunting puzzle. Learning English later in life can be overwhelming, affecting everything from grocery shopping to navigating healthcare systems. This language barrier often leads to feelings of isolation, with many elderly immigrants depending heavily on younger family members to help them understand their new surroundings. It's a challenge that transforms daily tasks into major hurdles, creating a constant feeling of being "lost in translation."

Cultural Clash: Holding Onto Tradition

Nepali culture is a rich tapestry of tradition, family values, and community support. However, moving to the U.S. can feel like stepping into an entirely different world. The transition from a close-knit, collectivist society to an individualistic culture can be jarring. Elderly Nepalis often grapple with an identity crisis, trying to preserve their cultural heritage while adapting to new social norms. This clash of cultures can be both confusing and isolating, as they navigate a landscape that feels starkly different from the familiar rhythms of life back home.

Social Isolation: The Loneliness of the New World

Leaving behind a lifetime of friendships and family ties often results in profound loneliness for elderly Nepali immigrants. In the U.S., the fast-paced lifestyle and cultural differences make forming new social connections challenging. Language barriers and mobility issues can further exacerbate this isolation, preventing them from participating in community events or accessing support networks. Many rely on their immediate family for companionship, but with younger family members often juggling their own busy lives, this dependency can lead to

strained relationships and a deepening sense of isolation.

Healthcare Hurdles: Navigating a Complex System

Imagine trying to understand a complex healthcare system in a language you're still mastering. For elderly Nepali immigrants, this is a daily reality. The U.S. healthcare system, with its intricate insurance plans and medical procedures, can be bewildering. In Nepal, healthcare is typically more community-focused, but here, elderly immigrants must navigate a system that feels impersonal and intimidating. Language barriers only add to the difficulty, making it challenging to communicate symptoms or follow medical advice. The lack of culturally sensitive healthcare providers can make these experiences even more distressing.

Financial Dependence: A Struggle for Stability

Many elderly Nepali immigrants arrive in the U.S. after retirement age, often without sufficient savings or financial security. This dependence on family members for financial support can be a significant source of stress and anxiety. The unfamiliarity with the U.S. financial system—banking, social security, and taxes—compounds the issue, leading to confusion and potential instability. Without adequate savings or access to assistance programs, many find themselves in precarious financial situations, adding another layer of difficulty to their new life.

Role Reversal: Shifting Family Dynamics

In Nepal, elders are revered and hold significant authority within their families. However, the immigrant experience often results in a role reversal. Elderly Nepalis may find themselves relying on their children for support, a shift that can lead to a loss of dignity and control. This role reversal can create tension within families, as traditional values clash with the realities of life in the U.S. Elderly immigrants may feel undervalued or burdensome, leading to feelings of

depression and helplessness.

Legal and Immigration Maze: Navigating the Unknown

Navigating the U.S. legal and immigration systems can be daunting, especially for elderly immigrants. Managing immigration status, understanding citizenship applications, and dealing with visa renewals can be overwhelming, particularly for those unfamiliar with the legal processes. Issues like estate planning and wills add another layer of complexity. Those who depend on family members for legal assistance may face additional risks if their relatives lack expertise or support, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation or legal difficulties.

Cultural Disconnect: The Quest for Appropriate Services

While there are numerous services available for elderly people in the U.S., many may not cater to the specific needs of Nepali immigrants. Community centers and senior programs often overlook dietary preferences, religious practices, and language requirements. This lack of culturally sensitive services can discourage elderly Nepalis from seeking help or participating in activities that could improve their quality of life. Additionally, mental health services that address the unique needs of South Asian elders are often lacking, leaving many to suffer in silence.

Conclusion: Bridging the Gap

The struggles of elderly Nepali immigrants in the U.S. are diverse and multifaceted, including language barriers, cultural clashes, social isolation, healthcare access issues, financial dependence, role reversals, legal challenges, and a lack of culturally appropriate services. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach—one that includes language support, culturally sensitive healthcare and social services, and strengthened community networks.

For Nepali elderly immigrants, bridging the gap between their traditional values and the realities of their new environment is crucial for enhancing their quality of life. As a society, we must recognize their contributions and strive to create an inclusive environment that supports them in their later years. By understanding and addressing their unique struggles, we can help ensure that their journey in the U.S. is one of adaptation, support, and respect.

About This Article

This article was written after engaging in meaningful conversations with numerous elders from the Nepali immigrant community. Their personal experiences and insights helped shed light on the unique challenges they face while adjusting to life in a new country. The struggles they shared—ranging from language barriers to cultural adaptation and social isolation—provided invaluable perspectives that shaped the narrative of this article. By listening to their voices, we hope to bring attention to their stories and advocate for better support systems for elderly immigrants.

Together for Mental Health: Building a Strong Sustainable Community

Shaivi Lamichhane, Agrata Dahal and
Anisha Anivilla

This summer of 2024, we three seventh graders embarked on a project to make a positive impact in our community. With rising stress, anxiety, and other issues among youths and teens, we decided to raise awareness about mental health. By learning about mental health early on, kids can be more aware of their thoughts and feelings and know when to seek help if something feels wrong. It also creates a supportive environment where everyone feels comfortable talking about their emotions and supporting one another. For this project, we planned various events and activities, including presentations, workshops, interviews with mental health professionals, and social media posts on mental health topics. We kicked off our mental health series by presenting on common mental health issues among youths and teens, root causes, symptoms, coping mechanisms and prevention strategies to members of Youth Non-profit called Dedicated to Our Community of North Carolina (DOC NC) during the Litter Sweep event on July 16 at Jordan Lake. Next, we hosted two workshops: one for parents and another for youths and teens. We reached out to two guest speakers, Ms. Pallavi Jois and Mr. Prakash Punj. We held a series of meetings with them to identify the outlines for the workshops, develop content and plan activities for the workshops. We also spent many hours working with our parents to develop the flyers and promote events on social media platforms. Ms. Pallavi Jois spoke at our 'Mindful Parenting Session', which was designed for parents and grandparents. During the session, Ms. Jois provided important insights on ways to handle stress and manage difficult emotions and situations using mindfulness

practice that can help live more meaningful lives. Next we held a youths/teens focused workshop on 'MindMatters'. At this workshop Ms. Pallavi Jois and Mr. Prakash Punj spoke on yoga and mindfulness aspects. This second session was focused for youth and teens, which included deeper discussions on challenges youths face at home, school and outside, and can lead to stress and anxiety among youths. Three of us played an active role in this workshop and conducted mental health trivia, and led active discussions with youth participants by presenting them with different challenging scenarios and asking them how they would handle such situations. We also incorporated yoga, breathing and mindfulness exercises into the event, which helped to keep the audience engaged.

In addition to these presentation and workshop series, we also interviewed four mental health professionals: Dr. Sushrusha Arjyal (MD, adult psychiatrist), Dr. Sindhura Kunaparaju (MD, child psychiatrist), Ms. Susmita Ghimire (PMHNP) and Ms. Smeeta Bhatta (PMHNP). Interactions with these professionals provided us with wonderful first-hand insights on the current status of the mental health issues in our community and hear about ways to help create a supportive environment to youths and teens that are facing such challenges!!! Finally, in order to continue to spread awareness in our community and beyond about mental health issues, we created a blog to share knowledge and learnings about mental health issues, as well as pictures, videos, and discussions from the events and interviews we organized this summer.

<https://teenmentalhealth123.wordpress.com/blog>

<https://youtu.be/ki8lrHSluIM?si=jNQrlVuWgKUSXf2R>

This summer project on mental health had a big impact on the three of us personally. The events deepened our understanding and knowledge of mental health issues and provided opportunities to hear from the professionals working closely in this field who shared their first-hand experience with us. Interactions with mental health professionals provided us with eye-opening insights into the various aspects of mental health care issues, root causes, prevention and coping strategies. We also learned smart ways such as mindfulness to handle problems.

Apart from enhancing our knowledge in the mental health area, this summer project also enhanced our leadership, project and resource management skills, and communication skills as we coordinated efforts among different stakeholders to plan different activities and helped us build our confidence to communicate with diverse groups and adapt to challenges. Engaging with individuals from various backgrounds and with differing mental health experiences also enhanced our ability to listen, understand, and connect with others.

Overall, this experience has been extremely rewarding and transformative for all three of us. While collaborating as a group presented its challenges, we united to overcome them with determination and moral support. With the help of our wonderful parents and with the expertise from the professionals we worked with, we developed a project that we are incredibly proud of.

The opportunity to engage with teens and educate them on mental health awareness was both enriching and fulfilling, providing us with a deep sense of fulfillment. We hope the resources posted in our blog will continue to be resourceful for individuals in the future.

कविताको पीडा

अज्ञात

“तँ आफैँ डक्टर, तँलाई अलिकति पनि शंका भएन
आफ्नो श्रीमानले यस्तो कदम लिन सक्नु हुन्छ भन्ने?”
मैले कवितालाई सोधें।

“हेर् पुष्पा, अहिले फर्केर त्यो जीवनलाई हेर्दा त प्रशस्त
संकेतहरू देख्छु, तर प्रत्येक दिन बाँचिरहंदा त्यस्तो केहि
देखिँदो रहेनछ।” उसले भनी ।

कविता, मेरो स्कूलकी साथी। अहिले समयले हामीलाई
संसारको दुई कुनामा पुर्याएको छ तर हामी हृदयका
नजिक छौं। दिन दिनै कुरा हुँदैन, कहिले काहीं त महिनौ
पनि बिच्छ तर जब कुरा हुन्छ, हामी घन्टौँ कुरा गर्छौं,
निर्धक्क एक अर्कासंग मनका कुरा साट्छौं ।

मेरो बिहे भएको २ वर्षपछि कविता र विवेकको बिहे
भएको थियो। दुबै जनाको पढेलेखेको सम्पन्न परिवार,
धुम-धामसंग बिहे गरेका थिए । मागी विवाह थियो तर
जोडी यति मिलेको थियो कि लाग्थ्यो भगवानले एक
अर्काका लागि नै बनाएका थिए । ५ वर्षकी छोरी थिई।
कविताले फेसबुकमा खासै पोस्ट गर्दैन थिई तर विवे
क भिनाजुको फोटो र भिडियोले मलाई छोरी आफ्नो
आँखा अगाडि हुर्केको भान हुन्थ्यो। छोरीलाई माइतीमा
छोडेर ७ औँ एनीभर्सरी मनाउन मालदिभ्स जाने यो
जना बनाइरहेका थिए। दुबै जना डक्टर, कमाई राम्रै
थियो। देश-विदेशको भ्रमण ठुलो कुरा थिएन। हामी
बाहिरबाट देखेको लागि 'पिक्चर पर्फेक्ट' परिवार
थियो। कवितासंगको गफमा कहिले पनि उसले श्रीमान
श्रीमतीको बीचको कटुपनको कुरा गरिना कन्फेरेन्सको
क्रममा दुबैजना अमेरिका आएको बेला हाम्रै घरमा
भेट्न पनि आएका थिए, संगै घुमेका पनि थियौं ।

साह्रै भद्र र रसिक मान्छे । बिहान उठेर फेसबुक
हेर्दा विवेक भिनाजुका लागि लेखिएका समवेदनाका
पोस्टहरूले छाँगाबाट खसे भैं भएँ । कवितालाई फो
न गरेर घन्टौँ कुरा गर्न मन लाग्यो तर एउटा सानो
संदेश पठाउने आँट पनि आएन। २-४ दिनसम्म त ऊ

र भिनाजु बाहेक मैले केही सोचन सकेको थिइना ५ औं दिनको दिन एउटा मेमेज पठाएँ । त्यसपछि २-४ दिनको फरकमा मेसेज पठाइरहेँ ।

“तैले मलाई रिप्लाई गर्न पर्दैन तर मैले तँ र छोरीलाई सम्झिरहेको छु है।”

“तलाई याद छ हामी तेरो जन्मदिनमा ठमेल घुम्न गएको? फर्किदा कस्तो पानीले चुटेको थियो नि !”

“आज हेर न मेरो कामबाट एक जनालाई निकालिदियो । हुन त काम खास्सै गर्दैन थिई, त्यसै ले होला ।” कहिले कहीं लाइक गरेर पठाउँथी, रिप्लाई गर्दिनथिई तर मैले उसलाई मेसेज पठाउन छोडिन । त्यो घटना पछि कविता र मेरो पहिलो चोटी फोनमा कुरा हुँदा भिनाजुले संसार छोडेर जानु भएको २ महिना भैसकेको थियो ।

ऊ भन्दै थिई, म सुन्दै थिएँ ।

“बिहे गर्न अगाडिदेखि नै डिप्रेसनको औषधि खाएको रैछ, त्यो कुरा मलाई भनेनन्। भनेको भए मेरो बिहे गर्ने निर्णय सायद परिवर्तन हुन्न थियो तर त्यो कुरा मबाट लुकाउनु ठीक थिएन। सबै कुरा ठीकै थियो। छोरी र मलाई औधी माया गर्ने। हाम्रो कुरा पनि मिल्यो । साँच्ची भन्ने हो भने हाम्रो कहिल्यै भ्रगडा पर्दैनथ्यो । वरु मै रिसाउँथेँ, उसलाई त कहिले रिस पनि उठ्दैन थियो भन्या। कहिलेकाहीं त यस्तो भगवान जस्तो मान्छे अहिलेको जमानामा कसरी हुन्छ भन्ने पनि लाग्यो । काममा पनि राम्रै थियो। १-२ वर्ष अगाडि काममा एउटा अप्रत्यासित घटना घट्यो । उसको करियरले एउटा रफ्तार लिइरहेको बेला त्यो घटनाले उसलाई अलिक विक्षिप्त बनायो। उसलाई गाह्रो भएको छ भन्ने थाहा थियो, साथ पनि दिएको थिएँ। ऊ मुटुको डक्टर, उसको धेरै जिम्मेवारी हुन्छ भनेर वरु मैले नै थोरै जिम्मेवारी भएको पद लिएकी थिएँ। हालसालै उसले अस्पताल पनि परिवर्तन गरेको थियो, उसलाई त्यति चित्त बुझेको थिएन, त्यो पनि थाहा थियो। विस्तारै सब ठीक हुन्छ जस्तो लागेको थियो। तर उसलाई के कुराले भित्र भित्रै खाइरहेको रहेछ, उसले कहिले पनि खुलेर

भनेना सायद उसलाई लाग्यो मैले जीवनमा प्राप्त गर्न पर्ने सबै कुरा प्राप्त गरेँ, अब जाँदा हुन्छ ।

हामी त एनीभर्सरीको तयारी गरिरहेका थियौं, कसरी मलाई शंका हुनु उसले यस्तो गर्छ भन्ने? म मेरो ममी-बुवा-दाइसंग सबै कुरा भन्ने मान्छे, मलाई अलिकति पनि शंका भएको भए म उहाँहरूलाई भनिहाल्थेँ नि। त्यस्तो भन्नु पर्ने केही कुरा छ जस्तो लागेको भए तँलाई पनि भन्थेँ नि, त्यस्तो केहि थिएन। अहिले सोच्छु सायद भनेको भए मैले देख्न नसकेको कुरा बाहिरका मान्छेले देख्थे कि तर यी सब कल्पनाका कुराहरू हुन्, जे हुनु भै त सक्यो। उसले छोडेर गयो, नगएको भए हुन्थ्यो तर गयो। उसंग ७ वर्ष मात्र बिताउन पाएँ। कसैले ५० वर्ष वैवाहिक जीवन बिताउँछन् कसैले २० वर्ष, कसैले गुनासो र दुखमा बिताउँछन् तर उसले मलाई यस्तो गज्जबको ७ वर्ष दिएर गयो, त्यहि कुरामा खुसी हुने कोशिश गर्छु ।” गर्हङ्गो मन लिएर फेरि सोधेँ, “तँलाई अहिले सबै भन्दा बढी के कुराले गाह्रो भएको छ त?”

उसले भनी, “बाँच्च गाह्रो छ पुष्पा, यो समाजमा ऊ त बितेर गयो तर बाँच्नेलाई गाह्रो छ। मेरो केही दोष छैन, तर मलाई समाजले दोषीको दर्जा दिन्छ, अनेक प्रश्न गर्छ । एउटै ओछ्यानमा सुतेपछि मैले उसलाई बुझ्नपर्ने थियो, बुझ्न सकिन त्यहि मेरो अपराध भयो। यो घटनाअघि राम्रो सम्बन्ध भएको सासु-ससुरा, नन्द, आमाजु पनि अहिले राम्रोसंग बोल्नुहुन्ना हो उहाँहरूमाथि ठुलो बज्रपात परेको छ, तर पीडित त म पनि हुँ नि। मलाई त यो ठाउँ नै छोडेर कतै टाढा जान मन छ ।” आङ्ग सिरिङ्ग भयो। “ह्या के भनेको त्यस्तो? “मैले अलिक भर्कै भनेँ ।

उसले भनी, “त्यस्तो होइन । समाजका अनगिन्ति प्रश्नहरूबाट टाढा अरु देशमा गएर काम गर्न मन छ भनेको। हुन त नेपालको डक्टरले थप लाइसन्स नलिइकन काम गर्न पाउने देश धेरै त छैनन्, तर पनि हेर्नपर्ला। छोरीको लागि पनि मैले बलियो त हुनै पर्यो ।”

“खोइ के भनौं अब, मैले गर्न सक्ने केही छ भने भन है! “मैले भनें ।

लामो सुस्केरापछि कविताले भनी, “त्यो घटनापछि तैले पठाएको मेसेजले मलाई कति धेरै ढाडस दियो। यस्तो घटनापछि धेरै मान्छे टाढिनेरहेछन् तर तैले केही अपेक्षा नराखी मेसेज पठाइरहिस। त्यो घटनाबाट एकैछिन भए पनि मन अर्कै तिर जान्थ्यो। कसले आफुलाई साँच्चिकै माया गर्दो रहेछ यस्तो बेलामा थाहा पाउँदो रहेछ ।”

कुरा गर्दा गर्दै छोरीलाई स्कूल पठाउने बेला भैसकेछ, फेरि कुरा गरौंला है भनेर उसले फोन काटी ।

सिर्फ एउटा घटनाले मेरी चंचल कवितालाई जीवनले कत्रो ठुलो बोझ बोकाएर गयो भन्ने कल्पिदै म धेरै बेरसम्म घोत्तिरहें ।

– सत्य घटना र कुराकानीमा आधारित, पात्रहरुको नाम परिवर्तन गरिएको छ ।

Mental health: My story

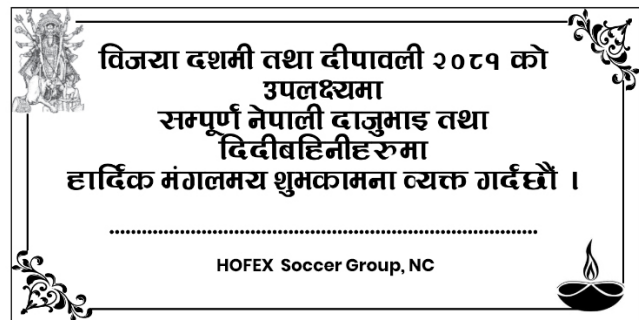
Megha

I am not sure if this piece is inspiring or a success story. It just is an experience. Living with chronic invisible illness is hard enough for anyone but being “young’ brings out different challenges. “Oh, you are too young to be sick like this’. For me personally, another added challenge was working as a healthcare professional during the pandemic. To be socially isolated and putting my health at risk because I was a healthcare “hero’. “Heroes’ who weren’t given basic protection like PPE or safe working conditions or even good benefits should such “heroes’ get sick.

This life experience along with the common struggles of an adult life brought some feelings of depression. I am intentionally not saying I am depressed because I am not qualified to diagnose myself. I go through periods of low energy; I like to explain it using the “spoon theory’. Let’s say most people have 10 spoons. They use 1 spoon to brush their teeth, 2 to shower so on and so forth. For me I don’t always start each day with 10

full spoons. Some days all I have is 1 spoon when I wake up. On such days I try my best to rest, hydrate, eat, sleep, and relax. But most days it’s hard to relax because of the Nepali mindset that resting is a sign of laziness. We should always be doing something, but wait! Not just anything it needs to be productive. So, on low spoon days, whether it is because of feelings of depression or chronic illness, I struggle with resting and relaxing.

So how have I been dealing with it you ask? I have tried a therapist, talked with my close friends and been vulnerable, self-talk especially in front of the mirror, reminding myself to not fall into this dance of being perfect and happy. Reminding myself that it is ok to rest and do absolutely nothing. I also try to plan rest and relaxation days especially after high energy events/tasks. And last, but not least I have done yoga with the right instructor/group and Wim Hoff breathing which has equipped me to deal with my feelings and build mental strength along with physical strength. Am I healed you ask? Absolutely not! Will I ever overcome the feeling of depression? I do not think so! But I am learning new ways to deal with it in healthy ways as we all do with life.



युवा मनोविज्ञान र सफल जीवन



डाक्टर चिरन्जीवी भट्टराई

पूर्व केन्द्रीय सल्लाहकार

गैर आवासीय नेपाली संघ, राष्ट्रिय समन्वय परिषद्,
अमेरिका ।

नेपाल सेन्टर अफ नर्थ क्यारोलाईना (एनसिएनसी) ले प्रत्येक वर्ष जस्तो शरदीय ऋतुमा प्रकाशित गर्ने संगालोको लागि लेख रचनारु मागेको थाहा पाएँ। लेखन क्षेत्र मेरो रुचिको विषय नै भए पनि आखिरी दिनमा लेख लेख्नु भने त्यति सजिलो काम भने मेरो लागि पनि लागेन । लेखको शिर्षक सोचन नै ३-४ घण्टा लाग्यो र लेख दिनु पर्ने मिति भनेको यही महिनाको अगस्त २३ सम्म छ, आज अगस्तको पनि २२ भैसक्यो, समय भित्रै दिदा आफूलाई पनि आनन्द हुने र लेख एक- दुई दिन मात्र ढिलो हुँदा आफूलाई पनि दिऊँ कि नदिऊँ जस्तै हुने हुनाले जे जस्तो भए पनि यसलाई आभू नै सकुँ जस्तो लाग्यो। फेरि भोलि काममा पनि जानु छ र मेरो घर बस्दाको दिनमा केही साथी भाइहरूसंग हाई- हेल्लो र भेटघाट सामान्य दिनचर्याको पाटो नै भन्दा पनि हुन्छ केही क्षण भने पनि, यतातिर पनि म अहिले धेरै जान चाहिन । पछि, पछि भएपछि मान्छे हरूलाई दिनचर्याको बानी जस्तो लाग्यो, पछि त्यही बानीले आफूलाई बढी डोर्याउने गर्छ, र मान्छेले पनि यही रूपमा बढी बुझ्छन् र केही समयपछि हामीले बानी बनाउने होइन कि बानीले हामीलाई बनाउने गर्छ, यस बारेमा पनि अहिले यहाँ यति मात्र भन्न चाहें ।

भन्दै अब भने अरु ढिलो नगरी म मैले यहाँ भन्न खोजेको विषय वस्तु भित्रै नै जान चाहन्छु ।

मैले यहाँ माथि पनि अलिकति संकेत गरि सकेको छु कि कुन शिर्षक अन्तर्गत लेख लेख्ने भनेर निर्णय गर्न नै मलाई ३-४ घण्टा समय लाग्यो । अलिकति मेरा अनुभवहरु, अलिकति मेरा विषय वस्तुहरु र अलिकति सधै जस्तो मेरा सामाजिक भावनाहरु पोख्न यो पटकको एनसिएनसीले निकाल्ने २४ औं अंकको संगालोको लागि मैले यही “युवा मनोविज्ञान र सफल जीवन” शिर्षकलाई उपयुक्त ठाने र सफल जीवन के लाई भन्ने भनेर बुझाउन तिर पनि अहिले म धेरै गईन । यसको बढी जिम्मा तपाईंहरूलाई नै दिएँ ।

तपाईंहरु ज -जसको हातमा यो संगालो पत्रिका छ वा ज -जसले यो मेरो लेख अहिले पढिरहनु भएको छ, सबैलाई सफल जीवन भनेको केही थाहा छ, याने कि मैले यहाँ थप विस्तारमा लेखिरहनु पर्दैन, मेरो आशया कोही जीवनमा राम्रो डाक्टर बन्न चाहन्छन्, कोही जीवनमा राम्रो इन्जिनियर बन्न चाहन्छन्, कोही जीवनमा राम्रो बैज्ञानिक बन्न चाहन्छन्, कोही जीवनमा राम्रो शिक्षक बन्न चाहन्छन्, कोही राम्रो प्रोफेसर बन्न चाहन्छन्, कोही राम्रो विजिनेसमेन बन्न चाहन्छन्, कोही राम्रो वकिल बन्न चाहन्छन्, कोही राम्रो नेता त, कोही मन्त्रि संसद बन्न चाहन्छन् । मान्छे भएर जन्मिएपछि सबै नै कुनै न कुनै तरिकाले सुखी र सम्मानित हुनु चाहन्छन्, सामान्य रूपमा तपाईं हामी सबैले बुझेको सफल जीवन यही नै हो । मान्छेले आफू बसेको समाज, समुदाय, देशमा नै सम्भाव्य सबै अवसरहरु प्राप्त गर्न खोज्छ, यसमा ऊ सफल भयो भने आफ्नो जीवनलाई सफल भएको सम्झन्छ भने कम्तिमा पनि समुदायमा सरल र सम्मानित तरिकाले उसको र परिवारको जीवन गुजारा भयो भने पनि मान्छे दुःखी भने हुदैन । नेपालमा पनि त्यही हो, अमेरिकामा पनि त्यही हो ।

आफ्नो पालामा सोचेको धेरै नभए पनि छोरा छोरीहरूको पालामा होला नि भनेर पनि चित्त बुझाउछ, मान्छेको स्वभाव यस्तो पनि हुन्छ । तर यहाँ भने छोराछोरीहरूको पालाको हुने वा होला भन्ने भन्दा तपाईंहरूकै पालामा होस्, चाहेको सफलता मिलोस् भन्न खोजेको हो मैले । जो जो युवा हुनुहुन्छ, उहाँहरूलाई अलिकति मैले आफ्नै जीवनमा देखेको कुराहरू पनि भन्न खोजेको हो । को ही साथीहरू चन्द्रमामा पुगेको कुरा नभए पनि, मेरा को ही साथीहरूले जून तारा छुन नपुगेको भए पनि ,तैपनि जस्लाई मैले साथीहरूको रोमान्चकारी प्रगति नै भन्छु । जस्ले देश विदेशमा समेत आफ्नो क्षेत्रमा धेरै प्रगति गरे का छन्, तिनै साथीहरूको बारेमा यहाँ अलिकति भन्न खोजेको हो । जस्ले समयलाई समयमा नै अलिकति बढी चिनेर अलिकति बढी मिहिनेत गरेर जीवनमा धेरै सफल भए । कारण युवा मनोविज्ञानमा अथाहा शक्ति हुन्छ, युवा मनोविज्ञानमा अथाहा ऊर्जा हुन्छ । यसलाई सही रूपमा प्रयोग गर्न सकियो भने जीवन सफल हुन्छ, जीवनमा चाहेका धेरै उद्देश्यहरू पुरा हुन्छन । यसलाई सही रूपमा प्रयोग गर्न सकिएन भने जीवनमा धेरै दुःख हुन्छ, यस अर्थमा मान्छेको जीवनमा केही गर्नको लागि युवा अवस्था विशेष अवसर नै हो ।

यहाँ मैले सबैलाई ठूलो ठूलो काम गर्न, ठूलो ठूलो मान्छे बन्नु भन्न खोजेको पनि होइन । कम्तिमा युवाहरूले आफूलाई कमजोर नठान्नु, मान्छेले गर्न सक्ने कुनै पनि काम मैले सकिदैन नभन्नु मात्र भन्न खोजेको हा । विश्वको इतिहास हेर्यो भने मानव संसारमा युवाहरूले गर्न नसकेको काम केही पनि छैन, अर्थात् उनीहरूले नगर्दासम्म देश दुनियांलाई नै त्यस्तो काम पनि गर्न सकिन्छ, र भन्ने लागेका धेरै कामहरू पनि युवाहरूले गरे का अनगिन्ति उदाहरणहरू छन्, त्यस्को लिष्ट बनाउने तिर पनि यहा म धेरै जान चाहन्न ।

तैपनि यहाँ मैले युवाहरूलाई नै बढी जोड दिएको कारण कुनै पनि मान्छेको लागि सबैभन्दा महत्वपूर्ण समय नै

युवा अवस्था हो भनेर नै हो । केटाकेटीमा अलि अलि विग्रिए पनि पछि सप्रिन सक्छन्, तर युवा अवस्थामा विग्रिए पछि पछि सप्रिन धेरै नै गारो हुन्छ भनेर पनि हो । देश अनुसार कतिदेखि कुन उमेरसम्मलाई युवा समुह भनेर बर्गिकरण गर्ने भन्ने पनि हुन्छ । नेपालमा १६ वर्षदेखि ४० वर्षसम्मलाई नै युवा भनेर बर्गिकरण गरि एको छ भने अन्य देशहरूमा भने १३ वर्षदेखि ३०-३५ वर्षसम्मलाई युवा भनेर बर्गिकरण गरिएको छ । जून उमेरमा मान्छे घरमा एकलै पनि बस्न सक्छ वा स्कुल, कलेज पनि एकलै जान सक्छ, आफ्ना लागि पनि संपूर्ण सरकारी वा कानुनी निर्णयहरू आफै पनि गर्न सक्छ, सामान्यतया मान्छेको यो उमेरलाई युवा अवस्था भन्न सकिन्छ । यहाँ मैले उमेरको भन्दा पनि युवा मनो विज्ञानको बढी कुरा गर्न खोजेकोले पनि बढी यसै विषयमा केन्द्रित हुन चाहन्छु ।

मलाई लाग्छ युवाहरू जे चाहन्छन त्यो बन्न सक्छन्, जे चाहन्छन् त्यो गर्न सक्छन् तर त्यो चाहाना भित्रैदे खि आउनु पर्छ ।, त्यो चाहाना अनुहारमा देखिनु पर्छ , र त्यस्को लागि ईमान्दारीपूर्वक लाग्नु पर्छ । यो भएपछि सफलता आफै तिम्रोपछि लाग्ने छ । म आफैले पनि मेरा धेरै साथीहरूमा पनि देखेको कुरा हो यो । म कुनै बेला एउटा प्रमाण पत्र तह पहिलो वर्ष पढ्दा कै मेरो साथी कै कुरा गर्दैछु ,एक जना साथीले जस्ले त्यो बे लामा नै कापीमा हामीलाई देखाउन कै लागि भने पनि नामको अगाडि डाक्टर लेख्थे । त्यो देखेर हामी छक्क पर्थेऊ, यी साथी कस्ता हुन् पहिलो वर्ष सक्न पाएको छैन डाक्टर लेख्ने भन्थेऊ , उनी भने “एक दिन डाक्टर भई हालिन्छ नि, अहिलेदेखि बानी पारेको नि” भन्थे, अहिले ती साथी साँच्चि नै नेपालको ठूलो डाक्टर बने का छन् । यद्यपि उनी त्यो बेलामा प्रमाण पत्र तहमा धेरै नम्बर नभई थोरै नम्बर ल्याउने समुहमा पर्थे, जब कि कतिपय क्लासमा धेरै नै राम्रो नम्बर ल्याउनेहरू पनि जिन्दगीभर डाक्टर बन्न सकेनन् । यद्यपि उनीहरूको ईच्छा भने जिन्दगीमा डाक्टर बन्ने धेरै नै थियो ।

मैले यहाँ पढाई र क्यारिएर कै बढी कुरा गर्न चाहें, किन कि संयोगले नै भनौं, म आफू अहिले जहाँ भए पनि कुनै बेला मसंग एउटै बेन्चमा बसेका साथीहरु अहिले नेपालमा धेरै रहर लाग्दा पढहरुमा पुगेका छन् । कुनै बेला नेपालमा एसएलसिमा बोर्डमा पर्ने विद्यार्थीहरु र म बसेको बेन्च पनि एउटै थियो । यसबाट पनि कम्तिमा मैले अलि बढी धेरै साथीहरुलाई देख्ने, उनीहरुको कुरा सुन्ने अवसर पाएँ भन्ने लाग्छ र त्यसमा पनि मैले यहाँ अन्य क्षेत्रको बारेमा भन्दा नेपालमा चिकित्सा क्षेत्रमा माथि पुगेका, प्रगति गरेका, हाल नेपालमा केन्द्रीय अस्पताल तथा शिक्षण संस्थाहरु कै प्रमुखको भूमिका निर्वाह गरेका साथीहरुलाई संभिन चाहें, संभेको छु, यो लेखमा बढी त ।

त्यो बेलाका मध्यम स्तरका साथीहरु पनि, अहिले कतिपय साथीहरु सरकारी उच्च तहमा हुनुहुन्छ । एक जना साथी जस्ले त्यतिखेर एमबिबिएसमा ६ नम्बरमा नाम निकाल्नु भएको थियो, उहाँ त्यतिखेर घन्न धन्न पहिलो वर्ष कलेज पढ्न छोडेको साथी नै हो भन्दा पनि हुन्छ । पढ्न वा कलेज आउन पनि नभ्याएर वा नमिलेर के कारणले हो, मैले उहाँलाई सोधे, “तपाईंले कसरी एमबिबिएसमा यति राम्रोसंग नाम निकाल्नु भयो? उहाँको उत्तर थियो कम होशमा हुंदा सधै पढ्थे, दिनमा पढ्थे, राति पढ्थे, गाडीमा हिड्दा पढ्थे, सपनामा पढ्थे, बिपनामा पढ्थे, कारण मेरो बिहा गरेको ४ दिन पछि नै अस्थायी हेल्थ असिस्टेन्ट जागिर गएको पत्र आएको थियो, जून कुरा मेरो श्रीमतिले पनि थाहा पाईन, त्यो बेला मैले श्रीमतिलाई भनेको कुरा यही थियो - चिन्ता नगर अब यो जागिर सागिर होइन, एमबिबिएस पढ्न जाने हो । यही चोटको ऊर्जा थियो त्यो सफलताको पछाडि, ती साथीको भनाई एमबिबिएसमा नाम निकाले पछि यही थियो ।

आज भन्दा २५-२६ वर्ष केही गर्न सकिएन भनेर रोएका मेरा धेरै साथीहरु अहिले रोमान्चकारी पदमा छन् भने त्यतिखेर हामी केही भयौं, हामीले केही गरेऊ भन्ने साथीहरु अहिले भन् धेरै पछाडि छन् ।

त्यस्तै कलेजको पढाई मेरो लाईनको विषय रहेनछ भनेर त्यति खेर आज भन्दा २९-३० वर्ष अगाडि नै कलेज पढ्न छोडेर राजनीतिमा लागेकाहरु, मेडिसिनको प्रमाण पत्र तह पनि पास गर्न नसकेकाहरु हाम्रै कलेजका साथीहरु पनि नेपालमा सांसद, मन्त्री भई सकेका उदाहरणहरु पनि छन् । यसलाई मैले उनीहरु हामी भन्दा वा जो कोही भन्दा असफल भएको भन्न मिल्छ र ? उनीहरुले पछि के पढे, के सिके थाहा भएन तैपनि हामीसंगै पढ्न नसके पनि नेपालमा सांसद, मन्त्रीसम्म भएका मान्छेलाई जीवनमा असफल भन्न मिल्छ र ?

अझ उनी त कुनै बेलाका नेपाल सरकारका सुचना तथा संचार मन्त्री र सरकारका प्रवक्ता नै थिए, यो आज भन्दा ३-४ वर्ष अगाडिको कुरा हो । यही हो युवा ऊर्जा भनेको, मलाई अहिले यस्तै लाग्छ, एकतिर नभए अर्कोतिर भन् ठूलो अवसर र भाग्य हुन्छ ।

कुनै बेला यो पनि ३०-३१ वर्ष अगाडिको कुरा होला, बेला बेलामा आजको कार्यक्रममा मेरो छोराले पनि बोल्छ, सुन्न जानु पर्छ है बाबुहरु हो तपाईंहरु पनि भनेर भेटमा भन्ने, पत्रिका पसलमा भन्ने, बाटोमा जहाँ भेट्यो त्यहाँ भन्ने तनहुंका एक जना सरका छोरा अहिले नेपाल सरकारको मन्त्री हुनुहुन्छ । हामीलाई त्यतिखेर छोराको भाषण सुन्न बाऊले मान्छे बोलाउदै हिड्ने भन्ने जस्तो लाग्थ्यो, अहिले ती साथी मन्त्री भएको थाहा पाउदा मलाई भने छोरा होइन, उनका बुवा मन्त्री भए जस्तो लाग्छ, परिवारको यहाँसम्मको सहयोग र साथ हुंदोरहेछ राजनीतिमा भन्ने लाग्छ ।

मैले यहाँ उहाँहरु कसैको पनि नाम चाही भनिन । नियति भनौं वा समयले मलाई यस्ता धेरै कुराहरु हेर्ने अवसर चाँही दियो । किन कि त्यो बेला हामी सबै बराबर थियौं, कुनै बेला स्कूल, कलेजमा हामी बस्ने बे

न्व एउटै थियो । काठमान्डौको जेपी हाई स्कुल पढ्दा होस् वा २०४६ सालको एसएलसि पछि काठमान्डौका कलेजहरुमा पढ्दाको समय होस्, त्यो बेलाका धेरै मे धावी विद्यार्थी साथीहरुलाई चिन्ने मौका पाईयो । तर जस्ले निरन्तर मिहिनेत गर्ने, उनीहरु सधै अगाडि बढे । जस्ले समय चिन्न सकेनन्, अलिखि गरे, त्यस्तैको कुरा सुने, संगत गरे उनीहरु क्रमशः पछि पर्दै गए ।

अहिले नेपालका धेरै जसो केन्द्रीय अस्पतालमा हाम्रै साथीभाईहरु हुनु हुन्छ । अथवा कुनै समय एउटै कलेज पढेका, राम्रोसंग चिनेजानेका साथीहरुले प्रमुखको भूमिकामा हुनुहुन्छ । यसमा सबैभन्दा महत्वपूर्ण कारण नै उहांहरुको ईमान्दारीपूर्वकको ईच्छा र मिहिनेत थियो ।

अमेरिका बसाईको यो १४-१५ वर्षमा यही पनि धेरै साथीभाइहरुको रोमान्चकारी प्रगति देखेको छु - कारण अबिच्छिन्न मिहिनेत र जीवनमा जसरी पनि केही गर्न पछि भन्ने हुटहुटी नै हो ।

यस अर्थमा अमेरिकामा बस्ने र यही जन्मेर हुर्के बढेका युवाहरुले साँच्चि नै चाहेमा, भित्रदेखि नै लागेमा, यहाँ पनि गर्न नसक्ने भन्ने केही पनि छैन । किन कि जसरी विज्ञानको सूत्र नेपाल र अमेरिका सबै ठाँउमा नै उही हुन्छ, सफलताको सूत्र पनि उही हुन्छ । युवामा अथाह शक्ति हुन्छ, अथाह ऊर्जा हुन्छ, अथाह तागत हुन्छ । यो जहाँ पनि उस्तै हुन्छ, यसलाई यहाँ पनि युवाहरुले भुल्नु हुदैन । युवा उमेर सधै पनि हुदैन, यो कुरा पनि ख्याल गर्न पछि । उमेर बुढो हुदै गएपछि शरीर पनि कमजोर हुन्छ, शरीर कमजोर भएपछि मन पनि कमजोर हुन्छ, मन कमजोर भएपछि मान्छेले केही पनि गर्न सक्दैन । त्यसैले जीवनमा गरी खाने

शिक्षा, ज्ञान, सिप आर्जन गर्ने सबैभन्दा राम्रो उमेर भने को युवा अवस्था नै हो ।

अलिकति ढिलो चाँडो केही होइन, तैपनि यी कुराहरु

सक्दिन भन्न चाँही युवाहरुले हुदै हुदैन ।

त्यसमा पनि प्रवासमा बस्ने नेपालीहरुले युवाहरुले भन्नु हुदैन ।

युवाहरुले परेको बेलामा भोक, तिर्खा, निन्द्रा सबै कुराहरुलाई नै जितेर अगाडि बढ्न सक्नु पछि । अरुहरुलाई जित्नको लागि पहिला आफूलाई जित्नु पछि, सफल जीवनको आधार नै यही हो ।

युवा मनोविज्ञानको सफलताको लागि परिवार, समाज र समुदाय सबैले पनि एथेष्ट साथ दिनुपछि, यसलाई पनि हामीले भुल्नु हुदैन, नेपाली अमेरिकी समाजले भुल्नु हुदैन । नेपाली अमेरिकी समाजका सबै सदस्यहरुको मन र भावना पनि सधै नै समग्र नेपाली अमेरिकी समाजको प्रगति र उन्नयनको लागि हुनुपछि ।

नर्थ क्यारोलाईनाको नेपाली समाज कै उमेर पनि अब २५-३० वर्षको भई सकेको छ । यो उमेर भनेको अमेरिकी ईतिहास मै पनि धेरै बैज्ञानिक, उद्योगपति, डाक्टर, ईन्जिनियर, सिनेटर र कंग्रेसमेनहरु जन्माई सकेको उमेर हो । त्यसैले पनि अब यसमा पनि हामी किन यति धेरै पछाडि भनेर सोच्ने र सामुहिक रुपमा छलफल गर्ने बेला भईसक्यो ।

मलाई यस्तै लाग्छ ।

त्यसैको उठानको लागि पनि हो यो मेरो लेख ।

हवस् त अहिलेलाई विदा

धन्यवाद ।

अदृश्य लडाईं



प्रमिला मनु

मलाई पनि अनिद्रामै ऐँठनले समातेको थियो,
सम्बन्धका अस्थिपन्जरले सताएको थियो,
न वसन्तको पालुवाले उमंग दियो,
न पंक्षीका चिरवीरले मधुरता दियो ॥

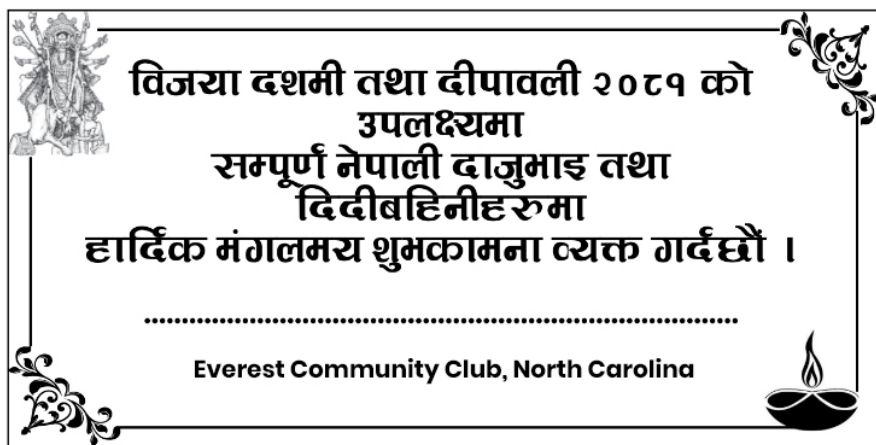
कहिले काहि मेरा रातहरुले बिहानी नदेखुन् लाग्यो,
रातको सन्नाटामा आफ्नै सन्ताप चर्को लाग्यो,
दिनभरी अरुसँग आफैलाई लुकाउँथे,
फेरी रातभरी आफू आफैसँग लड्थे ॥

तर, यो लडाईं कसैले देखेन,
दुर्क पानीमा भिजेर रोएको कसैले सुनेन,
देखेहरुलाई मेरो मुहार इन्द्रेणी नै लागि रह्यो,
मेरो द्वन्दको कुरुक्षेत्रमा म बाहेक कोही पस्नै सकेन ।

दिन, महिना र सालको चक्रले मेरो द्वन्द रोकिएन,
रोक्यो त एउटा साहसले रोक्यो,
जुन साहसले मलाई आएर भन्यो,
“तैले पाएको जिन्दगी तैले मनाउनुपर्छ ।”
“तेरो भित्रको कुरुक्षेत्र तैलेनै मेटाउनुपर्छ ।”

साहसले देखाएको बाटोमा हिंड्नु मैलाई थियो,
कसैले नदेखे दलदलबाट आफैलाई निकाल्नु थियो,
यो सब यात्रामा मैले “म” नै कर्ता हो भन्ने जब
बुझे,

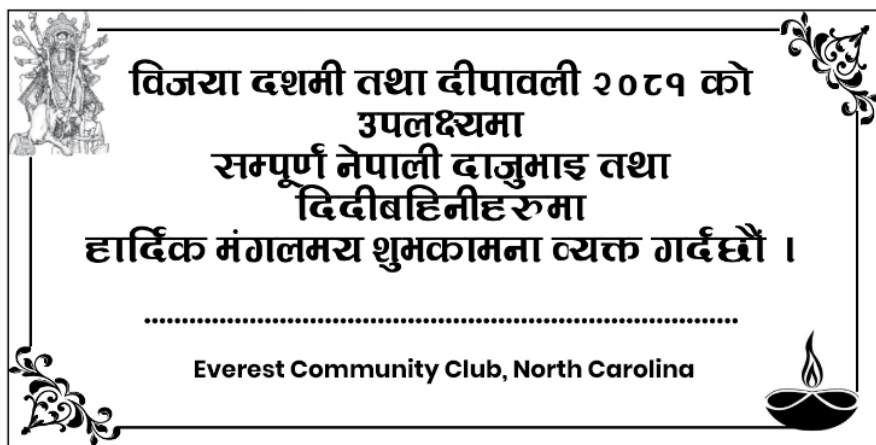
त्यसपछि जीवनयात्रा सुमधुर भयो,
सृष्टिकर्ता, रक्षक र भक्षक
सबै मेरै मस्तिस्क हो भन्ने जब बुझे,
म आफैलाई पैले प्रेम गर्न थालें,
अनी जगत नै प्रेमिल देख्न थालें ।



**विजया दशमी तथा दीपावली २०८१ को
उपलक्ष्यमा
सम्पूर्ण नेपाली दाजुभाइ तथा
दिदीबहिनीहरुमा
हार्दिक मंगलमय शुभकामना व्यक्त गर्दछौं ।**

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Everest Community Club, North Carolina



Rising Stars



Aayas Joshi

Aayas Joshi graduated high school from Kathmandu and is a third-year at UNC Chapel Hill studying Environmental Journalism. Aayas, a recipient of the prestigious, full-ride Morehead-Cain scholarship, has had works and projects featured on PBS NewsHour, National Geographic, and the Washington Post. Through journalism, Aayas hopes to bring light to the stories of communities scattered across the globe to the rest of the world.

Q: From Kathmandu to Chapel Hill – Tell us about that journey, and how you became interested in journalism.

I lived in Nepal my whole life. The only reason I'm here is because I got a full scholarship to attend UNC thanks to the Morehead-Cain scholarship. But UNC specifically has a really good journalism program. It's funny, I never thought of myself as being somebody who wanted to get into journalism until I took my gap year. The Morehead scholarship paid for a year that I could take off and travel. Among the many things that I did in my gap year, I decided to go to the Everest Basecamp and do the Annapurna circuit.

My first time going to base camp, I was so amazed by how beautiful it was, but I was also horrified by the environmental impact. In the area, there's an environmental issue that

was unknown to me and many of the people in Kathmandu have never heard about it. What shocked me the most was the impact it had on local populations that seemed to just be ignored.

I've always been interested in photography and video. I had plans to travel for the rest of my gap year with the stipend that I got from Morehead, but seeing all of that, I decided to instead return to Everest, this time taking my camera and trying to document what I saw with my own eyes. I hoped that maybe if other people could see it, they would care about it, they would try to do something and collectively, we could make a change.

I took these documentary photographs from different viewpoints in the Everest region. With the help of a photographer, Alton Byers, who had a collection of photos of that region from the 1950s, we compared photographs in the same season from the same viewpoint. Seeing how much the glaciers have receded in that timespan was really cool and it got a lot of attention to this nonprofit that I was working with, Himalayan Climate & Science Institute.

Those photographs were able to help raise funds to support this project to help build a weather station academy in this village called Phortse in the Solukhumbu region of Nepal. Because the Himalayas are one of the epicenters of climate change in the world, it's warming three times faster than the global. However, it's such a blind spot because there's not much data collection happening. We had this idea – if we could train the local Sherpa and Tamang populations to use data collection instruments usually maintained by Western scientists, we would have a much more cost-effective way of collecting data. Those photographs were able to get money for that. It was my first time seeing how documentary journalism could have real-world impacts and that put me on the path of wanting to pursue environmental journalism.

Q: What have you been up to during your time at Chapel Hill?

A: This summer, the UNC Hussman School of Journalism and Media had this annual grant that they give to one application for a documentary project. I applied and I was fortunate to get it. I used that funding to work on this documentary project about indigenous wildlife conservation of the American bison in the Yellowstone region. I was in Yellowstone for two months – the film we just produced is on YouTube [The Last Wild Herd: Defending Yellowstone's Buffalo]. That was my first full documentary project that I've been able to produce myself – that was a cool moment. It goes into the conservation of the American bison – a very important species culturally to Native American tribes. It's a story that's very overlooked in American history. Unfortunately, because they were so important to the tribes, they were intentionally eliminated by the US Army as a way to weaken the indigenous tribes. It's a species that has seen so much persecution throughout history and continues to see that persecution sadly. We were trying to tell the story of this organization called the Buffalo Field Campaign who stood on the front lines for the last 27 years trying to protect the species. There used to be between 30 to 60 million of them around the US, today there are about 3000.

I'm currently in San Diego working on a different project about migration.

Q: Outside of long projects what else are you involved in?

A: In Chapel Hill, I got to do some paid photo gigs. I found the NCNC Facebook group and I posted there saying, "Hey I'm a student photographer, still learning, but if you need family photos and stuff reach out to me." People did – I got to attend events and take a bunch of photos for the NCNC community. I've been able to meet people and be involved in the community by helping with portrait

photography stuff. It's a way that I can support myself through college – between the scholarships and the photography I've been able to be fully financially independent from my parents in Nepal.

Q: You have a very different journey than the majority of young Nepali people who may be reading this. What advice would you give other Nepali kids who are trying to come from Nepal to here, in a field where there isn't a streamlined path for artists like yourself?

A: I think what I do is like a weird intersection between photo-video and science communication. There's that art-making process and there's also the journalistic process of finding communities and helping amplify their stories, which is close to my heart. I want my work to have a positive impact. There's also the science communication part. Last year I worked on this project with PBS about the conservation of North Atlantic white whales. It was challenging and fascinating to take all of that and try to explain it to the average viewer watching PBS news hour

What I've done is very different from other college students, but I found something that I truly wanted to do – and I found a path to do it. At least growing up in Nepal, especially once you hit 10th grade, you're looking at your SEE, and SLC exams, it's almost like everybody gets grouped into a bunch of categories. It seems like there are predefined paths that you take, but with the US liberal arts education, you really can paint your own path. There may be paths that are tried and tested that you can fall back on reliability, but if you're somebody like me, who has a super niche interest, or if you're involved in something that's less sought after, there's a way to make that happen. One thing that want to say to all these students who are applying to come to the US is to think beyond the pre-defined paths that they've been told is the only way

forward. Really think hard about what it is you want to do and see if there's a way to make that happen. At least in my experience, there always is some way to make it happen and that's been very liberating.

Q: I know that you've been involved with the NCNC community before, but to anyone who wants to learn more about your work, how can they reach out to you?

aayasjoshi.com, I'm always open to working on new, cool, interesting projects. If somebody has what they think could be a cool story that they want me to cover, or if anybody is just in the market for some easy, fun, family photos I'm happy to help them!

Rising Stars



Angelika Chaurasiya

Angelika Chaurasiya is a junior at D.H. Conley High School. After moving from Nepal and briefly living in China, she moved with her family to America and currently lives in Greenville, North Carolina. In Greenville, she is driven by a strong passion and commitment to community service and aims to continue to help people in the future as a cardiologist.

Q: What will you do after high school?

A: I want to be a cardiologist – the way the heart works is very interesting. During my undergraduate studies, I will pursue a Biology major before applying to medical school.

Q: What extracurricular activities are you involved in?

A: I'm involved in HOSA as a team officer. I am also involved with Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), Red Cross, and Link Crew. I've been volunteering at a kid's camp as a counselor.

Q: Tell me more about the summer camp you are involved with.

A: The camp is called the Pitt County Sheriff's Office S.U.M.M.E.R (Sheriff's, Understanding, Monitoring, Mentoring, Educating, & Rewarding) camp. I heard a lot of people talking about it and I just like working with the kids. I have little siblings, so I know how to handle kids. I wanted to see what the camp was like, so I started working there.

Q: You've had to transition a lot, first when coming to America, and then coming to North Carolina, what things worked, and what things didn't?

A: At first it is always kind of challenging but then I mean I get used to it. It's a lot different from Chicago to North Carolina and Nepal to America. I moved from Nepal when I was around 11. Before moving to Greenville I lived in China for a year and I lived in Chicago for four years. I was a kid so it was a lot for me, especially with schools. I had to move to a lot of different schools, each with different types of people, which was a lot for me mentally. The way people live across each place feels very different. The schooling system is also completely different here. Outside of that, my transition was pretty smooth because I had a welcoming community every time I transitioned, which made things a lot easier.

Q: Tell me about Link Crew.

A: Link Crew is where you when you get with freshmen on the orientation day and show

them around the school. You get to play team-building activities with them and you're the leader for the team. Your role is to guide the freshman and get them comfortable with the school

Q: You're also a team officer for HOSA – how did you become a team officer? What responsibilities does being a team officer entail?

A: HOSA stands for the Health Occupation Students of America, and it's a club with many health science events and projects. To become an officer, I had to go to a state-level event and place in the top 10. For my event, I did phlebotomy. I had to study in-depth about blood and learn about veins, nerves, and blood taking. Then, I had to show them how to do it.

As an officer, you work closely with the club president and the teachers, along with the other members. You work on certain things and projects, right now we are working on orientation day before the start of the school year.

Q: You have extensive experience reaching out to communities – what drives your passion for community service?

A: Just that I can help people. In Chicago, there were a lot of people who were involved with the community and there were a lot of people in need of help. When I came here I just wanted to continue that because like I know a lot of people need help. I also want to help in different ways, not just by simply helping, but also by providing emotional support.

Q: How would you say other people like yourself can get involved in community service or find a passion like yours

A: Just do what you like, there are a lot of opportunities and things to do out there, you can find something eventually

Q: Adapting to changes in schooling systems can be difficult to navigate, what was your experience like? What advice would you give to yourself if you had to do it again?

A: It's a lot different here than it was in Nepal. The whole school system is because the way teachers handle students back in Nepal is much stricter. Here, students are more free in a way. Students can take courses and be on different levels in school but in the same year.

The school system feels hard at first, but there is room to go up. At first, you feel behind, but then you can get ahead over time. It takes a while for things to get better and to adjust, but you have to live with it. Things get better after a while and you have to push through it.

Rising Stars



Anna Koirala

Anna Koirala, recently crowned Miss Nepal North America 2024, was born in Nepal and raised in Cary, North Carolina, and graduated from Panther Creek High School. At East Carolina University, Anna was involved in microbiology and biosensor research, before graduating with a degree in Cellular and Molecular Biology in 2023. Anna has had extensive experience volunteering with government hospitals and NGOs in Nepal. She's also supported the Nepali community in North Carolina, regularly volunteering

with the NCNC community and currently also volunteering with Kiran, a South Asian domestic violence hotline.

Q: What motivated you to participate in the Miss Nepal North America Pageant? Tell us about the journey.

A: I've always been interested in pageantry. I had aunties, uncles, cousins, and family friends encouraging me to go to pageants. I was also approached by others encouraging me to go for Miss Teen North Carolina, but I was very focused on my academics. After I graduated college, I had a lot more free time to explore my interests outside of academics and really gravitated to this experience with Miss Nepal North America. What really drew my interest to Miss Nepal North America was that it was going to be a blend of both my Nepalese identity and American identity. I was able to share a platform that celebrated both, but also be a part of something much bigger than myself. I met an incredible group of women who were also first-generation like me and an incredible organization that celebrated and empowered young women.

Q: What was it like competing in the Miss Nepal North America pageant? What did winning mean to you?

A: Competing in Miss Nepal North America was a transformative experience that went far beyond the competition itself. Winning was never my primary focus instead, my goal was to make the North Carolinian Nepali community proud and to elevate our presence on a larger platform. Before the pageant, I dedicated myself to connecting with our community—attending picnics, and NCNC events, and even creating business cards to share my vision. I wanted people to understand the significance of this platform and how it could propel our community onto a national stage.

When I stepped onto that stage, my thoughts were with the many people who

had supported and believed in me. Their kind words and encouragement resonated deeply, and I felt a profound responsibility to represent North Carolina with pride. It wasn't just about me; it was about showcasing the talent and spirit of our state.

The week leading up to the finale was incredibly intense, with a rigorous boot camp in Baltimore. We trained from dawn until late at night, guided by amazing mentors like Sadika Shrestha, Miss Nepal World 2010, and Priya Rani Lama, Miss Cosmopolitan World 2019. Their wisdom and support were invaluable, helping us to prepare not only for the stage but for the broader responsibilities that come with this title.

Pageantry often faces misconceptions, but it requires sharpness, grace, and the ability to think on your feet. In the days leading up to the finale, we had one-on-one interviews with our judges very much like a high-stakes business meeting where they evaluated not just our answers, but our essence, our ability to represent the values of a Miss Nepal North America

For me, success is not measured by personal accolades but by the impact I can have on others. It's not just about winning this title but also winning the hearts of everyone. I now have the opportunity to give back to the community that has given me so much and inspire other youths in different parts of the country to reach for their dreams as well. That is the true essence of this journey, and it's a responsibility I carry with deep gratitude and compassion.

Q: You're now a symbol of the North Carolinian Nepali Community, what does that mean for you?

A: Being recognized as a symbol of the North Carolinian Nepali community is an incredible honor, but it's important to me that people understand the journey behind it. Reaching this stage wasn't easy and it's not just about

showing up, it also took relentless hard work, resilience, and a determination to rise above every challenge that came my way. I wasn't content to stay in my comfort zone. I sought out opportunities, faced my fears, and put in the countless hours needed to refine not just my skills, but also my mindset. I think that's very important to highlight because it also helps show that those challenges can be overcome with an unwavering belief in oneself. I want to inspire others in our community to believe that they, too, can achieve their goals, no matter how difficult the journey may seem. I envision a future where more people from our community are standing beside me, taking on leadership roles, and being celebrated for their unique contributions. So I am very committed to creating a legacy of empowerment, where each success story paves the way for many more to come.

Q: What advice would you give anybody who wants to go into pageantry or anybody who wants to elevate themselves to a higher stage as part of the NCNC community?

For anyone considering this path or any other, for that matter, the most important qualities to have are resilience and self-assurance. The journey is filled with challenges and moments of doubt, but what sustained me was an unwavering belief in myself. Even when doubts crept in, I had to trust in my abilities and harness the inner strength to keep moving forward. Pageantry, in particular, requires you to embrace constructive criticism and grow from it. You're surrounded by strong, beautiful, and intelligent women, and it's essential to carry those qualities within yourself as well. It's about developing not just your physical presence, but also cultivating inner beauty and strength. This path demands continuous self-improvement, but most importantly, it requires a deep belief in yourself. Even if that belief isn't fully formed at the start, it's something that grows with experience. My

advice is to believe in yourself, be your own best advocate, and go for your dreams wholeheartedly.

Q: Besides Miss Nepal North America, what else have you been up to this past year?

A: Over the past year, I've been deeply involved in healthcare and research, working to expand my knowledge and contribute meaningfully to the field. I've also been engaged with various charities, including Kiran, a South Asian domestic violence NGO based in North Carolina. My focus has been on community health, and I'm looking forward to continuing this work when I visit Nepal in November. As part of Miss Nepal North America, I'll be participating in events and charity initiatives, particularly those that align with my passion for improving community health and supporting underserved populations.

Q: What experiences have shaped your interest in global health?

A: Even before going into Miss Nepal North America, every one or two summers I would go to Nepal and I would always try to find opportunities to give back to the country through my time. I've worked in a bunch of government hospitals in Nepal and also with NGO's. I've always sought out opportunities that helped me get back to my community, but now very fortunate that I have a bigger platform and a bigger support system to really be able to help impact more communities. Beforehand, I was doing smaller-scale volunteer work, like with BIR Hospital, a government hospital in Nepal that provides highly subsidized surgeries and medical care to people who are underrepresented and marginalized in Nepal. I definitely have hopes to continue working on that, but now I'll have the backing of a much bigger organization that will help prosper that field and that hospital a little bit

more. It's something that I've always been doing, but I think I'm just excited to have a bigger platform to share that with

Q: Tell me about some of your work with Kiran.

A: Kiran is a South Asian domestic violence hotline for women, where I worked as a volunteer. They have crisis hotlines where women can call those hotlines if they want to speak to someone or have issues or problems. We do have many Nepali people also involved in that, so it's been a multi-cultural effort.

Q: How did you find all these opportunities?

A: A lot of it was Googling in my free time, and it's just a matter of finding organizations that fit my passion. A lot of it is also word of mouth. A lot of people in NCNC are also involved with Kiran so hearing from others and also seeking opportunities by myself was the main way I got involved.

Q: Before, you were on the path of becoming a doctor. Now, it seems like you're taking a detour, and you might be choosing a completely different path instead. How were you able to find a different path for yourself?

A: Medicine has always been a passion of mine, and it continues to be. However, as the newly crowned Miss Nepal North America, I've been given an extraordinary platform to make a tangible difference right now. I'm taking this time to fully embrace this opportunity, channeling my energy into working with charities and organizations dedicated to community and public health in Nepal. This experience is allowing me to contribute meaningfully to the causes I care about, and I'm excited about the impact I can have during this journey. Going for things that challenge you, you can also pursue

different opportunities in this world. Find something that aligns with you, I think you can never go wrong with something that you truly are passionate about. My commitment to medicine remains strong, but I see this as a unique chapter that will ultimately enrich my future contributions to the field

Q: What were you involved with during your time at ECU?

A: I was very heavily involved in research throughout my college experience - I worked predominantly in microbiology research. Throughout my college career, I really got involved in creating biosensors, and I ended up becoming the team lead in the biology team as part of an interdisciplinary effort to create biosensors. My role with the biology team was to find organisms that would work and be compatible with our biosensors. Projects like that really helped shape my independence and really helped me become a leader. I was tasked with a huge role and I would be speaking to professors and PhD students. I had to know what I was talking about, because at the end of the day, what I said ended up being what was used. It was an enormous amount of pressure, but it also really helped shape my leadership, so those experiences in college are really valuable, just being in a collaborative space.

Q: What other advice would you give to people going through college, trying to successfully find their own path?

A: Being so young, there's just a lot of pressure but at the end of the day, almost everybody in during your undergrad is no more than about 23 years old. At that young age, I think it's totally normal to feel like you don't know what you want to do or you don't know what you want to pursue. Instead of trying to find exactly what you want to do, try to figure out the stuff that you don't like. If you take a class, you don't have to love that class, but if you walk out of that class saying "I hate it",

then that's a good sign. You know there's a different direction you got to take. Focus on finding what you want to do. If you're having trouble, start making a mental checklist of stuff that you really realize you don't like - eventually you'll be able to find your way

Q: How were you able to maintain a strong connection between yourself and the Nepali community, while also keeping in touch with your Nepali identity despite living in the US for most of your life?

A: I really have to give a lot of credit to NCNC because I moved to North Carolina when I was in 7th grade. Up until that point, I was connected to Nepal just by going to Nepal every summer with my family. When I came to NC, I really saw the community that we had, and how much it was thriving.

Just having that support system, having people of your age who are Nepali, and who are going through the same experiences as you, really helped me bridge the gap between myself and my community. Since middle school, I have been volunteering for Nepali events. We would have Teej we would have Dashain - it was a way for all the Nepali kids to get together. We were able to hang out, but we were also doing something for our community - helping with tickets, helping with setting up the beds. NCNC helped us stay very connected to our community.

It really helped me, because, before that, I truly thought that at one point, while I was growing up, I was one of the only Nepali kids in the United States. I'm pretty fortunate to be part of NCNC and have that source of community where we had different events and different volunteering experiences for children. It was a really great experience overall and a way to connect back to my heritage.

Rising Stars



Ayush Lamsal

Ayush Lamsal is a 4th year at NC State University pursuing a major degree in Computer Engineering and a minor in Business. Raised in New Bern, North Carolina, Ayush attended Arendell Parrott Academy and cultivated his interest in computers, engineering, and business. During college, he's expanded on these interests, working in Nepal as an Information Technology Business Analyst and as a founding member of the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity. Ayush, an NC State Grand Challenges Scholar, aims to use his experiences to go into the field of computer architecture - where he will help lay the digital groundwork to tackle to problems of the future.

Q: What got you interested in computer architecture?

I've always been fascinated with technology and computers since middle school. Going into high school I built computers all throughout my high school career and helped friends build theirs. It got me interested in how they fundamentally worked - it's one thing to just order parts and assemble a computer - it's another thing to completely understand, from the ground up, how it works.

Q: What is computer architecture about?

A: Understanding computer architecture is understanding the fundamentals of how instruction sets and logic are handled within the actual computer. All computers are essentially made up of thousands and thousands of little logical gates, like AND, OR. Understanding how to manipulate those gates and create arrays and structures, to actually handle computer instructions and make sure that everything on your computer works is very complicated. I won't go too much into it but it's very cool and I really enjoy it.

Q: What other extracurriculars are you doing at NC State?

A: I'm part of the Grand Challenges Scholars Program at NC State which is focused on grand challenges in engineering and how you can solve those. I'm also on the executive board of a fraternity, Alpha Tau Omega, and I have a lot of fun helping the fraternity grow as a whole. Having executive-level management and being on the board is very insightful and helps me gain more experience in my interest in the business side of things.

Q: You worked for an insurance company in Nepal during the summer, can you tell me more about that?

A: In Nepal, I worked for an insurance company called National Life. I assumed a more business/IT role, not strictly computer engineering. But I learned a lot through that, especially on how Internet communication works and how it's so important for business-to-business communication. Because they have so many different brands and different areas, I learned a lot about all the server-side stuff and how to actually access that and manipulate all the different strings that go into protecting client data, having security, and just ensuring that you have backups of

everything. Dealing with insurance is a huge process, we have hundreds of thousands of clients and you have to make sure that their data is the most secure and that you can also access it whenever you want.

Q: I know computer science is in a dynamic, saturated state, and it can seem hard to get into, how do you go about finding opportunities?

A: Computer science definitely is in a chaotic period, with a lot of buzzwords, a focus on AI, and how it's revolutionizing even how programming operates it does seem like an uncertain future but it is cool to have gotten experience. It's very fortunate that I have this kind of experience and that I was able to gain experience in alternate fields that I wouldn't normally go into, which really helps for the business side of things and for the computer engineering side of things.

Obviously, it helps that I am Nepali and that I can kind of reach out to other Nepali people here. But the biggest thing to do is go online, especially for the United States, and just throw yourself out there. You have to really beef up that LinkedIn profile even if you don't really want to. You have to just make connections with people - even just going to class and being attentive, you'll never know who you run into in class. Certain professors but even students - they might know something you don't - so it's really just expanding your network beyond just your own proximity. It's by networking and figuring out, "Hey I know this person, and this person knows this person", and so on.

Q: Tell me more about the Grand Challenges Scholars Program you were a part of with NC State.

It's a program at NC State that focuses on engineering's grand challenges, like mapping the brain, solving the chip crisis, the energy crisis, and everything like that. It addresses

the biggest engineering problems in the world and it focuses on what you can do at a personal level. Even just going forward in your career it's helpful to keep in mind what see and that may inspire what you want to do in your career. It helps you to advance not only yourself but advance humanity forward and help tackle the world's biggest problems. It's a really cool program. I was able to help out during freshman year and it was a really cool experience, I also redesigned their entire website I was a liaison for the other group members to kind of communicate between groups.

Q: What was your role as a founding executive member of the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity?

A: I was the first treasurer since we were starting off as a new chapter. I got to create all the budgets figure out how we wanted to complete reports and figure out how to report and handle our semesterly finances. I handle all the money and transactions and make sure that we have enough money to pay member dues and enough money to run our chapter. It's been really cool to implement policies that we, as an executive board, have made from the ground up, being in charge of managing the budget to areas that need it the most.

Q: You have experience in the business side of things and you're pursuing a business minor, how will that help you moving forward?

A: I doing the business minor to gain more experience in the business world. Obviously, there are going to be fundamental classes like accounting and introduction to business, but one of my most interesting classes and one of my favorite classes was about supply chain and how all that operates. Obviously supply chain was a big buzzword, especially during the pandemic when so many supply chain factors were impacted by COVID,

so seeing how all of that works and how important it is to just every day-to-day life activity has really opened my eyes to kind of looking at the supply chain and the impact it has on the world. It's helpful to understand how everything works together because business is more than just profits. It's also understanding the network of how the global economy functions.

Q: What will you pursue after your undergraduate studies?

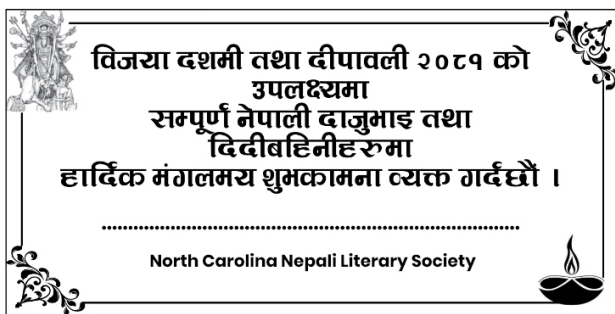
I want to work a couple of years in the industry, maybe with a big tech company, but after that, we'll see. I have a lot of ideas and I'm trying to meet like-minded people who are in engineering who have you know big dreams and big goals for how to advance humanity and come up with the ideas. I might also pursue an MBA after I get more experience.

Q: The process of networking, and finding like-minded people, how has that been going and what advice would you give to other people who are also trying to network?

A: The thing is you just have to meet new people. It sounds really simple on paper. For example, freshman year, I went to NC State with a bunch of my friends, but we decided to include random roommates. Through my random roommate, I made a great new friend in the aerospace engineering industry. Then through that, I have met other people who are brilliant computer programmers, computer scientists, and other engineers. So even just through the small thing of just rooming with someone random you can meet so many new people. Just going to different clubs and organizations even fraternities or you know Greek life in general, you can meet so many new people that you ordinarily would not have met. It's getting into the mindset of, "ok what's the best way you know to meet new people."

Q: What advice do you think you would give to incoming first-years and high school students like who also plan on pursuing a degree

A: College is a lot different than high school. Your experiences are going to be different, you're going to meet so many new people and there are going to be a lot more people on campus. I'd say work hard but play hard as well. You want to enjoy yourself, but you want to make sure that what you have in your mind and your goal is your primary focus. If you don't work hard to achieve your dreams, if you don't make sacrifices to achieve goals and dreams, then those goals and dreams will become the sacrifices. You want to make sure that while you are enjoying yourself and you don't want to completely stress out and be bogged down, taking 18-20 credit hours every single semester. Focus on what's important but also have fun at the same time. Make the most of your college experience. I know this sounds cliché but it feels like yesterday that I was dropped off to freshman year and right now I'm starting senior year. It goes by so quickly, so just make the most of it - make the most of everything. It's good to take time for yourself as well. It's obviously great to be surrounded by people you love, but take time for yourself, that way you can really work out things. Whenever you have big problems, take time for yourself and you'll inevitably figure it out. Even if things look hard just keep going and it inevitably will work itself out.



Rising Stars



Kavya Lamichhane

Kavya Lamichhane is a senior at Enloe High School in Raleigh, North Carolina, and a former president and founding member of the NCNC Teen Council. Interested in pursuing public and environmental health sciences in college, during high school, Kavya made a concerted effort to rally her local community for environmental change and did environmental science research with the UNC Gillings School of Public Health. Alongside her interest in environmental science, Kavya is involved with HOSA and volunteering at UNC REX and plans to pursue medicine after college.

Q: What opportunities related to health science have you been pursuing in high school?

A: My school has a Medical Bioscience Academy which I'll have been part of for four years. I take a lot of Health Science classes at my school, and I'm taking Pharmacy Tech. I also volunteer at the UNC REX hospital during the school year.

I'm a part of HOSA, Health Occupation Students of America, which is a health professional club with hundreds of events you can compete in. For example, in my first year in HOSA, I participated in Community Awareness, where we raised awareness about how medical textbooks lack a variety

of skin diseases shown under people of color, and we were able to place in the top three at that event. I've switched to a Community Emergency Response Team event, which is more hands-on, where we have to do a paper test and a hands-on CPR skills test. I've really enjoyed the club and I think it's great for anyone who wants to do pre-med.

Q: Tell me about the internship with Gillings you were involved with, and how you came across it.

A: This past summer I got to do an internship at the UNC Gillings School of Public Health with the Fry Lab for a week. They focus on environmental health impacts on pregnant women and their children. I conducted research along with my mentor on phthalate exposure in children.

Whenever I'm looking for an internship, the first thing I do is search it up online. I usually just search for universities near me where I can do research. Especially since I'm interested in environmental science research, I know that UNC has a phenomenal program, so I've searched for internships out there. Just go online and search, and if your friends or your teachers have any recommendations, look around for those as well.

Q: What did you learn from your Gillings internship?

A: The most important thing I learned is how important it is to find valuable and reliable sources, especially when you're researching. Overall, the structure of my writing really changed when I was doing this. I was learning to format my writing and check over it in a more formalized approach - my writing really improved while doing this research paper. I got a lot of practice reading really dense research articles and finding exactly what I needed to. Research is really hard because there are so many things you can

find online. I'm glad I was able to develop better research skills, especially for the AP Research class I'll be taking this year.

Q: Tell us about AP Research.

A: Not many schools offer it, but I'm pursuing the AP Capstone Diploma, which includes AP Seminar and AP Research. In my junior year, I completed AP Seminar, where I spent half the year working on an individual research project and the other half on a group research project. AP Seminar serves as a foundation for AP Research, which I'm taking this year. Unlike in AP Seminar, where research topics are somewhat limited, AP Research allows me the freedom to choose my own topic and explore a gap in existing research. I'm still developing my research topic, but last year, my focus in AP Seminar was on environmental justice.

Thanks to my experience at Gillings, I've honed my research skills, and I feel confident that I can approach this year's project with a much stronger skill set and achieve great results.

Q: How have you been involved with environmental efforts in North Carolina?

I'm currently the president of DOC NC. For the past few years, we've been really focused on sustainability efforts. Through that, we found the Museum of Life and Science in Durham. I attended the Youth Climate Summit a few years ago and I was really interested in it. I asked how I could get involved and they let me know about their Youth Advisory Board where they organized the whole summit. They network with different environmentalists, professors, and people in the area who are really experienced in that field. We got to bring them in, and they brought valuable insight and mentorship to our summit - it's really interesting.

Q: You already have immersed yourself in environmental science-related projects, how did you get started?

My volunteer organization DOC NC, when I joined, was looking for new projects to start. We settled on ideas related to sustainability. Eventually, we were able to partner with the town of Morrisville and they were actually looking for people to help them on a grant for recycling. That got me really interested in environmental science and sustainability efforts in our community.

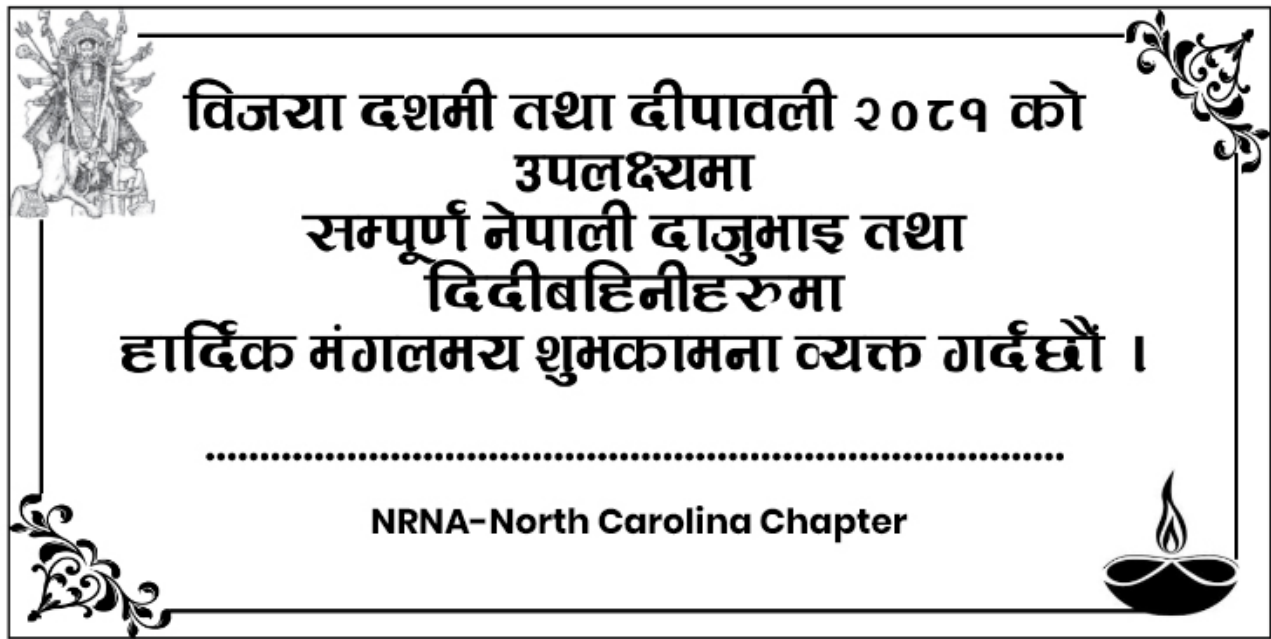
We were able to interview a lot of mayors, officials, and community members of our neighboring towns about what they do at home and what sustainability efforts they would recommend. We were able to spread the initiative to their town websites and we posted it on our volunteering website - it was a really big success and from there we started partnering with a lot of town officials on sustainably related matters.

Q: What advice would you give to anybody trying to be successful in high school?

A: I think it's really important to push yourself to take an extra step even when you're not really feeling motivated. Training yourself to take action when you're feeling really lazy is one of the best habits you can develop because there's never going to be a perfect moment to start accomplishing your goals. You need to do it no matter what and if you just do it when you're feeling motivated, you're not going far as you can go - so build that habit.

Q: Outside of science-related activities, what else are you up to?

I'm on my school swim team and cross-country team. I'm also in the NHS (National Honors Society). I help with school graduation and beginning of school events and this year, I'm also on the student council.



Chandralata



Nitin Mishra

Chandralata was an ordinary girl with an average height and intelligence. She lacked knowledge in dancing, playing the piano, and chess. Her only womanly characteristics were cooking, but they were only average, as mentioned earlier. On certain days, the dishes she made were incredibly tasty, but on other days they were bland and uncooked. The only positive aspect about her was being the only daughter of a wealthy landlord. Her father had a huge mansion, plenty of livestock, and servants to take care of him. Every now and then, she quietly yearned to be able to ride a bicycle, at least.

Since her wedding day, Chandralata had been hearing a great deal about Rudra Laxmi. Even after a month into her marriage, she continued to hear excessively and exclusively about Rudralaxmi and her glorious virtues. It seemed like Rudralaxmi possessed the talent to do it all, including singing a wide range of songs. It seemed like her features would never stop. Despite being newly married, Chandralata's name was neither praised nor celebrated as she had hoped for.

Despite being the queen of her house, she was treated no differently than an ordinary citizen. For every consultation, Rudralaxmi was summoned. She had already heard that she was a master chess player and a refined poet as well. Although Chandralata had never witnessed Rudralaxmi do so, it was

said that she could compose love poems in a jiffy. It felt as if the entire universe aligned to make it happen for her.

It is worth noting that Rudralaxmi was not even a member of the house where Chandralata was married to. Rudralaxmi's household was close to her, they were neighbors and very close. It happened that Chandralata's father-in-law and Rudralaxmi's father were engaged in the same line of business and had established a mill together. So, they were business partners. Both the families were so close to each other that they always enjoyed either lunch or dinner regularly. Whenever one family cooked chicken, they would send a hearty invitation to the other family. Chandralata's husband was a very learned man with many qualities: he was a poet and deeply philosophical. Although he always wanted to be a chess player and study Metaphysics and Western Philosophy, other activities always kept him engrossed, thus preventing him pursuing his cherished interests. said it was he could debate like Plato, and the principles and findings of Archimedes deeply influenced him. Chandralata lacked knowledge in any specific field, but she held a deep admiration for learned men and, now after seeing Rudralaxmi, women as well. She had encountered no women as talented and erudite as Rudralaxmi earlier in her life.

Chandralata's husband, Govind was almost engaged to Rudralaxmi, but because of some twist of fate, the engagement did not happen. After Govind's marriage it did not look like he was interested or willing to talk to Rudralaxmi. However they exchanged in regular conversations and Govind always summoned her every time he composed a poem which he thought was worth sharing. Govind would spend hours studying philosophy and writing poetry, short ballads and odes but poor Chandralata was incapable of deciphering what her husband was studying and writing. When Govind

was not around, she would sometimes try to read and understand his work, but it was too much for her. She could not make head or tail of it. She understood the individual words but could not grasp the meaning of them collectively. She could read it aloud but could not understand it. She could see the lines but could not see the hidden meaning behind the lines. It was evident that her husband never appreciated her company except in bed.

Sometimes she would find her husband stomping back and forth in the room holding a piece of paper impatiently. He looked out of the window as if in fear of the unannounced thunderstorm. When she asked what ailed him, he would just reply without even looking at her.

"Just finished this poem... I was struggling to get it done for a couple of days.... finally, it is done...and just want to show it to Rudralaxmi'. Holding again himself for a moment he burst. "I know she will love it...'

Chandralata wished so dearly if she could say, "Can I read it too?'

She realized that her ignorance was agonizing her. Now it was not her fault that she did not know poetry and philosophy. There is a vast array of subjects for one to master in one's life. Just like everyone else, Govind lacked expertise in other areas of life. All he knew was philosophy, poetry, and chess. Mathematics and cosmology were of no interest to him. But the thing that tormented Chandralata the most was that Govind seemed to know everything she did, but she knew nothing that he did not know. Sometimes she would find Govind and Rudralaxmi playing chess for several hours. Rudralaxmi would often teach him how to move the chess pieces. It was clear that he had a fondness for spending time with Rudralaxmi, their close childhood friendship and proximity as neighbors made it understandable. Even though she had all

such qualities, Rudralaxmi led quite a simple life and was not arrogant or presumptuous. It was fascinating for others to witness Govind and Rudralaxmi working through a complex chess moves or philosophizing over a piece of poetry. Chandralata could never grasp their fiery disagreements or admiration for poetry. In private, she once grabbed one of his poetry books and recited a poem, but amazingly, she could not do it. She could glance over the lines but couldn't unravel the poet's intentions. She tried once again, but with no evolution.

In a meeting, Chandralata asked Rudralaxmi a question.

"When are you planning to get married?"
"I don't know...I don't get to pick my husband; you know that right?'. Rudralaxmi replied jokingly.

Melting into a soft smile, Chandralata blushed, "No matter what, make sure that you find someone like you.

Having someone with similar interests makes life effortless and pleasurable.'

"Hmm.... true', Rudralaxmi replied without understanding the hidden motive behind her expression.

"By the way, have you been writing a poem lately?'

"Yes, a lot of them. In fact, I have made my usual routine to write one a day no matter what.'

"So, then you must meet Govind every day to discuss over it so he can shed more light to make it even better'

"I wish I could do that, but the circumstances have changed now.'

"Why.... What has changed for you?'," Chandralata raised her intonation as she asked.

"You...'," retorted Rudralaxmi back, throwing a sharp, piercing look at her. At first sounding very grave momentarily, but then very suddenly losing herself into a zeal of laughter in a childlike manner.

Quickly Rudralaxmi clasped her hand and said, looking deep into her eyes,

"It is not about you, but it is about his mother.... she has changed quite a bit since you got married to Govind,"

"How is that.... has she said you not to come here anymore?'," asked Chandralata

"No, no... no, it is not like that," Rudralaxmi promptly replied.

She further added,

"She is as gentle as a cow and, just like my mother, she is very docile and naive, but I don't know. I realize something looks different from before."

"Your home is not welcoming for me now...". With some bitterness mixed in her tone, she emitted.

"Don't worry, nothing has changed..... everything is exactly the same as before". Chandralata said in a jovial intonation. After that, she laughed so loud, as if she was about to go on an adventure. In her laughing spree, she retorted unknowingly, "I feel I am coming in between you two...".

In reality, Chandralata was beginning to have a feeling that she was becoming a source of conflict between the two artists. There was an awkward silence lurking. Chandralata couldn't bear the weight of silence any longer and finally cracked. "Ok I have a plan for two of you...listen... I will pass you a gesture you when Govind's mother is occupied in her kitchen or other chores so you can come and see him and show him your poem," ...', Rudralaxmi said widening her eyes.

"But what if someone sees or finds out later?'," objected Rudralaxmi.

"You can trust me to safeguard your meeting from any disturbances or interruptions. I'll keep a close eye on anyone approaching and notify both of you if necessary. Now, are you still feeling underwhelmed, my friend?". She asked, like she was expecting a victory.

"Fantastic...'," chuckled Rudralaxmi

"Then shall we begin this adventure from tomorrow?'," she pleaded with a glow in her eyes below her evenly shaped eyebrows, as if a great agonizing pain had been lifted from her.

"Why not ?'," whispered Chandralata as if in a drama blinking her left eyes all of a sudden. "Then I will bring four poems I have written recently," Rudralaxmi declared with a moment's delay.

Starting the next evening, Chandralata was always responsible for coordinating their meetings. She secretly waved at Rudralaxmi, whenever she saw an the opportunity for a meeting, whenever her mother-in-law was busy in her household chores. After that, she always took steps to prevent any disturbance during the meeting. The sound of faint whispers and sporadic laughter could be distinguished from inside of Govind's room. It was evident to Chandralata that Govind was extremely happy when he was around Rudralaxmi. As a result, these meetings became frequent ,taking place at least five days a week. The unheard compositions were always acknowledged, and the constant bursts of laughter never ceased. She clearly read the curiosity and bewilderment in Govind if one day Rudralaxmi could not attend the meeting. Govind felt haunted in her absence.

It dawned on Chandralata that her husband and close friend were in love, and she came to the realization that she was an outsider, possibly a significant one. Although they slept in the same bed, there was no physical

connection between her and Govind. The food they both ate was made in the same kitchen, yet they always had different tastes. Both of them failed to laugh or comprehend the joke at the same moment. They together walked in the rain, but they never got drenched. Perhaps they never felt the rain. They were married but never dreamed of a child. She had a house that never became her home.

On one morning, early she rose, left her dwelling not letting anyone know of her intentions. A month passed, and she remained untraced. She mysteriously vanished and completely disappeared into thin air. No one in her family, not even Govind or Rudralaxmi, could completely comprehend why and where she went, even long after she left unexpectedly. A home, rather than a mere house, was all that Chandralata sought after.

Embracing Sustainable Farming



Shreya Dhakal

The cows at Polyface Farm in the scenic hills of Swoope, Virginia are well known for their smiling “Mooo!” But there’s much more happening at Polyface Farm than the traditional image you might have of a typical farm. The visionary behind it all is Joel Salatin. Joel has taken Polyface Farm from a sleepy, broken-down operation to the front edge of the battlefield in today’s sustainable farming. The significance of Polyface Farm, compared

to the traditional red-barn farms, lies in its commitment to holistic farming. Joel Salatin is a trailblazer, demonstrating how economic viability can be seamlessly integrated with environmental stewardship, far more effectively than conventional cleared-land pasture methods. At its core, Polyface’s success is a system that combines livestock farming and rotational grazing underpinned by direct-to-consumer sales.

Salatin employs some revolutionary methods. An example of this is the farm’s rotational grazing system, in which cattle are grazed on lush grasslands followed by poultry, and so forth. In addition to healthy soil, this technique helps the most nutrient cycling win. Chickens living in what we call the “egg mobile” (a chicken coop on wheels transplanted with chickens every two weeks) free range and support ecological function by pecking at insects while they fertilize areas. Their mobility means they can lay eggs in clean and comfortable areas, while the grazing cows maintain grass at a desirable length.

Additionally, Polyface Farm also has a direct-to-consumer system that allows consumers to visit the farm and buy fresh-from-the-farm meats and produce. Doing so gives people a more intimate understanding of their food and stimulates local economies. Contemplating this one statement from a family member “Polyface’s mission is to maximize energy absorption and encourage grass growth” sums up the philosophy of Joel Salatin. This mission is visible in every operation of theirs, including how they maintain their pastures and raise the animals. When you’re in the grocery store, and see “free range” on an egg carton—there’s a lot more than how they get labeled. The chickens at Polyface Farm are free-foraging birds who live most of their days exploring grassy fields and benefiting from a system that places them just behind the cows. The cows move to a new “salad bar” as Joel calls it giving them

plenty of nutrients daily. The chickens then sanitize the cow manure fertilizing the grass. And, the pigs are sanitizing behind the cow in the barn. "So, this is all an effort to capture the nutrients produced by the animals, put that back, and feed the soil that would then effectively capture solar energy and produce biomass in the form of grass," said a Salatin. This mutually beneficial relationship does wonders for the animals but it is also invaluable to the sustainable success of any homestead.

In a recent interview, Joel Salatin remarked, "When was the last time you were at a Little League game, watching the soccer moms strut their stuff, boasting to each other about their child prodigies—how they can play Chopin at five years old? But when was the last time you heard a soccer mom say, 'Well, my son or daughter is going to be a farmer'? We don't do that!". He shed light on how society has disparities in certain career paths for children. We live in such a great country that we get to eat fresh fruits and fresh vegetables daily. Why is that? We have such hard-working farmers to provide us with those things and put a meal on the table. Now, most of the farmers these days are using pesticides and GMOs in their crops, but farmers are still putting their sweat and blood into fruits and veggies. All in all, Polyface Farm is more than a farm; it takes the farmer and shows how each component helps advance holistic health on that little piece of Earth.

In addition to Polyface Farm, there's also Natural & Local LLC, a thriving three-acre farm run by Dasharath Ji and Ramrati Ji. They grow a wide variety of vegetables and flowers, with the goal of expanding their operation at Good Hope Farm to provide fresh produce to the local community and contribute to a healthier planet. Dasharath Ji explains, "Our goal is to learn from our small operation at Good Hope Farm and grow it to a level where the local population seeks out

our produce, both for themselves and for a better planet'.

Nepal, our beautiful country as we know in the 1970s the economy was 90% agriculture based. This shows that most of the people were making a living out of farming and "gai bastu" raising. My family has a long history of earning a living through farming and livestock, a tradition that has been passed down through generations. Why should we look down on careers in agriculture, especially when most of our Nepali community grew up with an income coming from agriculture?

In the end, we are what we eat. If we eat a candy bar, we might feel a quick burst of energy, but within 15 minutes, that energy fades, leaving us fatigued. Now, imagine if we chose a well-balanced meal instead. We'd feel better both mentally and physically. For this, we owe our thanks to farmers like Joel Salatin, Dasharath Ji, Ramrati Ji, and millions of others who provide us with nutritious, satisfying meals. Without them, our health would suffer, and the risk of illness would rise. So, the next time you're at the grocery store and notice the farmer's name on a bag of apples, or when you visit a Farmers Market, take a moment to appreciate their hard work and dedication.



Jordan Smith & The Aliens



Eva Sharma

It was a normal, clear, sunny day at the beach. Me and my two friends, Kayla, and Jordan were suntanning like normal teenagers at the beach. I mean, it was summer break, so of course I would take my friends to the beach. My little brother Cody was playing in the sand with his friend Milo. Oh wait! I'm so sorry! I'm Gabby. And I have another brother named Mike. He is 16 years old, and Cody is seven years old. I'm a typical preppy girl who likes makeup and skincare and everything. My mom then announced that the whole family is going camping and each of us were allowed to bring two friends. I think she said two because I would have to leave out one friend if she said one.

~2 weeks later~

It's time to go camping! I was a little bit nervous, but Cody was hyped, and everyone knows what a phone addicted teenager like Mike is going to do. Watch TikTok all day long. "Gabby! Cody! Mike! Come on, it's time to go!" mom yelled. "Coming!" we all said in sync. I packed my last couple of things which were my toothbrush, toothpaste, and some makeup. I walked downstairs and saw my friends waiting for me along with my family. "C'mon Gabby, let's go. We are going to be late," mom uttered, sounding a little bit angry because I was taking a while. My mom has a minivan, so it can seat a lot of people. Mom was driving, so she sat in the front seat

with Mike in the passenger seat, you know because he is the oldest. Cody and Milo sat in the middle row, with all the luggages in their row. Then me, Jordan, and Kayla sat in the back.

~6 boring hours later~

"Mommmmmmmm. How much longerrrrrrr," Cody asked. "30 more minutes, sweetheart," she replied, trying to stay patient because he has been asking that question every half hour for the past four hours. "WE ARE FINALLY HERE!" Jordan yelled. But all we saw was a plain field with a few scraggly bushes. "Mom, this place looks horrible. How are we gonna stay here for a week?" I asked, disgusted. "Well, Gabby, think about it," Mom sighed. "This place could have been so much worse. Like there could've been bee hives everywhere, or we could've been put with a bunch of strangers. So please, don't complain," mom lectured me. We then noticed that Jordan was missing. I then started looking for him with Kayla. "He probably just went to explore a bit. Or maybe he wanted a little bit of fresh air, so he might have gone for a walk," Kayla assumed. "Yeah, maybe you're right. I shouldn't jump to the conclusion that he ran away and got hurt. That would be very silly, I told myself. I walked around the bushes, admiring all the beautiful plants that North Carolina has. "Kids. Let's go for a swim in the lake!" mom called out to get everyone's attention. We all groaned in unison. Mom heard us and relented. "Fine. We will go tomorrow when we are all fresh and more settled in the camp." Except I was never gonna be used to this dump. How could I possibly go from a modern mansion to this?

~1 day later~

"KAYLA!" I yelled. "What...?" she said as she was just waking up. "JORDAN IS STILL NOT BACK FROM THE LAKE!" I screamed out of fear that something terrible had happened to him. "WHAT?" And that got her to jump out of bed as fast as lightning. "Well, we have to find him!" I urged. "Mom, myself and Kayla are going for a walk!" I called out trying to sound

casual. "Okay dear," she said. We ran to some dirt bikes that we found. "This should work," I said, trying to stay calm. We rode for what felt like an eternity, searching frantically, until we reached the lake. And there, at the bottom, we found Jordan—motionless, with a knife embedded in him.

"O.M.G!" we screamed. "JORDAN! WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?" I cried out but there was no response. Of course, there wasn't—he was dead. I immediately video called Mom and showed her what had happened. She went into a frenzy, screaming and cursing. She called the police, who rushed to the area and began searching for clues. After three hours of searching, they finally found something—huge footprints, almost as big as my entire body! And I'm a good 5'2', so they were massive. The police stayed there the whole night while we headed back to our tents. I cried myself to sleep, and so did Kayla. But then something inside of me told myself to cheer up Kayla. So, I started reading her the horror story that she has always wanted to hear. That put a smile on her face. After the story ended, we started laughing and telling each other jokes and riddles. We completely forgot about Jordan.

~The next day~

The police then came to our camping site to talk to us. "Ma'am. We have to take you all to the station," Officer Shane said. And without anyone uttering a word, we followed him to the station. We already knew what this was about. Mike was actually being helpful when we got there. The interviewer asked me if I had done anything to him. As he was asking me, "Did you commit the murder?" That's when Mike stepped in. "WHY WOULD MY SISTER KILL HER FRIEND? ARE YOU RIGHT IN THE HEAD?! GABS WOULD NEVER DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT YOU CRAZY!" Mike yelled. "O.M.G.," was all I could think at that moment. It was probably the first time I'd seen Mike truly explode like that—aside from the usual football game outbursts when he'd lose his temper over a bad call or an opposing team's touchdown.

Officer Shane gasped in shock at what Mike had just said. Everyone in the room stared in disbelief. Then, without a word, Mike grabbed my hand and dragged me out of the room. "Mike? Why would you do that?" I asked. "Because I don't want him asking me these questions. Because I killed him." ... O.M.G! MIKE KILLED MY BEST FRIEND?! I HATE HIM! WHY IS HE LIKE THIS?!?!?!?!?!?!?! I shoved him away and told him to get out of my face. I decided to stalk him at midnight.

~7 hours later~

I followed Mike with Kayla but didn't tell her what was going on. "Why are we stalking your brother, Gabby?" "Uhm, I'm sorry Kayla. I can't tell you. We just continued following him discreetly. He stopped at a train station, so when the train got to a stop, we got on with him. Except he didn't notice me because I was wearing a disguise. Pink puffy, curly hair with a black coat and a cowboy hat. Kayla was wearing a purple suit and put on a blonde wig with brown highlights. We were the first stop. There were so many people staring at us. Maybe because we were wearing the brightest clothes in the middle of the night. We got off the train and followed him. Mike then came up to us and said, "Oh sup bro." "Oh, hey M-mike," I said nervously. "C'mon Bryan, let's go to the lake. You can come too, Aaron," he said. "Okay, bro," Kayla, or, "Aaron," said confidently

He led us to a group of gangsters who were smoking. He led us to a group of gangsters who were smoking. Among them was a guy covered in tattoos with a black mohawk. He threw a cigarette at Mike, who caught it and took a swig from a glass of vodka. "Hey Aaron, want some?" he offered, but Aaron was speechless. "N-no thanks," she finally stammered. "Come on, man. It's not that bad. You had it last time and you were fine. Don't be like my sister Gabby—she's a total nerd and really lame," he taunted. I felt a surge of anger. "By the way, thanks for helping me with that kid, Jordan. Aaron, you were a big help,"

Mike said, handing Kayla \$100. "This is insane," I whispered to Kayla. "You think it isn't?! Your brother killed Jordan!" "Oh, yes! Boys, it's time," that gangster boy with tattoos said. "Oh, thanks for reminding me, Clyde," Mike said. Their body parts suddenly started shifting and turning into what looks like an...alien...? I decided it was time to reveal our true selves. I slowly began ripping off my wig and taking off my clothes. Mike was just turning into the alien that looked like the one that killed Jordan! His feet were becoming big, duck shaped, and his head became droopy. Was this a dream? I then woke up to many police officers shaking my shoulder, and my mom worrying. It was a dream. Phew.

I got up from the floor and Mike tried helping me up, but I refused because of the dream, or nightmare about him. "No thank you, Mr. Alien Man," I said. At night, I decided that I was going to decide whether my dream was real or not. So I went to the exact same spot that Mike did in my dreams, and just like it, I saw a lot of gangster guys, huddling up near a big tree. I took my only opportunity to watch what they were doing, and it turns out that they somehow have their hands on Jordan's body! They stabbed it a million times and even stomped on him. There was a guy named Felix who had so many tattoos, I wouldn't even dare to count them. He said, "So do y'all know bout' da guy named Mike?" They all agreed. What do they want from my brother? "Well, he's next after Gabby," someone named Karl whispered. It was a bit loud to whisper because I heard it.

Wait. After me? So does that mean I'm going to die?! No, no, no! This can't happen. Then, in that very moment, I saw three aliens take them away, but with the same knife he killed Jordan with! Was Jordan killed by an alien? I didn't know. I slowly followed them, even knowing that I was going to die anytime soon. I really hope those guys get killed before I do. As they got onto the UFO, I started questioning myself. Why am I doing this? Is

this a good idea? When I stepped on the UFO, I was already feeling something. The aliens started whispering gibberish about me. It was like, "Klfhjfewf knvef rhg4t4bgrekhgtlu." But I'm not sure. The aliens took us to what seemed to be, Neptune? It was so cold. I used Jordan's body as a blanket, but that's okay because he was dead. Once we landed, I immediately got off, rethinking why I wanted to follow aliens. Now, I was lost in Neptune. Forever...

~5 months later~

I was sitting and chatting with the aliens, as usual, when I saw a rocket ship shooting towards me. It seemed as if there was a whole party in there. They were putting on blasting music and I was hearing a lot of chatter in English. "Snvilagfdu vgyugvru," Aurixia said. That means, "Who are these little peeps?" I had no clue. But when I saw who stepped out made me blow. It was my mom, Mike, Cody, Milo, Dad, my grandparents, my cousins, aunts and uncles, Mike's friends, Cody's other friends, and a whole army of police.

I was in shock. I ran towards my mom and dad, then gave Mike a knowing smile—I now knew who had REALLY killed Jordan Smith. I smirked at the aliens as I drew my diamond sword. The aliens drew their own weapons, and as I prepared to charge at my family with the sword, I quickly dodged the aliens and turned to face them instead. They must have assumed it was a joke, thinking I was just playing along with the family act, but this time it wasn't a game.

I rushed up to Aurixia and said, "Look, I'm sorry, but that right there is my real family." I swung the sword at Aurixia but missed. She drew her three swords—one for each arm—and threw one at me. Thanks to her training, I caught it and used a small pocket knife to stab her. As I watched her slowly die, I ran up to the police and said, "Can you still bring back Jordan?" "We can try, but since he has been unconscious for a couple weeks, we have to

charge you \$1000. But right now, it just looks like frostbite,' Officer Nolan said. "I can pay for it,' Mike said as he pulled out his debit card. As he paid, I stared at him. Now he is so, you get it, well, kind I guess is the word. We flew back with hopefully no aliens, and Jordan's body. We took him to the best hospital in North Carolina. I mean, my mom was rich so she could afford it. Every day, me, Kayla, Mike, and sometimes Cody and Milo would pray that Jordan would be alright. I hope he is okay.

~3 Months Later~

I tried convincing Mike once again to see Jordan in the hospital, but he refused to take me. "Gabby, you have been forcing me to drive you to the hospital for the past three months and there was still no sign of Jordan,' he said, sounding mad. "You know what, fine. But this is the last time I'm taking you. Tomorrow, you have to ask mom.' As we were driving, he started asking me questions. Weird questions. "What was the alien's name? How did you end up on Neptune? What made you want to go on the UFO with a bunch of strangers? Did the aliens kill Jordan?" I didn't respond. After five minutes, I told him, "The alien's name is Aurixia. I went to Neptune because that is where the rocket went, and I went on the ship because they said something about killing us. Yes, the aliens killed Jordan.' He looked at me and said, "Get out of the car.' I nodded and made my way to room 108. To my surprise, when I walked in, there were nurses and surgeons huddled around Jordan. "HE'S ALIVE! HE IS BREATHING! HE HAS A PULSE!' The nurses were screaming. I can't believe it. Jordan made it! I ran up to him and shoved the doctors out of the way and saw him in a silly hospital gown. I sat on his bed and hugged him, and he said, "Gabby? It's you!" He finally sounded so happy. It melted my heart with a bunch of relief too. Jordan's parents suddenly busted the door, and his mom was in tears as they sprinted to his bed. "Oh Jordan. Thank God you are okay,' his mom, Heather spoke, sobbing at the same time. We were finally happy again

~The End~

Navigating the Legal and Ethical Challenges of Self-Driving Cars



Devika Kandel Neupane

The rapid rise of self-driving car technology has brought us into a new era of transportation, promising greater efficiency, convenience, and safety. However, with these advancements come important legal and ethical challenges that need attention. As self-driving cars become more common, we must consider how to create proper legal frameworks and address the many ethical issues they present.

One of the biggest concerns is determining who is responsible when accidents happen, especially when they result in injury or death. Traditional laws are designed to hold humans accountable, but with AI controlling the car, it's unclear whether the blame falls on the car's manufacturer, the software developer, or the owner of the vehicle. This issue of liability becomes more complicated in severe accidents, raising both legal and moral questions.

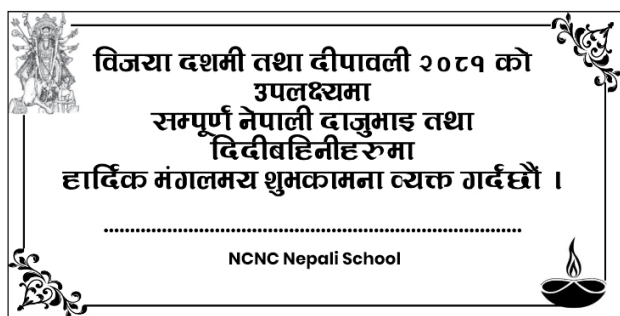
Additionally, self-driving cars collect vast amounts of data using sensors, cameras, and GPS systems to operate. While this technology improves navigation, it also creates privacy concerns. The continuous collection and storage of personal data—both from drivers and others—raises questions about who can access this information and how it may be used or misused. As the technology develops,

strong privacy protections will be needed to ensure data is not exploited.

Another significant issue is how self-driving cars make decisions in critical moments, especially in life-or-death situations. For example, if a car is faced with a choice between hitting a pedestrian or saving its passengers, how should it respond? The decision-making algorithms that control these vehicles must be carefully designed to reflect ethical principles, not just efficiency

Beyond these technical and ethical concerns, self-driving cars could significantly disrupt industries and jobs, particularly in fields like trucking and taxi services. While the technology might make these industries more efficient, it also risks displacing millions of workers. Governments and businesses must figure out how to manage these social and economic impacts as autonomous vehicles become more widespread.

In conclusion, while self-driving cars represent a revolutionary step forward, their adoption comes with challenges that cannot be overlooked. Issues like legal liability, privacy, ethical decision-making, and the societal impact of job loss must be carefully managed to ensure the technology improves transportation in a responsible and sustainable way. The future of transportation will depend on our ability to address these challenges thoughtfully, ensuring autonomous vehicles contribute to a safer and more equitable world.



Empowered and Rising: Nepali Women Entrepreneurs in North Carolina



Sarojani Neupane

In the heart of North Carolina, a growing number of Nepali women are turning their passions into thriving businesses. For the first time in Sangalo magazine, we shine a spotlight on five remarkable entrepreneurs who have successfully built ventures that blend cultural heritage with modern business practices. Their journeys are full of determination, creativity, and resilience, offering inspiration for aspiring women entrepreneurs in our community.

A Journey of Empowerment in Beauty



Shalu Khanal Gautam

Meet Shalu Khanal Gautam, a licensed esthetician with over 15 years of experience, running a vibrant beauty salon in downtown

Holly Springs. Inspired by her mother's unwavering support and work ethic, Shalu embarked on her journey in the beauty industry after her SLC exams in Nepal. Her passion for learning and the joy of bringing smiles to her clients' faces keep her motivated. "It's never monotonous; every day is a new adventure," she says.

The most rewarding part of her entrepreneurial journey has been the confidence she has gained. "I feel proud to be a Nepali woman entrepreneur in the USA," she shares, reflecting on her growth in interpersonal and communication skills. Balancing work and family life has become easier as she builds strong relationships with her clients, understanding their needs while ensuring they accommodate hers. This flexibility allowed her to take a six-week trip to Nepal earlier this year without losing her client base.

To women considering starting their own businesses, Shalu advises, "Don't hesitate to start! It may be tough at first, but with hard work and patience, you will find your way. Believe in yourself, and don't hesitate to reach out if you need guidance!"

Building a Legacy through Nepali Imports



Saraswati Adhikari is the co-founder of Everest Craft and Garment, a vibrant business that specializes in traditional handmade Nepali goods, from textiles to pottery. Together with her husband, Saraswati started this venture to celebrate Nepali craftsmanship while preserving

cultural heritage. "For us, entrepreneurship is about making a meaningful impact in the community," she shares.

What keeps Saraswati motivated is the fulfillment she finds in supporting her family and uplifting artisans back in Nepal. "I take pride in knowing that our business not only provides for us but also helps preserve our culture," she explains. Balancing the demands of entrepreneurship with family life has been a collaborative effort. "My children have been incredibly supportive, and they're involved in everything we do," she adds, highlighting the importance of family in her journey.

Saraswati's advice to aspiring women entrepreneurs is simple yet powerful: "Start small, stay patient, and don't be afraid to ask for help from family and friends." Her journey reflects the beauty of merging business success with cultural legacy, inspiring others to embrace their entrepreneurial dreams.

Crafting Memories with Shuvah Events



Amrita Adhikari and Aruna Maharjan are the creative minds behind Shuvah Events, a thriving event planning company that specializes in weddings and cultural celebrations. Offering comprehensive services from decor to photography and catering, they craft unforgettable experiences for their clients.

As mothers and experienced professionals, Amrita and Aruna faced unique challenges in balancing their work and family lives, especially while raising children with special needs. This inspired them to explore event

planning as a flexible career that would allow them to harness their creative skills and passion for celebrations. “We saw a need for personalized, culturally aware event planning, and we wanted to bring that to our community,” Amrita shares.

The most fulfilling aspect of their journey has been witnessing the joy of their clients during life’s significant milestones. “Creating lasting memories for people has been incredibly rewarding for us,” Aruna adds, emphasizing the satisfaction they derive from their work. While managing both business and personal responsibilities can be challenging, their partnership has been pivotal in navigating these demands. “We prioritize and share the workload effectively,” they explain, highlighting the power of teamwork in their success. To women thinking about starting their own businesses, Amrita and Aruna advise: “Don’t hesitate to start small. Take the leap, learn as you go, and remember that flexibility and teamwork are key to success.

Preserving Heritage Through Ama’s Kitchen



Binita Pant Basnet

Another inspiring entrepreneur is Binita Pant Basnet, the founder of Ama’s Kitchen in Durham, North Carolina. Originally from Kanchanpur in Saptari, Nepal, Binita grew up in a joint family where cooking for a crowd was second nature. After moving to the U.S., she continued sharing her love of Nepali cuisine with friends and family, receiving

constant encouragement to start a business. What started as a small venture selling bottled pickles has now grown into a thriving catering service specializing in traditional Nepali dishes. Binita’s catering business provides authentic Nepali meals to a growing customer base in the Research Triangle Park (RTP) area. Ama’s Kitchen has become a beloved name among Nepali food lovers, offering a taste of home for those far from it. Binita attributes much of her success to the support and encouragement from her family and friends. With the practical help of her daughters, sons-in-law, and her husband, she manages the business from home, ensuring that every dish is cooked with love and care. Her close friend, Geeta Basnet, played a crucial role in the early days of the business, providing not only advice but also the essential resources to get started.

What makes Binita’s journey even more remarkable is her dedication to mastering new skills. When she noticed a high demand for sel roti—a traditional Nepali rice flour bread—she decided to learn how to make it herself. Through practice and perseverance, she perfected the recipe, and today, Ama’s Kitchen’s sel roti is one of their best sellers. Binita’s story is a testament to how passion, hard work, and the support of loved ones can turn a simple hobby into a rewarding business.

Balancing her personal and professional life, Binita ensures that her business doesn’t interfere with family time. “Since we do catering from home, I only get busy when orders come in. I don’t take orders during personal or family events, which has made it easier to manage both the business and my personal life,” she shares. However, things do get busy during festivals, when the demand for traditional food spikes. For Binita, the most rewarding part of her business is hearing from happy customers who love the food. “The biggest reward for me has been when customers enjoy the food and compliment

its taste. It feels great when my cooking brings joy to others.'

Binita's advice to other aspiring entrepreneurs is simple: "As long as your mental and physical health support you, if you pursue a business you love with patience and dedication, you will definitely succeed.

As these incredible women demonstrate, the entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well among Nepali women in North Carolina. Their stories are not just about business success; they represent the resilience, creativity, and community spirit that define our culture. Let their journeys inspire others to pursue their dreams, forge their paths, and celebrate their unique contributions to our vibrant community.

NCNC Financial Statement January 01 to October 05, 2024

S.N	A/C name	Opening Balance	Current Bank Balance	Change in A/C Value
1	Main A/C 1886	\$108,548.76	\$11,482.29	-\$97,066.47
2	School A/C 4072	\$58,932.31	\$182,564.11	\$123,631.80
3	Community A/C 4080	\$37,553.68	\$38,588.46	\$1,034.78
Total		\$205,034.75	\$232,634.86	\$27,600.11

Income and Expense Breakdown: January 01 to October 05 2024

INCOME	Amount	Expenses	Amount
Benevity/Various Donations	\$7,393.23	Bhanu Jayanti Gift Expense	\$179.85
Dance Mantra Income	\$433.00	Education (Nepali school)	\$2,754.20
NCAAT Grant: 1st Pay	\$7,000.00	Event - Rental	\$5,618.00
NCNC Membership Fee	\$16,950.00	Event Expense	\$3,454.20
Nepal Day Income	\$8,198.00	Fees & Charges	\$252.33
Sangalo Dues Collection	\$4,376.00	Food Expense	\$1,717.60
School Fee/support	\$12,569.69	Gift (Teen, blood donation)	\$1,015.52
Satsang Income	\$402.00	Holi Expense	\$211.01
STEM Donation	\$3,635.00	HSNC Rent Nepali Pathasala	\$13,200.00
Town Of Cary Grant	\$750.00	HSNC Rental	\$165.00
Teej Collection	\$1,980.00	JV program	\$3,692.04
JV Event Collection	\$6,706.00	NCNC Election	\$1,591.65
Teen Volleyball Collection	\$1,250.00	NCNC Picnic	\$844.55
Interest(CD & MM)	\$4,007.92	NCNC Support to Community	\$1,720.56
TOTAL INCOME	\$75,650.84	NCNC Support to Duke	\$1,250.00
		Nepal Day Expense	\$6,151.42
		Nepali School Rent, Apex	\$1,040.00
		Nepali School Supplies	\$87.61
		Office Expenses (Business)	\$1,294.14
		Rent HSNC Teen Council	\$80.00
		School AC Transfer	\$450.00
		STEM-Expense	\$659.14
		Subscription* Zoom	\$14.99
		Sunday Satsang Expense	\$564.82
		Supplies (Business)	\$57.09
		TOTAL EXPENSES	\$48,050.73

Financial Wellness

Fundamental & Behavioral aspects of your financial Independence



Sharad Acharya

Financial Wellness is a holistic concept that includes both fundamental and behavioral aspects of income generation, assets allocation and liabilities management. The main goal of financial wellness is to achieve financial independence. Financial independence may mean different things to different people, however for the majority, it means managing the earnings during income-earning years and managing expenses in their retirement. In this article you will learn some key fundamental and behavioral aspects to achieve your financial independence.

Financial wellness is not as widely talked about but this is as important as physical or mental wellness. For the full aspect of life, organizations like 8 Dimensions of Wellness (<https://8dow.org/>) list many more 'dimensions'. Financial wellness is one of them and is no less important if not more than others. In this article, we will discuss a few aspects of financial wellness of an individual.

A. Fundamental Aspects

The fundamental aspects to financial wellness boil down to two main topics: a) Manage short term finance and b) Manage long term finance

Let's look at these aspects in a bit more detail.

1. Manage short term finance

Short term finance refers to managing financial activities for the duration of one year or less. A well-managed, short-term finance could be a solid foundation for your long term goals and therefore achieving financial independence. Following are key activities to manage short term finance:

1.1.1 Budgeting

You must plan for your monthly budget based on your expected gross earning, deductions, discretionary spending, non-discretionary spending, savings, loan payment and investments. As a starter, you should maintain a worksheet (as shown in this section) with income, expense and saving goals for every month and track it whether or not you are within the plan. These numbers are only shown for example and you should modify them to suit your needs.

You should update the numbers every month, preferably on the first day of the month and see whether your saving and spending goals are being met as planned or need to make some adjustments.

The traditional 50-30-20 rule still applies for the majority and you should at least start from there. According to this rule, the 50 represents that around 50% of your income should go towards the 'Needs' (non-discretionary spending), 30% to 'Wants' (discretionary) and 20% to 'Save' which includes emergency savings, retirement savings and saving for investments etc.

Example:

In January 2024:

1. Take home income was \$6,758.
2. Non-discretionary spending was \$3450, which is about 51%. This can be considered as 'Need'. Discretionary spending was \$1,700 which is about 25% and this is below 30%.

3. Savings was \$1,608 (24%) which is above the savings goal of 20%

In February 2024: Take home income \$6,474, need 3400(50%), want 2450(38%), save (10%). The 50-30-20 rule was totally out-of-control this month.

In March 2024, take home income \$6,474, need 3400(50%), want 2450(30%) and save (20%). The income and expenses confirmed the 50-30-20 rule for this month.

2.1.2 Emergency

Every person or family must have an emergency fund. As the foundation of financial wellbeing, the purpose is to fund for basic needs of the household when the regular income dries up because of partial cutbacks or layoffs. The fund should be spent only in the emergency. In all other times, it should be 'parked' in such a way that it is quickly accessible in a checking or savings accounts at a local bank. You should also explore online savings accounts or certificates of deposits which will pay higher intrests. There are many resources for your research but the following articles gives a pretty good overview.

1. <https://www.bankrate.com/banking/savings/best-high-yield-interests-savings-accounts/>

2. <https://www.nerdwallet.com/best/banking/high-yield-online-savings-accounts>

1.3 Autopilot

You may have heard the term called 'autopilot' in many contexts, but in personal finance which refers to arrangements to pay your monthly recurring bills automatically as much as possible. This avoids the anxiety of paying the bills on time or avoiding a penalty for a late or missed payment. You should also sign up for paperless billing, when possible, which is safer and offers environmental benefits. There are couple ways you can set

up auto payment:

1. Schedule recurring payment at the vendor website. This is the best option and you can do this by scheduling a payment amount and date of payment. The vendor pulls the money directly from your account and applies towards payment obligation for that month.

2. You can use the 'BillPay' feature of your bank which allows you to schedule a payment to be sent to the vendor by a given date. Some payments are sent via direct check which may take a few days so you should allow enough lead time to avoid late payment penalty.

1.4 Side hustle

Side hustle is something you could do to boost your earning if the income from your current job is not enough (which may cause financial distress). You should pick the side hustle in such a way that it does not impact your ability to perform your main job. As an example, if you are a software engineer with a good mathematics background, you could

	Month	1/1/2024	2/1/2024	3/1/2024
Income	Salary/wage	\$11,250	\$11,250	\$12,250
	Interest	\$677	\$393	\$501
	Pre tax income	\$11,927	\$11,643	\$12,751
Deductions	Pre tax insurance	\$117	\$117	\$117
	Taxes	\$2,888	\$2,888	\$2,888
	401K	\$2,017	\$2,017	\$2,017
	Total	\$5,021	\$5,021	\$5,021
	Post tax	\$148	\$148	\$148
	After tax income	\$6,758	\$6,474	\$7,582
Non discretionary (Need)	Housing	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600
	Food, clothing	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200
	Utilities	\$550	\$500	\$369
	Transportation	\$100	\$100	\$100
	Total non discretionary	\$3,450	\$3,400	\$3,269
Discretionary (Want)	Entertainment	\$250	\$400	\$400
	Eating out	\$250	\$200	\$200
	Vacation	\$100	\$1,000	\$1,000
	529 savings	\$1,000	\$500	\$500
	Invest in yourself	\$100	\$350	\$350
	Total discretionary	\$1,700	\$2,450	\$2,450
Save	Emergency fund	\$500	\$200	\$200
	IRA	\$500	\$500	\$500
	Saving/Checking	\$500	\$1,000	\$1,000
	Personal Investment	\$900	\$500	\$600
	Total Savinas	\$1,608	\$2,200	\$2,300

choose to become a part time math tutor for a local tutoring center during evenings or weekends to earn some money while helping kids. This should not impact your main job as a Software Engineer.

2. Manage long term finance

Managing long term finance includes activities for longer than one year, and usually involves planning for the big-ticket items such as retirement arrangements, saving to start a family including home purchase, financing for children's education and your personal investment goals. Let's look into these items in a bit more detail.

2.1 Arrangements for retirement

Funding for the retirement arrangements should be very top of your list of long term finance. Following are the activities you must have at the minimum.

1. If your company offers a retirement account, then you must enroll at the earliest possible date. Also, most companies provide a match, you must contribute at least to get the match amount. These contributions go from your pre-tax money which means you pay tax when you withdraw in future. So, tax planning is very important.

2. You should also contribute to the ROTH IRA with after tax money which does not incur any tax in retirement.

3. A Health Savings account (HSA) is another great way to save for your current and future health care expenses. It gives you a triple advantage: no tax on health-related expenses, opportunity to invest and grow, no tax on the growth.

2.2 Educational savings

In order to support education related spending for you or your family, you can start an educational savings account which can be used to cover higher education related expenses such as tuition, room and food.

There are numerous choices by state or institutions run such as Vanguard or Fidelity. You fund the account with after-tax money but the future withdrawals, including growth are tax free. As a rule of thumb, for your child, you should open the account before his or her first birthday and contribute enough to cover their 2 years of college costs in future.

2.3 Becoming a homeowner

Owning a home is touted as 'the American Dream' and should definitely be in your radar. However there are few points you should be aware of before deciding to become a homeowner.

1. Always do a buy vs rent analysis before deciding. Some cities like New York or San Francisco make sense to rent whereas other cities may make more sense to buy.

2. Owning a home means you will incur many different type of expenses. In addition to monthly mortgage payment, you owe property tax, insurance, utilities and regular maintenance.

3. Do not become a house poor! A house-poor is someone whose monthly house-related payments (listed above) are more than 28% of the gross income.

4. Have at least 10% on the down payment before deciding to buy a house.

2.4 Tax planning

Last but not least, tax planning is another important factor for long term finance. For 2024 the tax brackets listed at the IRS website range from 10%-35% of their taxable income. <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-provides-tax-inflation-adjustments-for-tax-year-2024>. Some of the tax planning tips include, but not limited to:

1. Learn about tax laws as much as possible. If you have any doubt, seek professional help for planning and preparation

2. Seek tax benefits offered by Federal and State governments such as Solar panels, electric vehicles, heat pumps etc.

3. Researching and identifying ways to reducing taxable income to move to lower bracket

4. Mix of taxable and tax-free withdrawal at the retirement. You need post tax accounts such as Roth IRA to lower the tax liabilities.

There are several other long-term finance topics that will have significant impact on your financial wellness include starting a family, accumulating additional wealth when you can, taking a long variation which you always wanted, and donating to a not for profit cause that you are passionate about. It will not be possible to discuss all of them but I would strongly recommend researching which topics are more relevant to your long term financial situation.

B. Behavioral Aspects

For the scope of this article, the target audience is someone who has a constant stream of income from their job or business and needs serious financial planning to become financially independent. To steady your financial journey at various stages in life thereby ensuring financial independence, let's discuss three key behavioral aspects: education, discipline and control.

1. Education

Financial education is key to financial wellness. You can achieve financial wellness from various sources: formal education, informal education or both. Some of the areas included but not limited are briefly listed here.

1. Enroll and complete financial education courses in community or 4-year colleges

2. Obtain certifications such as CPA, CFA, RIA

3. Participate online or in person target groups

4. Radio, TV, Newspaper articles, podcasts

2. Discipline

Discipline is the means by which your short and long term financial goals (discussed later) can be achieved without dramatic events. There are few areas that you need discipline on:

1. Spending within your means.

2. Plan financial activities, in writing as early as possible.

3. Keep your plan challenging but attainable.

4. Review and make necessary changes but never abandon them!

3. Control

Finally learn about what you can and cannot control thereby take control of your financial wellness:

1. You can't control interest rates, market volatility, returns on investment, financial instruments valuations etc. However, you should always be aware of the major events that might impact your wellbeing. For example, you can not control the rise and fall of the interest rate, but you can keep informed so that you can benefit from a change, if any.

2. You can control your behavior, savings rate, holding period and investing process.

C. Tools

Now let's look into some of the tools available at your disposal to create a solid financial foundation build over it.

1. Earning

To improve your financial condition and improve financial wellness, you should be

able to earn enough to support your short-term obligations and long term goals. Here are some common ideas to boost your income.

1. Obtain higher education or training needed for promotion or raise.
2. Engage in a side hustle related or non-related area of your expertise.
3. Learn about new tools, technology or trade and utilize them to your benefit.

2. Credit

For your financial wellness, access to credit is very important and you can do the following to build and improve your credit worthiness.

1. Take loans only when necessary.
2. Never default on the payments.
3. Aggressively manage your credit files
4. Don't overuse credit cards (1-2 good cards from renowned banks is enough)

3. Saving

Saving is most likely the most important tool for financial wellbeing. A large enough savings account should give peace of mind but this does not make the money work for you. Following strategy should work for most of us.

1. Emergency savings for 3+ months. Less is okay if you work in a field of high demand. No other savings account is necessary.

2. Additional savings can be parked at high yield savings accounts or short-term treasury bills which are yielding slightly below 5% at the time of this writing.

3. Other savings accounts should be opened for a targeted use such as educational savings accounts, savings for down payment on a house, wedding, vacation, vehicle etc.

4. Investment

Finally investment is available for your current and future wellbeing by taking advantage of different types of accounts available at your disposal.

1. A Retirement Account to put money aside now to withdraw in future when you reach the retirement age or stop working.

2. A Health Savings Account lets you invest, pretax, for your health-related expenses. Employers usually contribute money towards HSA and you will not lose the account when you change your job.

3. Individual Retirement Arrangements (Roth IRA) Let you put aside after tax money which will not incur any tax liability in future. It can also be transferred to your kids without any issue.

4. Risk free investments are types of investments such as savings accounts, certificate of deposits or treasury bills.

5. Investment for normal or hyper growth depending on your risk tolerance

D. Checklist

Finally let's go through the following financial wellness checklist. Please understand these and answer questions. If you answer 'Yes' to all of them, then you are in a good shape. If you answer 'No' to any of them, then you need to address them immediately and bring your financial wellness on track to become financially independent as early as possible.

Financial wellness checklist (answer all questions)

1. Do I earn enough for the 50-30-20 rule?
2. Do I have a monthly spending plan and track it monthly?
3. Do I have all financial obligations as an 'auto pilot'?
4. Do I have an emergency fund for 3+ months?

5. Do I have a fully funded retirement fund matched?
6. Do I have a Roth IRA, at least one investment account/savings account?
7. Do I know my retirement age and necessary monthly income ?
8. Am I ready to take professional advice, if necessary?
9. Am I satisfied with my current financial situation?

10. Do I feel confident and comfortable about my financial future?

(Sharad Acharya is a software engineer by profession with a background of system engineering and big data analytics. He has MBA degree with a Financial Management focus from NC State University by virtue of which he has keen interest in the personal and corporate finance worlds. He is interested in learning and teaching about technology and finance. He has been writing about important topics in personal finance for this magazine for the past several years. Please send your comments about a retirement question in general or this article in particular and he will happily answer!)

Free Community Health Clinic resources

Dharma Pantha

Types of services	Contact telephone	County
Mariam Clinic, Cary	(919) 824-4672	Wake
Avance Community Health of Southside, Raleigh	(919) 833-3111	Wake
Avance Community Health, Southeast Raleigh	336-421-3247	Wake
Advance Community Health -Apex	919-833-3111	Wake
Advance Community Health at Cary Dorcas Plaza	919-833-3111	Wake
Open Door Clinic of Urban Ministry of Wake County	919-746-0101	Wake
Alliance Medical Ministry	919-250-3320	Wake
Planned Parenthood-Raleigh Health center	919-833-7526	Wake
Shepherd Care Medical Clinic	(919) 404-2474	Wake
Wake County Public Health Center	919-250-3947	Wake
Lincoln Community Health Center- Early intervention clinic	919-560-7726	Durham
Lincoln Community Health Center-Healthcare for the homeless	919-808-5640	Durham
Lincoln Community Health Center-Holton Clinic	919-530-8210	Durham
Lincoln Community Health Center-Lyon park clinic	919-536-4205	Durham
Lincoln Community Health Center-Main site	919-956-4000	Durham

Lincoln Community Health Center-Walltown Neighbourhood Clinic	919-416-1254	Durham
Lincoln Community Health Center-Durham Recovery Response Center	919-797-1941	Durham
Carrboro Community Health Clinic	919-942-4781	Orange
Chapel Hill Community Health Center	919-951-7600	Orange
Planned Parenthood- Chapel Hill Health Center	919-942-7762	Orange
Student Health Action Coalition Dental	984-938-1031	Orange
Women's birth and wellness center	919-933-3301	Orange
Raleigh Crisis Center (Behavioral Services)	800-510-9132	Guilford
Alliance Health Behavioral services	800-510-9132	Guilford
Vaya Health Behavioral services	800-849-6127	Forsyth
Freedom House Recovery Center	919-442-1844	Orange
Healing Transition of Raleigh	919-865-2550	Wake
Durham Rescue Mission	919-688-9641	Durham
Compass	919-929-7122	Orange
InterActt	800-799-7233	Wake
Child Abuse hotline	800-422-4453	Nationwide
Suicide Prevention hotline	988	Nationwide
Anxiety/Panic	800-64-PANIC	Nationwide
Rape Crisis Center	919-967-7273/800-935-4783	Statewide
Legal Aid of NC	919-542-0475	Statewide
Apply for Medicaid	919-245-2800	Orange
Apply for Supplemental Security Income SSI	800-772-1213	Statewide

Note: The guide was compiled by Dharma R Pantha, LCMHC, LCAS, CCS, Clinical Director at Dharma Counseling Services, PLLC (DWI assessment, Mental Health and Substance use evaluation & counseling services) and Durham, NC 27707, TEL: 919-737-8996,

INFO@DHARMACOUNSELINGSERVICE.COM (Please call before you go to clinic)

References:

https://freeclinicdirectory.org/north_carolina,

<http://crisissolutionsnc.org/north-carolina-crisis-services-by-county/>

NCNC Teen Council's Year of Learning and Growth: Empowering Tomorrow's Leaders

Dr. Archana Lamichhane and Niveeta Sharma

The **NCNC Youth Empowerment Series** is a youth-oriented initiative launched under the NCNC Teen Council in September 2022. The council is dedicated to fostering a community that promotes engagement through programs designed to enhance outreach, support member growth, and encourage both academic and personal development. Since its inception, the NCNC Teen Council has grown to over 60 active members, reflecting its strong impact on the Nepali High School Community in the RTP area.

The NCNC Teen Council 2023-2024 held a series of enriching events and workshops throughout the year aimed at fostering personal and professional growth. Key among these was the **Personal Finance Panel**, where experts shared insights on budgeting and saving, helping attendees make informed financial decisions early on. Similarly, the **Career Initiatives Panel** featured professionals from various fields discussing career paths, industry trends, and networking strategies, offering invaluable guidance on navigating the job market. **"Navigating Tomorrow's Career"** addressed the future of careers shaped by automation, technology, and data, offering insights into essential tech skills. **"College Insights"** provided guidance on college admissions, featuring advice from college-going students on their experiences transitioning from high school to college. Another workshop, **"Master the Art of the College Essay,"** focused on enhancing essay-writing skills for college applications with real-time practice, followed by **"Embracing Your Roots,"** which explored balancing cultural identity with modern life, offering strategies for integrating tradition into contemporary

contexts. In May, Mental Wellness Month, **"Intergenerational Insights on Mental Health"** brought parents and kids from the same household, sharing their experiences on mental health across generations.

The Teen Council has an ongoing partnership with Duke Diya through the **My Buddy Program**, providing mentoring opportunities that have benefited a third of its members

Beyond educational events, social gatherings like the **Holiday Potluck** and **Hike and Picnic** enhanced community spirit, fostering strong bonds among members. Additionally, the **Sand Volleyball Tournament fundraiser** raised \$1,250 for Duke Children's Hospital, exemplifying our commitment to giving back.

Looking Ahead: As we plan for the next year, the NCNC Teen Council aims to introduce more innovative and engaging programs, expand our community outreach and service initiatives, and enhance member engagement and support their academic and personal growth.

We would like to thank Ayug and Nichole who served as the co-leads for the NCNC Teen Council 2023-2024. Additionally, we thank all members, volunteers, and partners for their dedication and contributions to a successful year.

Advisors:

*Dr. Archana Lamichhane, Sr. Scientist, US EPA / Adjunct Professor, UNC Chapel Hill
Niveeta Sharma, Infrastructure Engineering Architect, HPE | NCNC, BOD 2024/2025*



NCNC's 2024 Year in Review

Kalpana Bhandari

Executive Secretary, NCNC

Since its inception in 1999, Nepal Center of North Carolina (NCNC) has been working to bring various programs and activities targeted to enrich Nepali communities while fostering relationships with other communities in North Carolina.

With the mission to continue and enhance NCNC's goal, the current NCNC Board started its tenure at the beginning of January 2024. Since then the board has continued the annual activities and added several more to its portfolio.

The events were made possible by numerous volunteers, supporters, and donors, and we express our sincere gratitude to each and every one of them.

Nepali Pathshala

Nepali Pathshala in Morrisville, started in 2010 with about 20 students, has grown to over 175 students in 2024. The school teaches Nepali language to children aged 5 and above, offering basic, intermediate, and advanced classes. It runs every Sunday from January to September and offers optional extracurricular activities like yoga, dance, storytelling, and musical instrument learning. To expand, a pilot project was initiated in Holly Springs in April 2024 with 25 students. The kids also showcase their Nepali Pathshala skills at NCNC events and participate in a field trip to Kadampa Center in Raleigh during Buddha Jayanti.

Highway and Trail Clean Up

NCNC has been maintaining a three-mile stretch of highway between McCrimmon Parkway and Louis Stephens Drive since 2012, with volunteers taking time out of their busy

schedules to help with the annual clean-up, a tradition that has been maintained for 12 years. The current board continues this tradition, with another park adoption scheduled for 9/21/24.

Blood Drive

NCNC in collaboration with the Blood Connection held an annual blood drive in September where donors from the Nepali community poured in to donate their precious blood. In addition, a blood drive was held in April during Nepal day which was a collaborative effort between NCNC, NRNA NC, and NRNA NCC to honor the memory of Arjun Mainali, an exemplary blood donor.

Sunday Satsang

In order to provide a platform for Nepali seniors to connect and celebrate their cultural heritage, and pass on the tradition to the first generation Nepali-Americans, Sunday Satsang was initiated in February 2024 where people from all walks of life come together to sing, dance, and have a fellowship. The program runs on the second Sunday of every month and is attended by hundreds.

Celebrating Nepali festivals and traditions:

Since its inception, NCNC has focused on bringing communities together by sharing festivities from back home.

In March, NCNC organized the festival of color, Holi which signifies the arrival of Spring. People of all ages, especially children, enjoyed throwing colored powders at each other, singing, and dancing.



Adopt a Trail Clean Up



After a sports event



Autism Awareness Event



Bhanu Jayanti Celebration



Celebrating Holi



Celebrating Seniors during International Womens Day

Nepal Day, the largest Nepali gathering in North Carolina, and a signature program of NCNC since 2017, saw more than 2,000 participants in 2024. People enjoyed food stalls, vendors, cultural and heritage displays, parades and musical performances. To coincide with Nepali New Year, the third Saturday in April is declared as Nepal Day by the state and county governments in the Triangle area, including the Town of Morrisville, Wake county, and NC State. Town of Apex signed the proclamation for the first time in 2024 recognizing the third Saturday of April as Nepal Day.

Bhanu Bhakta Acharya, the pioneer poet of Nepal, was celebrated in July during **Bhanu Jayanti program**, which was organized in collaboration with Nepali Literary Society where children practiced reciting their favorite Nepali festivals. Local poets recited their creations during the event.

NCNC has been appreciating its members for a number of years by welcoming them in an annual picnic. 2024 was no different and the picnic was organized in July. Even though the picnic participants have exponentially risen in numbers from 30 when the tradition started to nearly 1,000 in recent years, it was an equal amount of fun with food, games, and entertainment.

Teej, a festival solely dedicated to women, was celebrated in August. NCNC organized a day to celebrate the festive season with performances, vendors, food, DJ and dance. On the day of teej, NCNC coordinated with Hindu Society of North Carolina (HSNC) and their priest to organize a **teej puja** where women fasted and came together to do a group puja and reminisce memories from Nepal through songs and dances.

NCNC has been on the forefront for a number of years now dedicating an evening, **Shubhakamana Saanjh**, to celebrate a conglomerate of festivals, including Dashain,

Tihar, and Chhath. Dashain, the largest festival of Nepal, celebrates victory of good over evil. Tihar, a five-day festival, celebrates a variety of things, including animals, respect for self, Goddess of Wealth, God of death, and a bond between siblings. Chaath celebrates Sun for giving life. This festive season was celebrated in November which saw performances from local artists and delicious foods from food vendors.

NCNC has continued to preserve the cultural tradition and enhance community bonding through Deusi-bhailo celebration. Deusi-bhailo, a popular tradition during Tihar, involves a group of people going door-to-door performing folk songs and dances and wishing prosperity upon the household. In return, the performers are blessed with money and food. NCNC has been dedicating the money raised during Deusi-bhailo for the continuation and betterment of Nepali pathshala.

As in past years, NCNC celebrated International Women's Day. This year, we organized a week-long activity in the first week of March. These activities were organized by NCNC in collaboration with NRNA-NC Chapter, NC NLS, and INLS-NC Chapter. We called for and shared in our social media sites the write-ups from various individuals on the most inspiring woman in their lives. We hosted a webinar on Domestic Violence giving an audience a glimpse of what constitutes domestic violence and ways to get out of the situation. We held a yoga and meditation session focusing on the health and wellness of women. We ended the week with a program titled 'Empowering Generations: Celebrating Seniors and Literary Excellence' where individuals shared their thoughts and poems on various topics related to women. Three senior women over the age of 80 were also felicitated during the program.



Respected gurus LP Bhanu Sharma, Ramesh Nepal, & guruma Devi during Purna Swastha Vigyan



Dance Mantra



Devotees after Teej Puja



Devotees during Teej Puja



During Adopt a Highway



During NCNC Teen Council

Community Awareness Events: NCNC aims to raise awareness on various topics affecting Nepali communities residing in North Carolina.

This year NCNC held four events, including two virtual events and two in-person events. **Basic Tax Filing and Personal Finance** focused on helping people understand the process of tax filing. **Donating to NCNC through Benevity and American Giving** focused on how employees can leverage their companies' corporate giving to benefit NCNC.

NCNC touched on two topics that are not frequently and openly discussed among Nepalis. The first event, **Understanding Autism: From Parents and Psychiatrists**, brought parents together who talked about the challenges of raising autistic children and shared the available resources. The second event, **Mental health event: Anxiety, Depression, and Suicide** brought mental health professionals to talk about mental health issues affecting the Nepali population in recent years.

During the month of May, a **mental health awareness month**, we attempted to break a barrier and called for write ups for people to share inspiring stories of someone overcoming a mental health crisis and/or the lessons learned. While we received only a handful of articles, it was a positive start.

NCNC took an initiative to organize **Dance Mantra**, a program designed exclusively for adults who wanted to explore the joy of dance and music. While there was a high demand in the beginning, the interest gradually declined. A total of seven sessions were held between April and June.

With an aim of increasing health and wellbeing and enhancing community bonding, NCNC started a **Hiking Club** in May, which has organized four group hikes so far.

NCNC Technical Events/Activities: In addition to celebrating culture and traditions, NCNC is involved in helping targeted Nepali groups excel in technical skills through various activities.

NCNC Teen Council, a youth-oriented initiative, has doubled its size from 30 to 60 in the past two years. The council allows young leaders to plan and execute monthly workshops and activities, with advisors' guidance. In 2024, the council hosted events like workshops, potlucks, hikes, and sand volleyball tournaments, raising \$1,250 for Duke Children's Hospital. NCNC Teen Council also partners with Duke Diya to offer a My Buddy Program for Nepali teens, providing mentorship opportunities.

NCNC Professional Network is a platform for working Nepali professionals to network and seek job and other opportunities. The network has been created with the aim of supporting each other for professional development and providing assistance and counseling to community members in need. More than 130 members are a part of the professional network in the Viber group.

STEM Events provide young learners with opportunities to explore robotics, including how to create robots and understand their functionality, learn about drones and its career prospects. In 2024, NCNC in collaboration with Gen Inspired, held two STEM events, **Robotics Show and Tell and RECF Aerial Drone Program**. As a result of these programs, several Nepali Kids signed up for Summer Camps for extended learning, participated in Young Women In Tech and Girl Power events which expanded their STEM skills. The events also led to forming VIQRC and Drone teams in the RTP area under the RECF programs.



During NCNC Teen Council



Handing off \$1250 to Duke Children Hospital by NCNC Teen Council



Holi



Kids during Nepal Day



Kids playing during NCNC Picnic



Mental health event by NCNC Teen Council

SPEF Scholarship was established by Sujan Parita Education Foundation in 2019 to provide scholarships to college students of Nepali origin. The award is managed and coordinated by NCNC in collaboration with the foundation. In 2024, we received applications from many highly qualified candidates and awarded a \$1000 cash prize to two students and \$150 cash prize to 4 students.

NCNC collaborated with Karobar Business to bring a month-long **Mindful March** to bring stories of success, struggle, and strength of various young local Nepali talents who shared their inspiring life journey. The videos are available on NCNC's Youtube channel.

Collaboration with other organizations: NCNC has always collaborated with various organizations to bring the programs benefiting Nepali communities in North Carolina.

NCNC organized a one day **Purna Swasthya Vigyan** program in June in collaboration with Jeevan Vigyan USA and several local organizations. Jeevan Vigyan, a Nepali non-profit organization, identifies itself as a modern spiritual center that teaches the art and science of living a happy and spiritual life through meditation and yoga. The founders and spiritual gurus LP Bhanu Sharma and Ramesh Nepal shared the spiritual discourse and led participants through yoga and meditation sessions.

NCNC held several **voter registration drives** during various NCNC events, including picnic, Teej, and annual blood drive. The drives were hosted in collaboration with North Carolina Asian Americans Together (NCAAT) as part of the civic engagement grant received from NCAAT in 2024.

NCNC collaborated with several local sports clubs to organize various sport tournaments. NCNC was involved as a collaborator and

a major sponsor in the cricket and tennis tournaments by **Everest Community Club**, volleyball tournament by **Everest Volleyball Club** and Dashain Cup Soccer tournament by the local **HOFEX Group**. The local sports clubs have always been at the forefront of supporting NCNC activities, raising funds, providing volunteers and jumping into any opportunity to help.

In addition to hosting events and activities, in 2024 NCNC participated in events organized by local organizations, including **Spring Daze festival** hosted by Town of Cary in Spring and **Lazy Daze festival** hosted by Town of Cary in Fall. NCNC also participated in **NCAAT Common Roots festival** in May and **the International Festival** in Raleigh in September. These events aim to promote Nepal to local residents where a number of visitors stop by the booth to ask questions about Nepal or share their experience from Nepal.





NCNC Hiking Club



NCNC Picnic



Nepal Day Proclamation at NC State



Nepal Day



Nepali pathshala kids visit to Kadampa Center in Raleigh during Buddha Jayanti



Parade during Nepal Day



Participant after donating blood for the first time



Participants at Teej



Participants during Purna Swasthya Vigyan



Participation during Common Roots Festival



Participation during Lazy Daze by Town of Cary



Participation in Spring Daze organized by Town of Cary

Building Our Future: The Quest for a Dedicated Community Center and Mandir for the Nepali Diaspora in North Carolina

Bikas Sapkota, Sujan Neupane, Dr. Bikash Shakya

As the Nepali community in the RTP area flourishes, the urgent need for a dedicated space has sparked an exciting new chapter. Join us as we explore the journey toward creating a community center and Mandir that honors our cultural and spiritual heritage while serving the unique needs of our diaspora! A Mandir is a spiritual oasis, a community center nurtures our collective spirit. They both provide a refuge for peace, solace and a safe haven that we can call our own.

The question of the decade: NCNC, Mandir, and Community Center?

As the Nepalese diaspora in the RTP area continues to gather steam with no rate of slowdown, the need for our own community center has become increasingly urgent. For years, there has been a debate whether to establish this center within Nepal Center of North Carolina (NCNC) or as a separate entity or whether to include religious aspects or focus solely on community needs. While there are several Hindu Temples and Buddha Stupas in the area, each is managed by different groups and they cannot cater to our specific requirements for a venue, a hall, a classroom space, and other facilities geared towards serving us.

We have long felt left behind when it comes to securing venues for our events, often depending on the availability and goodwill of other community center management, which frequently prioritizes their own programs. With the growing population, the need to address this has become more evident. Our need for our own space has

been studied and researched rather than driven by emotions or sentiments.

In order to address the aforementioned needs, we created Pashupati Buddha Mandir of North Carolina (PBMNC). Our decision to establish a new organization was guided by a well-organized and inclusive process, aiming to create a community center that not only addresses our needs but also features artifacts of Shree Pashupatinath Mandir and Buddha Stupa. While this new entity is legally separate from NCNC, it remains closely connected to their Bylaws and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which outlines the collaboration and shared objectives. The Bylaws and MOU are available for review, feedback, and comments.

Are NCNC and PBMNC the Same or Separate?

The answer is both yes and no. Legally, NCNC and PBMNC are separate entities; however, emotionally and practically, they are closely linked in a common mission: to serve the Nepali diaspora in North Carolina. It is important to find a balance between risks and responsibilities, as many organizations establish distinct entities for different purposes under the same ownership.

In this model, the ownership entity handles land and property, while the operational entity manages daily operations, programs, and services. This separation streamlines the management of operational risks, responsibilities, and ownership.

The relationship between NCNC and PBMNC has been formalized through a detailed MoU and the PBMNC bylaws. The MoU outlines their collaboration, resource sharing, and shared vision, while the bylaws define their joint efforts. Together, these documents ensure that both entities work harmoniously to create a community center that benefits the Nepali diaspora, serving as a vibrant hub for cultural, spiritual, and social activities.

Why is the Mandir not within NCNC?

The decision not to operate the Mandir and community center under NCNC stemmed from a few critical considerations. First, the scope and mission of NCNC are limited and primarily focused on non-religious activities. Additionally, incorporating the Mandir within NCNC was not feasible due to its status as a non-religious organization. NCNC's bylaws explicitly prohibit involvement in religious activities, which would conflict with the purpose and function of the Mandir.

Why Not a Community Center within NCNC?

While a community center is essential, financing such a project without the inclusion of a religious component, such as the Mandir, would have been challenging. The Mandir plays a significant role in attracting donations and support from those who see it as both a cultural and spiritual necessity. As a result, the only viable option was to create a separate religious entity dedicated to building and managing the Mandir and community center. This decision was not made lightly; it involved years of discussion and deliberation. While many community members initially felt uneasy about forming a new charitable organization separate from NCNC, the majority eventually recognized the necessity of this structure.

This formation allows both entities to operate within their legal and functional boundaries while still working toward the common goal of serving the Nepali community in

North Carolina. Ultimately, there is no single "correct" way to structure such organizations; however, given the circumstances, creating a separate religious entity was the most practical and effective solution.

Why do we need a Nepali Mandir?

We need a Nepali Mandir in North Carolina for these reasons:

Cultural and Spiritual Significance:

Pashupatinath is a revered Hindu temple, and Nepal is the birthplace of Lord Buddha. Establishing a Mandir honoring both allows the Nepali community to preserve and celebrate their cultural and religious heritage.

Community Support:

The area has a significant population of Hindus and Buddhists, not just from the Nepali community but also from other South Asian backgrounds. This Mandir would provide a unifying space for worship, cultural events, and spiritual practices, fostering a sense of community.

The financial support and sustainability:

A charitable organization largely depends on membership, donations and contributions from its members. Regular giving and effective fundraising are vital for maintaining operations, supporting programs, and achieving long-term objectives. According to the Hoover Institution, "religious individuals are significantly more generous in their support compared to secular individuals. On average, religious people donate \$2,210 annually, while secular individuals donate \$642. Additionally, religious people volunteer an average of 12 times per year, compared to 5.8 times for secular people. Despite representing only 33% of the population, religious individuals account for 52% of donations and 45% of volunteer hours. In contrast, secular individuals, who make up 26% of the population, contribute only 13% of donations and 17% of volunteer hours." This

data highlights the critical role that engaged and committed members play in sustaining charitable organizations.

Broader Appeal: The Mandir could attract support from a wider audience, including those with similar religious beliefs or an interest in Nepali culture, helping ensure its sustainability.

Cultural Legacy: The Mandir would promote Nepal's rich cultural legacy, serving as a point of cultural exchange and allowing people from different backgrounds to learn about and appreciate Nepali traditions.

What is PBMNC?

Purpose: PBMNC is established for religious and charitable purposes, with the goal of constructing an embodiment of the Pashupatinath Temple, a Buddha Stupa (Chaitya), and a Community Center.

Facilities: The Community center will provide office and event space for the NCNC to conduct its programs and activities. Although legally distinct, this new organization is committed to building on the values and mission of NCNC while addressing the religious and spiritual needs that NCNC cannot fulfill

Establishing the Mandir as a separate entity is crucial for following Reasons:

NCNC and PBMNC are partner organizations, united by a shared goal of establishing a community center to serve the Nepali diaspora in North Carolina. This collaboration reflects their commitment to creating a space that fosters cultural preservation, spiritual growth, and community engagement for Nepali immigrants and their descendants. Together, NCNC and PBMNC work towards building a vibrant hub that will support the social, cultural, and religious needs of the Nepali community in the region.

Preserving Religious Integrity: By operating independently, the Mandir can focus exclusively on its religious and spiritual mission, ensuring that the sanctity of religious practices, rituals, and traditions is maintained without interference from other organizational activities.

We researched various similar entities with comparable scopes of work and discovered that this format is widely adopted by most charitable organizations in the USA. This approach not only aligns with best practices but also provides a robust framework for effectively managing and operating a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving the community.

Risk Diversification: Separating the Mandir from other operational aspects helps to minimize the risks associated with day-to-day activities, such as financial management, legal liabilities, or administrative duties. This structure ensures that the Mandir's religious mission is safeguarded while allowing other entities to handle more secular responsibilities, thereby reducing overall risk and ensuring long-term sustainability.

Moreover, the Mandir serves as a cultural fulcrum, preserving Nepali traditions and connecting younger generations to their roots. It provides a sacred space for worship, offering peace and a sense of belonging to those following Hinduism and related traditions. The Mandir fosters community unity, hosting social events, religious ceremonies, and providing support to newcomers. Additionally, it acts as a bridge for cultural exchange, allowing the broader North Carolina community to appreciate Nepali culture and enriching the region's diversity.

How can you Join/Help?

With the establishment of the charitable entity and its Bylaws on August 26, 2024, you can support PBMNC by selecting a membership category that best suits you from the options listed in the Bylaws. By becoming a member, you are eligible to serve as a Director, as outlined in the Bylaws. If you have the time and desire to contribute further, you can also join our management team and serve as a Board Director, playing a direct role in the leadership and development of our organization.

Membership Classes:

Trustees: Diamond - \$50K, Platinum - \$25K, and Gold - \$10K

Members: Silver - \$5K, Founding Life - \$2.5K, Life - \$1K, Yearly - \$500, Honorary - \$0

Board of Directors (BoD): The BoD will consist of 15 directors, with 2 seats reserved for NCNC designees. The terms will be staggered over 3 years.

Board of Trustees (BoT): The BoT will include 9 members: 6 Donor Trustees and 3 Elected Trustees, with staggered 3-year terms.

Term Limits: Both BoD and BoT members may serve for two consecutive terms, after which a one-term gap is required.

Bylaw Development: The Bylaw is the result of a collective and collaborative effort by community members since 2015. We express our deepest gratitude to the NCNC Board of Directors, Board of Trustees, Advisors, Members, and all well-wishers for their invaluable support, guidance, and assistance in establishing this entity for the common good. We appreciate your patience and support. Your contributions have been essential in making this a reality, and we count on continued support to sustain our efforts in coming days.

The Psychology of Procrastination



Shine Lamichhane

Have you ever found yourself repeatedly putting off tasks, even when you know it might lead to negative consequences? Well, this common behavior is known as procrastination, and it has many underlying causes. Procrastination is often defined as the time when you delay doing something you promised to do, even though you know it might lead to negative consequences. There are two main types of procrastination: active and passive. Active procrastination is when you purposely delay a task because you know you can complete it quickly later. Some argue that active procrastinators don't count as true procrastinators since they plan their delays. On the other hand, passive procrastination is unintentional and often more draining because it consumes more mental energy the longer the task remains undone.

When we perceive a task as threatening, our bodies respond by procrastinating as a way to protect us. This triggers a fight, flight, or freeze response, causing us to engage in other activities instead. Research shows that we tend to procrastinate on tasks that induce negative emotions. For example, studies on university students reveal that they often delay tasks they find stressful or challenging. Interestingly, the perceived difficulty of a task tends to increase the longer we put it off. According to Dr. Fuschia Sirois, people engage in this irrational cycle

of chronic procrastination because they struggle to manage negative emotions associated with a task. It's important to note that procrastination is not the same as laziness. Procrastination involves delaying tasks while being active, whereas laziness involves a lack of energy and interest, leading to inaction. Surprisingly, people often procrastinate because they care too much, not because they're lazy. An experiment involving students found that those who procrastinated ranked the idea of studying as more stressful, making it harder to start. On the other hand, when they actually studied, they realized it wasn't as bad as they had imagined. This suggests that procrastination is often driven by negative emotions, making some individuals more susceptible than others, especially those with low self-esteem or poor emotional regulation.

While procrastination might work for some people in the short term, it can lead to frustration and significant consequences over time. The impact of procrastination largely depends on the length of the delay. When there's a deadline, procrastination's effects are limited, but without a deadline, nothing gets done until you decide to start. So, how can we break the cycle of procrastination? One way is to "short-circuit" the stress response by lowering the barrier to starting a task. For instance, instead of studying for two hours, commit to just 20 minutes, or break down a 90-page reading assignment into smaller chunks. This makes the task seem more manageable. Additionally, adding rewards for completing tasks, such as checklists or habit trackers, can motivate you to get started. It's helpful to identify the underlying causes of procrastination and eliminate distractions. Research shows that responding negatively to our own procrastination only worsens its effects. A TED-Ed video explains that procrastination occurs when we avoid tasks for no good reason, even though we know there will be negative consequences. This stress-induced

response can overpower our logical thinking, especially in younger individuals whose brains are still developing. The next time you feel the urge to procrastinate, remember these strategies to help you manage your time better and avoid the long-term effects of chronic procrastination.

References:

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Pandas



Salil Dhakal

6th grade, Mills Park Middle School

Did you know that pandas spend approximately 12 hours a day eating? Pandas are mammals and weigh up to 300 pounds. They are about 4 to 5 feet tall, and they are omnivores. Pandas also have one of the largest habitats in the world. The giant panda lives exclusively in six montane regions in a few Chinese provinces at 3800 ft and 9800 ft. The giant panda's diet includes mostly bamboo and some plants. Bamboo is low in protein and high in fiber. Pandas need to eat 20 to 40 pounds a day. Pandas' molars are very broad and flat. The shape of the teeth helps the animals crush the bamboo shoots, leaves and stems they eat. They can chomp on bamboo up to one-and-a-half inches thick.

To get the bamboo to their mouths, they hold the stems with their front paws, which have enlarged wrist bones that act as thumbs for

gripping. A panda should have at least two bamboo species where it lives, or it will starve. A scarcity of bamboo threatens the already limited panda population. Giant pandas are solitary. They have a highly developed sense of smell that males use to avoid each other and find females for spring mating. After a five-month pregnancy, females give birth to a cub or two, though they cannot care for both twins. The blind infants weigh only 5 ounces at birth and cannot crawl until they reach three months of age. They are born white and develop their much-loved coloring later.

I love pandas because of their unique colors, which separate them from other animals. Pandas are also endangered, which is why we humans should stop cutting down trees and let them live in the habitat that they deserve. I hope you learned something from this essay and enjoyed it.

Past VS Present



Supreme Timalcina

Many things have happened over the 4.543 billion years that the Earth has been around, from Mummies to Flying cars. But right now, we'll start on the past. In the past, there were many things to talk about but let's stick with the important ones first

Empires

Empires are very important. Empires are just some big fragments we had but they are the countries now but they share essential things with us. Empires come with religions. In empires, Empires have played a significant

role in shaping world history, cultures, and politics. They often involve the dominance of one nation or group over others, typically through military conquest, economic control, or political influence

Monuments and Buildings

Ancient monuments and buildings offer fascinating insights into the architectural achievements, cultural practices, and technological capabilities of past civilizations. Ex. Pyramids of Giza: The Great Pyramid, built for Pharaoh Khufu, is one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. It exemplifies the Egyptians' advanced knowledge of engineering and construction.

Karnak Temple: A vast complex of temples, chapels, and pylons dedicated primarily to the god Amun-Ra. It showcases the grandeur and scale of ancient Egyptian religious architecture.

Relics and Treasure

Ancient relics and treasures provide invaluable insights into past civilizations, reflecting their art, culture, beliefs, and daily life. Tutankhamun's Tomb: Discovered in 1922 by Howard Carter, this tomb contained an incredible array of artifacts, including the famous golden death mask of the young pharaoh Tutankhamun, as well as jewelry, chariots, and other treasures.

Rosetta Stone: This artifact was key in deciphering Egyptian hieroglyphs. It features the same text written in Greek, Demotic, and hieroglyphic scripts, enabling scholars to understand the ancient language.

These are some of the many things that the past has presented. Now we will move on to the present.

Geography

Our world geography now from the past is very different. There are proper cars for transportation as well as smooth roads. The landforms have completely changed. Comparing present-day geography to past

geography reveals how our understanding of the world and its physical and human landscapes has evolved. Like the plain land in Europe 5000 years ago will not be the same today because our geography has changed. There will probably be a bunch of buildings and a city full of people who have lived there for some time. Present-day geography benefits from advanced technology and scientific understanding, allowing for detailed and accurate mapping, comprehensive environmental insights, and a global perspective. In contrast, past geography was constrained by the limitations of exploration, technology, and knowledge, resulting in a more fragmented and less precise understanding of the world.

Technology
The technology we had in the past is changing rapidly. More than 600 years ago we didn't even have any technology but now we have flying cars, robots, and more insane levels of technology. Technology is very important because in this generation technology is everything, meaning that everything relies on technology like jobs, farming, sports, entertainment, etc.

Cities

Cities have evolved and have improved ever since technology has been a thing. Cities have been rapidly growing and this means more of the world's population lives in these places. Present-day cities are diverse, and dynamic, and reflect a range of economic, cultural, and social characteristics.

Ex. New York:

One of the most well-known cities in the world and is very diverse with the people living there. New York has evolved into a very big city with massive skyscrapers and many job opportunities. They also have business jobs and opportunities. New York is a great place to live and explore.

These cities reflect the diversity of modern urban life, each with its unique characteristics, challenges, and contributions to global culture and economics.

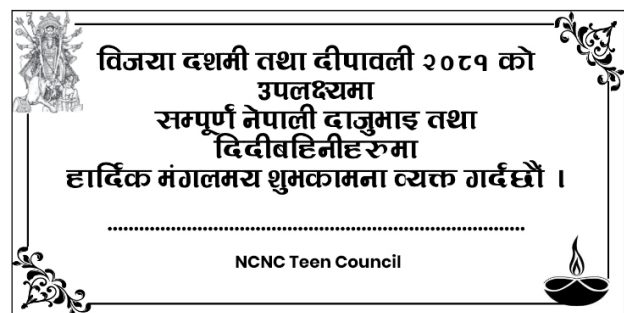
In conclusion, the past and present are both one of the most important parts of life and they revolutionize everything. The world has been changing rapidly and it is great to learn about the past and improve from it. These changes include economics, geography, landforms, structures, cities, technology and etc. These two are great and we should always study the importance of these things.

A Million Years Ago



Avyn Lamsal, 2nd grade

Sometimes I sit and wonder
How was Earth a million years ago?
Did flowers even grow?
Is there anything to show ?
The only way to figure out is to go back
A million years ago.
I wish they built a time machine
and picked me up to go
Then I would figure out how the earth was
A million years ago.
I wish to see a dimension 1 day ago.





Trashy Management; How our waste ends up on the other side of the globe

Pratigya Banjade , Grade 11

Sand is often perceived as an infinite resource due to its abundant presence in deserts and on beaches. It is also an essential component of modern civilization being the most consumed natural resource after water. However, sand is facing a global shortage that poses significant challenges to sustainable development along with colossal environmental and societal impacts.

Driven primarily by rapid urbanization, population growth, and infrastructure development, the global demand for sand has skyrocketed past what is sustainable. In the last two decades, the extraction of sand has increased threefold. The construction industry is the largest consumer of sand and since desert sand, which is abundant, is not suitable for construction purposes due to its smoothness and lack of angularity, which affects its binding properties in concrete, leading to a severe depletion of sand reserves, especially those of high-quality sand used in construction (Lambin).

Additionally, sand mining can cause erosion, loss of biodiversity, and the destruction of ecosystems, particularly in riverbeds, beaches, and coastal areas. These

environmental impacts are exacerbated by the illegal sand trade, which often operates with little regard for environmental regulations, leading to unsustainable and unregulated sand extraction. Moreover, the depletion of sand resources threatens coastal communities, where the removal of sand can lead to increased vulnerability to storms, rising sea levels, and other climate-related threats (UNEP). The competition for sand has led to conflicts in many regions, as communities and industries vie for control over dwindling resources. In some cases, the sand crisis has fueled corruption and organized crime, as illegal sand mining operations proliferate. These activities not only harm the environment but also undermine the rule of law and contribute to social instability.

One of the most critical steps is the development and enforcement of regulations that govern sand mining. These regulations should aim to limit the extraction of sand from vulnerable ecosystems, promote sustainable mining practices, and ensure that the environmental and social impacts of sand mining are minimized (Filho et al.).

The global sand crisis is a pressing issue that demands immediate attention. Public awareness and education are also crucial components of any solution to the sand crisis. Increasing public understanding of the importance of sand as a resource and the consequences of its depletion can lead to greater support for sustainable practices and policies. Campaigns that highlight the environmental and societal impacts of sand mining can help mobilize public opinion and encourage more responsible consumption and production practices (Lambin). By implementing a combination of regulatory measures and public awareness campaigns, it is possible to mitigate the impacts of the sand crisis and move towards a more sustainable future. The time to act is

now, as the consequences of inaction could be devastating for both the environment and society.



The Success of Tesla

Nirbirodh Timalina

Tesla has traveled a long and challenging road to success. Since its IPO in 2010, the renowned auto manufacturer has experienced remarkable highs, significant lows, and everything in between. Despite these fluctuations, the company has broken records and played a pivotal role in bringing electric vehicles into the mainstream. Now, 18 years after its founding and 12 years after going public, Tesla is poised for a fully electric and autonomous future.

Tesla was founded in July 2003 by engineers Martin Eberhard and Marc Tarpenning in San Carlos, California. At its inception, Eberhard served as CEO, while Tarpenning took on the role of CFO. The company was originally called Tesla Motors, and it was named after the famous Serbian-American physicist Nikola Tesla. Elon Musk, now synonymous with Tesla, began his involvement in 2004, marking the start of a long and transformative journey for the company.

Tesla unveiled its prototype, the original Tesla Roadster, 2006 to an invitation-only audience of 350 people in Santa Monica, California. The Roadster, powered by a lithium-ion battery pack, boasted a driving range of nearly 250

miles. Customers, including celebrities like George Clooney, placed deposits of \$100,000 to secure one of the first units, with an expected release date in 2007.

The years following 2006 were a period of restructuring for Tesla, with changes in leadership and strategic direction. During this time, Elon Musk published "The Secret Tesla Motors Master Plan (Just Between You and Me)," outlining the company's mission: "To help expedite the move from a mine-and-burn hydrocarbon economy towards a solar electric economy," with a focus on producing a wide range of models, including affordably priced family cars.

By late 2008, Tesla was on the brink of collapse due to the global financial crisis. Musk was promoted to CEO, and one of his first actions was to streamline operations, including a 24% reduction in staff. He stated, "The global financial system has gone through the worst crisis since the Great Depression. Our goal as a company is to be cash-flow positive within six to nine months. To do so, we must continue to ramp up our production rate, improve Roadster contribution margin, and reduce operating expenses." Throughout the early 2010s, Tesla gradually stabilized its financial position, designing and releasing more vehicles that were revolutionary for their electric powertrains. In 2014, Tesla introduced the first Autopilot system, an AI-based driver-assistance program integrated into the car's software, further setting Tesla apart from traditional automakers.

In February 2018, Elon Musk's SpaceX launched the Falcon Heavy on a test flight to Mars, showcasing Tesla's innovation not only in electric vehicles but also in space exploration. In October 2019, Tesla opened its first Gigafactory outside the United States, located in Shanghai, China. The factory, completed in just ten months, significantly boosted Tesla's presence in the Chinese auto market. With this second factory operation,

Tesla was able to ramp up production of the Model 3, which had faced delays. Today, Tesla has successfully released and sold millions of vehicles, playing a critical role in modernizing and popularizing electric cars.

Tesla's journey is a testament to the power of innovation, resilience, and vision. From its humble beginnings in 2003 to becoming a global leader in electric vehicles and sustainable energy, Tesla has navigated numerous challenges to carve out its place in history. By pushing technological boundaries and committing to a fully autonomous, electric future, Tesla has redefined the automotive industry. As the company continues to evolve, it not only symbolizes progress but also represents a glimpse into the future of transportation—a future that is greener, smarter, and driven by the spirit of innovation.

A Distant Dream



Stuti Acharya

A little girl clutches her mother's fragile fingers

She firmly holds them in her small hand
Her eyes are wide, shimmering with innocence

A stark contrast to the dirt that stains her legs and face

Her ragged clothes proving her clumsy youth
A life she is too young to handle alone

Her mother lies in bed, weakened and sick
Trapped in the stiff grasps of jagged roads and towering peaks

Financial barriers bind her like chains
Binding her to this remote and isolated village

Her father is indifferent and lacks empathy
A stranger when it comes to nurturing his own child

His anger towards his poor sick wife seep into the child's world

His neglect of their pain leaves the girl confused and scared.

In the quiet of the night, the little girl weeps alone in her bed

Her soft cries are ignored as her father turns a blind eye

She yearns for the warmth of her mother's embrace

the comfort of her mother as the house is in shambles due to her absence

Despite her bright mind and eager heart willing to learn anything

Proper education remains a distant dream - out of reach

To her it was just a beacon of hope, something too good to be true.

Her sharp intellect shines for her young age,
But her future is slowly dulling due to the lack of proper resources,

Her aspirations and dreams slowly being crushed as the only daughter,

As she has to carry the heavy burden of being born into an ill-fated family,

How long until the society's heavy expectations weigh on her shoulders,

Slowly suffocating the dreams she clings onto so tightly?

Embracing our village, the mountains seem timeless

Their magnificence a silent witness to the struggles below

In the shadow of these rugged peaks dreams bloom like wildflowers in a vast, untouched meadow

Their bright futures are held captive by the peaks solid grasp

In these serene and isolated areas

Young eyes gaze longingly at a future that

feels like a distant vision,
A promise of better opportunities and
education

However, we, the privileged, educated
Nepalis
hold the power to extend a hand, to bring
light to these children's lives
It is our duty to honor the true beauty of our
land
By lifting our people from their shadows
So that we can truly stand with heads held
high
and rise together to transform the hopeless
into the hopeful.

Author's note:

I wrote this poem as an inspiration, remembering a girl who lived in my mother's village. Although very cunning and smart, she lacked the money, care and education that we had growing up. Her mother had to be sent back to her 'maitighar' due to the fact that she was very ill, so there was no one to look after her either. So many remote areas do not have access to things like hospitals, schools, or other services that we take for granted here in the U.S. There are so many bright children who live in these areas, with such promising young minds, but they do not have the same opportunities. Maybe one privilege of being able to study and live here in the US is so that we have the capability to go back to our home country and give back. There are so many things still lacking in these areas, such as proper and close hospitals, good opportunities for children and better schools, proper security and safety, and resources such as water, food, etc. Us Nepalis are very proud and hold our heads up high because we know we are from a country with such beautiful mountains and landscapes, but it would only be right to stand with our heads held up high if we acknowledged and worked together to try and lift our people who live in these remote places.

Synopsis of chapter four of Bhagabat Geeta



Mina Sharma

Chapter four of Bhagabat Geeta is titled as Gyan Karma Yoga (ज्ञान कर्म योग). By understanding this yoga one can find a way to the path of attaining renunciation. The chapter contains 42 verses and consists of a dialogue between Shree Krishna and Arjun. No other speakers exist in this dialogue. Lord Krishna tells Arjun that this yoga is very ancient, first taught by Lord Krishna to Vivasan (sun God) which was then passed onto future generations. The royal sages knew all this but in the course of time it got lost somewhere. So Lord Krishna has to repeatedly explain the yoga to Arjun on the battlefield. It is from this text that entire mankind is benefitting afterwards. In this chapter, Arjun has doubts about the birth of Lord Krishna, and questions him by saying that if Lord Krishna was born in his time and age (same age as Arjun's age) how could he teach the same yoga to Sun God who was born a very long time ago. Lord Krishna explains his identity as Divine saying that he is eternal, immortal, immutable and the Lord of all beings but he still has to manifest himself with his divine power Yoga Maya (योग माया) from time to time when it is necessary in the physical world. Whenever there is fall in Dharma (धर्म) righteousness, and predominance of Adharma (अधर्म) unrighteousness, he makes his appearance - to protect righteousness, transfer the wicked to goodness as far as possible and punish the very wicked, and establish a natural

order in the world.

Karma yoga and Gyan yoga are correlated with each other. Karma is action and Gyan is knowledge. When Karma yoga is done perfectly, one attains the state of Gyan yoga which then leads to Renunciation. It is desirable to know about actions, inactions and forbidden actions. Action is performing one's own duty (swadharma स्वधर्म) perfectly, sincerely, selflessly and with full devotion. It should be free from self centered personal desires and purified by fire of wisdom. Inactions are those actions where the performer gives up all the outcome of the action (कर्म फल त्याग). Forbidden Actions are those actions which are not allowed to be done, which may lead to destruction and harming of others. Every action we do can be an act of prayer. Before we act we have the freedom of how to perform, but after we act its effect will follow us whether we want it or not. This is the law of Karma, so we need to act wisely in every respect. Additionally, some actions need to be done with some sacrifices. It can be done by Yanga (यज्ञ Haban) sacrificing senses with its functions, sacrificing breath control (pranayam), and by sacrificing material possessions. One who considers the outcome of his every action as a manifestation. It means that it is by God's act that we will realize God's presence. Those who perform selfless actions in the spirit of yagna (यज्ञ) can achieve self knowledge which leads to be established in transcendental knowledge finally attaining the liberation and eternal absolute.

To sum up, with the faith in God, if one does his Swadharma actions in yoga with the mind and body is under control, and understands that he can't control the outcome of his actions, then he gets on to attain renunciation. He is unaffected by victory or defeat, is free from envy, enjoys equanimity in success and failure and accepts whatever gain comes naturally from his actions. Only in the purified mind arises Gyan Yoga, this transcendental knowledge is achieved from within in due

course when one's mind is cleansed of selfishness by selfless service and sacrifice. Sincere and selfless practice has control over mind and senses. This practice takes one closer to achieving transcendental knowledge which finally leads one to acquire supreme peace, happiness and liberation. Jaya Shree Krishna !!!

Understanding Autism: A Journey Through the Spectrum



Dr. Mahendra Raj Neupane

Introduction: Imagine a world where every interaction is a puzzle, each social cue a riddle. Autism, or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), is like navigating this intricate world with a unique map. ASD is a neurodevelopmental condition that manifests differently in every individual, reflecting a diverse range of experiences and challenges. The term "autism" comes from the Greek word "autos," meaning "self," highlighting the inward focus often seen in this condition. But beyond this label lies a spectrum of abilities, perspectives, and potentials waiting to be understood.

Prevalence: Did you know that autism affects about 1 in 54 children? That's a lot of young minds with unique ways of seeing the world. Interestingly, autism is about four times more common in boys than in girls. This statistic isn't just a number; it represents a multitude of individual experiences and stories, each one adding to the rich tapestry of human diversity.

Diagnostic Criteria: To truly grasp autism, we need to look at how it unfolds over different stages of life. Here's a snapshot:

Infancy and Toddlerhood: Picture a baby who doesn't make eye contact or respond to a smile. They might babble late or show repetitive behaviors like rocking. These early signs can be subtle but crucial in understanding the developmental path of autism.

Preschool Age: Imagine a child who struggles with language and prefers to play alone or follow strict routines. They might not yet grasp the concept of pretend play or find joy in lining up toys rather than engaging with others.

School Age: As children grow, social interactions become even more significant. School-age children with autism might find it hard to make friends or adjust to new routines. Their intense focus on specific interests can be both a strength and a challenge, as it sometimes leads to isolation or frustration.

Adolescence and Adulthood: Transitioning into adulthood can be a mixed bag—while some individuals develop new coping strategies and strengths, they might also face challenges in areas like dating, employment, and independent living. Support and understanding become crucial as they navigate these new phases of life.

Etiology: What causes autism? The truth is, there's no single answer. Autism seems to result from a blend of genetic and environmental factors. Genetics play a significant role, but researchers are also exploring how things like prenatal exposure to certain conditions or advanced parental age might contribute. The puzzle isn't complete yet, but every piece helps us get closer to understanding the full picture.

Associated Conditions: Sometimes autism comes with other conditions like Fragile X syndrome or Tuberous Sclerosis. These can add additional layers to the experience, but they also highlight the need for personalized approaches to care.

Prognosis: Living with autism is a lifelong journey, but many individuals thrive with the right support. Whether it's excelling in school, finding a fulfilling career, or building meaningful relationships, the possibilities are endless. Family and community support can make all the difference in navigating this journey.

Management: So, how do we support individuals with autism? Here's a roadmap:

- **Behavioral Therapies:** Techniques like Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) help teach new skills and reduce unwanted behaviors. Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is another tool for tackling challenges like anxiety and social skills deficits.
- **Educational Interventions:** Structured teaching methods, Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and early intervention programs are tailored to meet the unique needs of each child.
- **Speech and Language Therapy:** For those with communication difficulties, this therapy helps improve both verbal and non-verbal communication skills.
- **Occupational Therapy:** Focuses on developing motor skills, sensory integration, and daily living skills to enhance independence and quality of life.
- **Medication:** While it doesn't directly address autism's core symptoms, medication can help manage related issues like anxiety or aggression.
- **Parental Training and Support:** Parents often benefit from learning strategies to effectively manage behaviors and support their child's development.
- **Social Skills Training:** Structured programs can assist individuals in learning social norms and building friendships.

Autism is a spectrum, and each person's experience is unique. By understanding and embracing these differences, we can create a world where everyone has the opportunity to shine. Remember, the goal of any

intervention is to maximize each individual's potential and enhance their overall well-being.

Understanding Obesity: A Multifaceted Challenge and the Role of Machine Learning



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Obesity is a pressing global health issue that affects millions and presents significant challenges for individuals, societies, and healthcare systems alike. As we navigate this complex landscape, timely diagnosis and accurate assessments of obesity prevalence, economic impacts, and associated mortality rates are crucial for devising effective intervention strategies.

The Scope of the Problem

Obesity has become a widespread issue, with nearly 500 million individuals classified as overweight worldwide as of 2002 (Hammond and Levine, 2010). In the United States, the rates have doubled since the 1970s, raising alarms across the medical community. A study by the NIH revealed that between 1996 and 2021, approximately \$16 billion was spent on treating health conditions related to obesity in middle-aged American women alone. Furthermore, medical costs related to obesity soared to an estimated \$147 billion in 2008, accounting for about 10% of the

National Health Expenditure (Hammond and Levine, 2010).

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), obesity is a multifactorial disease influenced by obesogenic environments, psychosocial factors, and genetic variants. This article focuses on estimating obesity levels based on dietary habits and physical activity, and how machine learning (ML) can revolutionize our understanding of this epidemic.

Harnessing Machine Learning

The advent of advanced computational techniques has opened new avenues for early detection and diagnostic insights into obesity. By analyzing large-scale datasets with powerful algorithms, machine learning can uncover hidden patterns, identify risk factors, and develop predictive models for obesity-related outcomes.

For this study, we utilized a dataset from the UC Irvine Machine Learning Repository, donated on August 26, 2019. This data encompasses individuals from Mexico, Peru, and Colombia, featuring 2,111 records and 17 attributes. The dataset is well-balanced with no missing values, covering variables such as gender, age, height, weight, family history of overweight, dietary habits, physical activity frequency, and more. The target variable, obesity level, is classified into seven categories: Insufficient Weight, Normal Weight, Overweight Levels I and II, and Obesity Types I, II, and III.

Exploring Machine Learning Models

In our analysis, we focused on decision trees and random forests. Decision trees are particularly effective when handling a combination of numerical and categorical features, providing clear insights into the factors most influential in predicting obesity levels. Random forests, an ensemble of decision trees, enhance accuracy and mitigate overfitting, making them suitable for datasets with numerous features.

This research was conducted using Google Colab and Python as the primary programming language. We employed Pandas for robust data manipulation and Scikit-learn for implementing machine learning algorithms. Visualization tools like Matplotlib and Seaborn were used to present our findings

Unveiling Insights through Data Analysis

Our dataset consists of 2,111 instances and 17 variables, with a nearly equal distribution of genders—1,068 males and 1,043 females. The obesity level distribution includes 351 individuals with Obesity Type I, 324 with Obesity Type III, and varying numbers across the other classifications

Heatmap analysis revealed a low correlation between most variables, except for height and weight, which exhibited a correlation of 0.46. This indicates a smooth running for our models, as multicollinearity does not pose a significant issue. Notably, boxplots highlighted a right-skewed distribution for several variables, particularly weight and meal frequency. Male participants exhibited higher averages in weight and height, aligning with typical physiological differences.

Results of Machine Learning Models

Our machine learning analysis showcased impressive results. The decision tree classifier achieved an accuracy of approximately 93.62%, indicating that it correctly predicted about 93.61% of instances in the test set. Key variables such as weight and height played pivotal roles in determining obesity levels, while less impactful features like transportation methods showed negligible influence

Similarly, the random forest model yielded a comparable accuracy of 93%. This consistency suggests that the problem may not be overly complex, allowing both models to perform well with similar decision

boundaries.

Recall metrics indicated that approximately 95.27% of actual positive instances were accurately identified, underscoring the model's effectiveness in capturing relevant cases. Meanwhile, a precision score of 95.44% indicates a strong ability to avoid false positives, further validating the model's performance. Additionally, the Gradient Boosting Classifier demonstrated an accuracy of approximately 95.27%, reinforcing the overall success of our predictive models.

Looking Ahead: Future Implications and Research Opportunities

This research highlights the critical role of machine learning in addressing obesity, a multifaceted health concern with significant economic and health implications. By employing decision trees and random forests, we effectively handled a diverse dataset, unveiling valuable insights about gender distribution, variable correlations, and key predictors of obesity.

Future research could explore additional lifestyle and dietary factors to enhance predictive capabilities. Broadening the sample scope will help create a more representative dataset, while investigating other machine learning algorithms may yield even deeper insights into obesity prediction.

Overall, this study contributes to the growing body of research dedicated to combating obesity through data-driven methodologies. By harnessing the power of machine learning, we can identify meaningful patterns and risk factors, ultimately enhancing public health outcomes and promoting evidence-based approaches to fighting obesity

Accessing the Data and Resources

The dataset utilized in this project, which

comprises various categorical, binary, and continuous variables aimed at predicting obesity levels based on nutrition and physical activity, is publicly accessible at UCI Machine Learning Repository. Users are encouraged to create an account for data download, with all personal identifiers removed to ensure anonymity.

The accompanying Python script for loading the dataset, performing preprocessing, and training a decision tree classifier is available within the Google Colab environment.

References

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अमेरीकाको पहिलो रात



नगेन्द्र न्यौपाने

२०५३ साल असार महिना अर्थात १९९६ को जुन । काठमाण्डौमा चर्को गर्मी छ । राति पानी परेकोले अहिले आकाश सफा छ । म त्यो सफा आकाश र चर्को घामलाई छल्दै पानीपोखरीस्थिति अमेरिकी राजदूतावासको मूल

ढोकामा पुग्छु । ढोकामा उभिएका सुरक्षा गार्डले मलाई रोक्छ ।

“कसलाई खोज्नुभएको हो ? के काम छ ?”

“तीन दिनपछि पासपोर्ट लिन आउनु भन्नुभएको थियो । म त्यही पासपोर्ट लिन आएको” म उसलाई जवाफ दिन्छु ।

“तपाईंको नाम ?”

म नाम बताउँछु ।

“तपाईं त्यो कुर्सीमा बस्नै गर्नुहोस् । म भित्र खबर गर्छु ।” भन्दै ऊ भित्र पस्छ । म उसले देखाएको कुर्सीमा बस्छु । ऊ केहीबेरपछि तीनवटा पासपोर्ट पल्टाउँदै ल्याउँछ र मेरो हातमा थमाइदिन्छ ।

“ल ! तपाईंको पासपोर्ट लिनुहोस् । ल बधाई छ, राम्रोसँग जानुहोला ।”

म पासपोर्ट एक-एक गरी हेर्छु र पट्याएर भोलामा राख्छु अनि सडकतिर आउँछु । सडक भन तातेको छ । हिंडी नसक्ने चर्को गर्मी छ । टेम्पो र कारहरु बेतोडले गुडिरहेका छन् । तर मेरो अन्तस्करणमा भने त्यही शब्द अटाई नअटाई घुमेका छन् । सुरक्षा गार्डले बोलेका शब्दहरु कानमा गुञ्जिएका छन्- ‘राम्रोसँग जानुहोस् है ।’ कसरी हो राम्रोसँग जाने भनेको? केबाट गए राम्रोसँग पुगिन्छ ? साथै अमेरिका राम्रोसँग नै जानुपर्छ ? मेरो मनमा विचित्रको दृष्य नाचन थाल्छ । आखिर अमेरिका जाने भने को हवाइजहाजमा त होला ।

केही वर्ष अगाडि मेरो दाइ बंगलादेश डाक्टर पढ्न जाँदा हवाइजहाजको टिकट किन्ने ठाउँ

देखेको थिएँ । उहाँको पछि लागेर टिकट किने को देखेको थिएँ । त्यति मात्र होइन- त्योभन्दा केही वर्ष अगाडि म आफैँ काठमाडौँबाट ढाका हवाईजहाजमा उडेको थिएँ । हवाईजहाजको यात्राबारे सामान्य जानकारी थियो तर ती केवल आफ्नै छिमेकी मुलुकका यात्रा थिए । एउटै जहाजको यात्रा थियो भने प्रविधि पनि पुरानो थियो । त्यसैले म अहिले अन्योलमा छु । आफू बसेको ठाउँबाट विश्वको अर्को कुनामा जानु छ, गोलाद्ध फरक छ, भाषा फरक छ, रुप-रङ्ग भिन्न छन् । त्योभन्दा पनि अमेरिका भने पछि ठूलो विभ्रमले बहकिएको छ । यो समाजले मलाई कोलाहल थपिदिएको छ ।

धेरैबेर सडक छेउमा उभिएपछि टेम्पो चढेर दरबारमार्गमा पुग्छु । दरबारमार्गमा प्रशस्त ट्राभल एजेन्सीहरु छन् । थुप्रै पर्वतारोहीहरुको पसल छन् । तीमध्ये एउटा ट्राभल एजेन्सीको दोकानमा पुग्छु ।

अघिल्लो दिन मात्र दमौलीबाट आएको हुनाले मेरो लवाई र बोलाईमा गाउँले पारा छ । गोडामा सस्तो खालको जुत्ताहरु छन् । कपाल र दाढी छोट्याउँछु भन्दा भन्दै भ्याएको छैन । म श्रमिक जस्तै देखिएको छु । ओभरसियर जागिरेहरुको व्यक्तिगत सरसफाईमा ध्यान पुगेको हुँदैन । ढुङ्गा, माटो र ज्यामीहरुसँग संगत गर्ने भएकोले भाषामा कमजोर हुन्छु । त्यसैले होला ढोकामा उभिएको सुरक्षा गार्डले निकै अल्छीलाग्दो पाराले ढोका खोलिदिन्छ, भने टिकट काट्ने महिला शुरुमा मेरो शिरदेखि पाउँसम्म हेर्छिन् र अनौठो पाराले सोधिन्छन् ।

“तपाईं नै अमेरिका जाने ? यात्रु तपाईं नै हो ?” मेरो मनमा एक प्रकारको हिनताबोधको विजारोपण हुन्छ । कताकता मेरो दिमाग कुडिन्छ । तर त्यस्तो अलपत्र भेष लिएको व्यक्तिले अमेरिकाको यात्रा गर्दैनन् भन्ने भ्रममा हुर्केकी महिलालाई म अनौठो लाग्न स्वाभाविकै नै छ । अमेरिका जाने भने पछि टाई र कोट घुसान्नै पर्छ, तडक-भडक नै देखाउन पर्छ भन्ने मनोदशाबाट ती महिला ग्रसित छिन् भने म त्यो मनोवृत्तिबाट पृथक । मैले टाई लगाएको छैन । मेरो पोशाक उनले सोचेजस्तो छैन । तर पनि उनीप्रति म प्रतिप्रश्न गर्न चाहन्न र यसलाई सामान्य रुपमा लिँदै उत्तर दिन्छु- “हो ! म नै हो । साथमा श्रीमती र एउटा छोरो पनि छन् ।”

जे होस् म त्यही ट्राभल एजेन्सीबाट तीनवटा टिकटको निधो गर्छु ।

२०५३ साल असार १७ गते अर्थात १९९६ जुलाई २ तारिक । आज अमेरिका जाने दिनु । भोला र सुटकेसहरु केही दिनदेखि नै कसकास भएका छन् । कुनै सुटकेसको साँचो लागि सकेको छ । आफ्ना इष्टमित्र र नातेदारको भिड लाग्न थालिसकेको छ । लाग्छ ! यहाँ ठूलो विजय-उत्सव हुँदैछ । ठूलो समारोहको आयो जना भएको छ । साँच्चै मैले ठूलै शिकार हात पारेको छु, तर मलाई थाहा छैन त्यो कस्तो प्रकारको शिकार हो ! कस्तो विजय हो ?”

हामीहरु बिहानको खाना खानासाथ एयरपोर्टतिर लाग्छौं र एयरपोर्टको सामान्य प्रक्रिया पूरा गरेर बोडिङ पास दिँदै कर्मचारी मतिर हेरेर बोल्छन् । “यहाँबाट बैकक र बैककबाट जापानसम्मको बो

डिङ्ग पास यही हो । अमेरिकाको लागि जापानमा अर्को लिनुहोला ।”

बोडिङ्ग पास हात परेपछि फेरि मेरो दिमाग एकपटक आतङ्कित हुन्छ । वास्तवमा अमेरिका टाढै रहेछ । जे होस् हामीहरु बोडिङ्ग पास लिएर माथिल्लो तला पुग्छौं । र केहीबेर को पखाईपछि जहाजतिर जान्छौं । एयरपोर्टको छतबाट अनगिन्ती हातहरु हल्लिरहेका छन् । आफन्तहरुले यात्रुहरुलाई बाईबाई गरिरहेका छन् । कराइरहेका छन् । म पनि पुलुकक छततिर हेर्छु । मेरा आफन्तहरु पनि रम्की रम्की हात हल्लाइरहेका छन् । लाग्छ म ठूलै अभियानमा निस्केको छु ।

बैकक पुग्दा अँध्यारो भइसकेको छ । केही घण्टा हामीहरु त्यही बैकक एयरपोर्टमा नै बस्नुपर्ने छ । एयरपोर्टको सिसाबाट टाढा-टाढा बत्ती बलेको देखिन्छ । बैकक शहर झलमल बलेको छ । त्यही बत्ती बलेको शहरलाई देखाउँदै छोरो सौ गात मलाई सोध्छ- “बुबा ! ऊ त्यही हो अमेरिका ? अमेरिका जाउन! हामीहरु किन यहाँ बसेको ! हिँड्नुहोस् त बाहिर जाऊँ !”

एकातिर रातको समय, अर्कोतिर एयरपोर्टको बन्द कोठा । उसलाई खुम्चिएको वातावरणले अत्यास लागिरहेको छ । बालक दिमागले चौर र आँगन खोजिरहेको हुन्छ । उसलाई अमेरिका डुल्न हतार भइरहेको छ । तर म विवश छु । उसलाई अमेरिका डुलाउने सामर्थ्य छैन । म बलै फकाइरहेको हुन्छु- “बाबु ! अमेरिका त्यो भन्दा धेरै टाढा छ । अर्को जहाजमा जाने हो ।” ऊ मेरो भनाइबाट सन्तुष्ट छैन । तुरुन्त जवाफ फकाईहाल्छ-

“जाऊँ न त, अर्को जहाजमा ! खै कहाँ छ अर्कोजहाज । जाम ।”

न त मैले नै जहाज देखेको छु, न त मलाई नै थाहा छ, अमेरिका कति टाढा छ भनेर ! म उसलाई जवाफ दिन सकिदैन । बरु उसको हात समातेर पसल-पसल घुमाउँछु । एयरपोर्ट भित्रका तस्वीरहरु देखाऊँछु । तर पनि ऊ मानिरहेको हुँदैन । अमेरिका भनेपछि खेल्ने-डुल्ने र रमाउने ठाउँ हो भन्ने परेको छ । बाल दिमागले त्यही जिद्दी गरिरहेको हुन्छ । बलै काखमा लिएर सो फामा सुताउँछु ।

भोलिपल्ट बिहान मिमिरे उज्यालो भइसकेको छ । एयरपोर्टको शिसाबाट बाहिर गाडी कुदेको देखिएका छन् । त्यही बेला कुमसम्म कपाल काटेकी एउटी महिला हाम्रो नजिकै आउँछिन् र अलि हतारिएको भावमा बोल्छिन्- “तपाईंहरु नारीता, जापान जाने होइन? आउनुहोस् । प्लेन चढ्ने बेला भयो ।”

केहीबेर अगाडि मात्र त्यस्तै अनुहार भएकी महिला हाम्रो यात्राको बारेमा जानकारी लिएर गएकी थिइन् । सायद तिनै हुनुपर्छ । म अन्दाज लगाउँछु । हामीहरु तीनैजना जय्याकजुरुक उठ्छौं र भोला तुन्मुन्याउँदै उनको पछि लाग्छौं।

“हो ! हो ! हामीहरु जापान जाने हो ।”

हाम्रो अगाडि अजंगको हवाईजहाज छ । यात्रुहरु लाइनमा उभिइसकेका छन् । कोही यात्रुहरु

सिटमा गएर बसिसकेका छन् । हामीहरु पनि हतारिदै आफ्नो सिटमा बस्छौ । केहीबेर पछि त्यसले जमिन छोड्छ । मेरो मनमा अनगिन्ती प्रश्नहरु उब्जिन थाल्छन् । खै ! कुन शक्तिले त्यो जहाज धानिएको छ ! यस्तै आश्चर्य र डर को साथमा हवाइजहाज छ घण्टापछि जापानको नारीता विमानस्थलमा पुग्छ । त्यहाँ दुई घण्टाको अलमलपछि पुनः अमेरिकाका लागि उड्छ । अनौठो यो छ कि ! आकाशमा उड्दा उड्दै आकाशमा नै रात पर्छ । र केहीबेर पछि आकाशमा नै सूर्य उदाउँछ । सूर्यको तेजले जहाज भित्र झलमल उज्यालो पस्छ । यस्तै उज्यालो र अँध्यारोको लुकामारीमा मिशिगन र ज्यको डेट्रोइट पुग्दा दिनको दुई बजेको छ । तर यो हाम्रो अन्तिम गन्तव्य होइन । हामीहरुले अझै अर्को जहाज फेर्न पर्ने छ । अर्को जहाजबाट नर्थ क्यारोलाइनाको राले शहरमा पुग्नुपर्ने छ । हामीहरु दुई घण्टाको हवाइ यात्रापछि राले(डुरम (Raleigh-Durham) विमानस्थल पुग्दा साँझको ६ बजेको छ ।

तर एक्कासी छोरो सौगातको निद्रा खुल्छ । आँखा खोल्नसाथ उसले पल्याक-पुलुक हेर्छ अनि मलाई सोध्छ ।

“कहाँ हो बुवा यो ।”

“अमेरिका !” म उत्तर दिन्छु ।

तर ऊ पत्याउँदैन । जताततै नयाँ मान्छे छन् । नयाँ वातावरण छ । झिलमिली बत्ती बलेको छ । त्यति मात्र होइन । दिन र रातको लुछाचुँडिमा उसको निद्रा बिग्रेको छ । राम्रोसँग सुत्न पाएको छैन । ऊ रुन थाल्छ । नेपालकै मान्छे र घर

आँगन खोज्छ । गोडा बजाउँ मलाई पिर्न थाल्छ । मेरो काख छोडेर भाग्न खोज्छ-

“बुवा ! घर जाम ! यहाँ नबसौं । मलाई अमेरिका का मन परेन ।”

म उसलाई बलै फकाउँछु । शान्त पार्न कोशिश गर्छु ।

एकातिर छोरो सौगातको कचकच अर्कोतिर ईश्वर दाइ एयरपोर्ट आउन ढिला गर्नु । हामीहरु हतासिँछौ । मलाई डर लाग्न थाल्छ साँच्चै ईश्वर दाइ एयरपोर्ट आउनु त हुन्छ ! उहाँले भुल्नु त भएको छैन । म भट्ट विगतको घटना सम्झन्छु हामीहरु अमेरिका जाने दिनभन्दा केही दिन अगाडि म आफैँ राजेश्वर देवकोटाको घर महाराजगंज गएको थिए । राजेश्वर देवकोटा, ईश्वर दाइको पिताजी गोरखा जिल्लाको नेता मात्र नभई अभिभावक पनि हुनुहुन्थ्यो । उहाँलाई भेट्न जानु एउटा शिष्टाचार मात्र नभई उहाँकै आतिथ्यमा बस्नुपर्ने पनि थियो । साथै केही समान पनि लगिदिनुपर्ने थियो । उहाँलाई भेट्न जाँदा उहाँको घर-आँगन पूरै भिडले ढाकिएको थियो । त्यही भिडमा उभिई उभिई नै हाम्रो अमेरिका जाने समय र मिति बताएको थिएँ । एयरपोर्टमा ईश्वर दाइ आउनुपर्ने अनुरोध गरे को थिए । तर अहिले ईश्वर दाइलाई नदेख्दा शंका लाग्न थाल्छ- “ईश्वर दाइलाई जानकारी भएकै छ त ? कतै मेरो खबर दिन उहाँले भुल्नु भएको त छैन ? कतै मिति र समय त फरक परेन ? मेरो उकुस-मुकुस बढ्दै जान्छ । हुन त अर्का एक जना गाउँले दाइसँग पनि म अमेरिका

आउने कुरोको जानकारी गराएको थिएँ । अमेरिका का आउनुभन्दा केही दिन अगाडि उहाँसँग फोनमा मेरो सम्पर्क भएको थियो । उनीसँग लामै गफ भयो । उनले आधा घण्टा गफ लडाए । आधा घण्टामा उनले पच्चिस मिनेट त आफ्नै गन्थन सुनाएर खेर फ्याँके । किन अमेरिका आइएछ । साह्रै गाह्रो भयो ! दसै लागेछ ! म त फर्कन्छु क्या हो । यस्तै विना तुमको वाइयात गफले मेरो एक हजार रुपिया सिद्धिएको थियो । रहेको पाँच मिनेटमा पनि आफूलाई क्षमाताहीन देखाए । मैले उनीबाट कुनै आशा गर्नु बेकार थियो । तर मसँग उनको फोन नम्बर थियो । फेरि अर्को आश्चर्य यो छ कि उनि बसेको ठाउँ जानलाई अर्को जहाज लिन पर्ने रहेछ । हामीहरु एयरपोर्ट अगाडिको वेन्चमा बसेर ईश्वर दाइको बाटो हेरिरहेका हुन्छौं । गाडीहरु आइरहेका छन् । गाडीबाट मान्छेहरु फुत्त निस्केका छन् । अनि एयरपोर्टभित्र पस्छन् । यो प्रक्रिया दोहोरिएको हुन्छ । मेरो आँखा प्रत्येक गाडीमा पर्छन् । म प्रत्येक गाडीमा ईश्वर दाइलाई खोजिरहेको हुन्छु । फेरि अर्को अनौठो यो छ कि अहिलेसम्म कहिल्यै पनि ईश्वरलाई मैले भेटेको छैन । म उहाँलाई चिन्दिन भने उहाँले पनि मलाई चिन्नुभएको छैन । न हाम्रो फोनमा कुराकानी नै भएको छ । न भगवतीले चिनेकी छिन् । म उहाँलाई अन्दाजको भरमा चिन्न खोजेको छु । कसैले मलाई पहिल्यै ईश्वर दाइको स्वरुप देखाएको थियो कि ! होचो होचो कद, गहुँगोरो अनि हाँसिलो अनुहार ! म त्यस्तै व्यक्तिलाई खोजिरहेको छु ।

केहीबेरपछि एउटा गाडी हाम्रो अगाडि आउँछ र

टक्क रोकिन्छ । अनि शिसाबाट बोलेको आवाज सुन्छु “न्यौपानेजी हो ?”

“हो ! हो ! म हतारिँदै उत्तर दिन्छु र गाडीतिर जान्छु । उहाँ गाडीबाट बाहिर आउनुहुन्छ, र हात मिलाउँदै बोल्नुहुन्छ-

“सरी ! आउन ढिला भयो । जुलाई फोर्थको परेडले सडक जाम थियो । धेरैबेर नै कुर्नु भयो हगि !”

हुन त उहाँको मुखबाट ‘सरी’ भन्ने शब्द निस्कन्छ तर मलाई खुशी लाग्छ । उहाँलाई देखेपछि लाग्छ, यो मानव धर्तिबाट कहाँ विश्वास मरेको छ र ? कहाँ भरोसा टुटेको छ र ? एउटा मसिनो फोनको भरमा त्यत्रो जिम्मेवार लिनु भएकोमा आभार प्रकट गर्छु, तर सानो आभारले त्यति ठूलो ऋण चुक्ताहोला र ? म आफैले आफैलाई प्रश्न गर्छु । जे होस् ! हामीहरु टक्क हुन्छौं र गाडीभित्र पस्छौं । अगिसम्म अमेरिका ! अमेरिका ! भन्दै कराउने सौगातको अत्तोपत्तो छैन । उसलाई नयाँ संसारसँग कुनै सरोकार नै छैन । ऊ मस्तसँग निदाएको छ ।

एयरपोर्टबाट निस्केको गाडी फराकिला र राजमार्गमा पस्छ । राजमार्ग निकै सफा छ र राजमार्गका दायाँबायाँ बाक्लो जंगल छ । गाडीहरु बेतोडले दौडाएका छन् । फराकिला राजमार्गमा दौडिँदा दौडिँदै गाडी शहरभित्र पस्छ । अनि केहीबेर पछि ईश्वर दाइको घरमा पुग्छौं । खै त मैले सोचेको अमेरिका ? अमेरिका यही हो ? म मनमनै सोचन थाल्छु । खै त ! ती अगला अगला

भवनहरु ? खै त मान्छेको भीड ? खै कलकार
खाना र कामदारको भीड ? खै गाडीका हर्न ?
मेरो मनमा थुप्रै जिज्ञासा छन् तर उत्तर
पाउन्न ।

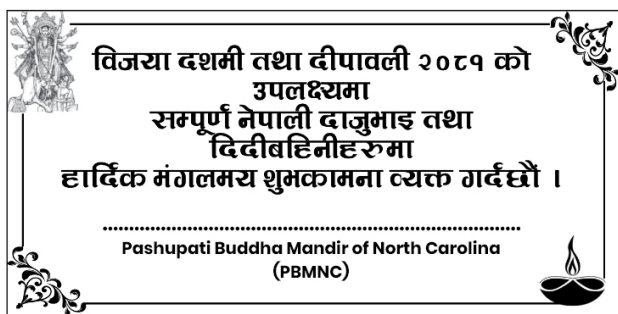
“कस्तो संयोग परेको हगि?” ईश्वर दाइ हामीलाई
सोफामा बसाउँदै पुरानै कुरा दोहोर्‍याउनु हुन्छ
।” फोर्थ जुलाई भनेको नेपालको फागुन सात
गते हो । नेपालमा २००७ साल फागुन सात
प्रजातन्त्र स्थापना भएको थियो भने अमेरिकामा
सन् १७७६ को जुलाई ४ मा । तपाईंहरु त्यही
दिन अमेरिका प्रवेश गर्नुभयो ।”

हामीहरु केहीबेरपछि खाना खानेतिर लाग्छौं ।
केही दिनको लागी हाम्रो बसाई त्यही घरमा
हुन्छ ।

लेखक श्री न्यौपाने एन.सी.एन.सी. का
पुर्व अध्यक्ष हुँन ।

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म - एक अटिस्टिक



प्रमिला मनु

तिमीले मलाई नामले बोलाँउदा,
मैले तिमीलाई फर्केर नहेरौला,
तिमीले मलाई प्रश्नहरु सोध्दा,
मैले तिनका उत्तरहरु नफर्काउला,
तिमी मसँग बोलिरहँदा,
मैले तिम्रा आँखामा नहेरौला,
तिमीलाई लाग्ला म अट्टेरी हुँ,
तर, मेरो मस्तिष्कले ती कुराहरु गौण ठाने,
जसरी मिठो संगीतमा मग्न भएको बेला,
तिम्ले बजिरहेको मोबाईलको घन्टी
निरर्थक लाग्छ ।

जसरी तिमीलाई हर्न बजिरहेका गाडीहरुको
कोलाहालले औडाहा हुन्छ,
त्यसरी नै मलाई मनिसहरुको हल्लाले,
गाह्रो बनाउछ
मलाई नयाँ ठाँउ जाँदा
घुल्मिल हुन समय लाग्छ ।
जसरी, तिमीले बुन्दै गरेको स्विटर
कसैले उधारिदिककंदा तिम्ले असह्य हुन्छ ।
त्यसरी नै मलाई आफुले गरिरहेको काम,
चटक्क छोड्न गाह्रो हुन्छ ।

म कहिलेकाँही आत्तिएर रोउँला,

कहिलेकाँही खुशीले चिच्याउँला,
मेरो रुवाई र चर्को आवाजमा,
मलाई समाजको दृष्टिकोण थाहा नहोला,
समाजको पारीधी थाहा नहोला,
जसरी,
तिमी सानो हुँदा न रुदा लाज मन्यौ,
न हाँस्दा सकस ।
त्यसरी नै मेरो मस्तिष्कले हाँस्न र रुनलाई,
उमेरको अंक नचिन्ला ।

मेरा इन्द्रियहरुले सुन्ने आवाज,
महसुस गर्ने स्पर्श,
तिम्रा भन्दा फरक छन् ।
तिम्रो मुहारका भावहरु
बुझ्ने मेरो बुझाई फरक छ ।
वा भनौ,
तिम्रो मुहारको भावहरु,
मैले तिमीलाई हेर्दा सम्म बद्लिसक्नेछन ।

म तिम्ले दिएको निर्देशन नमानुला,
मलाई एकै ठाँउमा अडिन गाह्रो होला,
किनकी,
मेरो मस्तिष्कमा तिम्रा भन्दा धेरै
कुराहरु खेलिरहेका छन्,
म कि त किताबकै पन्नाहरुमै हुन्छु,
कि त नाटककै चरित्रहरुमा भुल्छु ।
तेसैले म जस्तो छु,
मेरो प्रकृतिलाई स्विकारीदिनु ।
म अभिव्यक्त हुन नसकिएको,
एक भिन्न हुँ,
समाजले चिनेको “सामाजिक”
भिन्न नअटेको,

समाजकै अंश हुँ
जस्ले,
प्रेमको न्यानोपन पक्का बुझ्छ ।
समेटिएको अपनत्व पक्का बुझ्छ ।

स्मृतिमा मेरो साथी जुद्ध



भक्तराज पोखरेल

मेरो वाल्यकाल मामा घरमा बितेको हो। त्यस
बेलाको समयमा मेरो जन्मस्थल सिन्धुलीको खो
लागाउँ रातमाटामा स्कुल थिएनन्। थियो शैशव
अवस्था, बालकोमल गोडाहरु जुन कखरा पढ्न
स्कुल जान उचालिन्थे। मेरो पहिलो पाठशाला
थियो “पुष्प प्राथमिक विध्यालय”- खुर्कोट,
बारा। म मामा घरको न्यानो वात्सल्य प्रेमिल
वातवरणमा बसेर स्कुल पढ्न जान्थेँ। मलाई
सानैदेखि पढ्नमा रुची थियो ।

मेरो एउटा बालसखा थियो जुद्ध बहादुर
विश्वकर्मा। सानोमा म पातलो अलि कमजोर
थिएँ होला सायदा। हजुरआमाले मेरो किताबको
भोला पनि उसैलाई बोकीदिन आग्रह गर्थिना।
करिव ३० मिनेट लाग्थ्यो स्कुलसम्म पुग्ना।
बाटामा आँप, अम्बा, डुम्री, खनिउ, बयर, पानी,
अमला लगायतका मौसम अनुसारका फरक
फरक फलफूल पाइन्थे। साथीहरू मिली बहुत र
माइलो गर्दै खाइन्थ्यो। अरू साथीहरू भए पनि

हामी दुईमा विशेष स्नेह थियो। स्कूल जाँदा होस् वा फर्किदा हामी सँगै हुन्थ्यौं। जुद्धको पारिवारिक आर्थिक अवस्था निकै कमजोर थियो। तैपनि उसलाई दुःख जेलो गर्दै पढ्न पठाउँथे। उसका हजुरबुबाको काठका ठेकी, पाथी, मदानी जस्ता भाँडा बनाउने पानीघट्ट पनि थियो अर्धेरी खोलाको छेउमा। स्कूल छुट्टी भए पछि फर्कदा त्यता पनि खेल्थ्यौं। हामी सँगै खाने खेल्ने गर्थ्यौं। जुद्धको घर मेरो मामा घर भन्दा अलि टाढा थियो। उकालो हुँदै पुगिने बिसाउना भनिने ठूली पोखरी नजिक पर्थ्यो। ऊ उकालो गएको र बिहान ओरालो भरेको मेरो मामा घरबाट प्रष्टै देखिन्थ्यो। ऊ बिहान ओरालो भरेन भने मलाई दुःख लाग्थ्यो। स्कूल नआउला कि भन्ने चिन्ता लाग्थ्यो। म पढाईमा अलि टाठै थिएँ। उसलाई पनि सिकाउँथेँ जानेका कुराहरू। उसका कपि नहुँदा लुकाएर मेरै कपि पनि दिन्थेँ। हामी बिचमा जातिय दुरी पटककै थिएन। हुन त म कट्टर श्री वैष्णव परिवारको छोरा र मेरो मावली घर पनि वैष्णव नै भए पनि हजुर आमा असल साथै अति सरल हुनुहुन्थ्यो। ब्रतबन्ध नगरेसम्म सँगै खान केही फरक पर्दैन भन्नु हुन्थ्यो। जुद्धको हजुरबा फुकफाक गर्ने, जोखना हेर्ने पनि गर्दथे। जसलाई चमारे वा पनि भनिन्थ्यो। मलाई सन्चो नहुँदा, खानामा रुची नहुँदा मेरी हजुर आमा साह्रै चिन्तित हुँदै उनै चुँनारे बालाई बोलाउँथिन्। खाना उल्टा पाल्टा गरि फुकेर मेरो हत्केलामा उल्टा सुल्टा पारी खुवाउने गर्नु हुन्थ्यो। सायद ठीक हुन्थ्यो होला। त्यतिबेला गाउँमा स्वास्थ्य चौकी नहुँदा शरीरमा केही भएमा सामान्य लाग लगानका कुरा हुन्थे। अनि भाँरफुकले निको पारिन्थ्यो।

एक दिन स्कूलमा दिउसो टिफिनमा हामी साथीहरू खोला बगरको चौरमा खेल्न गएका थियौं। खेल्दा खेल्दै कसैले स्कूलमा घन्टी बजाइ दिएछ। हामी दगुदै स्कूल कोठा तर्फ गयौं तर समय भएकै रहेनछ। हामी फेरि दगुदै चौरी तर्फ भर्न लाग्दा शमीको रूखको जरामा अल्झिएर म तिखो ढुङ्गामा बभारिन पुगेछु। मेरो निधार बाट भल्भल् रगत भरेछ। म रगताम्मे भएँ। मेरो निधारमा गहिरो चोट लाग्यो। निधारको भल्भल् रगत रोकन सिन्दुर, ढुङ्गाको भ्याउ लगाएत घरेलु उपचार प्रधानाध्यापक विष्णु देवकोटाले गर्न भयो। वहाँ साह्रै असल र सामाजिक व्यक्तित्व हुनु हुन्थ्यो। नातामा मेरा मामा पर्ने वहाँले मलाई बोकेरै त्यस दिन घर सम्म पुर्याउनु भएको मलाई सम्भना छ। त्यस चोटबाट सायद २/३ महिना म स्कूल गइन होला। मेरो साथी जुद्ध बिहानै हाम्रै घरको बाटो स्कूल जाँदा उदास हुन्थ्यो म स्कूल नजाँदा। हामी गाई बाखा चर। उन उसको घर छेउछाउ जान्थ्यौं र उसका बारीमा हुने बदाम, अम्बा, केरा त कहिले भुटेका मकै पनि सँगै खान्थ्यौं।

म कक्षा ३ पास गरे पछि स्कूल स्थान्तरण भएँ। कक्षा ४ का लागि अलि टाढा करिब १ घन्टाको जनज्योति मा. वि. स्कूलमा। तर मेरो साथी आएन। पारिवारिक अवस्थाकै कारण होला। अफसोच हामी परपर भयौं समयको गतिसँगै। हावाको भोकासँगै हाम्रो मित्रता बिछोडियो। म पनि मामाघरबाट बसाई सरेर तराई रौतहट तिर लागें। दुःखको कुरा हामीलेसँगै पढेको त्यो प्यारो स्कूल जहाँबाट हाम्रो अक्षराम्भ भएको थियो २०४१ सालको बिनासकारी बाढीले नामनिशाना

नराखि बगाई लग्यो।हामीलाई सम्भनामै सिमित बनायो। आज मेरो मानसपटलमा खड्की रहेछ। त्यो जिवन्त इतिहास बनेर। हुन त प्रकृतिसँग कसले पो के नै गर्न सक्छ र तर पनि त्यो ठाउँ अहिले हरियाली जङ्गलमा परिणत भएको छ। मेरो साथी जुद्ध पनि त्यतै कतै घरजम गरेर बसेको होला। हामी छुटेपछि कहिल्यै भेट्न सके नाँ। समयले हामीलाई जुराएन। म पनि जीवन गुजाराको यात्रामा लागेँ र टाढिन पुगेँ। यस्तै रहेछ मानिसको जिन्दगी बगेको खोला जस्तो बग्दै बग्दै कहाँ गएर समुद्रमा मिसिनु पर्ने हो पत्तो छैन। हिजोका दिनले आज यहाँ पुर्यायो, भोलिका दिनले कहाँ पुर्याउला यसको रहस्य समयलाई मात्र थाहा हुने रहेछ।

मान्छे एउटै होइन अनेक हुँदो रहेछ



शारदाप्रसाद दाहाल

हामी भन्ने गछौँ उस्तै उस्तै हाड, मासु र रगतले बनेको मान्छे एउटै त होनी, तर मान्छे एउटै होइन अनेक हुँदो रहेछ। किन भने, मान्छे देशभित्रै पनि भूगोलको परिभाषामा पहाडे र मधिसे नस्लीय आधारमा कालो र गोरो

जातीय आवरणमा क्षेत्री, ब्राम्हण, नेवार आदि राजनीतिक आस्थाले दक्षिण पन्थि र वामपन्थि धर्म र नीतिको संकीर्णताले आस्तिक र नास्तिक र धर्मकै आडमा मान्छे हिन्दु, मुस्लिम, बुद्ध र किश्चियन बन्दो रहेछ,

ज्ञान र जगत बुझौँ भन्दा त मान्छे द्वैत र अद्वैतमा बाँडिदो रहेछ।

त्यही मान्छेलाई

सौन्दर्यशास्त्र भित्र सुन्दर र कुरूप संगै मनोविज्ञानले अर्न्तमुखी र बर्हिमुखी भनेर तोकदो रहेछ।

स्वभाव र गुणले मान्छे असल र खरावमा गनिदो रहेछ,

‘मै मात्र बाँचौँ, मै मात्र हाँसौँ र नाचौँ’ भन्ने आखिर त्यो पनि मान्छे हुँदो रहेछ अनि फेरि धनले मात्तिको, मनले मात्तिको र रक्सले मात्तिको मान्छे पनि त हुँदो रहेछ

त्यसैले,

हामीले भने जस्तो मान्छे एउटै होइन अनेक हुँदो रहेछ।

सम्प्रति :

गार्नर,

वेक काउन्टी,

नर्थ क्यारोलाइना,

संयुक्तराज्य अमेरिका

अमेरिकाको अनुभव र देशको माया



लक्ष्मी प्रसाद/एलएक्स दहाल

सुने त्यो खुसीको खबर
सुने त्यो खुसीको खबर
छोरा बुहारी पनि अमेरिका जान्छन रे ।
आफ्नो भविष्यको सपना बुन्दै,
नेपालको माया पोको पारी लानच्छन रे ॥

बिदा गरे उनीहरूलाई अनी भने
माया नमान्न है हाम्रो देशलाई।
पछ्याउदै पश्चिमी देशको सस्कृति
नबिरिरीसीनु है हाम्रो भाषाभेषलाई ॥
भन्यो छोराले लग्छु हजूरहरूलाई एकदिन
सपनाको देश अमेरिका देखाउना।
त्यही दिन समझीदै सुरु गरे मैले
भाग्यको कुण्डली हेराउन ॥

धेरै महीना पछी आये म पनि यहा
सपनाको देश भन्दै घूमन अमेरिका ।
देखे यहा भौतिक बिकास भएको तर
मानिसहरुमा मित्रता नभएको देश रैछ
अमेरिका ॥

दिनभरी बस्यो आफ्नै घर भित्र
छैन छरछीमेकहरु सीत गफ र बात ।

बोल्न खोज्दैनन छिमेकी हरु
लागछ, मैले गरेको छू उनीहरुलाई ठुलो घात ॥

लाग्न थाल्यो बोरिंग, नीरास अनी औडा
भने छोरालाई जान्छु मेरै देशमा ।
भयो धेरै अनुभव र अनुभुति
मित्रता र स्वतन्त्रता रैछ आफ्नै स्वदेशमा ॥

आयो सम्भना छिमेकीकोमा गएर पीयेको चिया
अनि माथील्लो घरे जेठासंग गरेको गफगाफ ।
ठुलो घर र महंगो गाडी मात्रै भएर के गर्न
अमेरिकामा,
नभए पछी थोरै पनि सामाजिक मेलमिलाप ॥

बिन्ति गरे छोरालाई,
काटीदे टिकट हवाईजहाजको,
पठाईदे मलाई
जान्छु मेरै देशमा ।
खुल्ला आकाशमा स्वास फेर्न चाहान्छु,
रमाउछु आफ्नै स्वदेशमा ॥

हिड्न चाहान्छु नेपालको भूमीमा
अनी उकाली ओराली बाटोमा ।
अन्तिम स्वास फेर्छु
अनी त्याग्छु शरीर
आफ्नै देशको माटोमा
आफ्नै देशको माटोमा ॥

शब्द- बिम्बमा अमेरिका



शारदाप्रसाद दाहाल

अमेरिका

वाशिंगटन, जेफर्सन, बेन्जामिन जस्ता मालीहरुले
हुर्काएका

विविध नस्लीय विरुवाहरु

भाङ्गिएर वास्ना छर्दै ढकमक फुलेका

एउटा अनौठो बगैँचा जस्तो

अमेरिका

वाल्ट ह्वीटमेनको धर्ती

जसले मानवीय परस्पर सम्बन्ध र त्यसको
भव्यतामा बाँच्न सिकाए

रोबर्ट फ्रोष्ट हिउँ र गाउँले जीवनको सुन्दरतामा
रमाए

औपनिवेशिक पीडा बोधका कविता बाचन गर्ने
एमिली डिकिन्सन हुन्

या मृत्यु बोधका कविता लेख्ने सिल्भिया प्लाथ
अमेरिकी माटोका गौरव

कुनैवेला बिटल कवि एलेन गिन्सवर्गका बिटल
गीतहरु सुन्न आतुर अमेरिका

अहिले खोइ कुन्नी कुन गीत सुन्न आतुर छ
अमेरिका

उर्वर मस्तिष्कहरुको एउटा साभ्ना धर्ती

जहाँ नव-प्रवर्तनको साहसमा अगाडि बढेर

ज्ञान, विज्ञान र प्रविधिको विचार र सूत्रहरु

बाँड्न तल्लिन हुने गर्दछ

अमेरिका

कतै उष्णता कतै शीतलताको जलवायुमा

अभ्यस्त हुँदै ताल र हरियालीको सौन्दर्यतामा
मुग्ध

विश्वका चारै दिशाबाट

विभिन्न सपना बोकेर आउने हुलका हुल

व्यक्तिलाई स्वागत गर्न तयार

अमेरिका

एउटा साभ्ना धर्ती

नव आगन्तुकहरु

सुख सुविधा र वैभव जीवन शैलीको लोभमा

आफूलाई हराउँदै बाँचेका,

आफनो देशमा तुच्छ संभिएर नगरेको काम
पनि

यहाँ गरेर आफूलाई धन्य संभिदा रहेछन् काम,
परिश्रम र इमान्दारिताको मूल्य सिकने अमेरिका
मानौं एउटा पाठशाला अमेरिका

सधैँ विहानै उठेर मर्निङ्ग वाकमाहाई हलोको

अभिवादन गद फिस्स हाँस्न अभ्यस्त अमेरिका

द फर्स्ट, द ग्रेट, द वेष्ट को मन्त्र जपै गन्तव्यमा

पुग्न खोज्दो रहेछ

गार्नर,

वेककाउण्टी,

नर्थ क्यारोलाइना,

संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका

अमेरिकी गिन कार्ड र यसका विषयमा नेपाल सरकारले पालेको भ्रम



प्रेम शर्मा

“A person who has been given the right to live and work in a country for as long as they want but is not a citizen with the right to vote.” अर्थात् कुनै व्यक्ति जसलाई देश भित्र बस्न र काम गर्न अधिकार दिइन्छ, तर उसलाई मतदान गर्ने अधिकार हुदैन र ऊ त्यहाको नागरिक हुदैन भनेर गिन कार्डलाई परिभाषित गरिएको छ, अमेरिकामा। भनेपछि गिन कार्ड भनेको नागरिकता हैन, नागरिक नभए पछि मतदान गर्न पाइने कुरै भएन तर यसको आधारमा त्यहा बसेर काम गर्न भने पाइने भयो। फेरि बस्न पाइने भनेर सधै बस्न पाइने पनि हैन, यसको पनि अवधि हुन्छ, कसैले ५ वर्षको सुविधा पाउछन् भने कसैले १० वर्षको सुविधा पाउछन्। यो सुविधालाई पनि निश्चित रकम तिर्नु पर्छ, जसरी भीसा शुल्कको लागि तिर्नु पर्छ। अमेरिकामा टुरिष्ट भिसा ५ वर्षको हुन्छ भने गिन कार्ड ५ देखि बढीको हुन्छ। पर्यटक भिसा र गिन कार्ड बीच फरक के छ भने गिन कार्ड पाएको ५ वर्ष पछि नागरिकताको लागि निवेदन दिन पाइन्छ र आवश्यक प्रकृया पुरा गरे पछि त्यहाँको नागरिकता पाइन्छ। तर सबै गिन कार्ड वालाहरूले

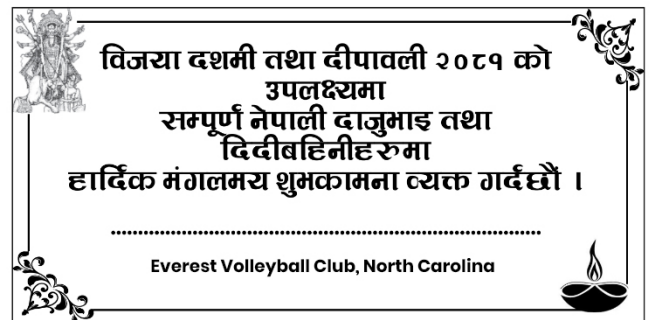
त्यहाँको नागरिकता लिन्छन् भन्ने चाही सत्य है ना। कसैले जब गिनकार्ड मात्रै लिन्छन् उनीहरू त्यहाँका नागरिक हुदैनन् तर नेपाल सरकारले यस्ता गिन कार्डवालाहरूलाई समेत अमेरिकी नागरिक जस्तो ठान्ने गरेको छ, जुन बिडम्बना हो। नेपाल सरकार स्पष्ट हुनु जरूरी छ कि अमेरिकी गिन कार्ड पनि एक किसिमको भिसा जस्तै हो, फरक यति छ कि पर्यटक भिसामा काम गर्न मिल्दैन तर गिन कार्डमा काम गर्न पाइन्छ।

नेपालमा रोजगारीको अभावका कारण विदेशिने नेपालीहरू काम कै खोजीमा विदेशिन बाध्य भएको विषयमा सरकार अनविज्ञ छ भन्न मिल्दैन। यसरी विदेशिएका नेपालीले कमाई गरेको रकम विप्रेषणको रूपमा नेपालमा भित्र्याएको विषयमा समेत सरकार अनविज्ञ छैन। हाम्रो देशको विकासको लागि वैदेशिक सहयोग लिनुपर्ने अवस्थामा रहेका हामी नेपालीले हाम्रै सन्ततिलाई समेत नेपालमा लागानी गर्न उत्प्रेरित गर्नुपर्नेमा लालबाबु जस्ता नकारात्मक सोच भएकाहरूको लहलहैमा लागेर अमेरिकी गिन कार्ड वाहक नेपाली उपर बक्रदृष्टि राख्नु आफैमा नकारात्मक सोच हो।

हो, हरेक नेपालीले नेपालको माया गर्नु पर्छ र गरेका पनि छन्, चाहे ती स्वदेशमा होउन् वा विदेशमा, तर नेपालमा अवसर नपाएर अवसरको खोजीमा विदेशिन बाध्य नेपालीको विदेश बसाइँलाई सहज बनाउन पाएको भीसा सहजीकरणको विषयलाई अन्यथा लिनु सरासर अन्याय पूर्ण हुन जान्छ। नेपालको संविधानको

धारा २९१ मा ग्रिन कार्ड वाहक नेपालीलाई राजनीतिक नियुक्ति दिन नमिल्ने ब्यवस्था गरिएको छ तर निज ग्रिन कार्ड वाहकले उक्त ग्रिन कार्ड त्याग गरेको ३ महिना पछि भने त्यस्तो नियुक्त दिन मिल्ने गरी संवैधानिक ब्यवस्था रहेको पाईन्छ। यसरी हेर्दा ग्रिन कार्ड वाहक र पर्यटक भीसा वाहक नेपाली बीच खासै विभेद गर्न पर्ने स्थिति नहुदा नहुदै पनि सरकारले विभेद गर्ने प्रयास गरेको छ। त्यसै गरी प्रस्तावित निजामती सेवा विधेयकमा समेत ग्रिन कार्ड धारी कर्मचारीलाई विदेशी नागरिक सरह ब्यवहार गर्ने गरी ऐनको मस्यौदा भएको सुनिन्छ। राज्यको जुनसुकै पदाधिकारीले राष्ट्रको गोपनीयतालाई सर्वो परी राख्नु पर्ने हुन्छ। र राज्यका विभिन्न पदमा कार्यरत वा नियुक्त हुने पदाधिकारीले राष्ट्रका संवेदनशील सूचनाहरू गोप्य राख्नु पर्ने हुन्छ, र निज विदेश जादा वा विदेशको प्रवेश आज्ञा पाउना साथ निज उपर शंका गर्न उपयुक्त हुदैन। त्यसै गरेर निजलाई राजनीतिक नियुक्ति दिने जस्ता कार्यमा समेत वन्देज लगाउन आवश्यक हुदैन तर यदि निजले विदेशी नागरिकता लिन्छ भने ऊ नेपालकै नागरिक नरहने हुदा त्यस्तालाई वन्देज लगाईनु तर्क संगत हो तर आफ्नै नागरिक विदेशमा बसेकै कारणले यस्ता वन्देज लगाउने हो भने संविधानले दिएको समानताको हकको समेत वरिखलाप हुन जान्छ। यस तर्फ पनि सरकारले हेक्का राख्नु पर्ने हुन्छ। यसैले संविधानमा उल्लिखित उक्त धाराको संशोधन गर्ने तर्फ समेत विधायकको ध्यान जानु जरूरी देखिन्छ। सरकारले विदेशी लगानीका लागि वातावरण बनाई रहेको दावी गर्छ तर वाध्यताले विदेशिनु

परेका नेपालीहरूलाई चुकुल लगाउने काम पनि गर्छ। विदेशको सीप र पूंजी भित्र्याउने नाममा गैर आवासीय नेपाली नागरिकताको नाटक गर्छ तर ऐन बनाउने बेलामा उनीहरूको मनोबल कता बाट गिराउन सकिन्छ भनेर किन र तरको प्रयोग गर्न कस्सिन्छ। वास्तवमा भन्ने हो भने नेपालीहरू विदेशिएका कारणले नेपालको अर्थ र राजनीतिक क्षेत्रमा आवश्यक पर्ने खास व्यक्तिहरूको खडेरी परेको पाईन्छ। देश बनाउने क्रममा विदेशमा कमाएको ज्ञान, सीप र पूंजी लिएर नेपालीहरू स्वदेश फर्कन तयार छन् तर नीति नियम बनाउनेले यिनीहरूको आगमनलाई सहज र सरल बनाउनुको सट्टा यसलाई थप जटिल बनाउन लागी परेको पाईन्छ। नेपालमा बसेर नीति बनाईटोपल्नेहरूले विदेशमा गएको जन शक्ति फर्केमा उनीहरूको व्यवसाय चौपट हुने सोचाई राखेका छन्। किनभने उनीहरूले देशमा गरिने राजनीतिलाई बपौती र पेशा बनाएका छन्। यसैले यसरी विदेशिएका नेपालीलाई नेपाल भित्रिन नदिन नाना थरी बहाना बनाउनुका सट्टा यिनीहरूबाट नेपालले कसरी फाईदा लिन सक्छ भन्ने तर्फ नीति निर्माताको सोच जानु जरूरी छ।



गजल



सविता बिष्ट

भनेकै थिए माया गछु
तर्किएर गयौ तिमि
मेरो न्यानो जिन्दगीमा
दर्किएर गयौ तिमि ।

फुल जस्तै फुलाऊला
सोचेकि थिए मैले,
सिसा सरी भयो माया
चर्किएर गयौ तिमि ।

ठेस लागे जिन्दगीमा
साथ दिन्छौ भन्थान्थे,
आलो घाउमा नुन-चुक
छर्किएर गयौ तिमि ।

अजम्बरी मेरो माया
जुनिजुनि लाई भन्थेऊ,
मभ्रधारमा एकलै छाडि
फर्किएर गयौ तिमि ।

जात धर्म केही हैन
हाम्रो माया सामु भन्थेऊ,
आज त्यही पर्खाल देखि
थर्किएर गयौ तिमि !!

भनेकै थिए माया गछु तर्किएर गयौ तिमि !!

छोरी



नम्रता गुरागाई

छोरी,
तिमी भोली अर्कोको घर हैन
आफनै घर जानु पर्छ
मन परेकैलाई तिमिले आफनो बनाउनु
आफैले बनाएको घरमा
मायाँ र प्रेम रोपेर हुर्काउनु पर्छ
त्यसलाई भन धेरै आफनो बनाउनु पर्छ
तर जानुअघि
घरको जग हाल्ने आँट लिएर जानु
हत्केलामा रेखा आफै कोर्ने छाँटकाट लिएर
जानु ।

छोरी,
तिमी भोली अर्कोको घर हैन
आफनै घर जानु पर्छ
मन परेकैलाई तिमिले आफनो बनाउनु
आफनो बनाउने क्रममा
घरका सबैकुरामा चित्त नबुभन सक्छ
तर चित्त नबुभदैमा संसार सकिदैन
समस्यामाथि वहस गर्ने हिम्मत लिएर जानु
हिडिरहेको बाटो असजिलो लागे
बाटा हजार छन्
बाटो बदल्ने साहस लिएर जानु
तर आफू भित्रको सुन्दरता पटककै नगुमाउनु ।

जय NCNC



भगवती न्यौपाने

को हो त NCNC ?
म नै हुँ NCNC
जान्दिन म नभन
तिम्रै पसिनाले
भिजेको छ NCNC
ओभानो नबन ॥

हाम्रो आँगन हो NCNC
खुलेर नाचनु छ
ममताको चौतारी हो NCNC
हातेमालो गरेर जोगाउनु छ ॥

नेपाल र नेपालीको शान हो NCNC
शिर ठाडो पारेर हिड्नु छ
सबैको मान हो NCNC
स्वाभिमान बन्नु छ ॥

देश छोडी परदेसमा बसेर
जन्मभूमीको नियास्रो मेटाउने
भाषा संस्कृति र पर्व बोकेको संगम हो
NCNC ॥

तिमी छौ र त यहाँ
आज NCNC पाउँछौ
NCNC भएर त त्यहाँ
म नेपाली कहलाउँछु ॥

तिमी बिना अधुरो छ NCNC
बिर्सन हुन्न आफ्नो
कर्तव्य र अस्तित्व
भुल्न हुँदैन अधिकार
जन्मभूमि र नेपाल आमाको ॥

कति संघर्ष आए होलान
अभै कति बककाकी छन्
भुलेर अतितलाई
जोगाउनु छ सानो NCNC लाई ॥

साभ्ना चौतारी NCNC
1999 मा स्थापित यो
बाल बच्चा बूढापाका
सबै अटाउने
रमाईलो
दौतरी हो ॥

नाति



डा. चन्द्र गिरी

नरबहादुर नाति/नातिनीको मुख नहेरी मरिन्छ कि भन्ने पिर बोकेर बाँचेको थियो। उसका दौतरीहरु हजुरबा भइसकेका थिए। सबै जना चो कको चिया पसलमा गफ गर्दा छोरा/छोरीको भन्दा नाति/नातिनीको बारेमा कुरा गर्थे। फोनमा नाति/नातिनीको फोटो देखाउँथे। कसै कसैले फोनको स्क्रिनमा फोटो राखेका थिए। “साउँको भन्दा ब्याजको मायाँ बढी हुन्छ” भन्थे। त्यसरी कुरा गर्दा तिनीहरूको अनुहारमा देखिने खुशी अभुतपुर्ब हुन्थ्यो। मनको बह कसैलाई नकह भनेर नरबहादुर चुपचाप सुनी रहन्थ्यो।

चिया पसलमा मात्र हैन गाउँ घरमा पनि सबै ले नाति/नातिनीको कुरा गरेर रमाइरहेको देख्दा उसको मन भारी हुन्थ्यो। आफ्ना नाति/नातिनीको मुख हेरेर गर्वले भरिन चाहन्थ्यो। तर, समयले उसलाई त्यो खुशी दिन सकेको थिएन। उसकै एकलौटी छोरी सरला बिहे गरेर अमेरिका भास्सिएकि पनि तिन-तिन वर्ष भई सकेको थियो। छोरी बाट कुनै खुसखबरी आएको थिएन तर नर बहादुरले आशा मारेको थिएन। ऊ हरेक दिन प्रार्थना गर्थ्यो कि एक दिन उसले पनि आफ्ना नाति/नातिनीलाई काखमा लिन पाउनेछ।

न्यु योर्कमा बस्ने छोरी संग बेला बखत फोनमा कुरा हुँदा, “अब मर्न अधि नाति/नातिनीको मुख हेर्ने मन छ” भन्थ्यो। सरलाले एक कानले सुनेर अर्को कानले उडाइ दिन्थिन। हुन् त छोरी ज्वाइले पनि केहि न केहि त् सोचेका होलान, तर नयाँ ठाउँ, नयाँ देशमा संघर्ष गर्न परेको ले केटाकेटीको बारेमा सोच्ने फुर्षद छैन होला भन्थान्थ्यो। “सुरु सुरुमा कुकुरले नपाएको दुख पाइन्छ रे अमेरिकामा” भन्थे गाउँका जान्नेबुभनेहरु।

केहि महिना पछि, एका बिहानै सरला र ज्वाइँ नबिन को फोन आयो। ज्वाइँसाहबले भन्नु भयो, “बधाई छ ससुराबा, तपाईँ नातिको हजुरबा बन्दै हुनुहुन्छ”। छोरी गर्भवती भएको र नातिको जन्म हुने खबर पाए पछि उ खुसीले गदगद भयो। गर्वले छाती फुल्यो। खेतमा तातो घाममा काम गर्दाको थकान कता हरायो कता। खुसीले फुरुङ्ग फुरुङ्ग उफ्रदै चिया पसलमा गएर सबैलाई लड्डु बाँड्यो, सबैको बधाई थाप्यो।

जन्मिनलाई अभै केहि महिना बाँकि रहँदा उसले आयाबारीमा गर्ने तयारी केहि थिएन। तर पनि हरेक बिहान आँगनमा स्थापना गरिएको तुलसीको मठ नजिकै मुडामा बसेर भगवानसँग प्रार्थना गर्थ्यो— “हे भगवान, स्वस्थ र तन्दुरुस्त नातिको जन्म होस्, र मेरी छोरीको स्वास्थ्य नबिग्रियोस्”

नरबहादुर नातीको मुख हेर्न आतुर थियो। समयले फट्को मारीसकेछ। अत्यन्तै खुसीको खबर आयो। न्यु योर्कको प्रेसबिटेरियन अस्पतालमा

नाति मुकुल को जन्म हुँदा भापाको आयाबार
ीमा एकजना हजुरबुबाको पनि जन्म भयो। जब
नरबहादुरले नाति मुकुलको फोटो र भिडियो
देख्यो, उसको खुट्टा भुइँमा रहेन। नरबहादुरको
आँखाबाट आँसु भरे। उसका सबै पीरहरू एकै
छिनमा मेटिए। उसले आफ्नो नातिलाई फोनको
स्क्रिनमा हेर्दै मनमनै भन्यो, “अब म खुशी-खुशी
मर्न सक्छु।”

पहिलो नातिको हजुरबुबा बन्ने सौभाग्य
पाउनु नरबहादुरका लागि भगवानको अद्वितीय
आशीर्वाद थियो। अमेरिका र नेपालको सबै परि
वारमा हर्ष र उमंग छाियो। घरमा चाँजो-पाँजो
मिलाएर छिटो भन्दा छिटो नाति भेट्न जाने तिब्र
इच्छा जाग्यो उसलाई। “अमेरिका जान सजिलो
छैन, इच्छा गरेर मात्र हुन्छ? धेरै कागजातहरू
चाहिन्छ, अन्तर्वार्तामा पास हुनुपर्छ,” भने गाउँका
मास्टर हरिहरले। उनले थपे “त्यो प्रक्रिया लामो
र जटिल छ। “जे जस्तो हण्डहर खानु परे पनि
नरबहादुरले हार मान्न चाहेन। नातिको माया र
अनुहार सम्झँदा, कुनै पनि चुनौती सामना गर्न
तयार थियो उ। भिसा प्रक्रिया बुझ्न र न्यु
योर्क जाने तयारी गर्न उसले सबै सँग सोधपुछ
गरेर जानकारी लियो। मनमा एउटै कुरा थियो
- नातिलाई भेटनु ।

एउटा कन्सल्टेन्सीको सहायता लिएर राजधानी
गएर भिसाको आবেदन दियो। भाग्यबस भिसा
मिल्यो। हवाईजहाजको टिकट किन्यो। उड्न के
हि दिन बाँकि भएको हुनाले गाउँ फर्केर गयो।
जाने दिन र घण्टा गन्न थाल्यो। कहिले आफ्नो
नातिलाई प्रत्यक्ष भेट्न पाइन्छ भन्ने कुरामा उ

आतुर मात्र हैन बेचैन पनि थियो। नरबहादुर
अमेरिका जाने कुरा गाउँमा डढेलोभैँ फैलियो।
हरिहरले “ल बधाई छ, कोट छ कि छैन? अमे
रिकामा कोट लाउनु पर्छ” भने । “धुलाबारी”
बजार गएर जिन्दगीकै पहिले कोट र एउटा
छालाको जुत्ता किन्यो।

जाने दिन आई सकेछ। एउटा भोला बोकेर
राजधानी तर्फ जाने तयारी गर्यो। भोलामा
आफ्ना लुगा फाटा बाहेक, आफ्नै घरको एक
डिब्बा घिउ र एक डिब्बा कुराउनि हाल्यो,
छोरी जवाईको लागि। जब उ घर बाट निस्कियो,
एकजना गाउँलेले सोधे “अब गाउँ फर्केर आउने
कि नआउने?”। “आउने नि किन नआउनु” भनेर
जवाफ दियो। अमेरिका छिरे पछि, जो कोहि उतै
भासिन्छन भन्ने मान्यता छ उसको गाउँमा।

काठमाडौँ पुगेको दुइ दिन पछि नेपाल छोड्ने
दिन कमेज सुरुवाल, कोट, र ढाका टोपी ढल्काएर
नरबहादुर त्रिभुवन अन्तराष्ट्रिय विमानस्थल तर्फ
लाग्यो। एअरपोर्टको भिडभाडलाई
चिदै सबै प्रक्रिया पुर्याएर हवाईजहाजमा चढ
यो र न्यु योर्क तर्फ रवाना भयो। नरबहादुरलाई
अमेरिका जाने उत्साह त थियो नै, तर त्यो
भन्दा महत्वपूर्ण कुरा नातिलाई साक्षात भेट्ने
तीव्र इच्छा थियो ।

न्युयोर्क त पुग्यो तर एअरपोर्टमा उसले लगेको
घिउ र कुराउनि कस्टमका अफिसरले फाल्न
लगाए। उसलाई नरमाइलो लाग्यो। नातिलाई
भेट्ने उत्साहले त्यो कुरा पनि भुल्न चाह्यो।
बाटोमा हण्डर खाएको कुरा बिसन चाह्यो। एअर

पोर्ट बाहिर पखि राख्नु भएका ज्वाइ साहब संग ट्याक्सी चढेर अपार्टमेन्ट पुग्यो। लामो यात्राको थकान र जेटल्यागको मारमा परेको नरबहादुर अपार्टमेन्ट पुग्ना साथ सबैभन्दा पहिले नातिलाई हेर्न चाहन्थ्यो। बाटोको थकान र अनिन्द्रा कता हराएको थियो कता। नाति हेर्ने उत्साहले भोक र प्यास पनि बिसिएको थियो।

अपार्टमेन्टमा पुग्ना साथ नुहाई धुवाई गरेर एक महिनाको नातिलाई काखमा लिँदा, उसका आँखाबाट आँसुका धारा छुटे। खुसीको सिमा रहे ना। काखमै राखी राखेर, उसले नातिको त्यो कोमल अनुहालाई हेरी रह्यो। नातिको त्यो सानो मुहारमा उसले आफूलाई देख्यो, आफ्नै बाल्यकालको भल्को देख्यो। उसको मासूमियत र उज्यालो मुस्कानमा उसले आफ्नो बंशको निरन्तरता र भविष्यको आशा देख्यो। पहिलो भेटमै नातिले उसका हृदयमा गहिरो छाप छोड्यो। उसले आफ्नो मनको गहिराइमा एउटा अटूट बन्धन महसुस गर्यो। नरबहादुरको हृदयमा असीम खुशी छाियो। उसले सोच्यो, यो स्मरणीय र अद्वितीय क्षणले दिएको स्वर्गीय आनन्दको व्याख्या गर्न संसारको कुनै पनि शब्दकोशले सक्दैन।

साउँको भन्दा ब्याजको माया बढी हुन्छ भन्ने कुरा सोहेँ आना सहि रहेछ। आफ्नै नाति हुनु र अरूको नाति देख्नुमा वा उनीहरुको बारे मा सुन्नुमा आकाश-पातालको फरक हुने रहेछ। आफ्नै नातिलाई देख्दा/भेट्दा आउने भावना अर्कै किसिमको हुने रहेछ। हाम्रा पुर्खाहरुले उखान टुक्का त्यसै बनाएका हैनन रहेछन भन्ने बुभ्यो। नरबहादुरले नातिलाई काखबाट छोड्नै सके

को थिएन। नातिले पनि कुनै खालको चिच्याहट वा असन्तुष्टि जनाएको थिएन। ऊ चुपचाप र सन्तुष्टसँग बसेको थियो, मानौँ उसले पनि हजुर बा सात समुन्द्र पार गरेर उसलाई भेट्न आएको कुरा बुझेको थियो। नरबहादुरले फुरुङ्ग हुँदै भगवानलाई धेरै पटक धन्यवाद दियो। नातिको सानो हातले आफ्नो औँलामा स्पर्स गर्दा, उसलाई आफ्नो जिम्मेवारी र प्रेमको महत्व थाहा भयो। मुकुलको हात एकछिन समाएर छोडे पनि, ती साना हातहरुको स्पर्शले उसको हृदयमा सधैंका लागि अमिट छाप छोडिसकेको थियो। नातिको अविरल माया र मोहले उसको मुटुको कुना-कुनामा गहिरो जरा गाडिसकेको थियो।

नरबहादुरले सोच्यो, यो क्षणले उसको जीवनमा नयाँ अध्यायको सुरुवात गरिदिएको छ। नातिलाई हेर्दा जिवन कति सुन्दर रहेछ भन्ने कुरा प्रस्ट भयो। नातिले केहि नबोले पनि धेरै कुरा भनिरहे को जस्तो लाग्थ्यो नरबहादुरलाई। नरबहादुरको संसार यसै कारणले उज्यालो बनि सकेको थियो। त्यहि दिन, त्यहि क्षण, उसले नातिलाई सके सम्म धेरै स्नेह र माया दिएर उसको भविष्यलाई उज्यालो बनाउन भरमग्दुर प्रयास गर्ने प्रतिज्ञा गर्यो। नातिको हरेक पाइलाहरुमा नर बहादुरले आफूलाई पूर्ण रूपमा समर्पित गर्ने प्रण गर्यो। नर बहादुर सोच्यै थियो, काश! हरेक हजुरबुबा र हजुरआमाले यस्तै आनन्दको अनुभव गर्न सकून्।

नरबहादुरको दिनचर्या नातिको वरिपरी केन्द्रित भएको थियो। बिहान उठ्ना साथ, बेलुका सुत्नु अघि र दिनमा पटक पटक नातिको के हाल

छ भनेर पुलुक पुलुक चिहाउथ्यो। उ नातिलाई हेरेर कहिलै थाकेन, कहिलै अघाएना नसुतेको बेला एकछिन भए पनि काखमा लिन्थ्यो। दुध खायो कि खाएन भनेर सोधखोज गरि रहन्थ्यो। उसलाई बाहिर कतै घुम्न जानु भन्दा नाति सँग दिन रात समय बिताउनै मन लाग्थ्यो। टाइम्स स्क्वाएरको भिलिमिलीमा रमाउन छोडेर घर फर्किन हतार हुन्थ्यो उस्लाई ।

अमेरिकामा बच्चा हुर्काउनु कुनै सजिलो काम होइन रहेछ, उ आफै भुक्तभोगी थियो यो कुराको। यस्तो परिवेशमा नातिले पाउनु पर्ने सुख सुविधामा कमि होलाकी भन्ने चिन्ता थियो नर बहादुरलाई। यहाँको जीवनशैली धेरै व्यस्त र द्रुत गतिमा चलिरहेको हुने रहेछ। ज्वाइँको एक महिने छुट्टी सकिई सकेको थियो। छोरीलाई एकलै बिहानदेखि बेलुकासम्मको दैनिकीमा बच्चाको हेरचाह, खाना पकाउने, सफा गर्ने, र अन्य कामहरू गर्नपर्ने हुँदा धौधौ परेको थियो ।

नरबहादुरले घरको काम गर्न अलि अलि सघायो तर जिन्दगीमा कहिलै नगरेका वा नदेखेका कुराहरू गर्न कहाँ सजिलो हुन्थ्यो र? कतिपय कामहरू गर्न बूढो शरीरले साथ नदिए पनि सकी नसकी गर्यो। खुसीको कुरा नातिले गर्दा मेरो जीवनमा खुसि नै खुसि छाएको, र नयाँ उर्जा जागेको थियो। नयाँ पुस्तासँगको अन्तर्क्रियाले ताजा दृष्टिकोणबाट जीवन अनुभव गर्न पाएको थियो। आयाबारीमा भएको भए परिवार र समुदायको सहयोग सजिलै पाउने थियो उसको सुत्केरी छोरी र नातिले, उ सोच्दै थियो। यहाँ त् त्यो सानो अपार्टमेन्टमा सरला, नबिन,

मुकुल र उ मात्र थिए। त्यो अपार्टमेन्टमा बस्ने अरु कसै सँग उनीहरूको सम्पर्क थिएन। कोहि कसै सँग बोल्न चाहँदैनन रहेछन यहाँका छर छिमेकीहरू ।

अमेरिकामा बच्चा हुर्काउने सबै चुनौतीहरूको सामना गर्न नेपाली मुलका बाबु आमाले निकै परिश्रम गर्दा रहेछन्। तेल भिसामा आएर कसै कसैले सहयोग गर्दा रहेछन। जे होस्, हरेक कठिनाइहरू पार गर्दै, अमेरिकामा आफ्ना सन्तानको उज्ज्वल भविष्यको सपना देख्दा रहेछन बाउ/आमाहरू ।

फुर्सदको बेला नातिलाई काखमा लिएर उ सोच्दथ्यो। आफ्ना बच्चा/बच्चीहरू कसरि हुर्के हो लान? उसलाई त् पत्तै भएनछ। उ खेतीपातीको काममा व्यस्त हुन्थ्यो। अहिले बुभ्दा गाउँघरमा आफ्नी श्रीमती लगायत अन्य महिलाहरूले धेरै मेहनत गरेका रहेछन उसकी छोरी हुर्काउनमा। अहिले पो छर्लङ्ग भयो। कति कुरा उमेरले बुझ्न दिँदो रहेनछ र कति कुरा उमेरले जबर्जस्त सिकाउदो रहेछ। उसलाई लाग्दथ्यो कि ३० वर्षअघिको छोरा/छोरी हुर्काउने अनुभवले अहिले पनि काम लाग्छ। यद्यपि त्यो गाउँको अनुभव थियो र त्यो पनि बाबुको हैसियतको, आमाको होइना उसले आफ्नो गल्ती र सफलताबाट सिकेका पाठहरू छोरी/ज्वाइँलाई बताईरहेको थियो। कुनै कुरा अहिले पनि सान्दर्भिक थिए होलान, कति थिएनन् होलान। छोरी/ज्वाइँ जिस्कँदै भन्थे, “३० वर्षअघिको अनुभवले अब काम गर्दैन, अहिले नयाँ तालिम चाहिन्छ।” न्यु योर्कमा नरबहादुरलाई खेति पातीमा दौडधुप

गर्न थिएन, बिहानै हलो जोत्न जानु पर्ने थिएन। फुर्शदिलो समय थियो। यो समयमा मज्जाले नाति सँग समय बिताउन पायो। त्यो बेला बिताएका पलहरु नातिले त् नसम्भला, तर नर बहादुरले भने सम्भ्री रहनेछ जिन्दगिभर भनेर उ दङ्ग थियो।

भिसाको अवधि सकेर गाउँ फर्किने बेला भइसके को थियो। तिन महिना कति चाँडो बित्यो कति अमेरिका भनेको के के न होला भन्ठानेको थियो तर उसले देखेको अमेरिका त संघर्षले भरि एको रहेछ। हरेक बिहान इनेपलिज डट कम को समाचार पढ्दा 'गन भायोलेन्स' र "भेदभाव" जस्ता समस्याहरू चर्किएको पायो। अबसरहरु र सुबिधाहरु पनि प्रसस्तै रहेछन्। मनमनै सोच्यो 'बस्नलाई त् आफ्नै देश आफ्नै गाउँ रमाइलो'।

नरबहादुरले आफ्नो नातिको दुवै हातमा "थु थु" गरेर बिदा भयो। जाने बेलामा नातिको कोमल अनुहार हेरिहँदा उसका आँखा रसाए। नाति उसलाईनै टुलुटुलु हेरीरहेको थियो। "अब कहिले भेट्न पाउने हो?" भन्दै चुपचाप आफ्नो आँसु पुछ्यो। उसले आफुले आफैलाई सम्झाउँदै भन्यो "जुन खुशी र माया यहाँ मैले मेरो नाति बाट यो छोटो अवधिमा पाएँ, त्यो मेरो बाँकि जीवनभर का लागि पर्याप्त छ, फेरी चाडै भेट भइ हाल्छ"। चार महिने नातिलाई छोडेर नर बहादुर मन खिन्न पारेर आयाबारी फर्कियो।

गाउँमा आफ्नो नातिको बारेमा सोध्ने भन्दा बढी अमेरिकाको बारेमा सोध्ने बढी निस्किए। कुरा मिलाएर नातिको बयान गर्न उसले छोडे

न किनकि उसलाई नातिको बारेमा धेरै कुरा सुनाउन मन लागेको थियो। चिया पसलमा ति दौतरीहरु सँग गएर भन्यो, "हो रहेछ, नातिको मायाले त् ज्यानै लिने रहेछ"। उसको अनुहार को खुसि सबैले छर्लङ्ग देखि रहेका थिए।

समय बित्दै जाँदा, नरबहादुरले आफ्नो दैनिकीमा फर्कने कोसिस गर्यो। तर उसलाई नातिको सम्भ्रनाले सताई रह्यो। जब उ आफ्नो खेतबारीमा काम गरिरहेको हुन्थ्यो, उसको मन भने सधैं नातिसँग रहन्थ्यो। हप्तामा एक चोटी शनिबारको छुट्टी मिलाएर भिडियोमा सम्पर्क र देखादेख भने भइ रह्यो। अमेरिकामा नातिको उज्यालो भविष्यको सपना देख्दै, नरबहादुरले नातिको हरेक नयाँ उपलब्धिहरुको खबर लिइ रह्यो। नातिको सानोतिनो सफलतामा पनि उसले गर्व अनुभव गर्यो। जब नाति बामे सर्न थाल्यो, हिड्न थाल्यो, पढ्न लाग्यो, वा कुनै नयाँ कुरा गर्न थाल्यो, खबर सुन्ना साथ नर बहादुरको आँखामा खुशीका आँसु चम्किन्थे। अरु समकक्षिहरुले जस्तै चिया पसलमा गएर छाती फुलाएर नातिको उपलब्धिहरुको कुरा गर्थ्यो।

हरेक चोटी भिडियो कलमा नातिलाई देख्न पाउदा उसका दिनहरूलाई रङ्गिन हुन्थे। नर बहादुरको संसार नातिको अगाध मायाले भरि एको थियो। उसको जीवनलाई नयाँ अर्थ र उद्देश्य प्रदान गरेको मात्र हैन जीवनमा आशाको दियो बलेको थियो। नरबहादुरले आफ्ना सबै पीडा र कठिनाइहरूलाई भुल्न सकेको थियो। समयले निकै लामो फट्को मारी सकेछ। पाँच वर्ष पछि छोरी/ज्वाई र नाति नेपाल आउने

भए। एक महिनाको छोटो छुट्टीमा आउने भए पनि कम्तिमा दुइ हप्ता आयाबारीमा बस्न कर गर्यो नरबहादुरले। उनीहरूले पनि माने। आउने दिनको प्रतिक्षामा दिन गन्न थाल्यो। घरको सर सफाई गर्ने काम सिध्यायो र उत्सुकतापूर्वक पर्खि रह्यो।

छोरि, ज्वाइँ र नाति आउने दिन उ मूल सडकमा गएर कुरेर बस्यो । आउनासाथ घरमा लग्यो । गाउँलेहरू पनि भेटघाट गर्न आए ।

अलि अलि मात्र नेपाली बोल्ने तर धेरै जसो अंग्रेजी बोल्ने नाति सँग कुराकानी गर्न नरबहादुरलाई कठिनाई भयो। आफु न्यु योर्कमा हुँदा सिकेका केहि अंग्रेजी शब्दहरू काम लागे। नरबहादुरले नातिलाई गोठमा बाँधेका गाई बस्तुहरू देखाई दियो। कुखुरा र बाखा संग खेलन दियो। बारीको आँपको रुख बाट पाकेको आँप ल्याएर खान दियो। करेसाबारीमा भएका तरकारीका बोटहरू र फुलहरू देखाई दियो। मकै बारी र धान खेत देखाई दियो ।

उसलाई के गरूँ कसो गरूँ, कसरि नातिलाई गाउँले जीवन देखाई दिउँ, सुनाई दिउँ भन्ने थियो। भ्याएसम्म गाउँघरका सबै कुरा देखाउन चाहन्थ्यो। बाखा चराउन, गाई चराउन, भैंसीको पीठमा बसेर पैनी पैनी चराउन, रोपाईँ गर्न, र हलो जोत्न पनि लिएर गयो। नाति पनि यी हरेक क्रियाकलापहरूमा रमाएर सहभागी भयो। त्यसै गरि चिया पसलमा नातिलाई लिएर सबैलाई चिनाई दियो। आफन्तहरू भेट्न जाँदा सँधैँ सँगै लिएर हिँड्यो।

आयावरिमा बसुन्जेल पुत्पुल्याउन सम्म पुत्पुल्यायो। नातिले जे माग्यो त्यहि दिन्थ्यो । बाउ/आमाको आँखा छलेर गुलियो दियो। फोनको स्क्रिनमा लुकी लुकी युट्युब हेर्न दियो। धुलाबारी बजार गएर खेलौना र एक जोर ने पाली लुगा किनी दियो। इँटाभट्टा र काकरभित्ता घुमाउन लग्यो। नातिले जति बदमासी गरे पनि केहि भनेन। बेलुका नातिले सुने पनि नसुने पनि बुझे पनि नबुझे पनि पुस्तौनी ज्ञान र रामायणका कथाहरू सुनायो। जाने बेला भइ सकेछ तर नरबहादुरले नाति संग भावनात्मक बन्धन अझ बढी जोडिएको महसुस गर्यो । उनीहरू एक अर्काका कहिलै नछुट्टिने र मिल्ने साथी बनि सकेका छन भन्थान्यो। नरबहादुरमा थप जोश, र थप उमङ्ग छाएको थियो। नाति बसुन्जेल हात गोडा करकरी खाने रोग पनि कता हरायो कता। घुँडा पनि दुखेन। उ आफुलाई पहिले भन्दा स्वस्थ महसुस गरिरहेको थियो ।

नाति फर्किएको दिन निकै नियास्रो भयो तर उसको नातिको उज्वल भविष्यको लागि अमेरिका फर्कनै पर्छ भनेर चित्त बुझायो। छोरी, ज्वाइँ र नातिलाई बिदाई गर्न काठमाडौँ गएर त्रिभुवन अन्तराष्ट्रिय विमानस्थलबाट बिदाई गर्यो। कतार एअरवेजको हवाईजहाज उडेपछि उसले जति रोक्न खोजे पनि आँसु रोक्न सकेन। मुखले केही बोल्न नसकेपछि आँसु बोल्दो रहेछ । त्यो आँसुमा खुशी र दुःख दुवै मिसिएका थिए। खुशी यस कारण कि नातिलाई भेट्न पाएको थियो, र दुःख यस कारण कि फेरि बिछोडिनु परेको थियो । उसका भावनाहरू आँसुका थोपा-थोपामा प्रकट भइरहेका थिए ।

अमेरिका गए पछि पनि हप्तामा एक पटक कुराकानी भइ रह्यो। कुरा गर्दा नातिलाई नेपाली बोल्न सिकाउन खोज्यो। तर उल्टै नरबहादुरले नातिबाट करिब दुइ सय जति अंग्रेजी शब्द सिक्न सकेको थियो। समय बित्दै गयो, र नाति स्कुल जान थालेको थियो। भोला बोकेर स्कुल जान लागेको फोटो सरलाले खिचेर पठाइन्। फोटो चिया पसलमा लगेर सबैलाई देखायो।

एकदिन एकाएक छोरीले मध्य रातमा फोन गरिन। “यो फोन गर्ने समय त् हैन” भन्दै आँखा मिचिँदै फोन उठायो। छोरी रोइ रहेकी थिइन्। उनले बडो मुस्किलले भनिन्, “मुकुल लगायत १४ जनालाई एउटा बन्दुकधारीले न्यूयोर्कको बाबु पढ्ने स्कुलमा गोली प्रहार गरेछ।”

नरबहादुर स्तब्ध भयो। केही बोल्न सकेन। के गर्ने, के नगर्ने सोच्न सकेन। उसका हात् खुट्टाहरु लरबरीए। छोरी ज्वाइको हालत के होला अनुमान पनि गर्न सकेन। फोन भुइँमा झर्यो।

नरबहादुरलाई यो भन्दा ठुलो बज्रपात अरु के नै हुन् सक्थ्यो र? उसका लागि पुरै संसार नै उजाडियो। नाति मुकुल उसको बाँच्ने आधार थियो, त्यो पनि सदाको लागि लुटियो। उ “मेरो नाति, मेरो नाति” भन्दै डाँको छोडेर छाती पिटी पिटी रोइ रहेको थियो।

अमेरिकामा बन्दुकको समस्या छ, भन्ने थाहा थियो तर आफ्नै नाती पर्ला भन्ने दश मनमा एक मन पनि सोचेको थिएन। नातिको भविष्यको लागि भनेर अमेरिका गएर दुःख गरेका थिए छोरी ज्वाइले, तर अब त्यो भविष्य नै रहेन। उनीहरुलाई अब नेपाल फर्क, दुख सुख गरेर

खाउँला भन्थो नरबहादुरले तर उनीहरुको आफ्नै सोचाई र बाध्यता थियो होला, फर्कन सकेनन।

खबर आयो केहि दिनमै नरबहादुर बारीको बरौको रुखमा झुन्डिएर मरेको अवस्थामा भेटिए।

यात्रामा भेटिएका तपाईं र मपाईंहरु



प्रभा पोखरेल

म अविरल यात्रामा थिएँ। विगत पाँच दशक देखि मेरो यात्रा स्वभाविक थियो। नदीलेभैँ बाटो स्वयमले खन्दै अघि बढ्दै गएँ। यात्रामा ठडिएका विशाल चुनौतिका पहाडलाई कपेर सुरुङ्मार्ग खन्दा त्यति गारो भएन। एकान्त अनकन्टार मनको वनमा सपनाको भारी बोकेर हुइकिन पनि त्यति गारो भएनातर मलाई गारो चाहिँ त्यहाँ भयो जहाँ मैले हरेक घुम्तीमा जम्काभेट भएका मपाइँसँग सहकार्य गर्न पर्थ्यो। हुन सक्छ ममा जन्म जात त्यस्ता गुण थिएनन् जसले मलाई परिस्थितिको सामना गर्न सिकाओस्। न त मसँग परेर या भनौँ पढेर आर्जन गरेको त्यस्तो सामाजिकीकरणको सीप नै थियो। यसले गर्दा हर खुड्किलामा मपाइँहरुको सेपमा अघि

बढ्न बाध्य भएँ तपाईंको ओतमा शीतलताको अनुभूति गरें ।

अब कुरा गरौं पहिला मपाईंको यात्राको क्रममा एक पटक एकजना उमेरल छ दशक जति नाघेका कद भएका अनि हेर्दा शालिन दाइसँग भेट भयो।सामान्य गफगाफको क्रममा सद्भाव साटियो अनि मैले सोधें दाइ दिन कस्ता चलिरहेछन् हिजो आज? उहाँले भन्नु भयो, “ठिकै छ तर मेरो सङ्गत मपाईंसँग बढेर अलि गारो भएको छ ।” फेरि सोधें “किन र दाइ?” अनि उहाँले खोल्नु भयो 'मपाईंको रहस्य'। “हेर बहिनी! मपाईंको वस्त्र भिर्नेको भीडमा अचानक पर्दा मेरो ऊर्जा दिनानु दिन खस्किदै गएको छ म मेरो मलाईको मन्तव्यले कान खाएर म टन्न अघाइसकेँ म भित्र पनि यस्तै रगत बग्न थाल्यो भने के गर्ने भनेर चिन्ता लाग्न थालेको छ,” भने पछि मैले केहीछिन् गम खाएँ ।

सोचें उहाँ र म अन्धकारमा रुमलिएको जुनकिरी जस्ता मलमलको जीवनमा अलमल परेका सार थी रहेछौं भन्ने पक्का भयो । एक किसिम खुशी पनि लाग्यो।आफ्नो जस्तै हालतको मान्छे भेटेँ भनेर अनि दुःख पनि लाग्यो - मपाईंको भीडमा पिल्सिनेको बढ्दो जमात देखेर । जीवनको यात्रा कहिले बर्सातको छालमा हौसिएका खहरे जस्ता, कहिले त्यो स्वच्छन्द आकाशबाट भरेका असिना जस्ता त कहिले नयाँ जोगीले खरानी घसे जस्ता थुप्रै रङ्गिन अनुहारको सङ्गतमा म पनि परेकी थिएँ । सुन्ने भन्दा सुनाउने, दिन भन्दा लिन जान्ने, आफु भन्दा अरूलाई नदेख्ने, अनि नाप जाँच गर्नेको भिडमा म पनि ठेलमठेल गर्दै हिड्दै थिएँ। मपाईं खोकीरहन्थे आफ्नो चौतर्फी

वृत्तान्त आफ्नो यात्राको सुनाउँदौम एकलो स्रो ता बन्थेकति मनन गर्थे पचाउँथे,कति मपाईंका आदतले मलाई तताउँथे, कतिले उचाल्थे,कतिले पछार्थे ।सबै भन्दा गारो चाहिँ सुन्ने मन नहुँदा नहुँदै पनि मपाईंहरूको भाषण सुन्न गारो थियो । कतै धनको, कतै पद प्रतिष्ठाको, कतै खोक्रो रवाफको, कतै देखासिकीको मपाईंत्व सुन्दा सुन्दा मगजको लवजमा भाइरस पसेर म थलिएकी थिएँ ।मैले भेटेका ती दाइ पनि मेरो जस्तै रोगले ग्रसित भएको पाएँ। अनि हामीले एउटा निचोड निकाल्यौं कि यात्रामा यदि कसै ले काम बिगाछ भने त्यसबाट पनि ठूलो पाठ मिल्ने रहेछ।इतिहास साक्षी छ हाम्रो जङ्गबहादुर बेला बेलामा नजङ्गिएको भए आज लोक बो लीमा यो त जङ्गे नै रहेछ भनिने थिएन हो ला।अनि मिचाह प्रवृत्तिको ज्ञान हुने थिएन हो ला।नारद अनि दुर्वासाका प्रवृत्तिको भेलमा राम र कृष्णजस्ता महापुरुष हौसेर युग नायक बनेकै हुन् । त्यसैले मपाईंहरूको गथासो पनि कहिले कही जीवन यात्रा सपार्ने कसी बन्ने रहेछ भनेर चित्त बुझायौं ।अनि तपाईं चर्चा गर्नतिर लाग्यौं।

यात्राका क्रममा मपाईं भन्दा तपाईं धेरै कम भेटिए।जो सँग यात्राका घुम्तिमा मिलियो ठूलो ओ त पाएको महसुस गरें।तपाईंको भेटमा कोही को ही त यस्ता अनुहार थिए कि यी सँगको मिलन मेरो किन यति ढिलो भयो भनी म बेलाबेला आफूले आफैँलाई धिकार्न पुग्थे।प्रश्न गर्थे आफैँतिर फर्केर मपाईंको बथानमा तपाईंका ती शालिन रूप देखेर “यस्ता मान्छे पनि त हुँदा रहेछन् नी दुनियाँमा?” भन्दैहदै लटरम्म फले को वृक्ष जस्ता अनि सधैं दोश्रो भएर बाच्च खो

जने। अरुको दुःखलाई आत्मासाथ गर्दै समस्याको जरामा मलजल गरी उठाउने, ओठ ओठमा मुस्कानको लाली लगाउने। यति मात्र होइन तपाईं भनेर बाच्नेहरूको हृदयमा बलेको बत्तीको उज्यालोले सिङ्गो स्वयमको शरीर मात्र उज्यालो बन्दो रहेनछ। उसको कारणले उसको घर परिवार गाउँ समाज सबै तिर सम्बन्ध सम्पर्कसम्म पनि झलमल हुने रहेछ। यस्ता मान्छेहरू दाता जस्ता हरतरहले दिने मार्ग रोक्दा रहेछन्। समयको गतिमा हिँड्दा हर परिस्थितिलाई बुझेर स्वस्थितिको व्यवस्थापन गर्दा रहेछन्। वास्तवमा जीवन बाच्ने सजिलो आधार पनि सेवाको भाव अर्थात् परहित नै सर्वा परी रहेछ। सोच, बोल, शैली अनि क्रियाकलापको प्रस्तुतिले सबैको मनमा शितल आभा छरेर धेरै सुन्ने कम बोल्दा रहेछन्। यो मन्त्रमा टिकेका सयौं मानव माधव हुने पक्का हुने रहेछ । तपाईंहरूले कुनै बाटो विराएकाहरूलाई भेटे भने सतमार्गमा हिँड्न डोच्याउने मात्र होइन जीवनका हरेक मूल्यमान्यता, सत्य, धर्म, शान्ति, अहिंसा सिकाउने रहेछन्। रहस्य खोलेर। जीवनका यी मूल्य अँगाल्ने तपाईं सधैं जगजीत बनी आफ्ना कर्म इन्द्रियका बसमा टिक्दा रहेछन् । आफ्ना पाँच ज्ञानेन्द्रियलाई शुद्ध राख्न अनेक विषय वासनाको भीडबाट आफूलाई जोगाउँदा रहेछन्। तपाईंहरूले यो बुझ्दा रहेछन् की फूलवारीमा सूर्यमुखी अरू सानालाई मारेर अग्लो भएको हो इन भन्ने गहन चिन्तनमा डुबेर घना जङ्गललाई पनि अध्ययन गर्दा रहेछन्। झार पात, कीट पतङ्ग अनि ती बडेमानको अग्ला रूख वीचको आपसी तादात्म्यता आ-आफ्नै अस्तित्वमा बाँच्ने शैली। अनि आफूभित्र सदभावको मन्त्र, समदृष्टिको

मन्त्र समाहित गर्दै गर्दै 'तपाईंहरू' सुखी जीवन बाँच्दा रहेछन् भन्दै दाजु बहिनीले तपाईं र मपाईंका जीवन बाच्ने शैलीको चर्चा गर्दै विदा भयौं ।

अन्त्यमा, हाम्रो यति स्वस्थ अन्तरङ्गपछि लाग्यो हामी चेतनशील प्राणी मानव हौं । हामीले कस्तो मार्ग रोज्ने सही या गलत। यो हाम्रो आफ्नो कुरा हो। हामीसँग हरेक चिजको विकल्प छ। अरूको नजरमा बिभाउने वा आँखाको नानीमा बस्ने। त्यो सबैले हेक्का राख्नु राम्रो होला। पर को स्थितिबाट जोगिएर स्वस्थिति समाल्न सके हरेक चुनौतिलाई सहज रूपमा सामना गर्न सकिन्छ। हरेक मानिसको आदत उसले गरेको संगत, पाएको संस्कार, बसेको वातावरणले फरक पर्ने हुँदा मपाईं जिराफको भैं घाँटी लामो पार्छन् अनि त्यही भित्रका तपाईं विरालो बनेर मुसा मार्छन्। अब भने हामी कुन स्थानमा छौं तपाईं की मपाईं ? आफूलाई आफैँ पर्गेल्दै हामी सबैको यात्रा सहज रूपमा जारी रहोस् । सबैमा शुभकामना ।

“विसङ्गत बस्ती” भित्र डुल्दा



शिखर दुलाल (लेखु)

नर्थ क्यारोलाइना नेपाली साहित्य समाज

डा. ऋषि वस्ताकोटीको “विसङ्गत बस्ती”मा छिरे पछि बाटो नसक्किउन्जेल साच्चिकै हिडिरहन मन लाग्यो । धक नमानी हिडिरहें । तर अचम्म यो यात्रा कति छिटो सकिएछ पत्तै भएन। हैन, विसंगतिका डुङ्गुर त कति रहेछन कति ! कविले कसरी कहाँसम्म देख्न सक्दा रहेछन ? म आफैँ दंग परें। राष्ट्र बनाउछु भनेर लागेका नेतृत्वले बिगारेका हाम्रा अस्तित्वदेखि प्रकृतिले पुर्याएका क्षति अनि समाजले कुत्कुत्याएका खति सपैँ देख्ने यी कविका आँखामा कुन डाक्टरले चशमा हाल्दिए ? हुन त यी कवि पनि वातावरणका डाक्टरै हुन । वातावरण विषाक्त भएको सहजै देख्दा रहेछन् । वातावरणविदलाई वातावरण दुखेको सट्टा नहुने रहेछ भन्ने मैले अडकल काटें। यिनलाई मानवीय अतिक्रमणले बिग्रेको प्राकृतिक वातावरण मात्रै दुखेको छैन । यिनले समाजलाई सुक्ष्म रूपमा हेरेका छन्, हामीले बाँचेको र भोगेको समय छामेका छन् । यिनलाई विकृति र आडम्बरले भरिएको सिङ्गै समय दुखेको छ । विसंगतिले भरिएको बस्ती दुखेको छ।

यी कविका (आर बी फ्लेम उपनाममा वि सं २०५४ मा प्रकाशित) पहिलो गजल संग्रह “ज्वालाका रापहरु” का बारेमा त थोर-बहुत जानकारी पाएको थिएँ । त्यो बेला यानेकी पचासकै दशकमा गजलयात्रा तय गरिसकेका ऋषि वास्तवमा साहित्यलाई दरिलो गरी हाँकन सक्ने मुर्धन्य ऋषि नै हुन भन्ने कुरा त जब जब नर्थ क्यारोलाइनामा उनीसंग संगत हुन थाल्यो त्यही बेला थाहा भइसकेको थियो । आफ्नो बारेमा उति चर्चा गर्न नचाहने उनी २०५२ सालमै तत्कालीन नेपाल राजकीय प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठानको लोकप्रिय राष्ट्रिय कविता महोत्सवमा पुरस्कृत भैसकेका र आफ्नो लेखनबाट साहित्यिक पहिचान बनाइसकेका व्यक्ति रहेछन् । अधिपछि पनि चाहिँदा कुरा मात्रै गर्ने, शान्त स्वाभावका कवि ऋषि वस्ताकोटीका गीति एल्बम “स्पर्श” भित्रको “चेरी फुल्दा”ले मलाई केही वर्ष अगाडि नै तानिसकेको थियो । कुनैबेला उनको चेरी फुल्दा गीत मेरो यात्रामा नबजेको दिन नै हुँदै नथ्यो । त्यो “चेरीले” मेरो मन यस्तारी तान्यो कि त्यसको स्वाद नलिई मेरो दैनिकी नै नचल्ने जस्तो भएको थियो एक समय । अझै पनि एकान्तमा एकलै भएँ भने चेरी गुनगुनाउन आउँछ मलाई । यो विसङ्गत बस्ती पढिसकेपछि त भन म भाङ्गिए कविका समिपमा । कतै छहारीको सेप लागिहाल्छ कि आफूमा पनि भनेरा।

वास्तवमै मुक्तक पनि नेपाली साहित्यको जिरे खुर्सानी सरहको तिख्खर विधा नै रहेछ। छोटो चार पंक्तिले कति गहिराइ मापन गर्न सक्दोरहेछ बल्ल चाल पाइयो ऋषिका मुक्तक पढेरा हुन त

म आफू मुक्तकको वाहक त हैन। कनिकुथि ले र्खें अनि कतै कतै पढ्थें पनि। सायदै भन्नुपर्दा उनै ऋषिको नियमित स्तम्भ बेलाका बोली चाहीं पढ्न मन पराउथें। उनका मुक्तकहरु अनलाइनमा बेलाको बोली बोल्दै आइरहन्थे। तिनै मुक्तकहरु संगालिएभै लाग्ने यो विसङ्गत बस्तीका एउटा पाठक भएर भन्नुपर्दा, त्यहाँ औंशी पुर्णिमामा पढ्नु र आज - पुस्तकमै एकमुष्ट एकैचोटी पढ्न पाउनुको स्वादै फरका बेलाको बोलीमा बेलाबेलामा छिट्टाछट्टी मात्रै बोल्ने तर यहाँ त समुन्द्रै ल्याएर थुप्रेका रहेछन् । छालहरु आएको आइ आएको आई । जति जति समुन्द्र पस्यो उति उति पौडिरहन मन पर्नेछालहरु पनि भन् कडा भन् भन् कडा। नाम विसंगति भए पनि ज्वारभाटाहरु नरो किउन्जेल पानीमै हेलिरहें, हेलिईरहें। कतै चिसा छाल, कतै मलिन छाला आहा आखिर विसंगति समुन्द्रका ज्वारभाटा नै रहेछ ।

जुनसुकै समयको सापेक्षतालाई मापन गर्नसक्ने, न गर्मी न जाडो, जहिले पनि जस्ले पनि चाहेको बेला पौडिरहन सक्ने यो विसंगतिका संगालो नकारात्मकतातिर ढल्किएको समाजको लागि वास्तविक खबरदारी रहेछ । यथार्थमा भन्ने हो भने साहित्यलाई माया गर्नहुने सबैले एकपटक सयर गर्ने पर्ने हाम्रो समाजको विसंगति हो ऋषिजीको यो विसंगत वस्ती।

पुस्तकले नछोएको ठाउँ नै छैन। एउटा समाजमा जीवन यापन गर्ने सम्पूर्णले जानी नजानी गर्ने गरेका गल्तीहरुलाई औंल्याइ दिएकाछन् मुक्तककारले। भक्भक्क्याउनु पनि त एउटा

चतनाको विगुल हो । यदि यस्लाई सकारात्मक ढंगले लिने र लाने हो भने हरेक प्रकारका विसंगतिहरु विस्थापित हुन सक्छन । विषेसगरी विकृतिजन्य तवरले विष्फोट नै हुन खोजिरहे का विसंगतिहरुलाई एउटै मालामा उनेर समाज वाहक हुँ भन्नेहरुलाई समाज संचालनमा संयम भएर कार्य गर्न भनेरै वनाएको जीवनबुटी हो यो विसंगत वस्ती । यस्लाई समाज परिवर्तनको ऐ ना मान्ने हो भने यसमा समेटिएका सामाजिक विसंगतिहरु चाहे ती तथाकथित राजनैतिक नै किन नहुन्, साँस्कृतिक विसंगति नै किन नहुन् सम्पूर्णलाई सकारात्मक बाटोमा लैजाने एउटा सुन्दर भविष्यका परिकल्पना गर्नसक्ने पहलकै रुपमा लिन सकिन्छ ।

विसंगत वस्तिका एकसय पच्चिसै मुक्तकहरु आफैमा विभिन्न ढंगले ओज राख्छन् तर पनि पढेका मध्ये केही केही मुक्तकहरुले भने मलाई विशेष रुपमा घच्च्याइरहे । सुरुमै धर्तीका गीत सम्बन्धि मुक्तकहरु छन् जसले हाम्रो वातावरण संरक्षणको दायित्वबोध गराउँछन् । कुनै जादुगर वा दैवले आएर फुमन्तर वा वृष्टि गरेर स्वर्ग बनाइदिँदैन भनेर अब गल्लि नदोहोर्याउन पृथ्वीवासीलाई भक्भक्क्याए भै लाग्छ।

धेरैजसो मुक्तकहरु राजनैतिक दुनियाँमा भ्रष्टाचार मा लिप्त तथाकथित नेताहरुकै बारेमा लेखिएका भान हुन्छन्। लाग्छ सबैभन्दा धेरै विसंगति र राजनीति मै मौलाएको छ। कविले व्यङ्ग्य भनौ या सुभाषका पोका मार्फत कतै मिठा शब्दहरुका माध्यमबाट राजनीतिकर्मीहरुलाई नेतृत्वलाई ठगिखाने भाडो नबनाउन आग्रह गरेका छन् ।

मलाई मन परेका यसप्रकारका मुक्तकका शिर्षक यस्ता छन् : दाता फेरे पनि, हिसाव, विडम्बना, वहाना, विसङ्गति १-७, नाङ्गो बादशाह, नबिर्स महासय, खै के-के सुनियो, बहुमूल्य खरानी आदि आदि ।

समाजलाई खल्वल्याउन मै हु भन्नेहरु बुटजुत्ताको धाक जमाई लागिरहेका हुन्छन्। होच्याइरहेका हुन्छन् गरिखाने श्रमजीवीहरुलाई । उठ्न दिदैनन् उठ्न चाहनेहरुलाई। यस्ता समाजका विषालु सर्पहरुलाई भक्भक्क्याउद शुभकामना, बगलीमा छुरा, सोचु, खेतालाहरु, आफ्नो मात्रै जस्ता शिर्षकमा मुक्तक लेखेका छन् कविले ।

मुक्तककार कवि कतिपय गलत निर्णयका कारणले भएका र हुने गरेका असहजतालाई सहज बनाउन समाजलाई नै आफ्ना मुक्तक मार्फत जीवनमा दुष्कर्म हुनबाट बच्न र मुक्तिका बाटो रोज्न यस्ता शिर्षकका मुक्तक पस्कन्छन् : छट्पटी, गुमनाम ऊ, नक्कली, प्रेमर्षि, अनाम फूलहरु, रहर, धरातल, चरित्र, नेपालीको सार्थकता, हामी, पदक आदि इत्यादि ।

व्यक्तिगत जीवनमा आइपर्ने आरोह अबरोहले पनि समाजिक विकासमा अवरोध गर्छ है भन्दै चेतना भर्दै कवि यस्ता शिर्षकका मुक्तक बो N5GM जिन्दगी १-२, सत्य- वाणी, नयाँ कथा, युग, निधारमा भएपछि, छोराले सोध्यो आदि ।

कतिपय मुक्तकहरुले मुटु छुन्छन् । संवेदनाका लहरै ल्याउछन् । मुक्तककार बस्ताकोटीले

यसरी भावनात्मक हुँदै यस्ता मुक्तक पनि पस्केका छन् जस अन्तरगत कविले आफ्ना मुक्तकका शिर्षक यसरी रोजेका छन्:

जुन हराउँदा, जिन्दगीको अङ्गणित, बाको तस्वीर, छोराले सोध्यो, दुःख, परदेशी साइँलो, रोजीरोटीमै अल्भियौं, विदाइ, महान सपूत आदि।

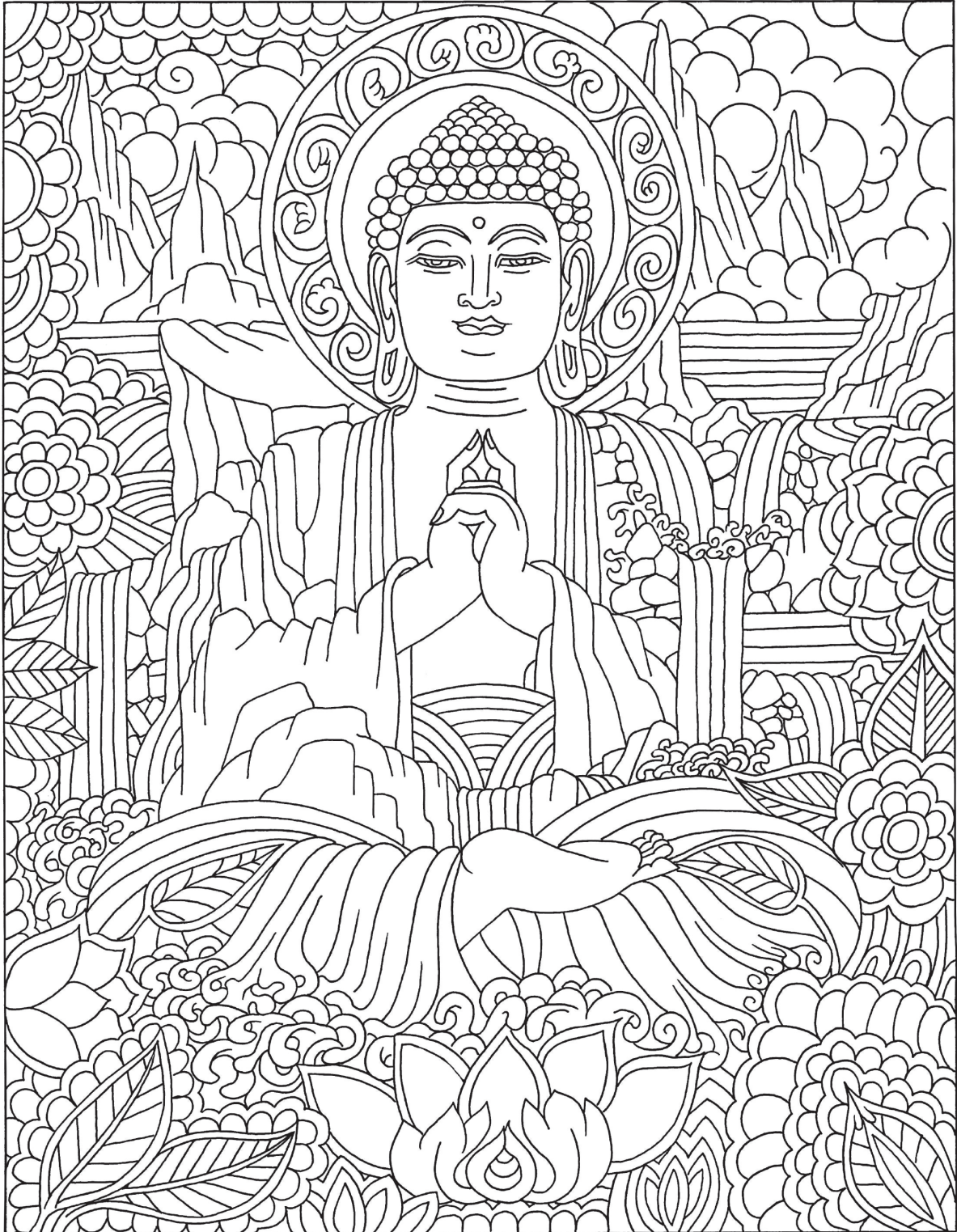
यस संग्रहभित्रका मुक्तकलाई विविध किसिमले हेरेर अनेक समुहमा वर्गीकरण गर्न सकिन्छ। पाठकीय हिसावले यति दावा गर्न सकिन्छ बस्ताकोटीका यी मुक्तक एक से एक छन्। संरचना र शिल्पका हिसावले मात्र होइन विविधता र दार्शनिक चेतनाको तहबाट हेर्दा पनि विसंगत बस्ती नेपाली मुक्तकको क्षेत्रमा एउटा महत्वपूर्ण प्राप्ति हो ।

विसंगत बस्ती विसंगतिहरुलाई चिर्न सक्ने हाम्रो समाजका लागि भविष्यको आशालाग्दो एउटा दर्बिलो हुङ्गार हुन्, चेतावनी हुन्।

हाम्रो समाजको बाटोमा हिड्ने अँध्यारो रातको पथप्रदर्शक किरण हुन् । हामीले भोगेको समयको सापेक्षमा हेर्दा यो लेखन मार्फत् मुक्तककार बस्ताकोटी युग सचेत देखिन्छन्, समाजप्रतिको दायित्व र जिम्मेवारीबोध उनको लेखनीमा प्रष्टसित देखिन्छ ।

मुक्तककार बस्ताकोटीलाई बधाई तथा शुभकामना !

COLOR ME PAGE



Name: _____

Nepal

p o k h a r a z h r w u i g m m h h
r w b h a k t a p u r a e o d o o j
h f m s a g a r m a t h a s t u r b
i f t n z b h i m a l a y a s n i m
n e c r u c h i t w a n i i s t t i
o m o u n t e v e r e s t k l a u h
f w m h n e p a l i g a f u p i a n
l u m b i n i h w n o l b n b n l k
l p u k a t h m a n d u j d o s s j
r g d r r a r a l a k e f a t d d p
c u l t u r e n b y s h e r p a i p
j m k u m a r i b u d d h a g w y t

Find the following words in the puzzle.

Words are hidden → ↓ and ↘ .

mount everest
gosaikunda
sagarmatha
himalayas
kathmandu
bhaktapur
mountains

rara lake
pokhara
lumbini
chitwan
rituals
culture
sherpa

nepali
buddha
kumari
rhino

NEPAL FUN QUIZ

1. What is the highest peak in Nepal?

- a) Kanchenjunga
- b) Lhotse
- c) Mount Everest
- d) Makalu

2. Which city in Nepal is known as the "Gateway to the Himalayas"?

- a) Pokhara
- b) Kathmandu
- c) Lumbini
- d) Biratnagar

3. What is the unique feature of Nepal's flag?

- a) It is the only flag with a rectangular shape.
- b) It has a dragon emblem.
- c) It consists of two stacked triangles.
- d) It is the only flag with three colors.

4. Who were the first climbers to reach the summit of Mount Everest?

- a) Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay
- b) George Mallory and Andrew Irvine
- c) Reinhold Messner and Peter Habeler
- d) Hillary Clinton and Norgay Tenzing

5. What is the sacred lake in Nepal believed to have been created by Lord Shiva?

- a) Rara Lake
- b) Phewa Lake
- c) Gosaikunda
- d) Tilicho Lake

6. Which festival in Nepal is celebrated to honor animals like dogs, cows, and crows?

- a) Dashain
- b) Tihar
- c) Holi
- d) Losar

7. In which Nepali city is the "Kumari" (living goddess) located?

- a) Patan
- b) Bhaktapur
- c) Kathmandu
- d) Pokhara

8. What is the traditional Nepali dish consisting of dumplings called?

- a) Dal Bhat
- b) Momo
- c) Thukpa
- d) Chow Mein

9. What is the highest lake in Nepal and one of the highest in the world?

- a) Rara Lake
- b) Gosaikunda
- c) Phewa Lake
- d) Tilicho Lake

10. Which Nepali festival marks the Tibetan New Year?

- a) Dashain
- b) Tihar
- c) Holi
- d) Losa

11. How many UNESCO World Heritage Sites are there in Nepal?

- a) 5
- b) 7
- c) 10
- d) 12

12. What is the Nepali word for "thank you"?

- a) Shukriya
- b) Dhanyabad
- c) Gracias
- d) Merci

13. Which ethnic group in Nepal is renowned for their mountaineering skills?

- a) Gurung
- b) Tamang
- c) Sherpa
- d) Newar

NEPAL FUN QUIZ

14. What is the official language of Nepal?

- a) Hindi
- b) English
- c) Nepali
- d) Sanskrit

15. What is the name of the river considered sacred in Hinduism that flows through Nepal?

- a) Yamuna
- b) Ganges
- c) Bagmati
- d) Brahmaputra

16. What type of architecture is prominently featured in Nepal's ancient cities?

- a) Gothic
- b) Pagoda-style
- c) Colonial
- d) Modernist

17. Which lake in Nepal is known for its reflection of the Himalayas and is a popular paragliding spot?

- a) Rara Lake
- b) Phewa Lake
- c) Gosaikunda
- d) Rara Lake

18. What is the name of the traditional Nepali festival of colors?

- a) Dashain
- b) Tihar
- c) Holi
- d) Teej

19. What is the Nepali name for the Buddhist stupa located in Kathmandu, also known as the Monkey Temple?

- a) Boudhanath
- b) Swayambhunath
- c) Lumbini
- d) Lumbini

20. Which Nepali city is known for its stunning views of the Himalayas and serves as a base for trekking?

- a) Biratnagar
- b) Pokhara
- c) Dharan
- d) Janakpur

21. What is the primary religion practiced by the majority of Nepalese people?

- a) Buddhism
- b) Hinduism
- c) Islam
- d) Christianity

22. Which famous historical figure was born in Lumbini, Nepal?

- a) Mahatma Gandhi
- b) Buddha
- c) Alexander the Great
- d) Confucius

23. What is the name of Nepal's national park known for its wildlife, including Bengal tigers and one-horned rhinoceroses?

- a) Sagarmatha National Park
- b) Chitwan National Park
- c) Bardia National Park
- d) Langtang National Park

24. What is the name of the ancient city known for its well-preserved medieval architecture and temples, located near Kathmandu?



- a) Patan
- b) Bhaktapur
- c) Lalitpur
- d) Kirtipur

25. What is the traditional Nepali name for the dish made of rice and lentil soup?

- a) Momo
- b) Thukpa
- c) Dal Bhat
- d) Chana Masala

ANSWERS



1. c) Mount Everest
2. a) Pokhara
3. c) It consists of two stacked triangles.
4. a) Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay
5. c) Gosaikunda
6. b) Tihar
7. c) Kathmandu
8. b) Momo
9. a) Rara Lake
10. d) Losar
11. c) 10
12. b) Dhanyabad
13. c) Sherpa
14. c) Nepali
15. c) Bagmati
16. b) Pagoda-style
17. b) Phewa Lake
18. c) Holi
19. b) Swayambhunath
20. b) Pokhara
21. b) Hinduism
22. b) Buddha
23. b) Chitwan National Park
24. b) Bhaktapur
25. c) Dal Bhat



**विजया दशमी तथा दीपावली २०८१ को
उपलक्ष्यमा
सम्पूर्ण नेपाली दाजुभाइ तथा
दिदीबहिनीहरूमा
हार्दिक मंगलमय शुभकामना व्यक्त गर्दछौ ।**

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Nepa Rythms, North Carolina



विजया दशमी तथा दिपावली २०८१ को उपलक्ष्यमा हार्दिक मंगलमय शुभकामना !!



बाबु, निशा, अबिशा, आव्यान
सुवेदी र परिवार, नर्थ
क्यारोलाइना



श्रीकान्त, शान्ति अधिकारी र
परिवार, नर्थ क्यारोलाइना



बटु, पुजा, आयुष्मा, आर्नभ र
परिवार, नर्थ क्यारोलाइना



कृष्ण, लक्ष्मी सेढाइ र परिवार,
नर्थ क्यारोलाइना



श्रीकान्त, लक्ष्मी गौतम र
परिवार, नर्थ क्यारोलाइना



भिम, पार्वती तिमलिसना र
परिवार, नर्थ क्यारोलाइना

विजया दशमी तथा दिपावली २०१९ को उपलक्ष्यमा हार्दिक मंगलमय शुभकामना !!



आर पि, अनिता, आभास,
आयुग पौडेल र परिवार, नर्थ
क्यारोलाइना



चेत, मन्जु भट्टराई र परिवार,
नर्थ क्यारोलाइना



ऋषि, कल्पना, कृतेश, कृस्टिना
अधिकारी र परिवार, नर्थ
क्यारोलाइना



योगेन्द्र, पवित्रा गौतम र परिवार,
नर्थ क्यारोलाइना



ईश्वर, कमला देवकोटा र
परिवार, नर्थ क्यारोलाइना



खेम, शिक्षा जोशी र परिवार,
नर्थ क्यारोलाइना

विजया दशमी तथा दिपावली २०१९ को उपलक्ष्यमा हार्दिक मंगलमय शुभकामना !!



किरण, सायना ढकाल र
परिवार, नर्थ क्यारोलाइना



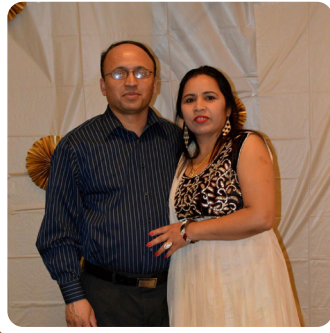
डा. चिरन्जिवि, सन्ध्या भट्टराई
र परिवार नर्थ क्यारोलाइना



प्रेम, गीता प्रधान र परिवार,
नर्थ क्यारोलाइना



शारदा प्रसाद, मिना, बबिता,
आहन, माएरा, प्रदिप दाहाल र
परिवार, नर्थ क्यारोलाइना



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परिवार, नर्थ क्यारोलाइना



फणिन्द्र, सरस्वती न्यौपाने र
परिवार, नर्थ क्यारोलाइना



विजया दशमी तथा दिपावली २०१९ को उपलक्ष्यमा हार्दिक मंगलमय शुभकामना !!



भूपेन्द्र अधिकारी र परिवार नर्थ
क्यारोलाइना



कमल, प्रीति काफ्ले र परिवार,
नर्थ क्यारोलाइना



सुरज, सरस्वती ढकाल र
परिवार, नर्थ क्यारोलाइना



सन्जिव, सुस्मिता बराल र
परिवार, नर्थ क्यारोलाइना



डा. देवेन्द्र, डा. नितु, आना
कोइराला र परिवार, नर्थ
क्यारोलाइना



दिपेन्द्र, पुनम विष्ट र
परिवार, नर्थ क्यारोलाइना

विजया दशमी तथा दिपावली २०१९ को उपलक्ष्यमा हार्दिक मंगलमय शुभकामना !!



नारायण, उर्मिला लुइंटेल र
परिवार, नर्थ क्यारोलाइना



ददीन, अमल, डिजा, दिव्या
पाण्डे र परिवार,
नर्थ क्यारोलाइना



ईश्वर, ज्ञानू, श्रेया, सलिल
ढकाल र परिवार, नर्थ
क्यारोलाइना



अशोक, शोभा खनाल र
परिवार, नर्थ क्यारोलाइना



विक्रम, उषा, विभुषा, युग
गौतम र परिवार, नर्थ
क्यारोलाइना



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संघ, राष्ट्रिय समन्वय
परिषद, अमेरिकार र परिवार, नर्थ
क्यारोलाइना

विजया दशमी तथा दिपावली
२०८१ को उपलक्ष्यमा
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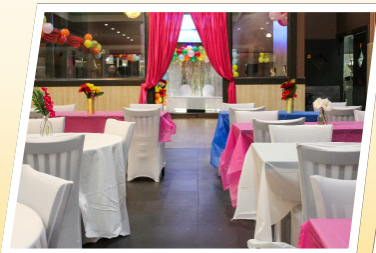
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