



**INDRENI**



### In this Issue -

1. Message from President -----Page 2
2. AGM 2020 -----Page 3 - 5
3. Meditation organised by NAF-----Page 5
4. WITH LOVE FROM ORLANDO.....!-----Page 5
5. Upset, afraid, ashamed; -----Page 7 - 8
6. Remembering Tears-----Page 9 - 10
7. A Sunday Morning Walk-----Page 11 - 15
8. The Lake by the WEL library - 2021 -----Page 15
9. आमाको मायाले थामेको संसार-----Page 16 - 18

**A Quaterly  
Publication  
of the  
Nepalese  
Association  
of Florida  
(NAF)**

## Message from President

Dear community members, Namaskar:

The current NAF executive team has entered into the second term of our tenure after successfully completing the 1st year with various community-based programs despite of difficult time of COVID-19. I would like to thank all the community members for your continuous support and involvement in our programs and looking forward for the continuation of your support and involvement in the future.



Anila Neupane Paudyal

We have successfully organized our Annual General Meeting on November, 2020 virtually with various cultural programs from the different cities in Florida. We also invited several community leaders from the different states in the US and incredible social workers from Nepal. We would like to thank all the invited guests, singers, supporting partners, local organizations, NSA-University of South Florida, and participants. We are very delighted to introduce our organization around the globe and the incredible social work we have been introducing to the community members.

We have concluded the Mindfulness meditation session after 10 months of regular weekly sessions. NAF, executive team would like to thank our mindfulness instructor, Ms. Rosy Sharma Sedhain, for her community service. We hope the program we offered was beneficial to our community members during this distress of pandemic.

NAF, as a solidarity supporting organization for Dignified Menstruation, attended 2nd International Workshop for Dignified Menstruation happened on December 8th - 10th, 2020 via Zoom. The workshop was successfully organized by Global South Coalition for Dignified Menstruation with the large number of participations around the world. We truly believe in menstrual equity, freedom from menstrual violence and discrimination and support Global South Coalition's mission to obtain dignity for all menstruators.

We have raised fund to help and support Samata School in Bhaktapur, Nepal in past months. We would like to thank all the donors for your generous support to face this unprecedented time and support to our children's education back in Nepal.

Our energetic youth forum will be organizing our second series of youth panel discussion at the end of January. The topic will focus on "Importance of learning Nepali culture and its challenges." Our targeted audience of this discussion will be next generation Nepali origin youths in the US and their parents. Please stay tuned for the detail of the program and join us with your children. We will try to learn more from the youth's perspective, what are the major challenges they are facing to meet their parents' expectation and how they are accommodating.

On behalf of NAF executive team, I would like to wish prosperous and healthy Happy new year 2021 to all our community members. Please continue to join us in our regular programs, visit our website, and give us feedback to us via social media, email and calls

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Anila Neupane Paudyal



## AGM 2020

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Nepalese Association of Florida (NAF) organized the **28th Annual General Meeting (AGM)** virtually on November 7th, Saturday 2020 via Zoom. At the beginning of the program Mr. Dev Bhandary, Ms. Priti Dhungel Bhandary (Member At Large), Mr. Sahil Bhandary, and Ms. Yuvani Bhandary from West Palm Beach sang Nepal's national anthem followed by the national anthem of the USA by Mr. Resh Neupane and Ms. Resha Neupane from Gainesville.

Dr. Pragati Ghimire, NAF- Vice President gave a welcome speech on behalf of the NAF-Executive Team. Ms. Rosy Sharma Sendhai was then honored for her volunteer contribution to the community for organizing the "Mindfulness Meditation Class" since April 2020; NAF-President Ms. Anila Neupane awarded a plaque on behalf of the NAF Executive team to Ms. Rosy Sharma Sendhai. Dr. Niraj Shrestha, General Secretary, presented the Annual Report for 2019-20. Annual report presentation was participated by Mr. Sushil Bhattachan (Mentorship Coordinator), Mr. Krishna Shrestha (COVID-19 Task Force Coordinator), Mr. Bimal Nepal (Adopt-A-Highway Coordinator), Ms. Shailee Banskota (NAF Youth Forum Coordinator), Mr. Narayan Neupane (Information Secretary/Indreni Quarterly Publications Coordinator) and Dr. Amar Bahadur Karki (Community Engagement Coordinator). Treasurer, Mr. Bishal Gautam presented the financial report for 2019-20.

During the program, distinguished speakers were invited from different local and state organizations; Dr. Rajendra Shakya (President, Newah Organization of America-Florida Chapter),

Mr. Prem Singh (President, Madheshi Association in America-Florida Chapter), Mr. Deep Karki (President, International Nepalese Literature Society-Florida Chapter), Mr. Nijananda Malla (President, Nepalese Community Center Orlando), Dr. Archana Kattel (President, Abi Kattel Memorial Foundation), Mr. Ajaya Satyal (President, International Nepalese Blood Donor Associations), Mr. Binaya Aryal (President, Nepalese Association of South-East America), Mr. Suneel Sah (President, Non-Resident Nepali Association, USA), congratulated NAF team for the first year and discussed future collaboration with NAF. Besides the speakers representing different organizations, the President of the US Nepal Policy Research Center, Dr. Rajan Pant highlighted how NAF currently organizes different social programs important for the community,



Which is exemplary for other different organizations. He also proposed to run collaboration programs with NAF in the near future.

The invited guest speaker from Nepal, Mr. Pukar Bam, the national coordinator of Hamro Sano Prayas-Nepal, discussed the first-hand experience of the current COVID-19 pandemic in Nepal and the roles of different social programs which

Hamro Sano Prayas has been running since the beginning of the pandemic in different parts of Nepal. Ms. Avima Upreti, Esq, President of Nepali Women's Global Network discussed the different programs currently running in the community by NWGN.

She also appreciated different social programs run by NAF and how two organizations can work together in the future on women related issues. She also pointed out that different organizations should learn from NAF to involve women in leadership roles. Past President Mr. Tirtha Mali, Mr. Bimal Nepal, and Mr. Bikash Devkota, Ad Hoc Committee Member Dr. Shailendra Shukla, and Unification Team Member Dr. Rudra Aryal also spoke during the program on the important roles currently NAF is playing in current situations. At the end of the program, NAF President Ms. Anila Neupane gave a vote of thanks. In her speech, she appreciated all the coordinators who are currently running different NAF flagship programs. She also thanked all invited speakers and community leaders for their participation. The program was attended by more than 60 community members from different parts of Florida via Zoom and Facebook Live and moderated by NAF General Secretary Dr. Niraj Shrestha.

Following NAF-AGM, the INLS-Florida chapter organized the रचना वाचन Poem recitation Program, moderated by Madhu Nepal. Later in the evening, with the collaboration among NAF, NCCO, and Nepalese Student Association (NeSA) at the University of South Florida, organized the Deusi-Bhailo and Cultural Program to raise funds to support different COVID-19 pandemic relief efforts in Nepal. The program was moderated by Mr. Sanjiv Gurung and Ms. Suzeeta Bhandari, both, doctoral students at USF; technical support was provided by Mr. Shree Ram Bhandary and doctoral student Mr. Anwesh Tuladhar. Community members and children from different cities participated in the culture program and demonstrated their talent. Popular Nepali Singer Mr. Diwas Gurung was the highlight of the culture program; he participated via Zoom from New York for interaction and performance. The program was streamed live on YouTube and Facebook Live.

NAF executive team like to thank all partner organizations INLS-Florida Chapter, NCCO, and NeSA-USF to help to successfully organized the program. If you need more information about this program and NAF activities, please email us at [naflorida2016@gmail.com](mailto:naflorida2016@gmail.com) Sincerely,

### NAF Executive Team

#### Link for NAF-AGM

<https://www.facebook.com/naflorida2016/videos/2823884797900687>

#### Link for Culture Program

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4mT8Dw7p1xI&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR0v3CQno0KWYqc5h2BhDY7FfE3A\\_S0d7B1v4uh7LG-zkZHxIs2r3Yp4C-g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4mT8Dw7p1xI&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR0v3CQno0KWYqc5h2BhDY7FfE3A_S0d7B1v4uh7LG-zkZHxIs2r3Yp4C-g)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4mT8Dw7p1xI&authuser=0>



**NAF executive team wants to thank all participants from the culture program: Dhanisha Thapa, Diya Maharjan, Krisha Dhakal, Ritush Pahari, Eliza and Kushal, Resh and Resha Neupane, Nia & Noa, Arvi Lamichhane, Bibek Karki, Anita Thapa, Januka Dhungel Khanal, Kanchan Sanyasi, Ritu Karki, Salipa Gurung, Dev Rai, Ruhin Pokharel, Malika & Malisha, Neetu Panta, Anju Sharma, Suzeeta Bhandari, Sanjib Gurung.**

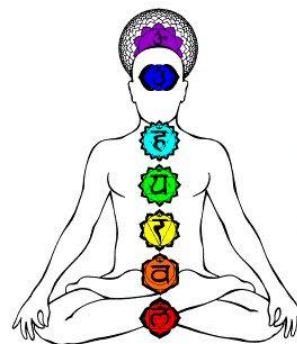
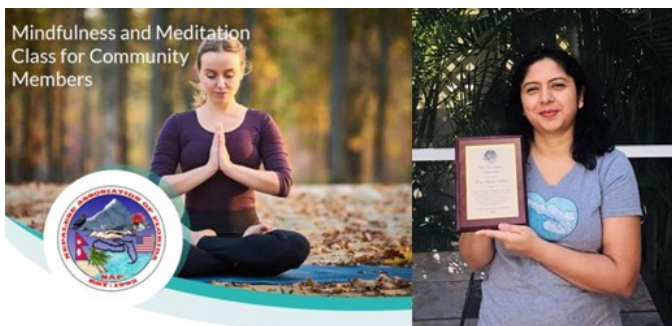


NAF President Ms. Anila Neupane, NAF Advisor Sushil Bhattachan, immediate Past President Dr. Chooda M Khanal and General Secretary Dr. Niraj Shrestha highlighted the significance of the program and thanked all the speakers and guests. Other participants also expressed the benefits of the program. Instructor Ms. Rosy Sharma urged participants to continue to practice Mindfulness and Meditation. If you need more information about this program and NAF activities, please email us at [naflorida2016@gmail.com](mailto:naflorida2016@gmail.com)

Sincerely,  
NAF Executive Team

### **Mindfulness & Meditation Virtual Session Concluded**

On December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Nepalese Association of Florida concluded a 36 weeks long virtual “Mindfulness and Meditation” session for community members. Program was started on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020, immediately after the COVID19 Lockdown. The program was run by certified Mindfulness instructor Ms. Rosy Sharma, on every Saturday at 10.00 to 11.00 AM. Community members from different regions from Florida, other states as well as from Nepal attended the session.



1. The Crown Chakra
2. The Third Eye Chakra
3. The Throat Chakra
4. The Heart Chakra
5. The Solar Plexus Chakra
6. The Sacral Chakra
7. The Base/Root Chakra



## WITH LOVE FROM ORLANDO.....!

Due to the deadly Corona Virus..... this year 2020, has historically been one of the most traumatic year for people around the world.

By the time the the medical professionals released the seriousness of the disease, and the warning to prevent its spread, it already had claimed too many precious lives in all corners of the globe. The virus had no border. And the blame game between the powerful leaders began, and landed right where the virus originated, Wuhan, China.

To contain the Virus worldwide, lockdowns became the norm. It created hopeless situation to people who survive on their daily labour. But people who were a little fortunate also began wondering, "How can I help?"

Out of a few options, the thought and the vision of the "desperate plight of the Nepali people," shared through the ubiquitous social media touched many people's compassionate heart, including those in Orlando.

SATYAGRAHA, the British-Gurkha Army veterans, who are relentlessly campaigning for their own equal rights for the past 30-plus-years; have, at their own expense, mobilised themselves in buying and distributing food, to the "weak and the destitutes in the hardest hit area in Nepal."

In exasperation, they admit, "There are too many."

Although, we play a small part in this desperate time helping those weak and the needy, oftentimes frustration and hopelessness becomes a big factor.

To play a larger role, however, I had to summon "extra courage" to ask a few of my "comrades" if they could contribute to "feed the vulnerable and the destitutes in Nepal."

Without hesitation or without even "who", "where", "what"...they each volunteered to contribute \$100 each, for which I am immensely grateful.

I did, personally and verbally conveyed my "gratitude and sincere thank you" to my generous comrades below. But, I assumed, doing so publicly will have a deeper and a special meaning altogether.



God bless them for their golden heart, forever and ever!

(1) Mr & Mrs Rajendra/Lisa Shrestha (2) Mr & Mrs Kedar/Binu Pathak (3) Mr & Mrs Shankar/Sharda Gautam (4) Mr & Mrs Kamal/Shanti Ghai and (5) Mr & Mrs Bikash/Amita Devkota.

Without saying, the attached photos do speak volume.

Ram Rai.  
Orlando.  
October 26,2020.

## Upset, afraid, ashamed; A Gen Z perspective on current events

*From natural disasters to unjust tragedies, this has been a difficult year to be a high school student stretched between two countries.*

**By Maya Oli/Special to The Sun**

I was born and raised in Gainesville. After going to Eastside High School for a year, I left to attend a high school in Japan: United World College ISAK Japan.

ISAK has helped me to gain a better understanding and more perspectives of the world. Nevertheless, this past school year has not been a smooth ride by any means.

To start off, an active volcano located right behind my school, Mt. Asama, had a minor eruption. Next, our first week of the year dedicated to service projects around Japan was put on hold.

We planned to hold an education-related workshop at a school in Fukushima. Our plans were finalized, but on Oct.13, Japan was hit by Category 5 Typhoon Hagibis.

Nearly 100 people died and flooding affected many areas. Our community of nearly 200 students, tucked away in the mountains, had to eat dinner together under flashlights and shower at the local gym. When that settled down, nothing too eventful happened until March.



**Maya Oli**

In March, for our second attempt at a project week, we planned workshops at schools in Tokyo. Our Airbnb was booked and we were ready to go. Once more, our plans were sidelined. This time, it was a deadly virus that would soon engulf much of the world.

COVID-19 started being mentioned around the end of February. After that, the situation in Japan quickly escalated. Restrictions began to tighten, and project week was canceled.

Soon after the Japanese government recommended that all schools close, we were advised to return home. I was fortunate to return to Gainesville in mid-March. Although, due to travel restrictions, some of my classmates are still in Japan.

This came as a shock. It meant leaving seniors, not knowing if or when I would ever see them again. I had four days to pack, and four days to say goodbye to the community that I had called home for two years.

Back in Gainesville, I slowly adapted to the stay-at-home life, until May 25.

As an American watching the news, I was upset. As a mixed-race female, I was afraid. As a human, I was ashamed. And I still am.

The eight minutes and 46 seconds that it took George Floyd to breathe his last breath in the hands of a police officer, who swore to protect and serve, left me speechless.

Knowing that George Floyd was not the only black individual wrongly killed in 2020, left me speechless. Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor are among the many whose futures were violently robbed.

Rest in power to all of the innocent lives lost, all over the world.

It enrages me that racial discrimination is still a prominent issue in the year 2020.

Where is the growth in our communities and nation? Who is going to step up to make lasting changes?

Movements tend to be covered up when a “more important” event occurs, creating a dangerous cycle of blazing issues being silenced. Although, some movements refuse to be forgotten. Black Lives Matter will not accept silence. This is not “their” problem. It is “our” problem.

I recently learned a disturbing statistic. Since schools began closing to limit the spread of COVID-19, CBS News reported that “March 2020 was the first March without a school shooting in the U.S. since 2002.”



In May alone, there have been over 50 mass shootings in the U.S. Do not forget the pressing fight against gun violence. Do not forget the #MeToo movement or the LGBTQ movement.

We can and we must join in unity to fight against injustices. Right now, our nation is hurting.

I can overcome my year not going as planned due to natural disasters, but I will not accept the current inability of the nation to eliminate racial inequality. As a 17-year-old, I never could have imagined fighting for equality in my lifetime.



We certainly can not bring back George Floyd or any others who died unjustly, but we can work in their memory. Only acknowledging that these tragic events took place is not enough.

Do what you can, how you can. Get educated, spark conversations to enlighten others, or donate. Be safe, and be respectful while doing it.

Silence is consent. Silence is a sign of defeat.

Maya Oli is a rising high school senior who attends school in Japan but has returned home to Gainesville due to COVID-19.



## Remembering Tears

It was during my 17<sup>th</sup> year that I first noticed a change in my way of crying. It happened at an age that is marked by great upheavals and transitions anyway. And in my case, there were two: displacement (from birthplace Dang home) and adjustment in a room at Chitwan (a hot place). After my School Leaving Certificate (SLC) examination (now they call it SEE), I had moved to Bharatpur, Chitwan for my intermediate (college) study. I clearly remember the time. Myself and my roommate Yub Raj Neupane (he was also from Dang) had attended the Orchid Science College for the first three days. On the fourth day, as usual, we returned to our room and started preparing snacks (Khaja) by operating a stove. We had walked almost half an hour on the extreme hot weather on the month of Ashad and were too much tired. Unfortunately, the stove did not work. I tried repeatedly but was not successful. I was totally wet with the sweats and my hands were black as coal. My heart blocked every masculinity and my eyes poured tears which passed away from my delicate checks. I could not control myself.

I looked towards my friend Yub Raj. He had observed my efforts to make the stove work. When he saw my eyes filled with tears, his eyes also started inducing the tears and they kept dazzling on the sunlight that peeped our room through the wide windows. I could not stand long and sat on the nearby bed. We both looked each other hopelessly! We could not speak for almost half an hour. My eyes kept on shedding tears. This pattern of pouring tears continued for several times in my college life. These random unexpected episodes of crying occurred when biology collaborated with emotions ultimately flushing out my heart and mind.



Shiv K Sharma Ph.D.  
Miami, Florida

Home sickness was a major contributor. The best part is that - after every episode, I used to feel relieved. I looked towards my friend Yub Raj. He had observed my efforts to make the stove work. When he saw my eyes filled with tears, his eyes also started inducing the tears and they kept dazzling on the sunlight that peeped our room through the wide windows. I could not stand long and sat on the nearby bed. We both looked each other hopelessly! We could not speak for almost half an hour. My eyes kept on shedding tears. This pattern of pouring tears continued for several times in my college life. These random unexpected episodes of crying occurred when biology collaborated with emotions ultimately flushing out my heart and mind. Home sickness was a major contributor. The best part is that - after every episode, I used to feel relieved.

After completion of my college study, I marched to Kathmandu for my bachelors' study. In Kathmandu, the homesickness was a bit far. I had shifted to a big city where there were plenty of entertainment sources. This 19-year-old chap had a lot of wonderful places to discover. In between my studies, I worked in a radio station as a radio jockey. Three years of bachelor study was merely analogous to one year. It passed easily.

I did not cry a single time although I was far from my home and family. I was after all a man fully in-charge of my own life. Interactions with lots of friends made me busy to pay attention to my emotions. After completion of my college study, I marched to Kathmandu for my bachelors' study. In Kathmandu, the homesickness was a bit far. I had shifted to a big city where there were plenty of entertainment sources. This 19-year-old chap had a lot of wonderful places to discover. In between my studies, I worked in a radio station as a radio jockey. Three years of bachelor study was merely analogous to one year. It passed easily.



I did not cry a single time although I was far from my home and family. I was after all a man fully in-charge of my own life. Interactions with lots of friends made me busy to pay attention to my emotions. Completion of master's degree in chemistry was a bit tough job. But the interactions with friends, different seminars, presentations, and a routine study made it feasible. I did not take whiskies, but some gatherings were perfumed with some sips of beer. Those occasions were also followed by playing cards "Marriage"- we considered a game of wisdom. Actually, those gatherings suppressed darker emotions that bubbled inside, beneath all the noise and laughter. So, sometimes I used to think whether it would make difficult to look at my blossoming adulthood and

plan ahead to face uncertain situations or disturbing emotions. So, the emotions that needed release tears sank further down into my organs making the fibers harder, almost brittle, making me unable to cry. I missed it, that sensation of immense relief, the loosening of inner muscles, the flushing away of months of toxic hormones that life deposits inside me. I yearned for the tears but couldn't. I had forgotten how to. It was as if I had lost an intricate password to my inner self.

Now, I am working as a lecture of Chemistry at the University of Miami. Days are quite busy. Sometimes my parent's satire me focusing the issue of my forgetfulness (supposed) to remember or call them. Though I try to call them on a routine basis; sometimes I fail on it. I have never relied on alcohol to feel better. Smoking - I really hate it. When I do encounter patches of emotional chaos, I know that it is a part of a process. Sometimes, it is my body refusing to do the long, hard work of letting difficult feelings pass through; sometimes it is my mind wanting to relapse back to old, easy habits.

I am waiting tears and wish to call them medicine that wipes brittleness of my fibers. Sometimes I sometimes imagine how much toxic substances have been deposited on my body as the natural mechanism of removing those toxic substances from body has failed. I miss the moment that made me feel relieved and delighted - cause tears have not shown up since long. Dear tear....when will you come?



## A Sunday Morning Walk

I woke up this morning, turned over to reach my android phone and looked at the time. It was 5:17 AM, November 8th, 2020. I thought, it was too early to get up and went right back to sleep. But, I could not. I tossed and turned for over an hour and still could not go back to sleep. So, I got up, looked at my phone again, and saw that it was 6:20. I went to the kitchen and boiled some water, poured two tablespoons of stinging nettle tea and let it seep.

In the meantime, I did some Hatha yoga for my lower back, courtesy of BNU Thapa's Sunday morning yoga class. I strained the nettle tea in my cup and started sipping it. I dressed up to go for a walk.

I opened the garage door and I heard someone say, "Good morning, Ted!" It was Liz, my neighbor from down the street, and I reciprocated, "Good morning, Liz."

I went to my backyard and felt a cool breeze, that made me shudder, but cheered up when I heard birds chirruping from the city conserved forest behind my backyard. I saw my labsi tree which put a smile on my face. I seemed to have rediscovered my labsi tree, her slender trunk producing a hundred branches, like a dress with frills, fluttering and bowing and swaying and dancing gracefully in the 15 mph wind. I then knew that this tree was going to bear me some fruit, unlike others, which I had them chopped.

I glanced to my left to see that the leaves had shed from my cinchona tree, but was surprised to see that three laukas were growing on top of the bare branches. I had wanted to pull out the lauka vines as fall was here. My lapse in memory was a blessing in disguise as I would be cooking some lauka dal soon, even as late as November. Lucky guy!



Tirtha Mali

With a sense of pride, I came back to my garage, put on my power socks and slid into my Glycerin 19 shoes for my morning walk. I tapped on my Spotify app and searched on my playlists to the 1960s and 70s Bollywood songs as Pankaj Udhas' hit, "Chandi Jaisa rang hai tera...." gently blared into my Samsung Galaxy Buds+ ear phones. I felt it was the perfect ghazal to start my walk. I looked up in the sky to check the weather, only to see the Sun peeping from the cumulus clouds in between two pine trees. I started walking towards NW 68th avenue. I looked at my Gear 2 and set it on walking. The time read 8:02 AM.

Two Red Robin's fluttered away from the idol of sitting Buddha on my front yard. Radha had mentioned that squirrels were eating the naibaidhyas, and I thought I will have to tell her who were really eating the offerings.

I also thought to myself, I would not be needing to drive to Publix to buy some flowers. The bougainvilleas were still blooming, deers had not eaten the hibiscus leaves, and plumeria plant we had brought from Hawaii was also blooming, next to the trumpet flowers. She had enough flowers for a few days for her morning pujas.

Two squirrels were fooling around on one of my neighbor's lawns.

One of them suddenly dashed passed me on the road to cross. I saw a red Mustang cruising towards this poor thing. I gestured and pointed to the driver, who I recognized as Aranzi Cruz, from the next street. She probably thought I was admiring her car and drove past me flashing a big alluring Porto Rican smile. The squirrel just made it to the other side. Phew! That was close I thought!

I passed an older lady and acknowledged her with a " Good morning! "

She smiled ear to ear and gave it right back to me. I looked around and saw this old lady walking behind me. I had no idea where she sprung out from. I heard her footsteps coming closer to me, pass me by as she power walked. Next thing I know, she was already 100 feet ahead of me. I thought to myself: Man! I am a slow walker, and started power walking but never could catch up to her. I gave up and told myself, that is the best I could do and blamed my surgeries and my health.

I heard a door open on my right, and saw Brad come out with his cute Samoyan puppy to walk her on his lawn. I saw the house for sale sign on his front yard and struck up a conversation.

" I see you are moving from the neighborhood! "

" Yah! I have lived here for 17 years. I love Gainesville, but had to make a move to Savannah, Georgia."

I wasn't really looking for all that information, and did not want to stand there listening to his story, so i told him, " Well, Brad, you got to do what you got to do. Good luck with your new location," and resumed my morning walk. For some reason, I remembered my first job training for Southland Corporation and a co-worker, Glenn, who would drop me off home, had told me, never go and live in Savannah.

It is a boring city with nothing to do. That was in 1976, and wished the best for Brad in 2020.

As I kept on moving, I came across a huge white Great Pyrenees dog sitting on the yard tied up to a tree. It reminded me of my own Maya, that I used to leave her on my front yard, and untied. She would sit there quietly and watch joggers and walkers go by the house. She would follow people and move her eyes and her head from the driveway to the next house as if she was watching a tennis match.

I even remember this couple that always passed by my house tell me, "I feel like one of these days Maya will get up and come and speak to us."

Maya was loved by the whole neighborhood, and those of you that have been to my house pretty well remember her, a cross breed between a German shepherd and a timber wolf. She was one pretty dog and well mannered. She passed away on one of a FNA picnic held in Gainesville a few years back.

I came upon Highway 441 and turned right and just started walking as my mind wandered off. It is an early Sunday morning, 441 is not that busy, and no drunk drivers would be on the road so early in the morning. I thought to myself, what with someone with a heavy hangover is on this road, and as an 18 wheeler whizzed by me, the burst of wind pushed me a little to the right off the road. That really scared me and I said to myself this would be the last time I will be walking on 441. It was too close for comfort.

I kept on walking towards the traffic light on 441, and I saw this heavy white guy wearing a wife beater under shirt pushing his walker.



I saw him turn left to Gainesville Carpet Plus driveway. I walked passed him on the driveway.

As I did so, I saw that he was sitting on his walker and puffing heavily.

I thought he may not be feeling well, so turned around to the driveway and hollered at him, " Good morning! " I said, " Do you need some help? "

He replied, " I am fine, thank you for asking, " as he lit a cigarette. Oh well !

I resumed my walk towards the traffic light that takes you to the Super Walmart, thinking I would buy a chapstick for my dry lips on this chippy weather, but just remembered that I did not have a mask, so, instead, turned around towards the Highway Patrol Station and crossed NW 34th Blvd to Fire Station 33.

I kicked a pine cone on the foot path under which I found a penny with its head up. I then remembered a friend of mine, Reese, who was a Colonel in the US Army. I used to see him pick up pennies when he came for his morning cup of Joe. I thought to myself, Americans say it is good luck to pick pennies if they are heads up. I saw this battered penny beckoning me as if to say I dare you. I picked it up, just for the heck of it. I kept on walking, playing with this beat up penny between my thumb, index and middle fingers. I felt cheap and dirty, but still dropped it in my pocket to show Radha my prized treasure. Well, let's just say, it was a big mistake. It did not sit well with her. Yes sir, not well at all.

I might be sleeping on the couch tonight.

I came upon the Senior Recreation Center on the left. This is my Precinct 17 where I had voted on Tuesday. I was surprised to see some Trump signs, a Biden sign and couple of local signs still planted on the ground near the entrance to the precinct.

I frowned upon these signs and wanted to pull them out, specially, the Trump ones, but cooler heads prevailed. I passed a Circle K to my right when a slim woman smiled and passed by me. It wasn't a pretty smile, her teeth were all yellowish. She must be on crack I thought.

I came upon two young ladies walking with two red nosed pit bulls.

" Good morning, " I shouted, " Are they pure breed ? " I inquired.

The both nodded with a " good morning " as if to say they are pure bred, but condescendingly. That's a pretty amount of dough for couple of dogs, I reminisced, as Radha had brought home Maya she had rescued from someone who wanted to drop it off on a highway. I turned right on 53rd Avenue.

I kept on trodding towards a little bridge where my son had fallen down on a wet evening while biking recently, and had ended up in the Emergency. The X-Rays indicated some contusions on his ribs. Krishna went to my iPad and had written about the dangers on this bridge on the Neighborhood app. There were a lot of responses about the bridge and all those who had slipped or got hurt on it never complained to the authorities. I took upon myself to write to the city about the hazardous bridge with pictures and locations. That was in early October and a month later, the Gainesville city had not done anything. I decided that I had to send them a reminder as a follow up.

Dev Anand was yodeling " Khoya Khoya Chand, Khula Aasman, Aankhon Me Saari Raat Jayegi....." from Kaala Bazaar on my playlist when I saw this girl with a meandering physique jogging towards me.

She turned out to be someone I knew from the Y. Gail was famous for coming to work out with a full makeup wearing black gym leotards and bright red lipsticks. Men at the Y were always gawking at her. As our path crossed, I said, "Hai Gail. No Y today?"

"No, not today. You know it is closed on Sunday," waved at me and gave me that Madhuri Dixit smile with those red lipsticks and kept on jogging as she crossed NW 37th Street that turns to Mile Run subdivision.

Speaking of Madhuri, I have to write about her. Yes, Madhuri Dixit.

Once upon a time Madhuri Dixit lived here during the early 2000s when she was married to Sri Ram Nene. He was on a fellowship at Shands hospital as a cardiologist surgeon. I used to drive into the neighborhood to catch a glimpse of her and go to Hunters Crossing Publix to steal a glance of her, but had no luck. That doesn't mean others had less luck. There were some who saw her shopping in Publix, or at parties, where she was the cynosure of all eyes. Amrit Palace from Ocala used to deliver food to her house. I tried to talk Dr. Sanjeev to invite her as he was pals with Dr. Nene, but did not try because of stories Nene used to tell him. After she left Gainesville, realtors had a field day selling her house, touting as a famous Bollywood actress that once lived there. Desi people nick named Mile Run as Madhuri Run.

Madhuri Run was once infamous for a pastor named Terry Jones, who burnt the Quran to get the attention of the world. The whole section of NW 53rd Ave between NW 34th and 43rd, the church parking lot and the field in front of the church would be overflowing with national and international television satellite trucks. This pastor was an anti-Islamic right wing activist of a small

nondenominational Christian church of Dove World Outreach Center. His antics hurt Gainesville, and I was afraid some fanatic would blow this Church, as my house was nearby behind the church. He sold the church and moved to Tampa. He is now the president of a political group called Stand Up America Now.

I kept on walking on 53rd towards Hunter Crossing Publix. I came upon the church of Trinity and decided to explore it. I did not realize how big this place was.

My eyes caught on a sign that read : Welcome Walkers and Joggers. I followed this path that led to the church. I stopped and read some signs, and found that they rented this church out to the public. It also had a soccer field, a softball and basketball court. Hmm....I thought to myself, and decided to inform Anila about this place for next year's NAF AGM.

I turned around and decided to head back home. It had been a pretty joyous walk on this beautiful Sunday. I felt I had achieved a lot this morning and was wondering why I felt so good.

I was near my neighborhood when I saw this couple walking towards me. They were Asian of Chinese origin. The wife was wearing a mask and the husband was not. I noticed he was wearing a red MAGA hat. That stunned me, and as I passed them by, I pointed to the MAGA hat. He ignored me, but I could see a yah - i - know - i - understand- smile under the mask of the wife.

Then it finally hit me as I was humming in tandem to Madhubala from my playlist, "Achha ji men hari chalo maan na jao na....." from Kalapani.



The chirruping of the birds, the robins, the narrow escape of the darting squirrel, the blooming flowers and the MAGA hat and even the Madhuri Run all reminded me of the previous day. Saturday the 7th was the best day of 2020. It was the Saturday that Radha's family had finally got together to celebrate her birthday after nine months, the Saturday that my Gators whipped the Dogs, the Saturday that all networks declared BIDEN/HARRIS as President and Vice President elect, and finally we all celebrated virtually, NAF's 28th AGM.

Saturday the 7th will always be etched in my heart for all those reasons.

My watch read 10:10, 15,890 steps, 6.15 miles, 788 calories and the heart beat at 120 as I opened my garage.

That was my longest morning walk of the year and I felt elated.

#### Writers Note:

I wrote this poem while playing a part of a play for the Wellington Library. I got the part of a poet who draws inspiration from the lake by the Wellington Library and wants to preserve it for our future.



Srijana Nepal

### The Lake by the WEL library - 2021

It was 100 years ago that women were finally allowed to vote.  
Yet, we still don't have a female

president, that's something to note

Well, wine, wealth and weather  
Are unpredictable by nature  
Nevertheless,  
We could not love our lake any less  
It has been our partner in crime and craziness  
People may have drawn inspiration from you  
In impressionist paintings  
Drinking in your striking beauty  
Encapsulating the flora and fauna of our library  
Children and adults alike, have come for fishing  
And, the staff are seen reading;  
Having a picnic; enjoying the tranquility by your side  
Basking in the sun by the lakeside  
Walking, strolling or exercising side by side  
Dreaming, lost in their deep thoughts  
Reflecting  
Contemplating  
Experiencing a sense of serenity  
It is mesmerizing  
To see the trees swaying in the breeze  
Butterflies flitting and fluttering  
Bees buzzing,  
Humming birds hovering; drinking nectar  
We have seen the sun set over you  
As you play hide and seek  
Sometimes draping us in a fog; covering us like a veil  
Adorned with a rainbow  
Bathing in the sunlight  
To look even more beautiful in the moonlight

But, there is no planet B  
We need the greenery, so let it be

Save our mother nature  
For our future  
Save the lake by the Wellington Library  
For the sake of our community

## आमाको मायाले थामेको संसार

"फूर्के नम्बर वान" भन्ने एउटा नेपाली हास्य टेलि चलचित्रमा हास्य कलाकार तक्मे बुढाले घरी घरी "मायाले संसार थाम्दोइन" भनेर भन्थे। हुन पनि सबै मान्छे सम्पतिकै पछि दौडेको देखेर यो कुरो सहि हो की जस्तो पनि लाग्थ्यो। तर होइन रहेछ। संसारमा शृष्टि कामबासनाबाट भए पनि यसलाई थामेको त मायाले नै रहेछ। होला



होला कर्मले सुखी वा दुखी बनाउला, भाग्यले वर वा पर गराउला, जिनले आसु र हासोको सङ्गम गराउला अनि धनले शत्रु र मित्रु बनाउला तरमायाले परिवार बनाउछ र आफन्त सङ्ग जोडेर राख्दछ।

इनै यो आमाको माया त अपारको छ। गर्भमा राखे देखि टुसाएको यिनको माया एकोहोरो बढ्या बढै छ। गरिब आमा, रोगि आमा, टाढाकी आमा, बुढि आमा, अशिक्षित आमा, दलित आमा, काली आमा र लाटी आमा सबै आमाको माया समान हुन्छ।

उनको हेराईमा, स्पर्शमा, बोलिमा, पिरमा, र घुर्कीमा, गाली र पिटाइमा समेत माया नै रहेको हुन्छ।



डा. अमर कार्की

त्यसैले उनले दिने सजायमा पनिहामीलाई भन्दा उनलाई नै बढि दर्द हुदो रहेछ। कर्मले सुखी वा दुखी बनाउला, भाग्यले वर वा पर गराउला, जिनले आसु र हासोको सङ्गम गराउला अनि धनले शत्रु र मित्रु बनाउला तरमायाले परिवार बनाउछ र आफन्त सङ्ग जोडेर राख्दछ।

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उनको हेराईमा, स्पर्शमा, बोलिमा, पिरमा, र घुर्कीमा, गाली र पिटाइमा समेत माया नै रहेको हुन्छ। त्यसैले उनले दिने सजायमा पनिहामीलाई भन्दा उनलाई नै बढि दर्द हुदो रहेछ।

आमाकै मायाले तानेर अहिलेको असहज स्थितिका बावजुद पनि आमालाई भेट्न



केही हप्ता अघि नेपाल पुर्यायो मलाई।  
अचानक आफ्नो जिबनसाथी गुमाउनु पर्दाको  
असिम पिडामा केही मलम लाग्ला कि भनेर  
छोरा नेपाल आवोस भन्ने चाह मनमा भए  
पनि छोरालाई बाटोमा तकलिफ होला कि  
भनेर कर गर्न सक्नु भएको थिएन मेरो  
आमाले। आमाको त्यती भाबना त मैले  
पनि बुझे र कोरनाको कहरबिसिएर उडे  
नेपाल तिर। आमालाई भेटेपछि आमाको  
ममता र करुणाले ६ फिट दुरी को  
नियमलाई कायम राख्न सकेन।  
आमाको काखले बुबाको बिछोडको घाउलाई  
केही साम्य बनायो। मलाई लागेथ्यो आफ्नो  
सन्तान सात सुमुन्द्र पारी हुदाको आमाको  
पिर अब छोरासाथमा भए पछि त  
निमित्त्यान्न होला। मलाई हट्टाकट्टा र  
स्वस्थ देखेर खुशी हुनुहोला। तर के घट्थ्यो  
र अजिबको आमाको पिरकोपोको।

स्वरूप फेरियो तर मात्रा घटेन। "राम्रै सङ्ग  
आइपुगिछस बाबु तर त त दुब्लो भै छस।  
अब यहाँ बसुन्जेल मैले पकाएको टन्न  
खाएरफेरिएर जा है।" पो भन्नु हुन्छ। खै के  
भनेर सम्झाउने, के भनेर बुझाउने? ल आमा  
यही पिरमै तपाईंलाई आनन्द मिल्छ भने  
गर्नुस दुख भनेरधेरै इवास इवास नगरी जे  
जे बनाएर खुवाउनु हुन्छ चुप चाप खाएर  
आमासङ्ग झन्डै ३ हप्ता बिताए। दुइ छाकै  
दाल भात अनि पटक पटकगुदपाक र खिर  
समेत खाइयो। आमाको हातबाट बनेको  
भएर हो कि यसपटक मेरो पेट पनि खराब  
भएन। हरेक पटकको नेपाल भ्रमण मेरो  
लागि ऐंसेलु टिपेर खाएको जस्तै हुन्थ्यो।

ऐंसेलु टिप्दा यसको काडाले हातमा खोचेर  
पिडा दिए पनि यसका रसिलो दाना मुखमा  
क्वापलाक्क हाले पछि भने अमृत खाए झै  
आनन्द लाग्ने। त्यसैगरी यो तिस चालिस  
घन्टाको लामो नेपालयात्राले यती वाक्क  
बनाउछ कि "यो नेपाल नै अमेरिका किन  
भएन होला? कम्तिमा भारत र चिन मध्य  
एउटा चाहिँ अमेरिका भैदिएको भएनि यती  
लामो यात्रा गर्नु पर्दैनथ्यो नि" भन्ने अनौठो  
सोच मनमा आउछ। हरेक पटक बाटोमा जादा  
जादै अब दस बर्ष यात्रा गर्नु नपरे हुन्थ्योभन्ने  
लाग्छ।

तर जब प्लेन नेपालको सिमा भित्र प्रबेस गर्छ  
र ति हिमाल, पहाड र तराई को दृश्यालोकन  
हुन थाल्छ फेरि ति सबै कस्ट रअपठ्यारा  
बिसैर मन भाबबिभोर हुन्छ र प्रफुल्ल हुन्छ।

झनै एरपोर्टमा  
झरेर काठमाडौं  
शहरको गन्ध  
सुइदै घर पुगेर  
परिवारलाई  
भेटे पछित के  
कुरा गर्ने।  
यसपाली त  
कोरनाको  
त्रासले झनै  
तारे भिरको  
ऐंसेलु टिप्न  
गए जस्तै  
भएको थियो।



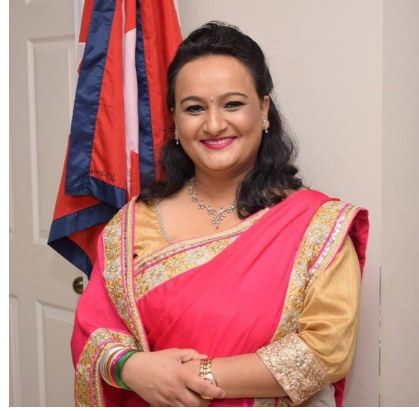
तर यसपालीको नेपाल यात्राकोलक्ष्य नै भिन्न भएर हो कि यो यात्रा पहिले जस्तो कठिन नै महसुस नै भएन। आमालाई सम्झाउछु बुझाउछु भनेर गएको म आफै आमाको काम बढाउन पो गए जस्तो लाग्यो तर यो प्रकृतिको निती नै यस्तो। आफुभन्दा दुइ गुणा ठुलो कोइलीको बचेरालाई समेत चारा खुवाइ खुवाइ आफ्नै चल्ला सम्झेर हुर्काउने आमाको मायाको के बखान गर्नु।

आजकल अमेरिकामा यि सबै चिज पाहिन्छ आमा यहाँ बाट लैजानु पर्दैन नि भन्दा पनि "आफ्नो घरको शुद्ध र ताजा चिज उहाँ पाउछस रतैले बाबु" भन्दै बेसार देखि गुन्द्रुक सम्म पोका पारिदिनु भयो। आमाको अनुहारको पत्र पत्रका चाउरी देखेर लाग्यो आमाको मायालेहामीलाई हरदिन सबल बनाइ रहेको छ भने उनलाई निर्बल। हामीले खाक्क खोक्दा दुइ दिनसम्म आमाको छाती दुख्ने। छोरा आउनेखुशीले दुइ दिन देखि निद्रा नलाग्ने अनि छोरा फर्कने पिरले हप्ता दिनसम्म छाती पोल्ने भए पछि कसरी सुखी देखिने आमा।

यता घरमा जस्तो थियो आमाको हालत उता ससुराली जादा उस्तै थियो सासु आमा ममताको खानी। त्यसमाथि छोरा र ज्वाइँलाई मात्रखुवाएर के चित बुझ्थ्यो र बुढि माउहरुको? छोरी, बुहारी र नातिनीहरुका लागि समेत सुटकेश भरी पोकाहरु घुसान थाल्नु भो। योमायाको डोरो पनि कति तन्किएको होला हरे भगवान।

भागेर कहाँ जानु नै छ र छोडेर आफन्त मायाको डोरो तन्किनै रहयो रैन छ है अन्त

मलाई लाग्थ्यो आमा भगवान हुन्। तर आमा त कसरी भगवान हुन सकिन्छन र? भगवानलाई जस्तो यिनलाई खुशी बनाउन पुजा पाठ गर्नुपर्दैन, फूल घुप नैबेध र भेटि चढाउनु पर्दैन र खाली पेट र खाली खुट्टा मठ, मन्दिर , मस्जिद र चर्च धाउनु पर्दैन।



President Anila Neupane talked on our organization , Nepalese Association of Florida (NAF) and the community based activities that we have been working.

The recording is available here if you have missed. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o4vS5BGK88U>



[www.radiohimalaya.com](http://www.radiohimalaya.com)

भावनामा देश खोज्दै...



www.floridanepalese.org

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Up Coming Program

# Youth Panel Discussion Series 2

**NAF YOUTH FORUM**  
 EMPOWERING NEPALI YOUTH

Date: January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Time 10.00 AM

More Details To Follow

nafyouthforum