

July 2025
NEWSLETTER

CHICAGO CHAUTARI
TIMES - 196th Edition

Dharma protects who
protect it
धर्मो रक्षति रक्षित

INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:

Editorial: To be ...	1
Blue Moon	2
History of Nepal II	3
Dying flowers	3
Summer	3
My summer ...	4
The river of ...	4
Why bullying ...	4
Why I think ...	5
Art	5
Art: Family	5
Snorkeling	6
The cycle of ...	6
NAC Finance	6
NBA News	7
The Garden of ...	7
Cycling to the ...	8
NAC Soccer ...	11

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Chicago Chautari Times

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Welcome to Chicago Chautari Times - 196th



To be or to be both

After college I took my first solo trip to Nepal. Not knowing at the time or even being aware, I realized I was coming of age, and this was the time to discover myself—and naturally all discoveries of self, world, and others, typically starts at home. If you do not understand your roots, it is safe to say that understanding yourself can be an uphill battle. Being young and naïve I thought to myself of challenging this 'hill', go home to Nepal, discover, or rediscover my home, family, land, roots, language, holy rivers, sacred mountains, vibrant custom and culture, daal, bhat, tarkari etc. You get the picture. Little did I know, this hill to climb, was demanding, perplexing and more challenging than physically climbing all the hills in Nepal. I was born in Nepal and raised in America. That is my response every time someone asks me where I am from. I intentionally and perhaps even subconsciously give that response. It is not only balanced and accurate but that is what I am. If it was the other way around, I would still say the same thing. My family settled in Columbus, Ohio. It was the early 90's, I was only seven years old, and at that time there was absolutely no place like America (somewhat debatable now) for school, career and raising a family. At that time, my brother and I felt like we were on top of the world. We started playing basketball, watching American football, listening to hip-hop music, eating American food, watching Steven Spielberg movies, attending summer camps, visiting churches, and wearing Air Jordan's (well knockoffs, we were immigrants remember). We were also bragging to our cousins about our new life and even at that age sensed some resentment from them.

We spoke Nepali at home, English at school, ate daal bhat during the week, pizza and pasta on weekends. As I grew older, I realized I was becoming less Nepali and more American. I didn't mind it. I didn't speak with an accent, had mostly 'American' friends, reluctantly ate daal bhat, and did the unthinkable and now obviously regrettable ate beef. I embraced by Americanness with eagerness and realized a luxury I had that since I was born in Nepal and almost all my family was still living there, that I will always be Nepali and be conjoined with my roots for life. Seemed simple. Embrace one with open arms and hold on tight to the other. That notion was put in shock during my first solo trip to Nepal. *I had visited several times in between with family but they were mostly ceremonial and because I was a kid with no real intent or purpose.* I took a trip to Pokhara and hired a boat ride in Phewa Tal.

- Mr. Biswa Phuyal (to be continued on page 2)

Chicago Chautari Times (CCT) has embarked its 17th years of uninterrupted monthly publications from April 2025. CCT would like to express deep gratitude to its subscribers and contributors, especially our young children and youths making this a platform to express their hidden talents via writings and arts.

To be or to be both - Contd. From page 1

The helmsman was not much older than me and we hit it off. We began asking each other questions about ourselves, life, family etc. -- and then suddenly in the middle of my narrative, he began to chuckle. I asked him if I said anything funny. He nodded sideways, and then said, "You have a very tough life." I asked him why. And his response has stayed with me since he first uttered them on a warm, muggy but blissful early evening in Pokhara. "Here, I am trying to row one boat, and you will have to try to row two. And that is difficult." I didn't realize this perspective until he explained this to me while we were on a boat. My mind immediately drifted to me trying to row two boats.

The narrative is always that being a Nepali American, especially for those that were born and raised here cannot be easy. It is hard to balance both. I grew up with friends from Nepal and other countries that fully embraced the American culture and American culture only. They do not speak their mother tongue, visit their ancestral homeland, enjoy the culinary, participate in cultural activities and intentionally go out of their way to only be American. I also grew up with friends that did the opposite; did not assimilate fully to the American culture and always longed for their home and artificially made their transition and adjustment in America difficult. There is no right answer and balancing the two can be a tall order due to preference and expectations. But you do not have to be one or the other. That's silly. It is perfectly fine to be both. I always think back to the day when I heard those words of navigating my life like rowing two boats. There is a lot of validity in those statements. But if I could go back in time, I would respond to the nice young man and tell him I am perfectly fine just rowing one boat, but I will use two oars. - Mr. Biswa Phuyal

Best Wishes to our July Birthday Stars

Aawahni KC
- July 29



Aishani KC
- July 29



Anjali Das -
July 28



Binita Adhi-
kari
- July 1



Deeya Phuyal
- July 23



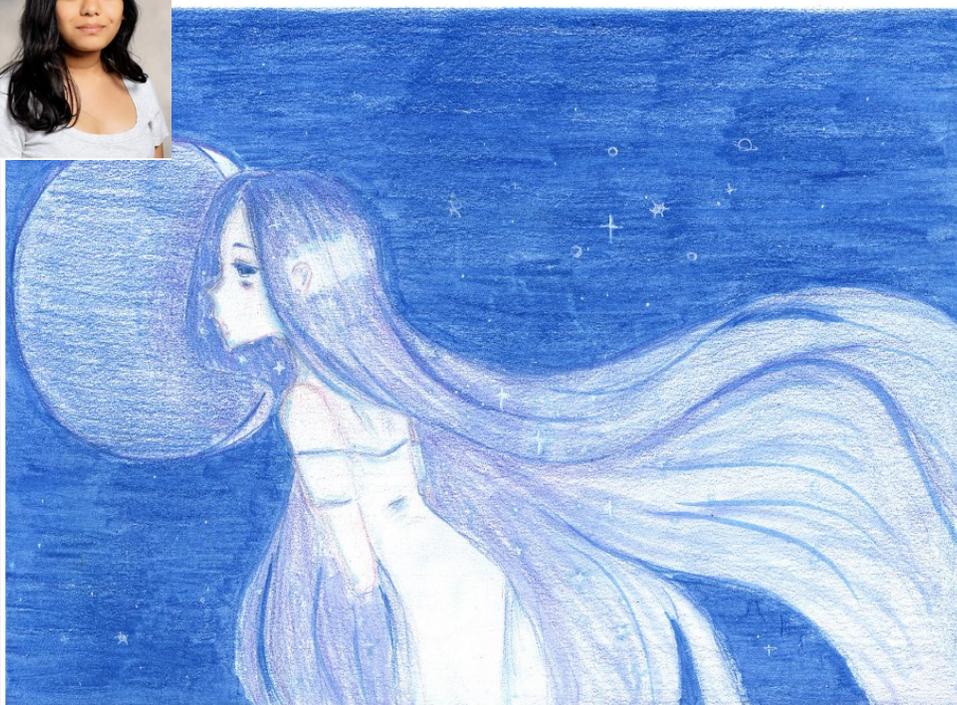
Rajnish Yadav
- July 13



Submit your birthday information with the pictures by via email by 20th of the previous month.



Blue Moon - Aawahni KC





HISTORY OF NEPAL: PART II

The queen underwent many operations to make her son king, but she was eventually exiled out of Nepal and into India, but that is a different story. Jung Bahadur was a close friend of Laxmi. At the time, Math Barsingh Thapa was the prime minister and uncle of Jung Bahadur. However, with relations to the queen, Math Barsingh refused to make Rajendra king. The next thing the queen had Bahadur to do was to assassinate Thapa. Unfortunately, he was successfully assassinated, and the last remaining descendant of Bhimsen Thapa was killed. The intentions of a nephew killing his own uncle is already cruel, and killing the last descendents of a prominent family is even worse. After this tragedy, the queen was satisfied, and Rana became close to her. After that, her most trusted man, Gagan Singh Bhandari, was anonymously killed. It turned out, Jung Bahadur killed him and blamed it on somebody else while on live court, but the person maintained innocence leading the queen to believe that Rana was lying, and at the same time, Rana wanted the king to be Surendra, but the queen ordered both Surendra and his brother Upendra to be executed, but that caused the queen to be exiled to India. That just made Rana even more powerful because now he forced Surendra to be queen and ordered Rajendra to step down from the throne. The next thing was the Kot Parba (massacre) which also involved the queen, a short period before she was exiled. In total, around 30-40 people were killed including the then current prime minister, Fateh Jung Shah. It was Nepal's deadliest massacre. The Rana Sasan went on to rule for a hundred and four years, and in that time period many things had happened. The first thing that happened was that Rana had made Surendra king and made the monarchy less powerful than the prime minister. This gave the Rana more power and even with so much power, he made good changes. After that more and more prime ministers helped shape Nepal and made the country better.

Then came World War I. This was a time which showed the true face of the Nepalese Gurkhas. Out of 1358 Victoria crosses, 26 were awarded to the brave Gurkhas who served. This showed how powerful Gurkhas really were. One Gurkha was awarded the Victoria Cross for saving a fellow English soldier who was heavily injured, this was done while maneuvering German machine gunners while also saving a fellow Gurkha. The history after the World Wars was very interesting and very weird. - **Rasik Pant**

Best Wishes to our July Birthday Stars - contd.

Syon Gautam
- July 22



Sophie Adhikari
- July 23



Swapnil Adhikari
- July 25



Submit your birthday information with the pictures by via email by 20th of the previous month.



Dying Flowers

The prettiest bouquet of flowers I have ever seen —

The flowers are dying but not screaming.
A bouquet of flowers for the prettiest person I have ever been dear to
The person is not screaming not dying —
But it certainly feels like they are.

Scars in places mirrors could never reflect.
They haven't screamed lately — not near me.
Once they believed they deserved my flowers,
Now they look at them like a lie wrapped in love.

The prettiest bouquet of dying flowers
For my most beautiful flower quietly wilting away.
- **Prisha Parajuli**



Summer by Ruby Phuyal

Put on **lotion**,
Rub it in—
Perfect for my
Summer **skin**.

With my brother, I -

Splash at the **beach**,
Splash in the **pool**,
A sip of **water**
Keeps me **cool**.

In summer, there's so much to do—
Time for **ice cream**,
Summer reading too,
And **lots of fun** the whole day through!



My summer vacation to Pittsburgh and Virginia

My name is Riya Phuyal, and I went on a trip to Pittsburgh and Virginia. Me and my mom went together. My dad had to work so he couldn't go with us. My cousin drove us to the airport and said bye to us.

Me and my mom went in the airport and walked around trying to find our gate. After a while we finally found it. The flight was to Pittsburgh. I was scared, but excited at the same time. Me and my mom had a club pass, so we went in to the club and got food and stayed for some time. We left the club after 30 minutes and went to our gate because it was almost time to board. The speaker went in and the person that was telling us to line up.

Me and my mom went in the plane and found our seats. The plane was small. I looked out the window and we were already moving! The plane went so fast! As soon as I knew it was already in the air. I was tired so I slept the whole time.

When I woke up, we were about to land. So, I got ready to get off. When the plane landed, we got off, got our luggages, and left the airport. My two cousins came to pick us up. We got to their house and started unpacking. Most of the days when I was at Pittsburgh we played in the water or just watched. After 5 days me, mom and my cousins' family went to Virginia from Pittsburgh, and it was about 5 hours road trip. They stayed there for only two days, but me and my mom stayed for a whole week! My mom went to a meditation program while I stayed with my other two cousins. We had a fun time. Namaste. - Riya Phuyal

the river of whispers

in the light of the universe through all redamancy and moments of somber, there flowed a selcouth river. whispering the secrets of loss, of love, of all life bestowed had ever sung.



it heard all whispers of soliloquy, from those who failed to escape from themselves— emotions laced in a cage, the key carried through the current. gazing upon the frayed edges of faded photographs, pieces scattered throughout— blurring as they slowly drift away.

through all it beheld, it continued to drift, carrying the burden of all secrets, quietly and wearily letting go— the labyrinthine elements of memories once present, yet now dissolved. - Aishani KC



Why bullying is normalized?

Something we fail to talk about is how normalized bullying is in everyday society. Whether it be actively gossiping and talking behind someone's back, to simply giving someone a look just because you found them weird. Bullying in everyday society is conditioned to be normalized. Here's why.

Lots of people feel obligated or allowed to talk bad about someone else because of that person's bad actions. But in all actuality, that doesn't make you any better of a person. Just because someone did something bad doesn't make it any better when you also decide to do something bad in return and just gossip.

Alot of people also feel comfortable bullying when a group of people do it. Again, someone else's bad actions don't ever make your bad actions any better. This is actually called the herd effect. The herd effect comes into play when an individual will follow a group with no hesitation. While the herd effect is actually normal in day to day life, it can become harmful in situations such as these.

Therefore, I think we as a society should try to step back once and a while, and think through our actions. Maybe be a little more aware. Is this actually ok? Am I going too far? - Stuti Dhungana



Why I think plastic shouldn't be banned

Have you ever thought of what your daily things are made of? Well, you might be surprised to realize how much of your things are made of plastic. In this article I will state some reasons why I think plastic should not be banned. Also, a couple of reasons are because of our safety, technology, and house climate which all use plastic in some way. That's also why we need plastic in our day-to-day lives.

First of all, plastic is very important because it helps us with safety. Our car airbags, medical things, helmets, and firefighter gear are all made out of plastic. These things are very important because without our airbags in our cars we would get hurt really badly from car accidents. Also, without medical things we wouldn't be able to have shots or disposable gloves. Helmets obviously keep our heads safe when we fall from long heights or bikes. Lastly firefighter gear helps firefighters safe from fires but also helps us stay safe. These are why these things are very important and without plastic we wouldn't have them. Also, some of you guys might say we can use other things like glass, wood, bamboo, and cardboard and that plastic takes a very long time to decompose but glass can be expensive, wood is not good because we're cutting down trees, bamboo isn't convenient in some countries, and cardboard can lead to global warming. But plastic is very convenient and affordable and that's why I think plastic is important for our safety.

The second reason I think plastic should stay is because of technology. Our tablets, phones, televisions, and computers are all made of plastic. I understand there can be other materials to make electronics but the chips in our electronics also have some plastic in them. Also, without technology it would be really hard to find information. It would be like when we had to find any type of information in a dictionary. Now all we have to do is ask a question. Also, electronics don't only give us knowledge, but they help us communicate with our loved ones with text or call. Imagine having to wait a week or longer to get your letter back from a loved one.

My last reason I think plastic should not be banned is because it helps us stay warm or cold. Plastic seals our homes from the outdoors and creates more energy efficient homes. There was a study in 2021, and it said if single family homes used plastic spray foam insulation the decrease in greenhouses would be the same as if they took 40 million cars off the road. It could also reduce certain gasses going into earth's atmosphere related to home heating and cooling by 40% which saves money in utility bills.

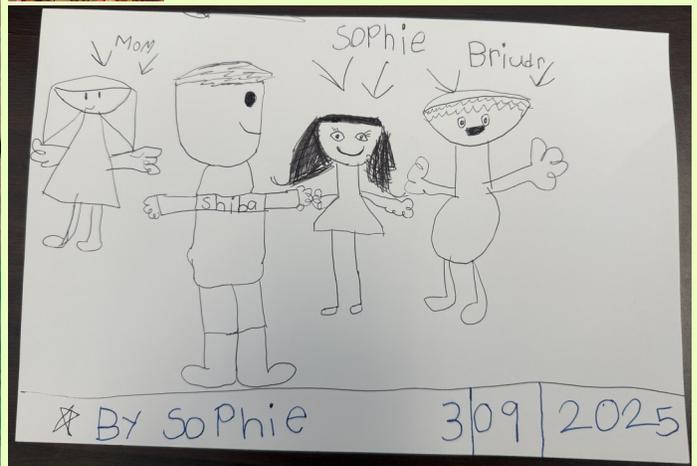
Well, this is why I think we should not ban plastic. It helps us with our safety, technology, and our house climate. I explained all the reasons in detail so you know how important plastic is and hope this could change your opinion about it - **Moksha Rijal**



Art by Abira Shrestha



Family by Sophie Adhikari





Snorkeling - Reeva Baral

What is snorkeling?

Snorkeling is a fun water activity that lets you see the beauty of the water under you. You use a snorkel which is a breathing tube and a mask to see so you can breathe underwater. It's different from scuba diving because you don't need an oxygen tank and you can do it no matter your age.

Gear and Equipment: You need a mask that covers your eyes and nose that will help you see clearly underwater. When you get this make sure you get the right size, and everything is tight and properly because you don't want any water to leak in through the sides. Now you need a snorkel which is a



breathing tube that allows you to breathe while your face is underwater. One of the ends goes in your mouth and the other sticks out of the water helping you breathe. You also need a life jacket because if you're not a good swimmer the waves might drown you and it just helps see underwater more clearly because you don't have to worry about floating. Also breathe slowly and don't panic when you get in the water. Staying calm while in the water helps you a lot. Make sure

you use a lot of sunscreen while you're snorkeling and you're always reapplying because the sun's always harsh and you're constantly in the water. If you're going to go in the water you should go with a friend because then you'll have someone with you in case you need help. Make sure you always pay attention to the guide because that's who will help you throughout the whole process.

Snorkeling tips: When you get your gear make sure you get the correct size. Make sure everything fits well and nothing leaks because if it leaks while you're in the water you can't do much to fix it. Also breathe slowly and don't panic when you get in the water. Staying calm while in the water helps you a lot. Make sure you use a lot of sunscreen while you're snorkeling and you're always reapplying because the sun's always harsh and you're constantly in the water. If you're going to go in the water you should go with a friend because then you'll have someone with you in case you need help. Make sure you always pay attention to the guide because that's who will help you throughout the whole process.

The reef : The reef under us in when you go snorkeling is really pretty, but we have to be very careful with it. It is sea life, and we don't want to damage it because that is home to many sea animals. The corals are very sensitive, and they can be damaged by touch and kicking with fins or even just standing on them. You also don't want to touch them with your barefoot because it can hurt your foot as well. If you were going to go snorkeling, do not try to stand on the sand because there isn't much sand to stand on and there is marine life under you so you don't want to hurt any of them.

- Contd. page 7

NAC Temple Fund — July '25 Summary

Thank you all for attending July 2025 puja. And thank you for your contribution.

Thanks to our sponsors and devotees. Your presence and donation makes it possible to give the continuity to our regular monthly puja and gathering to emulate our religion and culture. Here is the summary of collection from June puja.

Total collection (Cash and Zelle): \$845

Total expense: \$285 (Temple \$225, Pandit \$50, Misc. \$10), Saving: \$560

Number of NAC Trustees: 33 as of June 25

Total assets so far: ~\$200,000



The Cycle of Seasons

When winter arrives, the world turns pale.

The cold winds come, and the trees exhale.

As winter progresses, night kills the day earlier than before.

Snow covers the streets and frostbite crawls through our door.

Then spring arrives with flowers blooming.

And the birds return, and the sun starts fuming.

Trees crawl out their graves and skies turn clear blue,

But shadows still linger as spring breaks through.

Summer blazes with ruthless heat enough to start wildfire.

The ground burns under a blue sky full of desire.

Cicadas chirp their hearts out and wail with all their might.

While dusk bleeds red, surrendering to the night.

Fall steps in with unique colored leaves.

Whispers of endings drift on a chilling breeze.

Hoodies out and pumpkin spice filling the air.

Spring is home of late sunsets, so soft and rare.

Each season is unique and each brings something new.

Winter has chills, spring has blooms, summer has heat, and fall has the hues.

- Swopnil Adhikari



NBA News

Recently in the NBA, 2 big things have happened. Bradley Beal has gone to the Los Angeles Clippers, and Damian Lillard has returned to the Portland Trail Blazers. I will be giving my insight on those moves.

First off, Bradley Beal has gone from being on the worst contract in the NBA to one of the best. He was last year making 50 million dollars a year with the Phoenix Suns last season, and now he is making 5.5 million a year. And even though he has regressed he is still a good player averaging 17 points per game last season. The Clippers recently traded their starting shooting guard Norman Powell for a better starting power forward in John Collins, and Bradley Beal and be their Norman Powell replacement and fit right in the starting lineup. The Clippers are now a great team, but the western conference is very deep and difficult to win in. The day after that it was reported that Damian Lillard had gone back to the Trail Blazers, which he had been a part of for a long time before he went to the Milwaukee Bucks a few years back. He signed a 3 year long 42 million dollar deal. The Trail Blazers could be a good team in the east now but probably not this year as Lillard is out for the whole season with a tore achilles injury. They did just trade for Jrue Holiday this offseason so even without Lillard they could be a sneaky playoff team in a weak eastern conference. There is my analysis of the two most recent signings in this years NBA offseason. The Los Angeles Clippers are now a title contender with Bradley Beal and the Portland Trail Blazers could be a playoff team for years to come. - **Suvav Bhusal**

Snorkeling - Contd. from page 6

My experience: When I went to the Dominican Republic I went snorkeling and I had a lot of fun doing it. I made sure my mask was tight because if it wasn't in the water it would have leaked through and burned my eyes. It was really cool seeing the water underneath me because I didn't know how beautiful the ocean really was. The water was so blue and beautiful, and I was really excited to go in the water. I got to see different types of fish underwater and it was a really cool thing to experience. I had really fun when I went and the boat I was on was really nice as well. After snorkeling they took us to the beach and there was a restaurant with really good food. You get to spend a lot of time on the island itself. The island I was on was Catalina Island. The water was really pretty, and I got some really beautiful shells from the beach. We got to spend time there and I feel like the beach was very clean and very nice. Overall I really did enjoy this experience.

Snorkeling is a very fun water activity, and it lets you discover the beauty of the water under you. I didn't know the reef could be this pretty but thanks to snorkeling I got to learn different things from it. You get to see colorful fish, the coral reef and the piece of the ocean so snorkeling offers a unique and unforgettable experience for people of all ages. Overall, snorkelling is just such an amazing experience that I would recommend.

- **Reeva Baral**



The Garden of Forsaken

Beneath a sky that once held light,
Now veiled in webs of ashen white,
There lies a gate with hinges rusted,
A place the living never trusted.

Its iron vines, once carved with care,
Now choke the arch in dead despair.

Each rose within its shattered bed
Still blooms—but only shades of red.

The garden drinks the morning dew,
Yet nothing here will grow anew.
The soil is soft, but not with grace—
It's fed by time and loss's trace.

A statue stands, her face eroded,
A weeping pose forever coded.
She holds a bowl of crumbling stone,
Where petals fall, then rot alone.

The path repeats, a coiling snare,
Each step returns you to the stare
Of hollow trees with hearts of rot,
Who whisper truths the world forgot.

Decay is more than rust or blight—
It's memory turned into night.
The echo of a child's cry,
Still trapped beneath the wilting sky.

The ivy climbs in looping chains,
Through broken glass and windowpanes.
Each leaf a hand, once soft, now cracked,
That clings to walls the years attacked.

A fountain gurgles dust and bone,
Its song a brittle, whispered moan.
The water died, yet still it plays,
Repeating loss in endless phrase.

This garden, once of hope unspoken,
Now bears the name: The Forsaken.
Its beauty waned, its silence grown,
Where all who linger turn to stone.

- **Syon Gautam**

Cycling to the Base of the World: My High-Altitude Journey to Everest

by Ishwor Adhikari, Asia Quality VP

Q2 2025

In early May 2025, I embarked on a once-in-a-lifetime cycling expedition to one of the most iconic and awe-inspiring destinations on Earth—Everest Base Camp. This journey was not only a test of physical endurance but also a deeply enriching cultural and spiritual experience. Over two weeks, our international group of cyclists traversed the vast, rugged landscapes of Tibet, gradually ascending to the foot of the world’s tallest mountain.



The Team and the Terrain

Our group consisted of eleven riders from five countries—the United States, Australia, England, China, and Singapore—brought together by a shared passion for adventure and exploration. Nine of us regularly ride together in Shanghai, which added a strong sense of camaraderie to the journey. The route spanned approximately 450 miles, with a total elevation gain of 15,850 feet, and altitudes ranging from 9,800 feet to over 17,000 feet. Riders had the flexibility to skip certain segments if weather conditions became too extreme or if altitude sickness set in.

From Chengdu to the Tibetan Plateau

The journey began in Chengdu, China, where we met for a pre-trip briefing and final equipment checks. From there, we flew to Linzhi, Tibet, situated at 9,800 feet. This marked the start of our acclimatization process and the beginning of our ride across the Tibetan Plateau.

The route was carefully designed to allow for gradual altitude adjustment. Over the following days, we cycled through some of the most remote and visually stunning regions of Tibet, including Basongcuo (12,139 ft), Shannan (13,057 ft), and Tingri (14,265 ft), before reaching Everest Base Camp at 16,896 feet. At our highest point, we climbed to 17,388 ft—a true test of stamina and spirit.



Everest Base Camp at 16,896 feet. At our highest point, we climbed to 17,388 ft—a true test of stamina and spirit.



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before reaching Everest Base Camp at 16,896 feet. At our highest point, we climbed to 17,388 ft—a true test of stamina and spirit.

A Landscape Like No Other

The scenery was nothing short of breathtaking; snow-capped peaks, expansive valleys, and winding mountain roads created a dramatic and ever-changing backdrop. Along the way, we encountered Tibetan mastiffs, herds of yaks, lambs, and even a friendly donkey—eagerly waiting for scrapes from our lunch.

Contd. to page 9

Cond. - Cycling to the Base of the World: My High-Altitude Journey to Everest

by Ishwor Adhikari, Asia Quality VP

Despite warning signs about yaks, we passed through herds without incident. These encounters added a unique charm to the journey and underscored the deep connection between the Tibetan people and their environment.

Highs and Lows at High Altitude

Reaching Everest Base Camp was the pinnacle of the trip—both literally and figuratively. Standing in the shadow of the world's highest peak was a humbling and awe-inspiring moment. However, the journey was not without its challenges. The air was extremely dry, and the weather could shift dramatically—from sunshine to sleet, hail, or even blizzards within minutes.



I personally experienced the effects of altitude sickness and had to rely on supplemental oxygen at 17,060 feet. The oxygen level at that altitude is just 50% of the sea level. Despite this setback, the support from fellow riders, the organizer and the sheer beauty of the surroundings kept my spirits high. The camaraderie within the group was one of the most rewarding aspects of the trip, as we encouraged each other through every climb and descent.

Cultural Encounters and Local Hospitality

One of the most enriching aspects of the expedition was the opportunity to engage with local Tibetan communities. Unlike in many parts of the world where strangers may be met with hesitation, the people of Tibet were warm, welcoming, and genuinely curious about our journey. A simple “Tashi Delek” (hello in Tibetan) often sparked smiles and friendly conversations. In several villages, locals even asked to take photos with us.

We also visited significant cultural landmarks, including the Potala Palace in Lhasa and the Samye Monastery, the first monastery in Tibet. These visits offered a deeper understanding of Tibetan Buddhism and the spiritual significance of the region.

Cuisine and Comfort on the Road

Tibetan cuisine, shaped by its high-altitude environment and neighboring influences from Nepal and Sichuan, was another highlight. We enjoyed a variety of local dishes, including yak curry, grilled yak, yak dumplings, and even yak burgers. Barley, the region's primary crop, featured prominently in meals, often in the form of tsampa, a roasted barley flour mixed with butter tea.

Due to the harsh climate and limited agriculture, Tibet relies heavily on imported food supplies, particularly from Sichuan and neighboring countries. Nevertheless, the meals were hearty and nourishing—perfect fuel for long days of riding. **Contd. to page 10**



Contd. - Cycling to the Base of the World: My High-Altitude Journey to Everest
 by Ishwor Adhikari, Asia Quality VP

Our support team from Serk, the organizing agency, played a crucial role in ensuring our comfort and safety. From mechanical assistance to hot coffee at rest stops, their professionalism and attention to detail made the journey seamless.

Infrastructure in the Himalayas

One of the most surprising aspects of the trip was the quality of infrastructure in such remote areas. Well-paved roads and expressways, including mountain tunnels costing between \$48 million and \$160 million per mile, connected even the most isolated villages. The longest tunnel in the region, at 7.9 miles, cost \$1.5 billion to construct.

Access to schools and hospitals has also improved significantly. A local tourist guide told us that life expectancy in Tibet had risen from 35.5 years in the 1950s to over 77 years today, reflecting the region’s rapid development.



A Glimpse into Tibetan History and Culture

Tibet’s history is as rich as its landscapes. Once a powerful empire, it transformed into a peaceful Buddhist nation. Mythology traces the origins of the Tibetan people to a union between a monkey and an ogress. The Yarlung Valley was the cradle of Tibetan civilization, and figures like Songtsen Gampo played pivotal roles in spreading Buddhism.



Tibetan culture is distinct from that of its Han Chinese neighbors. Traditional dress, such as the chuba, and elaborate jewelry featuring coral and zee stones, reflect a deep cultural heritage. Women hold strong positions in society, and unique practices like polyandry (women having more than one husband at the same time) historically helped manage inheritance and land use.

A Life changing Journey

This expedition was far more than a physical challenge—it was a journey of personal growth, cultural discovery, and spiritual reflection. Cycling through the vast and varied landscapes of Tibet, with Everest as our final destination, offered



a rare opportunity to disconnect from the everyday and reconnect with nature and humanity. For anyone seeking an adventure that combines endurance, exploration, and cultural immersion, I wholeheartedly recommend this experience. It’s not just a bike tour—it’s a life changing journey that leaves you with a deeper appreciation for the world and your place in it.



Nepali American Center soccer tournament unites Nepali community in Chicagoland area

Lead by Nepali American Center (NAC), local Nepali soccer team buzzed with excitement to play soccer on July 12 and 13 at Udall Park, Elk Grove Village. Local teams gathered for a spirited two-day soccer tournament that brought together players of all ages and skill levels. The event showcased not only fierce competition but also strong community spirit, with family-friendly games, youth showcase, and a veterans' match adding to the festive atmosphere.

Six teams competed in the main tournament: **Drip FC, Danfe FC, Northwest FC, Rara FC, Manakamana FC, and Himalayan FC**. After a series of intense matchups, **Drip FC** emerged as the champions, beating Danfe by 4-2 displaying both tactical discipline and offensive flair throughout the tournament. They won A Championship Trophy and Cash prize of \$500. Winner and Runner Up players also got medals from the Organizing Committee. Two players earned individual honors for their exceptional performances. **Shreeyan** from Danfe was named **Player of the Tournament** for his consistent impact across matches, while **Peter** from Drip FC was the **Highest Scorer** of the tournament, dazzling fans with his clinical finishing.

In addition to the main competition, the tournament featured **friendly matches** that highlighted the future stars of local soccer. Under-10 and Under-15 teams took to the field, providing young players a platform to showcase their skills and gain valuable match experience. These youth games were met with loud cheers from proud families and supporters.

One of the standout highlights of the event was a thrilling **competitive match between Nepali U-10 Kids and local team called Azzuri U-10 Kids**, which drew a large crowd and kept fans on the edge of their seats. Both teams played with heart and determination, reflecting the growing enthusiasm for soccer among youth in the community. Even though Nepali Kids came out as winner, both of the teams won the heart of the spectators for the technical game played by these Under 10 kids. Austin Lamichhane scored 5 goals for Nepali team, whereas Anthony scored 3 goals for Azzurri. Adding a nostalgic



touch to the tournament, a **veterans' game** brought former players back to the field, reminding spectators of the enduring passion and camaraderie that soccer fosters across generations.

Organizers, volunteers, and community members came together to make the event a success, reinforcing the importance of sports in building connections and promoting healthy lifestyles. With high energy, memorable moments, and inclusive participation, this year's tournament was more than just a competition—it was a celebration of community through the beautiful game. Spectators and participants alike praised the tournament's organization and welcoming atmosphere. A major highlight for many attendees was the delicious food available on-site. **Rajani** served up freshly made **Sel**, a traditional Nepali sweet rice flour

doughnut, which quickly became a crowd favorite for its crispy texture and rich flavor. Right next to her stand, **Naman** offered classic **pizza slices**, satisfying hungry fans of all ages with a quick and tasty bite between matches. These local foods sold by Rajani and Naman added a flavorful touch to the event, blending cultural tradition with familiar favorites and contributing to the overall festive vibe.

The success of the tournament wouldn't have been possible without the dedication of its many **volunteers**, who worked tirelessly behind the scenes. **Bigyan Shrestha** and **Manzil Gajurel** took charge as referees, ensuring fair play and maintaining the pace of the matches. On the sidelines, **Jay Kunwar** and others served as linesmen, keeping a sharp eye on the action and supporting smooth game flow. **Sujan Adhikari** and **Sanjay Bhusal** offered crucial help throughout the event,



assisting with logistics and coordination. A special recognition goes to **Nitesh Pant**, whose leadership and organizational efforts brought the entire tournament together seamlessly. Their teamwork and commitment were instrumental in creating a memorable experience for everyone involved. On top of that, organizing committee would like to say thanks to Himalayan Sherpa Restaurant, Chicago and Himalayan Curry Hut, Highwood for their sponsorship of the event.

With its resounding success, this year's tournament has set a high standard for future events. Organizers and community members are already looking ahead to next year, hoping to expand participation and bring in even more families and interstate teams. The tournament not only celebrated the love of soccer but also strengthened bonds within the community, reminding everyone that when people come together with passion and purpose, great things can happen—both on and off the field.