

July 2026
NEWSLETTER

CHICAGO CHAUTARI
TIMES - 208th Edition

Dharma protects who
protect it
धर्मो रक्षति रक्षितः

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NEWSLETTER TEAM :

Ankur Sharma
Bishnu Phuyal
Yagna Pant
Binod Dhungel
Sarana Parajuli

For birthday
announcements, articles,
success stories,
quotations, poems, write
to us at
info@nepaliamericancenter
.org



Chicago Chautari Times

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JULY 2026 NEWSLETTER



Welcome to Chicago Chautari Times - 196th Edition



A Note on Diaspora Responsibility and Their Expectation

The change in time is showing the ubiquity of technology. Henceforth the strength of a physical border and its confinement to people from any country are lessened day by day. Today, you can support and love a cause that your life is blended and bonded with wherever you were born and wherever you live. It actually is unconcerning so long as your actions of any kind are bounded by the legality of that nation. This fact applies to almost everyone in modern times and thence to the Nepalese Diaspora too in recent times.

The fact everyone must understand is that the Nepalese Diaspora have not just left their homeland simply to earn, their primary motivation to leave the motherland was to find employment and opportunities by which they can improve the condition of their family first. Each one of them understands that with their success in economic conditions, they can take part in and contribute directly and indirectly to developing their village and even the nation. Leaving a place of birth doesn't decrease or degrade their love to their motherland, rather it creates more affection to their village and Nepal. Improved economic status can expand horizon of an individual beyond self or family. This helps strengthen the bonds with Nepal personally. This increases greater affection, causes nostalgia and so it motivates them to be more involved one way or the other. All that Diaspora Nepalese need now is a notion of "you are also Nepali" portrayed and displayed in the views, laws, policies and actions of Nepal Government allowing them to participate in the success of Nepal.

Open and fair behaviors of government to the diaspora in line with the citizens, I believe, can act like the use of water and fertilizer to a wilting plant. Like the plant becomes healthy, it can bear better produce later. The equal treatment of Nepalese wherever they live always opens and produces unexpected and unimaginable benefits. It is a natural law – live and let live. One must understand the deep-rooted human psychology of hunger for equality, fairness, and understanding, the ingredients of unity. Nepalese living abroad have the same aspirations in their mind and expectation from the government.

Besides, if Nepal likes to welcome international business involving non-Nepalese for development in Nepal, those businesses have one fundamental interest of just making profits from their investments. Their sole interest is to make profit anyhow and transfer that profit back to their own country.

- Dr. Bishnu Phuyal (to be continued on page 3)

Chicago Chautari Times (CCT) has embarked its 18th years of uninterrupted monthly publications from April 2026. 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.

Nature



- Aawahni KC



shifting time

like the fruits of autumn, we submit to the gentle pull of a winding breeze
weathered and torn, and never quite the same as before,
we drift through a pocket of light beyond these dreamy trees,
as if every ending softly opens a new door.

we'll adapt to every shift in moonlight,
and bask in moments that softly blend.
like something once certain slipping out of sight,
blooming anew, yet with no intent.

and still green, red, and blue carve their marks in our skin,
each passing hour a ribbon ties through the soul,
rewritten softly every time the winds begin again,
sculpted through every moment beyond our control.

and though winds will never learn to travel still or slow,
they leave us where serendipity is meant to be,
until the reflection of then is stardust from long ago,
and peace becomes a past now free.

- Aishani KC

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.



Homesick

The bustling city that never sleeps
welcomes me with a gush of heat.
Familiar faces light up with joy,
and the sadness and longing in my heart are destroyed.
The delicious organic aroma of home-cooked dishes fills my nose,
while laughter fills the small kitchen and smiles grow.

Badminton rackets clink as the sun sinks from sight,
and the laughs and groans that distract me make me forget about the mosquito bites.
As the days shorten, each morning I wake up to my heart being a bit more tense.
Every night, I fall asleep to the sound of small critters, and every morning I wake up to the smell of incense.

We travel around in cramped buses and explore the underground bazaar,
and the city is filled with dust and scents of char.
Then one day, I wake up, and this time it is different.

Silence stretches through the house, the smell of incense still lingering, and the morning filled with heavy hearts.

I dress neatly and outside waits my departure.

My loved ones bless me, and I give them one last hug as if it were just the start.

The small rickshaw arrives, and I climb aboard with teary eyes as I wave my final goodbyes.

And in the blink of an eye,

I am back in this foreign land, once more homesick.

(This poem is about my trips to Nepal and the many happy, memorable memories I have made there with my beautiful family) - **Prinsa Kumal**

A Note on Diaspora Responsibility and Their Expectation - from page 1

Collective investment by involving Nepalese Diaspora on the other hand will not have such monetary benefit focus only. It can have the same goal in terms of profit but with one major significant difference. The deep-rooted love to the place of their birth and ancestral home lives in them and that never dies. Economic progress of diaspora only enhances it. The love to the motherland always remains deeply in their mind and hearts. By letting them involve in the development activities elevates their feelings and strengthens the ties with the country by making them feel more associated with the country, sharing vision, expertise, and monetary resources. Their services uplift their soul and elevates the stature of Nepal.

Since none of the Nepalese Diaspora wants to be detached from Nepal, Nepalese Government must also treat them with this basis human benchmark. Looking at them with the viewpoint of selfish individuals who left the country only for their personal gain will hurt them and not the truth that is in their hearts. Given these facts and by treating them as one Nepali can never cause any ill will, exploitation or irresponsibility from them but rather it encourages towards the path of understanding, respect, cooperation and compassion. It will establish a sense of belonging and togetherness among all Nepalese wherever they live. Contracting power of human will and restricting the extending ability of human hand for uniting is confining human's mindset and ability. Such actions or policies are not beneficial for peace and progress. Rather it should be our efforts to expand beyond the physical border to let the reach of Nepali roots extend wherever they can reach far and wide and act as own resource. Extension of our roots beyond the territory naturally helps gather necessary nutrients required for the healthy economic growth, image and strength of Nepal just like a long root provides nutrients to a healthy plant. - **Bishnu Phuyal, Ph.D.**

Best Wishes to our July Birthday Stars - contd.

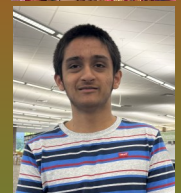
Syon Gautam
- July 22



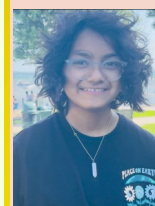
Sophie Adhikari
- July 23



Swapnil Adhikari
- July 25



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



The Future of Guilt in Your Past

This shame will never lift.

The past is done.

Always to be thought about.
Always to be heard.
Always to be seen.

You are not alone,
Yet no one lets the pain fade.

Bury it under bricks,
Seal it tight—
It seeps through cracks regardless.

A lifetime of guilt
For little amounts of sadness
Was suffering what you wanted?

It is what you got.

- **Prisha Parajuli**



NAC BiKe/Walk 2026

I went to the NAC bike/walk. It was really fun! I want to share you all about it! My parents signed me up to sell some items for the NAC bike walk so I decided to sell some bracelets. I worked days making these bracelets and they were fun to make. My mom helped me by making some crochet items. I made about 20 different bracelets. Since my mom was helping me she only got time to make 5 items. I ordered some bags to put the bracelet in and I also added a lollipop in each bag. I made a sign that showed how much each item cost. It was bright and colorful so people can see it better.

After a few days the bike walk was here! I put all my stuff in a bag and drove to the place. The NAC bike walk was like a picnic and there was food for lunch and desserts from different stands. Once everyone came, they started walking. I chose not to go because I wanted to stay next to my stand because I didn't want anything to fly away because it was kind of windy outside. Once I was done setting up my stand, I went around to see other people's stands. Some people came to my stand because they didn't participate in the walk like me. These girls wanted to buy a bracelet, so they gave me their ticket, and I gave them the one they wanted. Once the walk was over everyone started to go to the stands. So many people wanted my bracelets! I got 48 tickets in total! Soon it was time to eat but suddenly I found this super cute dog! I went to the owner with my cousin to ask if we can play with her. She said yes and she let us take care of the dog. Me and my cousin took turns holding the leash. I was holding the leash mostly and she was holding the dog. We sat under a tree and played with the dog. Her name was Poco and we taught her some tricks. We told her to sit and she sat. We walked her around and gave her water. The owner told us that we can come to her house so we can play with Poco! I was so happy. I ate some lunch and went right back to playing with Poco. Soon the dog had to leave so I started to pack my leftover stuff from my stand. Soon it was time to go home.

Thank you and Namaste 🙏

- Riya Phuyal



My trip to Vipassana Meditation Center

Hello everyone. My name is Abira Shrestha. I am in 3rd grade.

Today, I want to share my experience about the meditation class that I went to. On May 17th, me and my parents went to the Illinois Vipassana Center. I did a program called Annapana meditation. There were other boys and girls like me getting dropped off for the day. Among them was Shrija, my friend from Nepali school. We were in different groups though.

When I first got in, we had to write our name on a name tag and write a few descriptions about ourselves. My mom helped me to write it down.

We introduced ourselves and were divided into groups of 4 girls with 2 teachers who were parent volunteers. We then went for a nature walk through the center. After the walk, we meditated in a giant room. They played a video on the screen while we meditated. The person on the TV appeared like a guru and talked in english and shared so many lessons. We were asked to be silent but me and my friends whispered sometimes.

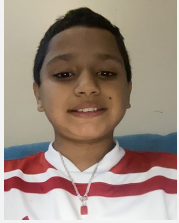
We then took a tour to the adult dorm rooms where people stayed for 10 days meditating.

Next thing was lunch time. There were foods like pasta, rice, lemonade, cheese, grapes etc. We even played some games after lunch like parachute, pick the ball, badminton etc. It was so much fun. We made cookies from scratch and put them in the oven. It was not tasty though. I did not like it.

I want to come again next year.

Thank you to my parents for organizing this trip.

- Abira Shrestha



The Book Thief

“Goodbye Papa, you saved me. You taught me how to read.”

The Book Thief reflects on Liesel's life during WWII. She was given up by her mother and taken in by the Hubermanns. Papa (Hans) truly cared for Liesel and taught her what family was. The character that had the largest impact on Liesel was Hans Hubermann.

When Liesel first arrived, Hans was the calming presence. A quote from the book that supports my claim says, “It took nearly fifteen minutes to coax her from the car. It was the tall man who did it. Quietly.” (pg. 28). This quote relates back to the main idea because it shows that Hans was patient and very calm with Liesel. This quote also shows how he got her out of the car.

This quote also shows how selfless Hans is and how he shows Liesel his selflessness through getting Liesel out of the car. This also shows how Hans had the biggest impact on Liesel.

Hans teaches Liesel how to read the basic German language. A statement from the book says, “Now,” he said upon his return. ‘Let's get this midnight class started.’” (pg.65). The midnight class shows how Hans had an impact on Liesel because it ultimately saved her life from the air raid that nobody she knew survived, even Hans, because she started writing a book about herself. Hans understood the situation of Liesel and taught her how to read, impacting her life even more. This shows Hans's true selfless self and how he spread selflessness to Liesel through a small act of kindness like teaching Liesel how to read German.

Hans ultimately saves Liesel by teaching her how to read and write. A quote from the book that shows he saved her life says, “Goodbye Papa, you saved me. You taught me how to read.” The quote supports my main idea because it shows how he saved her by teaching her how to read, and how she spent her time reading and writing during an air raid that killed all of her family members and friends. This also showed how it helped Liesel in the long run because she knew how to read, she started writing, and writing saved her life from an air raid that killed her loved ones. This showed how Hans' act of kindness and selflessness ultimately saved Liesel's life.

Hans Hubermann showed Liesel his selfless, caring self. The time when Hans taught Liesel how to read, when Liesel didn't die in the air raid because she knew how to read, and the calm presence of Hans when Liesel first came, made Hans an impacting person in Liesel's life.

Hans can teach others what it means to be selfless. He took the time to help Liesel learn and grow to become the person she was by the end of the novel.

- Rasik Pant



The Busy Pencil

Hi, I am Penny. I am a pencil, and I always get used to it. If you didn't know, I have a friend who has a glue stick. He almost never got used to it, but now he gets used to it everyday though not as much as me. I got used to it way more. All my friends Petty, Pel, Pickle, and Pebble are pencils too. They are all sharp, and if you were wondering, they get used normally. But me? No. I get used to it all the time! I don't even get to see my friends. I'm always placed in a small cabinet every day, and I'm all alone.

There is a notebook in the cabinet too, but he never talks. He snores, though, and it is so loud! Today is my owner's birthday. That means I will be alone, so I can call my friend Pally. She is a piece of paper, but a special one. When someone writes on her, they use a special marker, and then they erase it with a special eraser. If Pally can help me open the cabinet door, I will finally be free! Then I will run away. But that will be hard because I'm short, and I can barely walk. Suddenly, a kid opens the cabinet, takes me, puts me in his bag, and gives me to his sister. But wait... that girl looks familiar. Wait! That's the girl! The one who has my friend... the... the... the... glue stick guy!

Now I'm in her pocket. I wonder why she would want me. Maybe it's because I'm blue, pink, and purple with some white. When I arrive at their house, I see a bunch of school supplies. Some of them I have seen before. Wait! I called Petty, Pel, Pickle, and Pebble, but they never came. That might have been because they were all here!

Thank You!- Ruby Phuyal





How to be a FIFA referee

When people talk about the FIFA World Cup, they usually think about the star players scoring amazing goals or the goalkeeper having incredible saves. However, every game depends on a team of highly trained referees that have to make sure the game is being played fairly. Becoming a FIFA World Cup referee is one of the most difficult achievements in soccer. It requires years to develop a deep knowledge of the game, excellent physical fitness and the ability to stay calm under pressure. Their journey can start from being a referee at your local club to standing at the world's biggest games. That journey can take over a decade.

Every World Cup referee starts at a local level. The first step to being certified is through your country's soccer Federation. Referees have to complete training courses, pass exams before receiving permission to officiate matches and learn the official rules of the game. Many referees begin by refereeing their local clubs or youth games. That's where they gain experience making decisions and managing players.

As the referees start to improve, they get assigned a higher level of competition. They go to referee games in high school college and semi-professional games. Throughout their careers they are regularly evaluated by assessors who review their positioning, consistency, communication and decision making. The referees who perform well advance through their countries' officiating system. It is a rigorous process to even get this far.

Once you've made it past that point, reaching the international level requires much more experience. National Soccer Associations nominate their best referees for FIFA to consider. All referees must pass a demanding fitness test, demonstrate excellent understanding of the rules of the game and consistently perform well in professional competitions. They must have good communication, effectively make accurate decisions only in a few seconds and remain calm and confident under pressure.

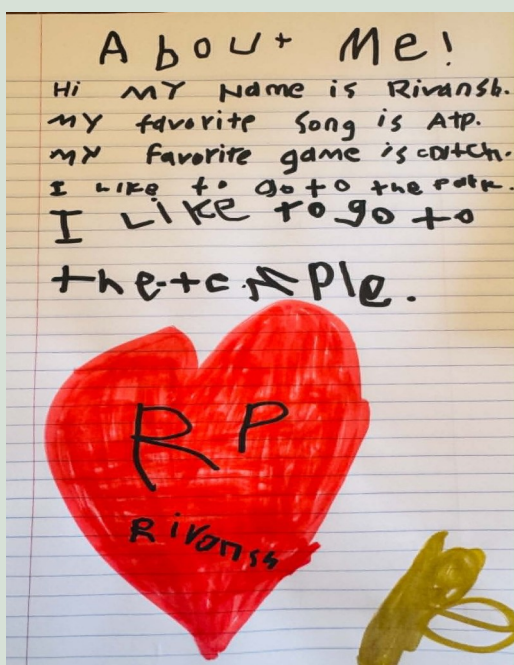
After you make it past that stage and earn a FIFA badge you are automatically a referee for the World Cup before choosing carefully based on performance and international tournaments. The selected referees have to attend a specialized training camp where they complete fitness testing, review game situations, practice using VAR and work closely with an assistant of referees to prepare as a team.

During the World Cup referees are responsible for enforcing the rules in front of millions of fans that are watching around the world. They can't let that pressure get to them for games. They must communicate consistently with the assistant referees and VAR team all while making split second decisions that can affect the outcome of a match. A World Cup referee may run between 6 and 8 miles during a single game while staying focused for the entire 90 minutes or more. The job is very hard and underappreciated.

The coming of people as a World Cup referee is a long and challenging journey that requires dedication, discipline and years of hard work. It's more than just blowing a whistle and giving out cards. They try their best and earn their spot to be there. Without their dedication, the games would be much different. – **Reeva Baral**



Rivansh Phuyal



NAC Temple Fund JULY '26 Summary

Thank you all for attending July 2026 puja. And thank you for your contribution.

Thanks to our sponsors and devotees. Your presence and donation makes it possible to continue our regular monthly puja and gathering to practice our religion and culture.

Here is the summary of collection from July puja.

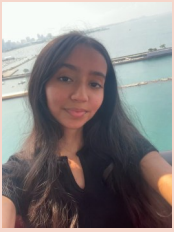
Total collection (Cash and Zelle): \$385

Total expense: \$375 (Temple \$225, Other \$150),

Saving: \$10

Number of NAC Trustees: 36 as of June 2026

Total assets so far: >\$200,000



The Importance of Cybersecurity Education

Technology has improved a lot over the past 10 years. Computers are faster, and people can connect with others around the world more easily than ever before. These advances have made life easier, but they have also created new risks. As technology continues to grow, cyber attacks are becoming more and more common and can seriously affect people's safety online.

In 2025, the National Cyber Security Centre reported a 50% increase in major cyber attacks, showing how serious the problem has become. At the same time, the Google Transparency Report found that phishing websites have increased while malware websites have decreased. This shows that cybercriminals are focusing more on tricking people instead of attacking computers directly.

When someone falls for a phishing email or a fake text asking them to pay a bill, they may lose money, but they can also experience lasting emotional stress. Victims may struggle to trust online services again, feel embarrassed, lose confidence, or become afraid of future scams. According to PR Newswire, more than 40% of cyber attacks go unreported because victims feel embarrassed about what happened. This means many people suffer in silence instead of seeking help.

Another important issue is the digital divide, which is the gap between people who have easy access to technology and online resources and those who do not. This divide is often caused by factors like income, education, and access to reliable internet. According to WIRED, cyber attacks affect communities of color, low-income families, and immigrant communities, at a much higher rate. People with fewer resources may also have less access to cybersecurity education, making them more vulnerable to online scams and attacks.

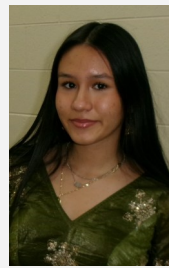
Making cybersecurity education free and easy to access can help reduce this gap. When everyone has access to reliable information about staying safe online, more people can learn how to protect their personal information, recognize scams, and avoid cyber threats. As technology continues to evolve, improving access to cybersecurity education will play an important role in creating a safer digital world for everyone.

- Purnima Pathak

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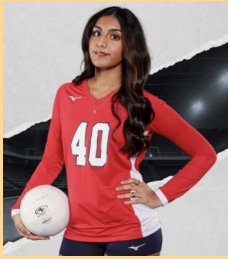


Value of Astronomy

There are many reasons why astronomy is, and has been, important to people now and in ancient times. It has had many practical and values since the very early civilizations, from the Romans to even earlier cave-dwellers, utilized the movement of the Sun, stars, and planets as a calendar to keep track of time and changing seasons. The ability to track the sky was very important for agriculture because it helped people determine the best times for planting and harvesting crops, making it a skill needed for success and survival. Another way people used astronomy was by observing the Moon's crescent to predict rainfall, serving as an early form of weather forecasting. Lastly, the positions of stars acted as a natural map which guided travel and navigation across both land and sea.

Astronomy has also played an important role in religion and tradition throughout many cultures. Initially, it was used to support the geocentric model of the universe, which claimed that Earth and humanity was the center of the universe. This belief was later disproven through more astronomical discoveries like Saturn's rings, Jupiter's moons, and the rotation of the planets around the Sun. Astronomy also had a significance in many cultures, as many stars, planets, and constellations were named after gods and mythological figures.

Religion and tradition were strongly influenced by astronomy, but its past practical utility has the greatest impact on everyday life because it assisted in the development of today's society and its way of regulation: time-keeping and meteorology. Observations of the sky also contributed directly to agriculture, navigation, seasonal planning, and the development of calendars. These uses have affected daily survival and the way society organized itself, making astronomy not only a source of knowledge and belief but also an essential tool used by both ancient civilizations and us today. **- Ayuksha Joshi**



Volleyball

Volleyball has become one of the most important parts of my life. As a middle blocker on a 14U volleyball team, I have learned so much about teamwork, hard work, and determination. Every practice and game helps me improve my skills and become a better player.

Playing middle blocker is a unique position because I am involved in both offense and defense. One of my main responsibilities is blocking the other team's hitters at the net. This requires quick reactions, good timing, and strong communication with my teammates. I have to pay attention to where the setter is going to send the ball and be ready to move quickly across the court.

On offense, I work closely with my setter to run quick attacks. Middle hitters often have fast sets, which means I need to be ready to jump and hit at the perfect moment. Scoring points for my team is exciting, but I know that every successful play depends on everyone doing their job.

Being part of a volleyball team has taught me the importance of teamwork. Volleyball is not a sport where one player can do everything alone. Every pass, set, hit, and block depends on players working together. When we communicate and support each other, we play our best volleyball.

Practices can be challenging, but they help us improve. We spend time working on footwork, serving, blocking, hitting, and defensive skills. Sometimes drills are difficult, but I know they make me stronger and more confident on the court. One of my favorite parts of volleyball is the excitement of competition. Whether we win or lose, I enjoy playing with my teammates and giving my best effort. The energy in the gym, the cheers from teammates, and the feeling of making a great play make volleyball a sport I love.

Being a middle blocker on a 14U volleyball team has helped me grow as both an athlete and a person. I have learned discipline, responsibility, and perseverance. Volleyball continues to challenge me, and I look forward to improving my skills and creating more memories with my team.

- Deeya Phuyal

Anchoring the Mind: Finding Stability in Moments of Panic

An anxious event can strike without warning, transforming our inner world in an instant. One moment we may feel steady, optimistic, and grounded; the next, a single trigger can flip that balance. The mind, which was calm just moments before, begins racing toward negative possibilities. Thoughts spiral into worst-case scenarios, creating a chain reaction that convinces us there is no escape. In these moments, anxiety feels overwhelming, as if it has taken over every corner of our awareness.

In the middle of this turbulence, many people feel an instinctive need to reach out. The mind, shaken and searching for stability, longs for the presence of another human being—someone who can listen, soothe, or simply sit beside us. In desperate moments, connection becomes a lifeline. It helps soften the impact of the storm inside. And when we turn to someone, it becomes important to focus on what truly matters: their presence, their support, their willingness to stand with us. This is not the time to dwell on their shortcomings or past mistakes. Anxiety asks for compassion, not perfection. Even with support, the path out of an anxious moment often begins with the body. Physical movement—walking, stretching, exercising—activates and energizes every cell. It interrupts the mental storm and anchors us back into the present. Once the body begins to settle, the breath becomes our next tool. Pranayama, or conscious breathing, helps reconnect the physical body with the subtle body, the *sukshma sharir*. Deep inhalations expand our inner space, and slow exhalations release tension and fear.

The third and most transformative stage is meditation. By sitting still and observing the mind, we gradually reduce the number of thoughts pulling us in every direction. Meditation doesn't force the mind to stop; it teaches us to step back from the noise. In that quiet space, clarity returns.

At the heart of this process is the Buddha's teaching on impermanence. Every emotion, every thought, every wave of anxiety eventually shifts. Nothing stays fixed. When we remember this, our inner balance returns—like a ship that rocks for a moment but settles again. Even when the mind feels unsettled, equanimity reminds us that the disturbance will pass. And when we look back at past events that once troubled us for days or weeks, we often see how little they matter now. What felt heavy then becomes almost insignificant in hindsight. That clarity reinforces the truth that our thoughts and emotions are always changing, and we can move through them rather than be defined by them. - Yagna Pant