

Folklore and Folklife of Danuwars: Exploration through Field Research

Introduction

In the earlier issues of the Newsletter (volume 1, 2 and 3), we had reported our studies on Gandharva, Gopali and Aathpahariya Rai folk groups under the Folklore and Folklife Study Project. In the course of continuing the same project with Finnish support under local cooperation, now we have completed several works related to the study of the fourth folk group – the Danuwars. Therefore, the activities completed in connection with the field research of this folk group are going to be reported here. The topics that follow will describe the progress of the field study along with its achievements.

Preparatory Works

For the purpose of data collection from field, the preparatory works needed to be done included that of purchasing some equipments and preparing the research tools. Therefore, the equipments necessary for field research were purchased, including the memory cards, rewritable CDs, DVCs (digital video cassettes) etc. Moreover, field sheets, questionnaires and schedules were also prepared, prior to the beginning of the field-based activities.

Pre-field Work

To carry out the preliminary survey, the project team leader Prof. Tulasi Diwasa, with General Secretary Prof. Dr. C.M. Bandhu along with Mr. Omkareshwor Shrestha and Mr. Ajit Man Tamang had visited two locations of Kathmandu valley – Badikhel VDC for Pahari and Dukuchhap VDC for Danuwar folk group on 15th and 22nd June 2006 respectively. After the completion of preliminary survey in the two locations the office has decided to send the 4th group of researchers to study Danuwar folk group in Dukuchhap VDC, Lalitpur and sent on July 25, 2006 to the research area.

On the basis of pre-field report, Dukuchhap is located adjacent to Kathmandu city and 1312 meter above the sea level. According to the household survey conducted by the researchers, there are altogether 187 households of the Danuwar.

The population is 53,229 in the total (CBS 2001) and it constitutes 0.14 percentage of the total population. In Dukuchhap, there are 835. Besides, there are some Danuwar settled in other districts, namely, Udayapur (4019), Jhapa

(1250), Morang (1095), Sindhupalchok (2739), Sarlahi (920), Rautahat (2345), Kabhre (4110), Dhading and Makawanpur including 62 districts of Nepal. However, our research is limited only to Danuwar living at Dukuchhap. Then, a team of researchers were appointed on the basis of agreements by the end of June 2006 and a memorandum of understanding was signed in the office.

A team of four researchers was appointed for Danuwar Study Project, agreement was made with them, and MOU and TOR were signed. The research team comprises these experts: 1. Mr. Omkareshwor Shrestha (team coordinator) 2. Mr. Ajit Man Tamang 3. Mr. Yadav Subedi and 4. Mr. Man Bahadur Shahu.



Complete view of Duku, Danuwar village

Contents

Folklore and Folklife of Danuwars: Exploration through field research 1

First National Folklore Congress (Nidhi Ratna Ghimire) 5

Nepali Folklore Society (NFS): An Introduction 8
Folklore studies in Nepal (Lal Rapacha) 9

Folklore and folk culture: Human life's texture (Arun Ranjit) 10

Folklore Society to publish books on endangered communities (Smriti Poudyal) 11

Myths and Ethics on Sex (Madhav P. Pokharel) 11
Danuwar Folklore and Folklife: A Close

Observation 13

Some Major NFS Activities 19

From July 17th to the 24th, the researchers practiced to operate the essential equipments and tools needed for data collection (digital-audio recording and video cameras). They also collected some reference materials related to the folk group and were involved in the orientation, whereby they were given the necessary guidelines for field work. Besides, an interaction programme was organized in the project office to share the experience between them and the earlier field researchers who had completed their field work. On behalf of the earlier research teams, Prof. Dr. C.M. Bandhu (Coordinator, first research group) and Mr. Tej Prakash Shrestha (Coordinator, second research group) shared their experiences of working in the field in course of data collection. The programme was organized in the presence of the project team leader Prof. Tulasi Diwasa, Prof. Dr. Abhi Subedi and Ms. Anu Karvinen, the Cultural Officer in the Embassy of Finland. Prof. Diwasa had also given the necessary guidelines for the researchers regarding the field study.

Field Work in Dukuchhap and Adjacent Areas

Spending the period of 3 months (from July 26th to October 26th, 2007) in the settlement areas of the folk group in and around Dukuchhap VDC - Lalitpur district, the field researchers collected data on Danuwar folklore and folklife. The work of data collection was divided into four different areas of Danuwar folklore and folklife: 1) folk language and folk communication, 2) material folk culture and folk heritage, 3) folk literature and performing arts, and 3) socio-cultural folklife and folkways. Mr. Omkareshwor Shrestha (Team Coordinator), Mr. Ajit Man Tamang, Mr. Man Bahadur Shahu and Mr. Yadav Subedi had taken charge of collecting the relevant information in the four areas respectively.

During their stay in the field, the researchers had sent reports in the interval of every fortnight, mentioning their activities, collections and achievements, to the project office,



View of Duku village from Tokalmath

Bhatbhateny, Kathmandu. They had collected the relevant information by visiting the key informants of the folk group, interviewing them and audio recording the speech, taking photographs, and video-recordings several aspects of their life, community, culture, language etc. They also used the field

notes and questionnaires for the purpose of data collection. During their fieldwork, the researchers visited almost each and every corner of the folk group settlement area. The Danuwar people cooperated them a lot during their field visits and data collection.

On the 15th September 2006, Prof. Tulasi Diwasa, the project coordinator, Prof. Dr. Chudamani Bandhu, the Secretary General of the Society and Ms. Anu Karvinen, the Cultural Officer in the Embassy of Finland made a visit and inquired the achievements and problems of the research and directed guidelines to the researchers. Prof. Diwasa along with the video-cameraman Siddhartha Kumar Shakya visited the field for the second time on 18th October 2006 and photographed and video recorded various aspects of the Danuwar folk group of Dukuchhap VDC in Lalitpur.

Problems and Rapport Building

Some of the community leaders in the folk group narrated their past experience with some experts who had visited the Danuwars' settlement areas, consulted them and collected some materials; but the Danuwars did not understand the purpose of such "studies", since the experts never informed them about the research findings. Moreover, they even narrated the events of distrustful acts done by the experts earlier in the name of research – like taking valuable documents from the villagers but not returning them back. Mentioning such a context, several informants raised a doubt in the present research as well and questioned regarding what could be expected as the outcome of the research for their own benefit.

Realizing the need for raising the informants' confidence in the field activities, the researchers convinced them by saying that they will disseminate the research findings among the people of the folk group.



The oldest woman in the Danuwar village, Santu Maya Danuwar

Post-field Work

In the last week of October 2007, the researchers came back to the project office after completing the work of data collection from the field, and submitted their field survey report. The information collected from the fieldwork is documented in the office, mostly in the form of digital

audio/video recordings and photographs. Besides, some items representing Danuwar material folk culture, collected from the field research, are also preserved in the office. Now the researchers are transcribing, analyzing and interpreting the data, in order to prepare the detailed research report.

Collections and Achievements

The researchers have completed data collection by 26th October 2006 and now they are preparing their report. Covering the four main areas of folklore and folklife study, the work of data collection from the folk group has been divided among four researchers; and the progress in their work is reported here. They have brought some items representing the Danuwar material culture. These items include: Kuini (fishing net), Phurlung (fish storing basket), Cakati (round mat), Chokri (mat) etc.

The field researchers have completed video-recordings of the relevant information in altogether 22 DVC cassettes for 22 hours in total length. From their collection, altogether 5289 pictures and 42:48:21 hours' long audio materials have been collected. In addition to, the project team leader Prof. Tulasi Diwasa and Cameraman Mr. Siddhartha K. Shakya have also video-recorded the relevant aspects of Danuwar folklore and folklife, with the length of 7 hours in total, 212 photographs and 31 minutes 39 seconds audio recordings.

The researchers have also made the folk group's household survey, and brought the survey record to the project office.

The main collections from the field include the oral texts recorded from the informants in the form of interviews, songs, narratives, photos, and video records of the various aspects of Danuwar folklife.

The excerpt of the collections and the achievements of each of the individual researchers given below are based on their reports from the field available in the project office.



A Kuini (Dhadiya), a fish trap

I. Folk Language and Folk Communication: Mr. Omkareshwor Shrestha

Mr. Shrestha has taken 197 photos, and has audio-recorded oral texts having the total length of 3:25:42 hours so far. The collection includes the areas of communication, bilingualism, language attitudes, baby talks, dialect study, etc. From his collection, 910 namelores, 162 oral and written texts, 10 folk riddles, 63 proverbs/proverbial expressions, 1 joke, 11 nicknames, 2 special vocabulary items, 8 baby talks and 10 curses/taunts have been collected.



Krishana Bdr. Danuwar at Chinimaya's tea shop

II. Material Folk Culture and Folk Heritage: Mr. Yadav Subedi

Mr. Subedi has taken 696 photographs and has audio-recorded oral texts with the total length of 00:23:48 hours. The subject matter covered includes rites and rituals, folk medicine, dress and ornaments, handloom, folk architecture, festivals and foods, etc. From his collection, 2 agriculture practices, 4 folk rituals, 27 folk clothes, 19 folk weapons, 10 folk furniture items, 40 folk medicines, 28 folk ornaments, 101 oral and written texts have been documented.



A Danuwar woman weaving chokri, the mat

III. Folk Literature and Performing Arts:

Mr. Ajit Man Tamang

Mr. Tamang has taken 2818 pictures, and has audio-recorded oral texts with the length of 37:39:58 hours in total. He has also produced a video record with the length of 20 hours. The collection includes folk songs, folktales, performing arts, narratives, myths, personal memories, music, musical instruments, etc. He has collected 19 folk narratives, 7 myths, 5 tales, 4 personal memories, 1 annotated joke, 12 folk songs, 3 seasonal/festival songs, 2 work songs, 3 religious songs, 4 folk dances, 3 children's songs, 5 folk music, 2 musical instruments, 12 folk games and 7 folk legends etc.



Danuwar Lakhe dance performing at the Duku Danuwar village

IV. Socio-Cultural Folklife and Folkways:

Mr. Man Bahadur Shahu

Mr. Shahu has taken 1366 photographs, and has audio-recorded the oral texts with the length of 1:18:53 hours. The subject matter covered in the collection includes: source of income, method of harvesting, rites of the passage, division of labour, gender issues, decision making procedures, kinship system, religious beliefs, folk gods and goddesses, customs and livelihood etc. He has also video-recorded the relevant information with the total length of 1:30 hours.



Danuwar planting rice in their field

Concluding Remarks

Overall, the researchers have a wonderful experience of working in the field among Danuwars. Not only has the field research been successful in exploring several aspects of the



Danuwar women attending in the micro-credit meeting

folklore and folklife of this community, but it has also become a highly encouraging endeavour in increasing the awareness of the people of this folk group towards the preservation and promotion of several dimensions of their folklife, culture and language. The people of this folk group, influenced from our research activities, have become highly enthusiastic to initiate programme for the upliftment of their community and for the promotion of their valuable folk cultural heritage. We have experienced that, if the awareness of the folk group is maintained in this way, no doubt, any folkloristic research will not simply remain the matter of expert's task; instead, it will also be the part and parcel of the folk group's life - which, in turn, will be more meaningful. We have learned this great lesson from our field-based activities among Danuwars, in which the people belonging to the folk group have cooperated with us as they are themselves the responsible persons to handle the research activities.

Despite some problems, the research team has accumulated very important materials during the three months at Dukuchhap. They came to know that the folklorists do not only go through the theories but also invest their expertise in a meaningful task of sharing with the indigenous folk group. The Danuwar folk group have contributed their helping hands during the field visit and they have had many opportunities to see, to entertain the social and cultural performances, and imprisoned them in digital camera and laptop computer.



Anu with Dhan Kumari Danuwar (73) and girl

First National Folklore Congress, Kathmandu

- Nidhi Ratna Ghimire

Introduction

Since its establishment in the year 1995, Nepali Folklore Society (NFS) has been amply contributing to promote and preserve the folklore and folklife studies in the country. With its catalytic attributes and efforts, NFS has been common platform to all disciplines of the social studies such as sociology, anthropology, geography, political science, linguistics, literature medicine and architecture.

During the course of its activism, NFS has marked its first and second international congresses respectively in the years 2001 and 2003. Aiming to disseminate the output of these congresses to the experts and interested people, NFS has already carried out the newsletters covering the events and activities of the sessions. This report, thus, focuses on the events, activities and the sub-themes of the First National Folklore Congress held on 15-16 December 2006, Kathmandu.

Supports

For the grand success of the Congress, NFS received an encouraging supports from a number of organizations and institutions such as Nepal Academy, Nepal Association of Tour and Travel Agents, Sajha Prakashan, Bhrikuti Academic Publications, National Folk and Duet Song Academy, Nepali Kagaj Udyog, Nepal Sahitya Prakashan Kendra, and National Bookseller and Publishers Association of Nepal. The support provided by Nepal Academy stood remarkable since it sponsored the event and provided its library hall to venue the two-day Congress of NFS.

Participants

The Congress brought together hundreds of participants including above 150 regular participants representing various walks of life. Other observing and viewing the historic Congress were the students, media persons, volunteers and interested people. A total of 69 papers on various themes were presented during the Congress.

Highlights

The Congress underlined the need to explore the diverse streams of folk group at the society and stressed on the holistic approach to study the people and places across the country. Sessions of the Congress were divided into seven sub-themes entitled:

1. Nepali Folklore and Folklife Study
2. Folklore, Gender and Power
3. Folklore and Folk Performing Art
4. Theoretical and Methodological Issues in the Study of Folklore
5. Folklore, Identity and Ethnicity
6. Folklore, Literature and Language
7. Folklore, Cultural Studies and Folk Practices

These sub-themes had focused on the matter related to the specific themes. In addition to these themes, inaugural and valedictory sessions, as described below, were also held.

Inaugural Session

The inaugural session of the Congress, held at the library hall of Nepal Academy on December 15, 2006 from 9:45-10:45, was chaired over by Prof. Tulasi Diwasa, the Chairman of the NFS.

On the occasion, Prof. Dr. Abhi Subedi delivered his welcome speech further shedding lights on significance of the NFS. Mr. Satya Mohan Joshi thanked the NFS through his speech for bringing folksongs, tales, and material culture of the real people in light. Honorable Minister for Culture, Civil Aviation and Tourism – Mr. Pradip Kumar Gyanwali, also the chief guest, had inaugurated the session igniting an artistic traditional lamp (*Panas*). He stated that the culture is a part of folklore. He further said that NFS has played the role of the preserver and promoter of cultures of Nepal.

Concluding the session, Prof. Tulasi Diwasa emphasized on the need of leading the folklore studies by Nepalese experts. He further thanked the Chief Guest and the support makers of the Congress.



Inaugural Session

Congress Session

Following the historic opening of the national Congress, the special second session entitled “Nepali Folklore and Folk Life Study” begun at the library hall of the Academy. In the session chaired over by Prof. Tulasi Diwasa, Prof. C.M. Bandhu (Palpa) presented a paper entitled “Tukka ko Saiddhantik Pakshya ra Gandharva Bolika Tukkaharu” (Theoretical Aspects of Idioms and Idiom in Gandharva Language).

On the occasion, Mr. Kusumakar Neupane (Pokhara) presented a paper named “Gandharvako Lok Sahitya: Nirantarata ra Paribartan” (Gandarvas’ Folk Literature: Continuity and Change) and Mr. Tej Prakash Shrestha (Kathmandu) presented a paper on “Gopali Jati ra Tinko Lok Sahityako Chhoto Chinari” (Gopali Ethnicity and a Short Introduction to their Folk Literature).

The session witnessed Dr. Rudra Laxmi Shrestha (Lalitpur), who presented the salient characteristics of Gopali language through her “Kunchhali-Gopali Lok Bhasaka Kehi Maulik Bishesataharu” (Outstanding Features of the Kunchhali-Gopali Folk Language).

The Presentation by Mr. Jitendra Kumar Chaudhary (Rautahat) on “Gopalese Identity,” Mr. Amrit Yonjan

(Ramechhap) “Lok Sanskritiko Sthalgat Anusandhanma Anusandhankartale Samana Gareka Chunautiharulai Pani Chunouti” (Challenge to the Challenges Faced by the Researchers on the Field Visit of Folklore and Culture), Mr. Luisang Waiba (Udayapur) on clan organization and oral history of Athpahariya Rais entitled “Clan Organization and Oral History of Athpahariya People of Dhankuta,” equally added bricks on the Session of the historic Congress.

On the occasion, Mr. Omkareshwor Shrestha, Kathmandu, came with his paper on “Dukainiko Rupbigyan” (Morphology of Dukaini) while Mr. Ajit Man Tamang (Nuwakot) presented the paper- “Duku Danuwarko Lokbhasa, Sahitya Tatha Pradarshankari Lok Sanskriti” (Folk Language, Literature and Performing Folk Culture of Duku Danuwar). Likewise, Mr. Man Bahadur Shahu (Dadeldhura), through his paper- “Marriage Practices of the Danuwar: A Study of Kinship Relation of Duku”, shed lights on the marriage practices of Danuwar while Yadav Subedi (Chitwan) dropped points over the income resources of Dukus through his paper- “Danuwar Jatika Amdanika Shrotharu” (Income Resources in Danuwar Ethnicity).

The third session of the Congress “Folklore, Gender, and Power” took place from 13 to 14 pm in the same day. In the session chaired over by Dr. Gajab Kumari Timilsina, Dr. Madhav Pd. Pokharel (Sunsari) presented a paper- “Myths and Ethics on Sex” further underlining the sex ethics in ancient Hindu and Western mythology. Another presenter, Ms. Suveckshya Shah (Kathmandu) came up with her paper under the title “Women and Politics: A Cultural Perspective” while Beena Poudel (Kirtipur) depicted the traditional thinking and culture of Nepali women through her paper “Nepali Mahila: Paramparagat Soch, Sanskriti ra Sudhar” (Nepalese Women: Change in Traditional Thoughts and Cultures).

Among others, Dr. Aruna Uprety (Kathmandu) presented “Lok Aushadhopachar ra Banaspati” (Folk Medicine and Herbs), bringing in light the importance and the usage of traditional medicines and methods. Likewise, Dr. Lal-Shyakarelu Rapacha (Okhaldhunga) presented a paper on the importance of ethnic language, linguistics and the folklife for the interpretation of history through his paper “Ethnolinguistic and Historical Connections in Kiranti Folktales.”

The fourth session of the Congress was held under the theme “Folklore and Folk Performing Art.” The Session chaired over by Prof. Dr. Madhav Prasad Pokharel brought in Dr. Harsa Bahadur Buramagar (Baglung) with his paper on “Galkot Khuwa Chhetrama Prachalit Lok Githaru.” Mr. Ram Saran Darnal (Kathmandu) with his “Nepali Sanggitma Badya Badan” (Musical Instruments in Nepali Music) through which he underlined the importance and history of Nepali folk musical instruments and their present situation.

Mrs. Beni Jangam (Kathmandu) talked about the importance and development of folk songs through the media and present situation of Nepali folk songs in her paper “Samakalik Lok Gitko Sthiti” (Condition of Contemporary Folksongs). Through his paper- “Juhari ra Dohori Git: Parampara ra Bartaman Sthiti,” Mr. Bhim Rana Jigyasu (Gorkha) highlighted the developmental history and commercial values of duet songs in Nepal while Dr. Dhrubesh Chandra Regmi,



Participants of Congress

Shyam Saran Nepali, and Pramod Upadhyaya (Kathmandu) jointly presented a paper “Samajik Sasaktikaranka lagi Punarparibhasit Nepali Sanggit ko Aabasyakata” bringing in light the role of music at the context of social change.

During the session, Mr Krishna Pd. Neupane (Syangja) brought in light the duet songs prevailing in Syangja presenting a paper- “Syangjaka Nepali Dohori Lokgit ra Bibidh Sandarbha,” while Dr. Gajab Kumari Timilsina (Syangja) presented her paper on “Love and Pathos in the Folk Song of Nepal.” Dr. Jay Raj Panta (Doti) presented Ashika Geet at Doti through his paper “Doteli Ashika Geet.” Dr. Ganga Prasad Akela (Dhanusa) talked about the folk and traditional devotional song and their use and importance in the folklife in Mithila region through his paper- “Jivanka Saswat Pakshako Parichayak Mithilanchalko Loksankirtan.”

Through his paper “Dhannach: A Folk Culture,” Mr. Kamal Thoklihang (Panchthar) underlined that the Limbu folk dance- Dhannach- more than a form of dance is a culture representing the whole Limbu culture. Subi Shah (Dhading) added flavor in the session by performing a dance and playing madal while presenting his paper entitled- “Khyali Nach Eka Charcha.” Mr. Bulu Mukarung (Bhojpur) shed lights on the importance of musical instrument and music on the base of ethnicity through his paper- “Nepali Lokbaja: Jatiya Sandarbham.”

The fifth session began on the 16th December under the theme “Theoretical and Methodological Issues in the Studies of Culture.” The session chaired over by Prof. Dr. Abhi Subedi floated in various papers including Mr. D.N. Gongol’s (Kathmandu) “Nepali Architecture and the Disappearing Tradition” through which he depicted the importance of traditional architecture for the contemporary society. With his paper - “Historicity through Folk Elements: A Phenomenological Reading of Abhi Subedi’s Yooma,” Mr. Puspa Raj Acharya (Kirtipur) exposed the way of using the mythical symbols further revitalizing them as a use of folk elements. Mr. Tara Lal Shrestha (Makawanpur) likewise, presented his paper based on the oral tradition of folk culture based on the subaltern people through his paper “Orality, Writing and Representation of the Subaltern: Issue of Sustaining a Cultural Identity.”

The Session ahead witnessed “Folklore of Nepal: Sources for Social and Political History,” a paper presented by Prof. Dr. Tri Ratna Manandhar (Kathmandu) through which he

brought in light the sources of the folk culture while Prof. Dr. Yogendra Yadav, Prof. Dr. Tej Ratna Kansakar, Mr. Bala Ram Prasain and Krishna Chalise (Kirtipur) jointly presented the paper entitled “Documenting a Nonliterate Language: A Case of Baram.” Prof. Dr. Abhi Subedi (Tehrathum) termed the traditional and folk material as the stuff of commercial value for metropolitan visitors through his paper “Folk Fetish.” Similarly, Prof. Dr. Govinda Raj Bhattarai (Jhapa) underlined the folk culture and folklore for the sustainable development and strengthening of the democracy in the world through his paper “New Dimensions in the Study of Folk Element: An Appraisal of New Humanitarian Spirit.”

Mr. Bhim Narayan Regmi (Syangja) floated a paper on “Kathya Bhasako Samagri Sankalan ra Alekhan: Nepali Rastriya Pathsangrahaako Anubhava” (Collection and Transcription of Spoken Language: An Experience from Nepali National Corpus) on the occasion while Bhim Prasad Nepal (Khotang) finally presented a paper on “Nepalma Loksanskritiko Awastha ra Samrakshyan” present status and preservation of Folk Culture in Nepal.

The sixth session took place from 11am to 12pm at the academy hall with the theme- “Folklore, Identity and Ethnicity.” In the Session chaired over by Dr. Yogendra Yadav, a total of seven persons had presented their papers including Mr. Lok Nath Verma’s (Banke) “Abadhi Lok Bhasa ra Lok Sanskriti.”

The session witnessed another paper entitled “Rastriyata Samabeshikaran: Fattepur, Saptarika Musaharharuko Eka Adhyayan” by Nani Ram Khatri (Kirtipur) discussing the backward Musahar due to overlooking national policy further stating the need of an inclusive policy. In the Session, Mr. Bijaya Kumar Rauniyar (Mahottari) presented a paper on the Maithili folk identity and culture named “Maithili Identity and Ethnicity in Folklore.”

“Abadhi Lokkatha ra Lokjivan” was the next paper presented by Mr. Bikram Mani Tripathi (Kapilbastu) which explained about the valor, love, sympathy, ghost, evil spirit as used in the different aspects of folklife and folktales. Mr. Madhu Prasad Aryal, (Kapilbastu) through his paper entitled “Bukune ra Rupamati Lok Kathama Abhiprayako Adhyayan,” brought in light the motif in the folktale prevailing at Jyagdikhol, Syangja.

Shova Kant Gautam floated a paper entitled “Nepali Ukhanma Krishi Prayogko Avastha” (Description of agricultural practice in Nepali proverbs).

The seventh session that begun at 12 pm with the theme- “Folklore, Literature and Language” chaired over by Dr. Govinda Raj Bhattarai. The session witnessed a paper by Mr. Badri Pd. Sharma “Bidari” (Kanchanpur) entitled “Kashiramko Bharatko Prastuti ra Bhasik Adhyayan.” Mrs. Sabitri Malla Kakshyapati (Palpa) also presented a paper in the session entitled- “Atit Chetanako Punasthapanama Loksrijanako Mahattwa.” Through the paper, she claimed that one can peep into the ancient tradition and acquire knowledge vicariously. Raj Kumar Gandharva (Lamjung) presented- “Karkha Gayan: He Barai...!” one of the most popular folk songs of the Gandharva.

Similarly, Mr. Shiva Prasad Poudyal (Butwal) presented the paper “Nepali Ukhanma Pratibimb Sthaniyata” (Reflection of local color in Nepali proverb) and Mr. Prem Chhota presented the paper “Hanumannach Baglungko Prachintam Loksanskriti”

(Hanuman dance: Ancient folk culture of Baglung). Mr. Gopal Thakur (Bara) presented a paper on “Element of Republicanism in Bhojpuri Folklore and Literature,” while Mr. Kapil Dev Lamichhane (Bhairahawa) came up with “Gaunkhane Katha Loksanskritiko Sambahakko Rupama,” Mr. Moti Parajuli (Kaski) on “Nepali Lokkathama Narabali: Sampkshipta Avalokan,” Mr. Bajramuni Bajracharya (Kirtipur) on “Gaijatrampa Pradarshan Garine Byangya Sahitya Ka:tu Ra Naykhin Chwayeke.”

Among others, Dr. Bishwo Nath Bhandari (Dhankuta) and Mr. Ram Kishun Uranw (Sunsari) presented paper under the theme- “Jhangad (Uranw) Lok Bhasako Uchharan Prakriya” and Bam Kumari Budha (Rolpa) on “Nagara bajako Bibhinna chala.”

The eighth session had the theme- “Folklore, Cultural Studies and Folk Practices.” It was started at 2:30 and was chaired by Dr. Beena Poudel.

The Session witnessed the paper by Mr. Madhusudan Subedi (Dang) on “Folk knowledge of Acute Respiratory Infections Management among Tamangs in Nepal”; while Mr. Tejeswor Gongga (Bhaktapur) presented paper on “Lokjivan ka Kriyatmak Lilaharu”. Mrs. Neelam Karki came up with “Chhaupadi: Impact of Cultural Health” she brought in light the tradition and bad impact to the health of women. Mr. Subash Kumar Bitha floated a paper on “Bhojpuri Lok Samajma Chhath Parvako Sthan”; While Mr. Dik Bahadur Rai presented the paper on “Athpahariya Raiharule Garne Puja ra Tyasko Samajik tatha Dharmik Mahattwa”. Mr. Ram Krishna Chaudhary (Kailali) presented “Village Ruling System of Far Western Region’s Indigeneous Tharu Race of Nepal.” Mr. Satya Mohan Joshi presented the paper on “Mastoka Dhamisaga Sakhsatkar” as the last presenter of the session.

Valedictory Session

Prof. Tulasi Diwasa, the President of the Nepali Folklore Society, had chaired the session. Aruna Uprety stated that she got ample opportunity to introduce herself through NFS. D.N. Gongol said that he was proud of NFS as it accepted architecture as a part of its priority. Elke Selter talked on the importance of folkculture and the policy of UNESCO. Govinda Raj Bhattarai praised the great contribution of NFS for producing expert fieldworkers and giving new dimension of folk culture studies.



Valedictory Session

Mr. Jal Krishna Shrestha, joint secretary at the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation had assured that the government policy for culture shall be made in future. Prof. Abhi Subedi gave vote of thanks to participants and talked about contribution of NFS for cultural studies in a short span of time. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Satya Mohan Joshi lauded the NFS for its contribution in studying and promoting the Nepali folk culture. Finally, Prof. Diwasa concluded the session with his remarkable speech on folklore and folklife.

Nepali Folklore Society (NFS): An Introduction

Every nation exists on its own identity, which is reflected in the typicality of its folklore and folklife. The different groups of people living in Nepal have maintained their identities in their own values and norms, beliefs, knowledge and experience, language and literature, arts etc. Despite this fact, we can also notice the changes taking place in the traditional folklife and folk culture along with the influences of modernization process. In this connection, after realizing the need for an academic institution at the national level with the goal of studying, preserving and promoting the folklore and folklife in the country, Nepali Folklore Society (NFS) was established as a non-governmental and non-profit making organization registered in Kathmandu.

NFS is guided by one of the directive principles of the state, which emphasizes the ideal of national unity by maintaining the diversities in society through the promotion of language, literature, script, art and culture of all the country, has been carrying out various activities to achieve the goal.

To be more specific, this Society was established to carry out the following activities in order to achieve its goal just mentioned.

- Collecting, documenting and analyzing the specimens of folk art and literature from various folk groups
- Organizing workshops, talk programmes etc. on folklore at a certain time interval
- Mobilizing folklore experts to carry out a systematic research on folklore
- Celebrating folklore festivals by organizing special programmes at national level
- Organizing national and international conferences on folklore
- Demonstrating/disseminating various aspects of Nepalese folklore
- Organizing programmes to honour those personalities who have made a significant contribution for the preservation and promotion of Nepalese folklore
- Working in collaboration with other national and international institutions interested in the study and promotion of folklore/folklife
- Translating the research-based writings on the folklore, folk culture and literature

- Publishing newsletters and journals, dealing with the various issues related to folklore
- Creating awareness among the people on their rich cultural heritage, traditional technology and indigenous wisdom

Some Important NFS Activities in Brief

1. The first International Folklore Congress was organized in Kathmandu on May 5-7, 2001.
2. A CD release programme was organized on August 26, 2001, in which the folk songs of Miss Komal Oli, a famous Nepali singer, are collected.
3. Sarangi Diwas (The Sarangi Day) was organized in collaboration with Gandharva Art and Culture Organization on February 6, 2003.
4. The second International Folklore Congress was organized in Kathmandu from May 30 to June 1, 2003.
5. Various talk programmes were organized, inviting the folklorists from different countries (America, Japan, Bangladesh, and Finland).
6. Poetry recitation programmes were organized on different occasions, in which poets in the country as well as from abroad were invited to recite their poems.
7. A special poetry symposium was organized on February 24, 2004.
8. Representatives were sent on behalf of the Society to participate in the international folklore congresses and seminars held in India and Bangladesh.
9. 10 day workshop on Folklore and Folklife study, April 16-25, 2005.
10. Karkha (a traditional form of Gandharva song) singing competition was organized at Pokhara, in collaboration with Gandharva Community Development Centre, Batulechaur, on September 24, 2005.
11. The first National Folklore Congress was organized in Kathmandu from December 15-16, 2006.
12. A week long workshop on Folklore and Folklife Field work, December 17-23, 2006.
13. Publishing bi-annually newsletter "Nepali Folklore and Folklife."
14. Now, the Nepali Folklore and Folklife Study Project is running (2005-2008).

Executive Committee of NFS

1. President: Prof. Tulasi Diwasa
2. Vice-President: Prof. Dr. Abhi Subedi
3. General Secretary: Prof. Dr. Chudamani Bandhu
4. Secretary: Dr. Jaya Raj Panta
5. Treasurer: Mr. Tej Prakash Shrestha
6. Member: Dr. Ananda Sharma
7. " : Mr. Kusumakar Neupane
8. " : Dr. Shiva Rijal
9. " : Mr. Hiranya Bhojpure
10. " : Prof. Dr. Govind Raj Bhattarai
11. " : Dr. Sangita Rayamajhi

Folklore studies in Nepal¹

- Lal Rapacha

As the state politics slouched towards egalitarian Nepal from rampant feudalism; Nepali folklore, life, literature, art, culture, history songs, music, ethnography and several other aspects started fascinating our native researcher-scholars magnetically. Both young as well as elder researchers' deep-interest in our own folklore and folklife presently for establishing Folklore Studies as an autonomous academic discipline is more laudable than practicing everything western in our school and college education including universities.

Folklore Studies in the west was institutionalized decades or centuries back as one of the independent academic disciplines. Even in South Asia, Folklore Studies in countries like India, Bangladesh, Srilanka and Pakistan had gained wider attention of researcher-scholars and governments. They have emphasized upon the promotion of folk-literature, art culture, history, songs, music, ethnography and folk architecture for the sake of preserving their unique identity and nationality.

In Nepal, intellectuals, politicians and governments seldom paid attention to local glory of this nation, which remained unheard, unwritten and unrecorded. Globalization has even steadily been dislocating our indigenous-folk glory faster than ever.

Folklore as such in Nepal had gained minimal attention during the mid 1970s when poet and Professor Tulasi Diwasa along with his research colleagues like Dr. Dilli R Dahal had carried out in-depth research documentation on the Dhimal folklore of eastern Terai. After three decades of slumber, Nepali Folklore Society (NFS) was founded in 1995 under the chairmanship of Prof. Tulasi Diwasa, with Prof. Dr. Abhi Subedi as vice-chairman and Prof. Dr. CM Bandhu as general secretary. NFS since then has established a mode of Folklore Research, disseminated the Nepali concepts of Folklore Studies and further established wider contacts with folklore societies and scholars in different parts of the world.

Meanwhile, the society organized its First International Folklore Congress-2001 in Kathmandu highlighting its main theme "Folklore for Identity and Understanding" for the first time in its history on May 5-7. This Congress had brought folklorists together from India, Bangladesh, USA, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands and Nepal with interesting academic papers and discussions in their sub-themes including a special session on 'Indo-Nepal Folklore Studies'. Also, it organized its Second International Folklore Congress-2003 in the capital city on May 30-June 1 along with "Explorations of the Dynamics of Creative Sensibility in Folklore and Modern Poetry" as a broad argument.

Till this date NFS has completed overall fieldwork research documentations on the Gandharva, Gopali, Kiranti-Athpre and Danuwar folklore from several parts of the country as its milestone. This documentation's crucial feature is digitization of oral, customary and material folk culture and heritage from the original homeland of those people besides

report publications under a local cooperation project "Folklore and Folk-life Project: A Study of Living Cultural Heritage of Nepal" supported by Finland. The idea of Nepali folk-life, songs, knowledge, architecture, culture, language, geography, economy, anthropology, ethnography, ethnicity, ethno-medicine, resource management, politics, and literature is disseminated in its several activities like talk programs, symposium, and recitations with Congress.

This December 15-16, 06 witnessed such zealous native researchers from all over the country exploring our folk-life from Hindu mythology, Nepali proverbs, to Kiranti folktales, Kiranti-Athpare culture, ethnography and many more. About seventy native scholars from rural to urban Nepal in NFS's First National Folklore Congress held at Nepal Academy discussed and asserted their varied interests in Nepalese Folklore Studies covering wide-ranging themes like 'Nepali Folklore and Folk-life Study', 'Folklore, Gender and Power', 'Folklore and Folk Performing Arts', 'Theoretical and Methodological Issues of Folklore', 'Folklore, Identity and Ethnicity', 'Folklore, Literature and Languages', and 'Folklore, Cultural Studies and Folk Practices'.

Another most important activity conducted by NFS in order to flourish and cherish Nepali Folklore Studies in the country and in South Asia as well other Asian or Western nations for geo-cultural strategy is workshops. The society in its one-week workshop (17-23 December) trained a total of 19 young native researchers coming from variety of disciplines.

The most inclusive topics of the workshop included: 'Language and Folklore Studies', 'Folk-life, Ethnicity and Identity', 'Folklore and Human Geography', 'Folk-life and Folklore Fieldwork', 'Folk-life Culture and Development', 'Folksongs and Ethnomusicology', 'Folk-arts and Crafts', 'Finish Method: Study of Tales-types and Motive', 'Oral Tradition and Oral History', 'Study of Indigenous Economic Institution and Livelihood', 'Traditional Folk Knowledge and Technology', 'Visual Folklore: Digital Audio-video Recording', 'Folklore Studies in Literature and Culture', 'Folklore Theories and Methodologies', 'Collection and Transcribing Oral Texts', 'Ethnicity, Gender and Folklore', 'Folk Performing Arts and Dramatic Performances', 'Folklore, Context and Performance', 'Ethno-Botany and Folk Medicine', 'Ethnography of Material Folk Culture', 'Collection and Interpretation of Folk Rites and Rituals', 'Translation/Transcription of Oral Texts', 'Applied Folklore and Cultural Studies in Nepal', 'Folk-life and Ethno-history', and 'Visual Folklore: Ethno-photography'.

Experts in folklore, literature, linguistics, geography, economics, architecture, medicine, socio-anthropology, ethnicity, music, video technology, history, culture and more excluding political scientists delivered lectures and techniques on the above varied topics of Folklore Studies in Nepal. Poet, folklorist and the NFS President Prof. Diwasa mainly stresses on the holistic combination of all those components to study Nepali Folklore makes sense to institutionalize Folklore Studies as an academic discipline in the country and even strengthen folkocracy for promoting egalitarian society.

¹First Published in *The Kathmandu Post*- December 31, 2006

Many congress and workshop participants have shown keen interest to institutionalize Folklore Studies and carry out research in this area for understanding our unheard folk-lives in hundreds of unreachable corners and caves of our homeland. The West is the best since it academically and politically cares its folks indiscriminately. And now it must be Nepal to look after her folks politically and academically through Folklore Studies all around the country. Now it is high time to formulate plans, policies and allocate budget for understanding our excluded and unreachable peoples' folk-life, needs and behavior to generate sustainable development. This effort can certainly help institutionalize Folklore Studies and folkocracy in Nepal.

Folklore and folk culture: Human life's texture²

- Arun Ranjit

Nepal is a land of heady mixture of unique cultures where visitors can revitalize their mind, body and soul in a simply knock out with age-old traditional hospitality.

It is a home of 100 ethnic groups diversified religions, cultures, languages and life-styles that exist in harmony.

Ethnic castes, festivals, social activities, traditional values show that Nepal is rich in cultural heritage and festivities that are dynamic and enthralling for foreigners.

Every festival in Nepal traditionally begins with something religious and moves with spontaneous spirit into a pleasant family feast. This is because, for Nepalese, religion has always influenced and has been the core of Nepali culture. The unique peaceful coexistence of a multi-religious system and beliefs is one of the most fascinating aspects of Nepal.

Every country's way of observing festive-activities from the culture of a country. And every nation exists on its own identity that is reflected in its folklore and folklife too. The different groups of people living in Nepal have maintained their culture.

There are limited numbers of people and institutions involved in the promotion, preservations of Nepal's cultural aspects. But attempting to focus on the folklore and folk culture Nepali Folklore society (NFS) is heading towards an advanced path.

Nepali Folklore society (NFS) is involved in the preservation and promotion of the folklore and folk culture of Nepal by emphasizing the ideal of national unity by maintaining the diversities in the society.

The society has been collecting, documenting and analyzing the specimens of folk art and literature from various folk groups. It organizes workshops at the national and international level, conducting research activities to create and bring awareness among the people on their rich cultural heritage, traditional technology and indigenous wisdom with mobilization of folklore experts.

According to the NFS president Prof. Tulasi Diwasa, NFS has also carried out International Folklore congresses, sarangi day, and various talk programmes inviting folklorist

from America, Japan, Bangladesh and Finland, poetry recitation, Karkha singing competition and carried out folklife and folklore study research works.

The Himalayan kingdom, Nepal is rich in scenic nature to diverse culture. Thus, every country's cultural heritage needs to be made known to the world. This would help in sharing of the cultural borrowings made possible.

One country may have borrowed something from the culture of another country. Cultural differences may be seen in clothes, in behaviors, in good manners, in beliefs and in many other things. The differences may be minor but these differences go to make one culture distinct from another. It should and will exist, because it is the cultural differences, which add to the richness and variety of life.

A center of Himalayan civilization and culture as a multilingual and multiracial nation Nepalese people have various cultural traits. Thus, Nepal is considered as a treasure house of arts and culture by foreign scholars, historians and other experts.

A variety of culture is being produced and consumed to suit the diverse tastes of various people. In addition, culture has moved into the spotlight as a strategic industry to reinforce the nation's competitiveness in the 21st century along with the information technology, biotechnology, environmental, aerospace technology and nanotechnology sectors.

Cultural products are fundamentally different from industrial products that can be readily assembled from imported parts of facilities simply as a result of capital investment.

As is well known, culturally advanced countries consistently offer literature and art education from primary school.

It is, therefore, clear that those who have their youngsters read representative novels and who utilize cultural facilities like museums as education sites believe in the value of strengthening humanities, literature and art education in the classroom.

Thus, Nepal is one of the nations which has pledged to promote its arts and cultural industry, as a key strategic industry in the 21st century should follow a good path.

This could make impressive on the objects of great national pride. Despite many other subjects, art/cultural education is also utmost importances in human life.

This impacts the sophisticated level of understanding that each and every country; region, community etc. have an own culture that plays a significant role.

There should also be a high level of professionalism in providing a uniform approach to art and cultural education. Enough amounts of guides, published materials and activities should be available.

Nepal, having centuries old artifact treasures and unbelievable worthy cultures, should take the initiative to join in at the decisive level for the promotion and preservation of the centuries old art and cultural aspects as well as the historically important sites designed by as the World Heritage Sites.

²First Published in *The Rising Nepal*, July 3, 2006

This will definitely help to improve the condition of the present level status of the Nepal's arts and culture.

Anyway, as it is the responsibility of the Academy of Nepal to promote, preserve and carry out research activities on Nepal's rich cultural heritages, NFS could be another culture oriented institutions as it has been playing a very important role by showing the openness that an academic institution deserves to deal with the issues of folklore of Nepal not only of the South Asian nations but globally.

The NFS could elevate itself above the narrowness of the so-called nation of "political boundary."

Folklore Society to publish books on endangered communities³

- Smriti Poudyal

The Nepali Folklore Society (NFS) is all set to publish research books on two endangered ethnic groups – the Gandharva and the Gopali.

The NFS took three months to complete each research and the outcome is expected not only to preserve the culture and languages of the groups, but also bring to light their economic and social lives. The folklore society also plans to publish the report in an audio-video form.

Prof. Tulasi Diwasa, president of the NFS, said: "Though the books are not purely academic, the publication would help disseminate knowledge about the backward communities and help promote cultural tourism in their localities."

Diwasa said: "The research was conducted by a group of cultural experts including an anthropologist, a linguist, a sociologist and a folklorist in each group. They lived with the community for three months."

Prof. Diwasa said that during their stay, the researchers collected 469 photographs, 29 hours 36 minutes of audio records, 30 hours of video records of Gandharvas and 6,882 photographs, 144 hours 52 minutes of audio records and 26 hours of video records of the Gopalis.

Each book will have some 50 photographs and also the photographs of 10 stone inscriptions and 23 hand written manuscripts.

"All the collected materials include the folklife, interviews, culture and traditions about those ethnic people," Diwasa said.

Prof. Diwasa added that the society is also preparing to publish research books on Athpahariya Rai and Danuwar. They have already started study of Meche and Tharu communities."

"We conducted the study on diversified cultural and social aspects of the non-identified ethnic groups because we felt the need for timely collection and preservation of ethnic culture and languages," Diwasa said. He hoped that the research would help policy makers to gather information about the ethnic groups and bring unidentified community into the mainstream.

³First Published in *The Himalayan Times* - May 29, 2007

Myths and Ethics on Sex

- Madhav P. Pokharel

On sex, myths are more liberal and progressive than the lawgivers are. In mythology, characters repeatedly cross social barriers and ethical boundaries.

In *Rig-Veda* (10th Mandala. 10) Yama and Yami are twins. Yami is Yama's sister, but when they grow young, Yami requests Yama for sex to beget their father's grandchild. Yama denies such a relationship. This may be a precursor of Electra complex in Greek mythology where Electra loves her brother more than she loves her parents.

Greek mythology (Shapiro 1984) supplies the story of Oedipus (Encarta 2007). Sophocles (Oedipus Rex) narrates how Oedipus unknowingly killed his father and married his mother from whom he begot his brothers and sisters. The story of Oedipus is replicated in the story of Virupaksa in Sanskrit mythology where Virupaksa has incest with his mother although he does not kill his father. In Pashupati temple area, there is an image of Virupaksa, who is often called Kaliyuga by local people. Lain Singh Bangdel truly identifies Virupaksa with Lord Shiva. Virupaksa, in fact, is one of the eleven Rudras (Mani 1975:863).

According to *Matsya Purana* (See Mani 1975:696) goddess Sarasvati is the daughter of Brahma. When she grew young, her father Brahma fell in love with his daughter. He was intently looking towards Sarasvati who knew her father's intention. Therefore, she went to the left side of her father, but Brahma grew a new face to his left side. Then Sarasvati went to her father's backside, but he grew another face towards back. Sarasvati ran to her father's right side, but when she saw her father's new face growing on the right, Sarasvati surrendered to become her father's wife. In so doing, Brahma became the four-headed God.

According to *Devi Bhagavata* (prathama skandha, see Mani 1975:171) when Brihaspati's wife Tara first saw the moon god Chandra in his home, her husband's disciple, both of them fell in love with each other. Tara started living in Chandra's home until she was pregnant. Brihaspati sent messages for Tara several times, but Tara did not come back and Chandra was not afraid of his Guru's curse and punishment. When Tara came back to Brihaspati's home, she gave birth to Budha, but both Brihaspati and Chandra claimed Budha to be his son. At last, Brahma asked Tara to decide his father and Tara said it was Chandra, so Budha was sent to his father Chandra.

These are the examples of incest in Vedic and Puranic mythologies.

I do not remember any example of polyandry in the Rig-Veda, but there are a few examples of polyandry. Surya gave his daughter to twin Asvinikumaras. It may hint that both polygamy and polyandry were common practices during the Rig-Vedic period; however, polyandry is less common. It may hint that Vedic Aryan society was primarily patriarchic rather than matriarchic.

Rama's father Dasaratha had 350 wives according to Valmiki-Ramayana. That is an example of the beginning of

polygamy in the Aryan society. Srikrishna had relationship with 16108 women. These examples mark the growing practice of polygamy at least among the rich Aryan people although there are evidences of polyandry with the stories of Draupadi, Kunti, Madri and Gandhari, because each of them had sexual relation with at least two and at most five men.

Satyavati gave birth to Vyasa from premarital sex with Parasara, but she married later with King Shantanu. From Shantanu, Satyavati gave birth to two sons, namely, Chitrangada and Vichitravirya. Chitrangada had premature death and Vichitravirya was married to Ambika and Ambalika, but since Vichitravirya also died soon after his marriage, therefore, following the custom of NIYOGA, Satyavati appointed her first son Vyasa to help Ambika and Amabalika to give birth to Dhritarastra and Pandu. In place of Ambika's son Dhritarastra also, Ambika's daughter-in-law Gandhari was blessed by Vyasa with 100 sons and a daughter. It means the same Vyasa initiated the birth of both generations. Ambika's other two daughter-in-laws Kunti and Madri who were married to Pandu, also had their 3 plus 2 sons respectively from five different fathers.

Not only Satyavati but also Kunti had each son through premarital sex. Satyavati had Vyasa from Parasara and Kunti had Karna from God Surya.

Radha is one of the consorts of Lord Krishna, but she was already young when Krishna was carried to Gokula (Brahmavaivarta Purana) and one of the Puranas notes that Radha and Krishna's marriage was arranged under the priesthood of Brahma himself. This kind of unequal partnership is not a common practice prescribed by any Hindu codes of conduct. Srimadbhagavata (10th Skandha) describes RASALILA of Lord Krishna who had sexual relationship with almost all the young women of Vrindavana on the same night.

Vishnu had unauthorized sexual relationship with Vrinda or Tulasi (Shiva Purana) in disguise. Lord Indra also deceived Ahalya, wife of Gautama in disguise. Hindu laws like Manusmriti, Nirnayasindhu (Bhatta 1991) and Dharmasindhu do not allow the kind of relationships noted above.

I have not come across homosexuality in any myth. Almost all the Puranas, epics and pieces of literature from the Vedic period to the present, have Poetic License, like Abhisara Prakarana, which tolerates love and sexual relationship that cross the legal boundaries of Hindu laws. This is what to prove that mythologies are more progressive and social laws more conservative on sex. Science and technology have realized the sex change comparable to that of Sudyumna who became woman and then man again with the name ILA (*Mahabharata*, and *Srimadbhagavata*). Even in the Rig-Veda, there are a few mentions of sex change, but to realize an exchange of sex comparable to Sikhandini who exchanged with Yaksha to become Sikhandi is yet to come. The myth of Kartikeya's birth can be mapped to the discovery of test tube baby.

Hindu laws are codified in different Srutis, Smritis and Puranas and there are two prominent books like Dharmasindhu and Nirnayasindhu (see Bhattacharya ed. 1991), which have defined Hindu codes of conduct. However, the conducts of Yami (in Rig-Veda), Virupaksha (in Shiva Purana), Brahma (in Matsya Purana), Brihaspati, Tara and Chandra (in Devi Bhagavata), Dasaratha and Indra (in Valmiki Ramayana), Krishna and Gopinis (in Srimadbhagavata), Satyavati, Vyasa, Ambika, Ambalika, Kunti, Madri, Gandhari, Draupadi, Surya and Pandu (in Mahabharata), Radha (in Brahmavaivarta Purana) cannot be justified by any of the Hindu laws.

These examples are clear evidence to prove that civil codes on sex are often violated by mythologies.

- Bhattacharya, M.M. Vrajaratna (ed) (1991). **Nirnayasindhu of Kamalakar Bhatta**. Varanashi: Chowkhamba.
- Mani, Vettam (1975). **Puranic Encyclopaedia**. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas.
- "Oedipus", **Microsoft Encarta 2007 (CD)**. Microsoft Corporation, 2006.
- Shapiro, Max S. (1984). **A Dictionary of Mythologies**. London: Paladin.



Stone carved hand of Machhindranath



Katuwal Daha of Bagmati

Danuwar Folklore and Folklife: A Close Observation

Introduction

The term Danuwar is not derived from the mother tongue spoken by the people of this folk group: rather it is a derivation related to Nepali word *Duna* (leaves plate). Normally speaking, people who settled on the bank of the stream and the rivers and adopted the profession of fishing were called Danuwar. Thus, *Dune* (in Nepali signifying inner terai) was appropriate place for them. People being settled in Dune were named as Danuwar. Etymologically, the term Danuwar was derived from the Sanskrit *Dronibar* (*droni* signifies the plain land between the confluence of two rivers situated in the laps of two hills) as mentioned above, fishing is their main profession so they settled on the confluence of the two rivers. Similarly, *Dukucha* in Newar language signifies the domestic animal goat. One day, people heard *Dukukarne* (the crying of goat) while they were approaching over there right in present village. Since then, the name of the place began to be known and recognized as *Duku* deleting the suffix *<arne>* and the inhabitants were called Danuwar. Historically speaking, in the fourteenth century, the king of Simoroungarh, the ancient kingdom on the mid-southern part of Kathmandu, constructed a grandeur palace in the name of his beautiful daughter and she was married by the crown prince of Lanka (now Srilanka). The queen gave birth to five sons after marriage. Among them one was Danuwar and the rest of the three were Newar, Sunuwar, Kirat and Limbu. The same Danuwar immigrated and settled to the hilly area from the inner terai. His successors' surname remained Danuwar. Long time ago, Machhendranath or *Matsyendranath* (means the king of water) was escorted from Kamarupa, one of the holy Indian pilgrimage, to Kathmandu. The Danuwar had gone to bring Matsyendranath Baba and brought him enroute to Dukuchhap. It was getting night as they arrived at *Dukku*. So, they stayed and passed one auspicious night over there and the devotees celebrated arrival of Baba hosting a worship during the whole night. They offered him *Prasad* on the plate made of leaves and a baby girl was seen on the same plate in the next morning. Machhendranath was astonished to



Hasta Bdr Danuwar (73) and Purnamaya (70)

see it and baptized her as *Duna* because she was born out of the *Duna*, the plate made of the leaves. In this way, it is believed that they are the successors of Duna girl. They claim to be God Machhendranath as their parental relative even today. They have now scattered all over in search of better life and opportunities of income generating business and settled in the different parts of the country. In search of origin of Dhimal folk group, the Danuwar is also mentioned as the three sons: Munaingba, Thoboingba, and Yoboingba of Swayambhu Satrupa in Prof. Diwasa's research. There were ten sons of Munaingba and the ancestors of Koche, Meche and Dhimal and the youngest Thirukpa was the predecessor of Danuwar.

The folk belief, as narrated by Khil Bahadur Danuwar to the researchers, in terms of origin of this folk group is that they were the poorest people of the poorest village and *Duku* was derived from the Nepali word *Dukhi* (the poorest and destitute). These people were *Dukhi* that signifies the poorest and destitute in terms of economic and social condition.

Similarly, there were a Brahmin young boy and a Chhetrini young girl. While the girl got asleep soundly, the boy put his germs in *Duna* (the plate made up of the leaves) and kept over her womb. It leaked and spilled inside and she became pregnant. Her parent inquired her with whom she had sexual intercourse but she did not have answer. However, the baby was baptized because he was born from the chromosomes put on the Duna. Her successors were called Danuwar.



A group of khetala (agriculture workers) having their food



Brother in Law pouring the water after being purified

Settlement and Population

Presently, there are some Danuwar settled in other districts, namely, Udayapur (4019), Jhapa (1250), Morang (1095), Sindhupalchok (2739), Sarlahi (920), Rautahat (12134) Kavre (4110), Dhading and Makawanpur including 41 districts of Nepal. Dukuchhap is small rural area located just 44 km away from the Kathmandu city and 1312 meters high from the sea level. The total population of the Danuwar is 53229 in the total population of the country and it constitutes 0.14 percentage of the total population. According to the household survey carried out by the researchers, the total population of the folk group is 835 households in this village. They prefer to settle on the bank of the rivers and streams like Majhi, Kumal and Bote folk groups but they resemble with the Tharu folk group of Terai. The houses are not in dispersed structure or pattern. They plant trees and flowers at the front of their house buildings. In the village, they make wide streets that is meant for courtyard whereas in plain area they construct the courtyards at the front of their house. The courtyards are used for sun bathing in winter seasons and feeding the groves to cattle.



Khaya Tole of Bensi Gaun a view from Chandanda

House Construction and Use

Most of the houses in the settlement of Danuwar are found in semi-patterned. The houses are rectangular and they are found mostly three storied in the village. The first floor is used for cooking food and the cattles are kept just opposite to the



A house of Kanchha Danuwar and Makai Thankra

corner, they use for storing grains and food. The second floor and the top floor are used to keep the light things like old tattered clothing and hay and scraps of maize and sometimes, used as the bedrooms too if the number of the family members is more in the house. There are barandas constructed at the front part of the houses. But now the trend of constructing modern buildings is prevailing in the locality.

Danuwar Language

They have their own language called *Kaini* (language, talk, and thing). There are dominant language groups, namely Tamang in the upper part of the village, Nepali (Khas) in the Middle and Duku Danuwar Kaini in the lower part of the village.

The language is affiliated to Magadhi subgroup of indo-Aryan family. There are 25 consonants and 12 vowels. There are two tenses: past and nonpast. The numbers are singular and plural. The basic constituent order is S(subject) O(bjects) V(erb). It is left branching. It is very rich in terms of kinship terms. The areal languages are Tamang and Newar which are affiliated to the Tibeto-Burman Group of Sino-Tibetan language family.

There are a large number of borrowed words from Nepali. In terms of sociolinguistic study, there are multilingual speakers below sixty and the people above sixty are monolinguals. The language is undocumented, unrecorded and endangered because of language shift to Nepali which is used in educational and official purpose in the country. There is no any written literature so far found in Danuwar language. In terms of oral folk heritage it is considered to be tremendously rich like other folk group's cultural heritages. There are dialect variations within the Danuwar living in the different parts of the country. They are not in use in different domains of education, administration and media.

Family and Kinship

They practice living in joint and nuclear family structures. In the nuclear family, there are two generations living together whereas in the joint family there are more than two generation sharing and living together. The family is patriarchal in terms of decision making and male dominated too. As a result, the sons have right to inherit the properties after the death of the parents. The fathers and



Chameli Danuwar and Binaya Danuwar

mothers expect to live with the sons but not with the daughters who are believed to become unknown after marriage. The daughters can not claim any parental properties. The male Danuwar practise polygamy for the sake of prestige, pride and honor of masculinity. They incline to love more to the second wife because she looks more beautiful and younger than the first wife who was already married in early age, and look aged and older than the husband. The Danuwar young girls also expect to be the '*Kanchhi Swasni*' (the second wife).

There are mainly three forms of kinship relation in this community: 1) the kinship by blood, 2) The kinship by marriage and 3) The kinship by fictive bondage. The degrees of behavior differ from the status of the kin. Some of the kins are more honorable and respectable than the others while some are in formality only. The kinship by blood are the example of the relationship of brothers and sisters whereas the kinship between father-in-law and sister-in-law is relation by marriage. The kinship by *miteri* (mutual agreement to have relation based on same age and status) is the relationship between the friends. Such are the kinship based on the honor and respect of humanity. The incest in such kinship is considered to be sinful evil and strongly condemned in the society. There should not be a single touch on any parts or organs of body in *miteri Saino* (ritual relation) if done so any person who did it would be fined certain amount of money to become pure. These kinships are based on long tradition of social and cultural norms and values which are brought up along with social and cultural development.

Folk Belief

The widely held folk belief in Danuwar is about the raining in the rainy season. They pray and have strong faith upon Machhendranath while doing any works. First of all, they remember the name of Machhendranath; pray to in his holy name and worship, and start doing any work. They should not keep sheep as a pet in the house and they should not touch the pigs even. They become purified after taking bath in cool water. Similarly, the pregnant woman should not touch others' children during the period of pregnancy, if done, her own newly born baby will suffer from spongy diseases. It is not a good omen or indication or prediction to have the sight of walking three persons together.



Mr Khil Bdr going to feeding bhat, rakti and other food item

Folk Gods/Goddesses and Festivals

The Danuwar folk group mainly worship nature and respect natural diety. They mainly pray to Matsyendranath and Hindu gods and goddesses. They celebrate Hindu festivals. These include Nag panchami (worship of serpent), Gathe Mangal (worship of agricultural deity), Janai Purnima (the day of special thread wearing for the males), Kartik Purnima (worship of Machhendranath), Ched Nikalne (chasing away evil), Ropai jatra (rice planting day in the farm), Machhendra Jatra (worship of Machhendranath, Bhairab and Chhetrapal), Maghe Sankranti (the first day of the month of Magh (generally the 15/16 January) Kushe Ausi (the day on which they worship the soul of dead fathers), *Chauthi* (day on which the Danuwar are free to steal cucumber, peas, soyabeans, and other vegetables from others' framings), *Mangsir Purnima* (kinship feeding day), *Ama Khuwaune Ausi* (the mother worshipping and feeding day), Dashain and Tihar.



Preparing the prasada of sacrificed femal animals

Folk Dresses and Ornaments

They do not have folk dresses of their own origin. However, the males normally put on shirt, pants, vest, waist coat, daura surwal, coat, jacket, sweaters, and the females wear sarees, cholo, phariya, petty coat, and roll the clothes on their waist. The traditional clothings are not worn nowadays. The male Danuwars wear less ornaments than the females in this folk group. The female Danuwar generally put on ear ring on the ears, ribbon on the forehead, clip on the hair, and the girls put on clips, lemontu and so on. The old women like putting on and tying the hair with the red ribbon on the heads.



Purna Maya Danuwar(60) wearing sikri janter, along with sari



Kanchhi Danuwar (66) Danda Tole

Folk Medical Treatment

The Danuwar have faith upon the shaman's performance and witch doctors. Even today they practice chasing the evil, visiting the witch doctors, exchanging the *achheta* (made mixing cereal curd and powder), driving away the evil spirit, and using the herbal medicines in everyday life. They believe in healing the cough, headache, heart disease, post pregnancy diseases, and cursing of nag (serpent or snakes) only after visiting the witch doctors and shaman. They go to hospitals while suffering from diarrhoea, pneumonia, fracture of bones, and other incurable diseases nowadays.



Sepre Danuwar healing the small baby

Folk Literature

The Dukaini do not have own script. However, there are oral folktales, riddles, proverbs, ballads, religious hymns, and narratives of arrival of Machhendranath. The folktales can be classified in *Dantekatha* (nine oral tales), historical folktales, religious folktales, mythological folktales, tale of origins, hearsay, and ballads and *Gaukhane Katha* (riddle, answering the question in the form of story if defeated, the village as a bet would be lost) and so on. '*Hira Raja and Hira Rani*' *Majhi Dai*, *Garib Bahun*, *Toudahako Nag ra Nagini* are the popular folk oral tales in Danuwar literature. The two historical folktales are *Kalik Kaini*, *Nariwal Gudaune Jatra* (running coconut festival), the arrival of Machhendranath, *Toudahako Bisphotan* (explosion of Toudaha big lake in Newar language), and Ramayana, Machhendranath, and Bhimsen are religious folktales. The tales which describe the origin of Danuwar from Duku, Duna, Dune, Bahun-Chhetri etc. are the tales of the origins.



Danuwar women wearing popular ornaments Tilahari on the neck

Folk Performing Arts

The *Lakhe* dance and *Ropai Jatra* (paddy plantation festival) are the two popular folk performing dances. Maruni (a boy dances wearing girls' dresses). *Deusi* and *Bhailo* are folk performing songs. *Madal*, flute and mouth harmonium are the folk performing instruments found in this folklife community. Similarly, the folk performing games include *pathar goti*, *pathar dhek*, *pangro* (a game with wheels), *dori khel* (a game with thread), and *poudi* (swimming).



Deusi team at Kumar Danuwar's Home

Folk Musical Instruments

The main folk instruments of the community are *murali* (flute) and *madal* (drum). In the past, there used to be *madal* in each and every house in the community, but now there are only three and four *madals* in the whole village. Interestingly, a mouth harmonium was found in the search even that seemed to be made in china.



Kaila Danuwar playing the madal on the occasion of Hile Jatra



Krishana Bdr. Danuwar playing flute

Gender Issues and Decision Making Procedure

The women have important role in the society. The daughters are offered *gunyu choli* (blouse) after they become worth of right candidate for marriage in the same way the sons become valid after conducting *chhewar* ceremony in the society. Above all, the death ceremony can not be fully observed in the absence of the daughters. If the daughter has eloped



Danuwar women attending meeting of their saving group



Mailee Danuwar (L) keeping a baby in her lap and Saili danuwar

she becomes pure to conduct death rituals after her mother beats on the back of the body once. The girls in Dukuchhap are unmarried owing to the unavailability of the groom from their own folk group or they did not get the right candidates as they had expected or chosen or they were manipulated by their sister not to marry. If they remained unmarried they get livelihood from the parents but they do not get the certificate of land ownership. The fate of girls who remained single or unmarried during the years of the life is very tedious and monotonous because they are insulted and neglected mainly by their own elder or younger sister-in-laws and the younger sisters of their own.

Rites of the Passage

Janam ra nawaran (Birth and naming rite)

The birth of the baby generally takes place in the separate room otherwise a mat is spread in a certain place and the others take care of the baby. They invite the shaman and the helper too. They become happier if the newly born baby is male rather than the female. If the newly born baby is a son then parents distribute the gifts and chocolates to the whole villagers. But they do not do so for the second time. During the time of postnatal period the mother is fed flour of the cereal with the soup of *juwano*. She is not allowed to go or should not go to any other places except the *majeri* (the adjacent part of the door in a house) because of the religious reason of causing the irritation or anger to the God of Clan. The ceremony is celebrated for nine or eleven days. On the ninth day of birth, the child is baptized and the mother becomes pure after she gets bathing and gets her baby bathed on the fifteenth day.

Pasni (Feeding Ritual)

The rice feeding day is observed on the ninth month if newly born baby is a male otherwise it is observed on the fifth. Only some people perform this ritual nowadays and rest of them do not conduct it because a huge amount of expenditure. The important role in this ceremony depends on the baby's maternal uncle as he feeds the rice pudding or cooked rice. In the absence of maternal uncle, the grandfathers may participate and play the role of the maternal uncle in the gathering. The participants or invitees bless and hand gifts

over the baby on the end of the day. The absentees may attend the function next day and bless the child to be good and great in life.

Chhewar (Adolescent rite)

The first hair cutting ceremony is observed at the age of 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11. The main participants in this ceremony are maternal uncle, niece, and own relatives who get together in the house. To mark the hair cutting day, they consult the astrologers and decide the auspicious day and go to Gubhaju (Newari priest) with one *mana chamal* (almost half a kilogram rice) and the amount of 25 rupees. They smear the floor with cow dung and the floor is considered to be purified for the purpose. They worship god especially Matsyendranath before they start doing *Chhewar*. They gather from the village as invited earlier than the day of first hair cutting. The ceremony lasts for the five days on special occasion. After the completion of ritual the son is allowed to observe mourning rituals after the death of father or mother and also become worth candidate of marriage in the family.

Vivaha (Marriage rite)

The marriage system in this folk group includes arranged marriage, love marriage, and marriage by capture. In arranged marriage, the bride for the son is fixed by the parents. However there were only two pairs found who were married with *panchya* baja. The marriage procession with a *dalo of roti* (a basket of bread), a *gagri of chhang* (a bucket of local wine) and three and four pathi (equivalent to three kg) wine starts from the bridegroom's home. Besides, they carry hens, mutton, he-goats too. They play the *Panchya Baja* (five musical instruments i.e. damaha, sanaya, jhali, two narsingha) in the marriage procession if the family is capable of that. The ceremony lasts for the two days, and then they introduce the mother-in-laws and the father-in-laws including other relatives on the final phase of the marriage day.

The love marriage system is very dominating trend. Whether they are in daily wages work or farm working or making flour or schooling they know each other and share the feelings. Then, the love affair really begins. They realize and express feeling of each other and promise that they can not live without the absence of one and finally it turns into love

marriage and settle conjugal life in the society. If the lad or boy is very much fond of the lady or girl he persuades and captures her to hide in a unknown place and may have intercourse on the same night. Then, they can marry with the consent of the father or mother. Sometimes, the lad and the lady decide earlier themselves and the parents might have already known about it. But the parent of the girl should beat the would be son-in-law with the sticks at the first sight or meeting. This tradition has not been prevailing since the last six or seven years.

Tradition of giving *Neg* (a ritual of feeding parents)

There is a traditional ritual of giving *neg* to the *maiti* (the parental relatives of the bride) while doing so, they should prepare bread, wine, soybean, mutton, chicken, and fetch to the parents' house and feed them. Thereafter, the parents give dowry to the daughter. The daughters are not allowed to visit the father's house or *maiti* unless they have completed *neg ritual*.

Mirtyu (Death rite and purifying rite)

The dead body is laid stretching its head to the north direction. A lamp is burnt on the side of the head of the corpse. The eldest son sits at the side of the burning lamp and the youngest son sits on the side of the legs. If the dead has no son the daughter can light *dag batti* (offering fire to the dead body). The ritual concludes on the ninth or seventh day and the family becomes purified after scattering the grains and water put on the leaf plates on the crossroads. On the very day, the son-in-law or the niece slaughter the hens and smother the head of the cock to the place where they offer the *Pinda* (cooked rice meant for the dead person). It is believed or said that the women folk should not see these ritual activities of the men. Whether they are men or women they should mourn for the whole year. During the time, they should not eat oranges, *pidalu* (yam), *badam* (peanut), and the second hand cigarettes and the food prepared by others except the member of the family.



A Danuwar cheli pouring the oil on the hair of other women

Barakhi (Mourning rite)

They mourn for the whole year renouncing orange, *badam* (peanut), *pidalu* (yam), as well as food cooked outside the house. The sons of the dead father or mothers

should wear white dresses and white shoes and should not shave beards, moustache during the whole year. The red *tika* should not be put on the forehead. If the dead is an unmarried girl the eldest brother mourns on her death. The women wear black dress to mourn the death of their husbands.



Jaya Bahadur Danuwar a kiriyaputri

Economic Life and Livelihood

The main profession is fishing. The women knit the mats and sell them. Because of water pollution in Bagmati river the fishing is almost ended now. The other works of income generations are driving, daily wages works, working in the industry, government offices, and farming.



Bishne Danuwar fishing in the Bagmati River

Concluding Remarks

The Danuwar people are one of the endangered indigenous folk groups though they are very rich in terms of folk heritage. They have their own traditional beliefs, language, ornaments, clothing, housing, settlements, and folk cultures different from others. After the FOFO research they have become aware on the importance of their folklore and folklife.

Prepared by: Mr. Omkareshwor Shrestha, Mr. Ajit Man Tamang, Mr. Yadav Subedi and Mr. Man Bahadur Shahu

Translated by: Mr. Kedar Nagila.

Some Major NFS Activities

Steering Committee Meeting of the Folklore and Folklife Study Project

The third steering committee meeting of the Folklore and Folklife Study Project was held on 23rd May 2007 under the chairmanship of Prof. Tulasi Diwasa, President and Executive Director of the FOFO Study Project at Bhatbhateni. The meeting was attended by HE Ms. Pirkko-Liisa Kyostila, Charge de Affairs and the project officer Ms. Eeva Maijala of the Embassy of Finland in Kathmandu. The Social Welfare Council was represented by Mr. Raju Joshi. The members of Core Group present at the meeting were Prof. Dr. Abhi Subedi, Prof. Dr. Chudamani Bandhu, Dr. Jay Raj Pant, Mr. Tej Prakash Shrestha, Mr. Hiranya Bhojpure, Mrs. Urmila Shrestha, Mr. Jiwan Joshi and Mrs. Sandhya Joshi were invited as guests.

Prof. Diwasa presented the progress report in the meeting on behalf of the Core Group. HE Pirkko-Liisa Kyostila expressed her satisfaction on the progress of the FOFO project.



3rd Steering Committee Meeting

Meche Cultural Conservation and Promotion One day Interaction Programme

'Meche Samaj Shibliyari Aafat' organized one day interaction programme on conservation and promotion of disappearing Meche folklore and culture on 25th Bhadra 2064. In the programme the president of 'Meche Samaj Shibliyari Aafat' Chandan Meche was the chairman and Prof. Tulasi Diwasa, president of Nepali Folklore Society (NFS) and Mr. Jalendra Meche, Ex-chairman of 'Meche Samaj Shibliyari Aafat' were Chief Guests. The researchers of NFS went for the study of 'Meche Folklore and Folklife' Mr. Tej Prakash Shrestha, Mr. Suren Sapkota, Mr. Ram Kumar Shrestha and Mr. Rohini Raj Nepal also participated in the programme.

Chandan Meche, Jalendra Meche, Ekasari Meche, Ram Bahadur Meche, Khila Meche, Pagal Singh Meche, Santalal Meche spoke in the programme from Meche community. Besides, representatives of the Dhimal community Patra Dhimal, Newar community Dinesh Shakya and Rajbanshi



One day Interaction Programme at Jhapa

community also spoke in the programme. On behalf of the study team, Team Coordinator Mr. Tej Prakash Shrestha spoke on the experience of Meche Folklore and Folklife study. Chief guests Prof. Diwasa, Mr. Jalendra Meche and other participants also put their views.

Tharu Folklore and Folklife Study Programme and Press Conference, Dang

On 18th Ashadh, 2064 the researchers of Nepali Folklore Society involved in the study of 'Tharu Folklore and Folklife' organized a press conference to disseminate information on the importance of study of Tharu folklife to the local community of Dang. The researchers of the study team were Dr. Govinda Acharya, Mr. Ashok Tharu, Mr. Bir Bahadur Khadka and Mr. Jitendra Kumar Chaudhary.

The Programme was chaired by coordinator of the study team Dr. Govinda Acharya. Local journalists and various individuals shown participation in the programme. Prof. Tulasi Diwasa, president of Nepali Folklore Society (NFS) was the chief guest in the programme. On the conference Karina Kurin and Eeva Maijala, representative of Embassy of Finland spoke on the importance of study of Tharu Folklore and Folklife as Special Guests. Sudarshan Rijal, secretary of Nepal Reporters Association, Dang and Ram Prasad Poudyal, chairman of Press Union, Dang and others put their views in the programme.



Press Conference at Dang

Orientation for 5th and 6th Research Team

Two team of four researchers each were appointed for Meche and Tharu Folklore and Folklife Study Project, agreement was made with them, and MOU and TOR were signed. The Meche research team comprises these experts:

1. Mr. Tej Prakash Shrestha (team coordinator), 2. Mr. Suren Sapkota, 3. Mr. Ram Kumar Shrestha and 4. Mr. Rohini Raj Nepal and Tharu research team comprises 1. Dr. Govinda Acharya (team coordinator), 2. Mr. Ashok Tharu, 3. Mr. Jitendra Kumar Chaudhary and 4. Mr. Bir Bahadur Khadka.

From April 1st to the 12th of April, the researchers practiced to operate the essential equipments and tools needed for data collection (digital camera, digital-audio recorder and video cameras). They also collected some reference materials related to the folk group and were involved in the orientation, whereby they were given the necessary guidelines for field work. Besides, an interaction programme on 6th April was organized in the project office to share the experience between them and the earlier field researchers who had completed their field work. On behalf of the earlier research teams, Prof. Dr. C. M. Bandhu (coordinator, first research group), Mr. Tej Prakash Shrestha (coordinator, second research group) and Mr. Amrit Yonjon (coordinator, third research group) shared their experience of working in the field in course of data collection. The programme was organized in the presence of the project team leader Prof. Tulasi Diwasa, Prof. Dr. Abhi Subedi and Prof. Dr. C.M. Bandhu. Prof. Diwasa had also given the necessary guidelines for the researchers regarding the field study.

Meche Folk Cultural Programme

Meche Folk Cultural Programme was organized on 23rd Ashadh, 2064 at Ayabari, Jorsimal, Mechinagar-3, Jhapa. Ganga Prasad Meche coordinated and Pagal Singh Meche chaired the programme while Prof. Tulasi Diwasa was the chief guest in the programme. There were altogether ten folk songs and folk dances presented.

Pagal Singh Meche, Gangaru Meche, Somalal Meche and Sondari Meche played the musical instruments tabala, flute, and *Jotha* in the programme. The artists who sang the songs and presented the dances include Pagal Singh Meche, Ganga Prasad Meche, Chandra Bahadur Meche, Bathiya Meche, Niharo



A view of Meche Cultural Programme

Meche, Burunchi Meche, Pinki Meche, Sunita Meche, Radhika Meche, Prasad Meche, Kandri Meche, Asari Meche, Kopchi Meche, Sonto Meche, Ravi Meche, Divas Meche, Ramesh Meche, Sanjaya Meche, Bikram Meche, Manju Meche, Arati Meche, Sujita Meche, Somlal Meche, Sondari Meche, Basanchi Meche and others.

At the end Pagal Singh Meche, chairman and Prof. Tulasi Diwasa expressed their views in appreciation of performed Meche folk dances, folk songs and the folk culture.



Meche folk dance

Nepali Folklore and Folklife Newsletter

The Newsletter is edited and published semi-annually, by Prof. Tulasi Diwasa on behalf of Nepali Folklore Society, mainly for the purpose of disseminating the activities of the Society. Besides, it also provides a forum for folklorists and the people interested in Nepali folklore and folklife study.

Editorial Board:

Prof. Tulasi Diwasa
Prof. Dr. Abhi Subedi
Prof. Dr. C.M. Bandhu

Anybody interested to subscribe the Newsletter or contribute papers in it can contact the editor through:

Postal Address: Nepali Folklore Society,
Post Box No. 3326
Bhatbhateni,
Kathmandu (Nepal).

Tel: 00977-01-4410706, 4412487

Fax: 00977-01-4410706

Email: folkloresociety@mcmail.com.np

Page Layout and Design: Sangram Waiba

Language Editor: Bhim Narayan Regmi

The authors' original papers published in the Newsletter may not necessarily represent the official view of the Society.

© Nepali Folklore Society, Kathmandu
ISSN 1819-3803

Printed at: dongol printers, 4256932