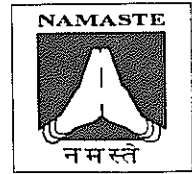


# Namaste!



Volume 2 No. 2

P.O.Box 90581, Portland, OR 97290

September 1996

## Prince Deependra at Olympic

Nepalese Association in Southeastern America (NASA) hosted a grand reception in honor of the His Royal Highness Crown Prince Dipendra Bir Bikram Shaha of Nepal and the Nepali Olympic delegates at Smyrna Community Center on July 21, 1996. About 300 Nepali and friends of Nepal attended the reception. The HRH was accompanied by Mr. Bala Bahadur K.C. (The Minister of culture, Sports and Youth), Dr. Bekh Bahadur Thapa said that all the Nepalese residing in the U.S. are the permanent ambassadors of goodwill of Nepal while people like him come and go. (*Yeti Views, Vol.5 No.3*).

## Olympic Games Participation

Six athletes represented Nepal in the XXVIth Centennial Olympic in Atlanta, Georgia. They participated in four events: swimming (Nishma Gurung and Sita Ram Shahi), shooting (Bivashori Rai), weight lifting (Sunil Joshi), and marathon (Tika Bogati and Bimala Rana Magar). The 1996 Olympic Summer Games was the largest athletic spectacle in the history of the Olympics with 10,800 athletes from 197 countries, 31 sports and 25 sports venues. The largest torch relay carried by 10,000 people traveling across 41 states, plus Washington, D.C. arrived in Atlanta Olympic Stadium during the Opening Ceremony on July 19. (*Yeti Views, Vol.5 No.3*)

## NAC Formed

Recently, the Nepalese American Council (NAC) made history amongst the Nepalese community in the U.S. and Canada when its executive board was formally constituted during the Second National Convention of Nepalese and Friends of Nepal in North America held at the University of Maryland on May 25-26, 1996.

The first executive board, duly elected by the presidents of member associations.

## Vijaya Dashami

Every community has traditional holidays around the world. Here in US all the communities celebrate their traditional holidays. In Nepal there are many festivals and holidays every month. Among them the Dasain or Vijaya Dashami and the Tihar are the most important and are celebrated throughout the country. Here in Portland, the Nepalese community celebrates the Dasain with great enthusiasm. This festival is similar to the Thanksgiving holidays. During this holiday Nepalese people take blessings from the elderly people. In Portland, the Dasain or Vijaya Dashami is observed by Nepalese Community for the last several years. In this regard, the Bhattarai Family has special contribution in organizing a party on this occasion. Since last year it has been celebrated with wider range by inviting as many Nepalese and Nepal related friends as well, which was organized by Helen Ward and her family. Similarly the Dasain party will be organized this year too in Portland with great enthusiasm. Please look for date and place in this issue.

Many Nepalese families have young children. Many of them do not know why we celebrate the Dasain. So, here is a paragraph on Dasain for those who want to know about it.

Dasain, like the Western Christmas season, is by far the longest, most auspicious and most joyous time of year, celebrated...during the bright lunar fortnight ending on the day of the full moon in late September or early October

...These two weeks glorify the ultimate and inevitable triumph of Virtue over the forces of Evil, commemorating a great victory of the gods over the wicked demons and devils who harassed mankind in ancient time. The Ramayana story is retold of the righteous King Rama, deified by Hindu mythology as an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, or again as God himself, who after epic struggles slaughtered Ravana, the fiendish king of the demon hordes from Lanka, a legendary country believed by many to have been Ceylon. Some say Lord Rama was successful in his battle with the demon only when he evoked the Shakti or Supreme Energy vested in Goddess Durga, the Divine Mother of the Universe. Others have it that Rama's saintly wife Sita, having been kidnapped by the demon Ravana, assumed the form of the Terrible Destructress, Goddess Kali - otherwise known as Durga - and destroyed this thousand-headed King of the Demons.

Greatly celebrated during Dasain...is Goddess Durga's slaying of the terrible demon Mahisasura, who roamed the earth, terrorizing the populace in the guise of a ferocious water buffalo.

No matter how the story is told, victory is celebrated during Dasain fortnight with great rejoicing, and Goddess Durga is adored throughout the land as the Divine Mother Goddess who liberated the suffering people from the miseries of Evil. (Mary M. Anderson, *The Festivals of Nepal*)

This is how we get blessings.

According to a Nepalese Calendar, 2053, "Ghatasthapana" is on Sunday, October 13, and "Phulpati" is on Saturday, October 19. "Tika" is on Monday, October 21.

is as follows:

- **President** - Dr. Tulsi Maharjan, Nepa Pasa Pucha Americayae
- **Vice President** - Dr. Mahesh Baidya, President, Association of the Nepalese in Midwest America
- **Secretary** - Mr. Kiran Dhungana, President, Nepalese Community Network of Canada
- **Joint Secretary** - Dr. Samanta Thapa, President, Nepalese Association of in Southeastern America
- **Treasurer** - Mr. Rohini Sharma, vice President, Nepalese and Friends Association. (*ViewPoint, Vol.14 Issue 2*)

### International Referee Seminar Attended

Mr. Narayan Gurung, a renown Taekwondo instructor, attended and successfully completed the International Referee Seminar in Melbourne, Australia, in May, 1996. The IR seminar was organized for the Asian countries by the World Taekwondo Federation.

### Dasain Party

If you would like to join the Dasain Party in Portland please be advised to reserve a seat by sending \$ 12 each person (Children under 12 years free) no later than Oct. 15th to: Helen Ward  
14085 SW 144th Ave.  
Tigard, OR 97224  
Party at: 13720 HWY 99 West  
(Same place as last year)  
Date: Saturday, Nov. 2, 1996.

For more information please contact Mrs. Helen Ward at 503 590-1068 (evening, before 9 PM).

### SLC Result

Out of over 91,000 who appeared in SLC (School Leaving Certificate), 2053, a mind boggling 60,000 flunked the exam. The Board of SLC is keeping the passing percentage low, perhaps, because of the country's existing colleges and universities do not have enough seats to accommodate them. (*The Independent, Vol. VI, #20*)

### Safa Tempo

Vice Chairman of the National planning commission Mangal Sidhi Manandhar launched Kathmandu's first fleet of eight non polluting battery operated tempos called 'Safa Tempo'. This was made possible with the help of Eugene, Oregon based, Global Resource Institute. (*Spotlight*)

### Wedding Rituals

Subas Shrestha tied up the ceremonial wedding knot to Sachita on Sunday June 2nd, 1996 in an auspicious fire offerings conducted by a Hindu priest at Mr. Durga Bahadur and Basudha Shresthas' resident. Mr. Prem Bahadur and Menaka Shrestha were the proud parents of groom at this happiest occasion. Subas's sister, Indira Shrestha and uncle were also present at the ceremony. A big crowd of relatives and friends of both sides were gathered to celebrate the ceremony. Dinner reception was held at Hi Hat Restaurant. Namaste congratulates them and wishes them happiest lives.

### Comments From Canada

"Namaste", the newsletter of Friends of Oregon, is an astounding and delightful newsletter which includes interesting community news and facts. "Namaste" gives the opportunity for Nepalese to read about Nepali activities and news in Oregon, U.S.A. DIYALO wishes them the best of luck in their coming issues. (Diyalo Journal, Nepalese Community of Canada Network, NCCN)

### A Journal of Newarology

Daya Shakya is planning to bring out a journal of Newarology called Newaa Vijnana, a leading Journal to preserve and promote the society and culture of the Newar community and to provide information for the people who wish to know about the Newars of Nepal.

He has requested to send papers and information on Newars living in any part of world as well as the research work being conducted on and about them. He can be reached at Drasha@aol.com or by phone 1-503-777-4593 for more information.

### The Class of 2000

The summer is already over. It just went by so quickly. Now the time has come to get ready for back to school. Many of Nepalese families have sent their children to high school this year. In Portland, Ashish Mathema in Wilson High, Sudip Shakya and Binaya Dongol in Benson High, In Corvallis, Kanita Rauniyar in Corvallis High and In Salem, Nishita Shrestha and Ashish

### ANNOUNCEMENT!

#### HIMALAYAN EXPLORERS CLUB

A new nonprofit organization, called the Himalayan Explorers Club, is now available for people traveling to (or with an interest in) the Himalayas. The Club offers a number of services, including (1) A Kathmandu Clubhouse where members can send or receive mail, faxes, and e-mail, store luggage, and meet other travelers. (2) A home-stay program, where visitors to Nepal can stay with families in Kathmandu. (3) A quarterly newsletter, Himalayan News, with articles on culture, travel, and nonprofit work being conducted in the Himalayan region. (4) Growing database of trip reports and travel advice collected from members, press articles, and internet searches.

Please E-mail to himexp@aol.com or call (303)494-9656 for a free copy of Himalayan News. Please remember to include you "snail-mail" address. Or, for more information, visit them on the Web at <http://www.abwam.com/himexp/>

Vaidya in South Salem High. They will graduate from high schools in the year 2000. Namaste wishes them for their success in education and future plans.

### Wedding Reception

Bishal and Bikram Raghubanshi the sons of Basudev and Bimala Raghuvanshi got married with Rojita Shrestha and Sharmila Munakarmi in Nepal on May 5th, 1996. They came back to Portland, and a special wedding reception was held in Old Fellow Hall in Tigard on Saturday, July 2, 1996. Namaste welcomes the new brides in Nepalese community in Portland, and congratulates them for happy lives. It is reminded that the Raghubansi family has been moved to Portland from Denver Colorado last year. This is how the Nepalese community in Portland has been growing every year.

### House Warming Party

Raju and Minu Mali of Portland organized a house warming party on Saturday, June 29 in Cornelius near Forest Grove. The house was beautifully set, and has a big yard to hold another party for the Nepalese community. Namaste appreciates Raju and Minu's hospitality by inviting many of Nepalese friends and families.

### Pasni Gathering

It is the Nepalese tradition to organize a rice feeding ceremony on auspicious day (Solid food feeding) for every child after

## The Living Goddess Of Nepal and the Indrajatra Festival

By Jagadisha B. Mathema, Portland

Nepal has been regarded as the land of Gods, Goddesses and festivals. The festivals occur every month in cyclic order and it is in those festivals that the Nepalese people express their love, devotion and their long cherished ideals and beliefs. Every festival has some significance, behind it and has played a distinctive role in the molding of the Nepalese society. Thus festivals have become a part and parcel in the life of the Nepalese people.

One can judge from the number of festivals observed in Nepal that the Nepalese people are one of the happiest people on earth enjoying every moment of their existence in gay and happy mind.

There are different version as regards the origin of this festival, but the very name INDRA JATRA signifies that it is a festival in honor of Indra, the ruler of heaven. According to the legend, Indra had come down to earth in disguise in search of Parijat flower for his mother, who was observing the Tij festival, which falls a week earlier. Indra was stealing the Parijat flower and was caught red hand. His hands and feet are tightly bound by the rope by the inhabitants of the Kathmandu valley. During this festival the wooden image of INDRA is exhibited with hands legs tightened. by the rope at Maru Tole ( near Durbar Square in the heart of Kathmandu city). Indra's mother Indrayani became much worried when INDRA did not come back with PARIJAT flower. She also came down to earth to fetch her son back and after vigorous search for a week, she found her son in such a terrible condition. Indrayani set her son free against payment of a ransom of the dedicate gray gossamer called Fog . It is believed that beginning this day fog appears around the valley which helps the paddy ripe in the field. When they came to know that the thief whom they had punished so severely was no other than the king of gods INDRA himself and the lady, whom they had so badly behaved was his mother they extremely repented. So, in order to please Indra and Indrayani they made their replicas of INDRA and Indrayani out of the clay, wood, bronze brass etc. painted their face with bright and illuminating colors feted then with delicacies and drinks and performed elaborate ceremonies during the whole week.

There is another version of the origin as well. According to Kano Upanisad there was once a great war between the gods and demons, Gods who fought the war under the commandership of King of Gods. Indra was badly defeated by the demons. Being very much humiliated and embarrassed the gods went to Lord Vishnu, the supreme being to take advice and also to know the reason of their defeat. Vishnu disclosed that the main cause of their defeat was that they did not possess a common flag and were not united in their effort.

Lord Vishnu made flag with moon and sun and gave to the gods. He recognized their strength which appeared in the flag of the Almighty Shakti. The significance of the flag, given by lord Vishnu with the emblem of the moon and the sun is quite remarkable. The moon signifies the character of coolness and the shade under whose impact thinking and planning is possible . While the sun rouses in the courage and valor both of which are indispensable condition for the attainment of victory. Because of their unity under the common flag the Gods succeeded in defeating the demons very easily.

The Kano Upanishad describes that the auspicious day when the Gods got the common flag with the emblem of moon and the sun from lord Vishnu is celebrated by Hindus in the form of Indrajatra festival. Therefore, as already mentioned in the above chapter Indrajatra signifies that in order to attain victory unity is most essential. Nepal being the Hindu state the law recognized this flag and the national one and it is under the powerful impact of the flag that people of different faiths and beliefs in Nepal have remained one and united. Indra Jatra festival begins following the hoisting of the National flag attached with the tall wooden pole of about 80 feet long at the Hanuman Dhoka the ancient place. Below in the small cage Indrayani the mother of the God Indra riding on the back of the golden elephant is exhibited.

Since this festival is observed for a week many other important items are also attached with this Hindu festival. The chariot of Kumari ( the Living Goddess and her escorts Ganesh and Bhairava are drawn through certain parts of the old city of Kathmandu valley. In order to take the blessings of this living goddess even the King pays visit of her residence and accepts Tika ( Rice and vermilion mixed with curd) . Kumari the virgin goddess is selected from the girl below the age of 12. To occupy this seat, she has to undergo a very hazardous and a fierce test. She is worshipped as the source of all creation and the mother of the universe. She has got another form, which is terrible and is called Mahakaal ( Bhairab) . Mahakaal is worshipped because it is recognized as the destroyer of demons . Ganesh also occupies an important place during this festival as he is regarded as a scholar and the national symbol of wisdom and learning. Moreover, it is believed that before the execution of any important and major act, god Ganesh has to be consulted, otherwise the result will not be fruitful. The three Gods and Goddesses having occupied the important places in their respective fields are worshipped with pomp and grandeur during this occasion. The three Chariots are dragged around the Kathmandu City amidst huge numbers of worshipers, who pay respect to the living gods and goddesses by throwing vermilion, flower and coins. The venue of this festival is the ancient Darbar Square, where the dances of the deity and devils with masks and colorful attires are performed, Mahakali Dance, Lakhe dance (demon) dance of Bhairava dance are the most popular. The attraction of the Darbar Square and Indra Chowk is doubled by the presence of the fierce Bhairav following beer and wine out of his mouth and people rush to get some beer and wine to make it a worthy night to watch and enjoy.

Another attraction is the masked figure of the woman known as Dagini. She is followed by a crowd of women who are bereaved. After taking round the city the Dagini followed behind by the bereaved woman go to a pool near Thankot, six miles west to Kathmandu. They take bath in the pool in the name of the deceased for peace to the departed souls. ———

pleting 6 months of age( For baby girl 5 months). In Portland, there was an opportunity for Nepalese people to participate in such a ceremony on Saturday, August 17, at Helen and Steve's house to bless their son Janak Glenn. He was born on March 1st. Namaste congratulates the Ward family the third son born to them and wishes good luck for Janak.

**Ihi Ceremony ( Bel Vivaha)**

It is also Nepalese tradition to perform the Ihi ceremony a marriage with a bel fruit (Wood Apple) among the Newar girls after completing 5 years of age. In this regard, Raja And Sunita Shrestha have organized the Ihi ceremony for their daughter Karishma in Kathmandu, Nepal in April 1996. Now there are some social obligations which Karishma has to follow after the Ihi is performed.

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 Ph: (503) 585 -2414              Ph: (360) 604-5448

**Farewell**

Mr. Bai K. Joshi is back to Nepal with a Bachelor Degree, Business Administration, in hand. He graduated from the Lewis and Clark College last summer. A farewell party was organized at Kin's residence on his honor. We all will miss him in social gatherings for his lovely voice and charismatic personality.

भाषा र साहित्यको जगेर्ना गरौं  
 जातीय धर्म र सस्कृतिको रक्षा गरौं ।  
 - भरत जगम

**Sponsor**

This issue of Namaste has been financed by the King Family of Lebanon, Oregon. Namaste would like to extend its appreciation and thanks to Puspa and Mark King for their support to publish this issue of Namaste News Letter for Nepalese community in Oregon.  
 Namaste also thanks the following persons for their contribution:  
 Gita Ale & Brian Rothkopf (Portland)  
 Don & Karen Messerschmidt (Vancouver)



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