

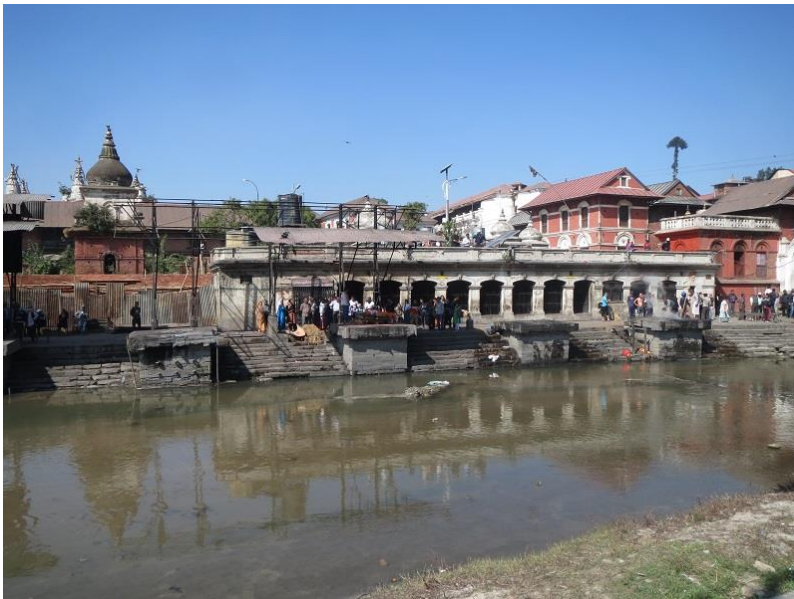
Ekerö November 13 2018

Hello, Namaste and Thashi Delek

Italo is now in Kathmandu and has resumed his studies in Nepali, which he began this spring. He communicates to us some impressions from his stay in the city. Furthermore, I comment on a few projects we have and have had in addition to the school home. News from the school home comes in the next newsletter in December.

Boudhanath In October

The largest Hindu festival, Dashain, starts this year on the 9th October and lasts until the full moon on October 24. On the first day, a special altar is set up in the homes. During Dashain people follow many Hindu traditional rituals. Every day has its religious meaning. One day you place for example flowers and leaves from nine different plants in a special pot. During the Mahi-Asthani day one sacrifice a goat or a duck, but there is of course a non-violent alternative too. Duck eggs or pumpkin is just as good.



During Dashain only here in Kathmandu over fifty thousand goats are slaughtered in a few days. An extra important day is the Thika day. This year it falls on Friday the nineteenth of October. It is a day when thousands visit different temples. For example, the President of Nepal visited one day one of the temples on Pashupatinat, the great Hindu shrine (*To the left*) here in Kathmandu. Some

days after Thika people often visit family members and get a Thika (an often-red mark made of rice) on its forehead.

Many also provide gifts for family members. Just being with one's family and meeting the elderly in the family is very important.

As at Christmas in Sweden, a lot of people go "home", Dashain is the largest travel season during the year here in Nepal. More than TWO million!!! are leaving the Kathmandu Valley with bus, car, motorbike, truck to go their villages. Given the enormous traffic on Nepal's often lousy roads, it is no wonder that during the Dashain many difficult accidents occur and hundreds of people lose their lives.

Dashain is also an important period for all business. I was down in central Kathmandu during the early days of Dashain. There were sales everywhere and a lot of people on the streets. Yes, no comparison in general, but it resembled a typical day during the Christmas sales in Sweden.

Other news that is of extra interest to us with Humla affiliation I find in an article in the Kathmandu Post. In Hilsa near the Tibetan border, an immigration centre has now been opened. KMCH:s School Home is a three days hike from Hilsa and as far from the Humla capital Simikot. The authorities apparently think that tourism, including that from China will continue to increase. Not least, it can probably be so when the road from the Tibetan boarder and Hilsa reaches Simikot. But it will, according to Chembal, take many more years.

Another sign of increased interest of Humla is the launch of more flight departures to Simikot. And it is promised that the increased number of departures will continue even when the Dashain festival is over. How it will be it is probably another issue. In the same issue of Kathmandu Post it is told that a lot of people are waiting at the airport in Nepalgunj to fit on a plane up to Humla.

Humla belongs to province 6, Karnali Pradesh. In a report from the provincial government you can read that they have not yet spent any of the sums assigned to them to improve the infrastructure in just Humla.

One blame among others lack manpower and even shortage of office

locations for the administration. And then there are few places in Nepal with such a crying need for infrastructure that it is just in Humla, not only in the form of road constructions but also in terms of education and beds.

Here in Nepal, now also the Me-too movement is taking off. It does not go a day without Kathmandu Post are reporting of rapes. Women are now beginning to talk about sexual assaults of men in managerial positions and also naming these men. Of course, they strike out.-I do not know who you are talking about, is a common answer. Another variant is that the accusations are made by political opponents. That Me-too gives more and more attention is of course good. Because it does not help that as several leading politicians who often proud do; to Point to the Constitution and talk about it on paper



consolidating equality. In everyday life, girls and women have a huge slope in front of them. *(To the right is the Buddhist sanctuary Boudhanath).*

The opposition is now starting to sharpen the knives. We see more and more power abuses they say. There may be something in it. Even in the ruling Nepal Communist Party, there is a lot of criticism of the Prime Minister Oli and his way of often making his own decisions without consulting the party board or the party members. Nepal has, however, just now something for Nepal very unusual. There is a political stability. The question, however, is whether the government has the power and the knowledge to use its power to something that will ultimately benefit the great majority in Nepal. It will be interesting to follow the developments on that front.

KMCHs Tree Planting Project – TPP- and other projects.

We always emphasize that KMCHs Priority **A** is to give some poor children in Humla the opportunity to go to school. It is so, but we have not been totally orthodox, so we between the years 2009 and 2016 we had a health clinic in cooperation with the local monastery and between the years 2009 and 2012 we supported adult education in some villages. Both projects that we considered important to start. The authorities built a new health clinic in 2017 so we could close ours. In 2013 the authorities took the responsibility for the adult education, but they have, unfortunately, soon put it down.

We have also in various ways tried to broaden the supply base for the School Home and thus enrich the children's diet. Food for sale is not available in Humla so we buy most of it from Tibet and the diet has been very one-sided. Because of that KMCH 2010 built its first greenhouse, sponsored by the Swiss water engineer Bastian Etter. It was the first green house in Humla according to Chembal. We would like to believe him on this point. The School Home has since that built a new and larger greenhouse at the Home's current location. When we walked to the School Home 2011, we saw no greenhouses along the way from Simikot. On the same hike in 2016 it was a lot of greenhouses. We like to believe that this was a sign of the of power the good example. We have also tested goats but that project we have put down.



A few years ago, we planted some apple trees at the School Home with varying degrees of success. Planting of fruit trees has been made and is being done successfully elsewhere in Nepal. We have judged this to be so important that we sent a few people to Kathmandu for training and purchased seedlings for both KMCH and for some nearby villages in the previous year. The project has been supported by the New Hope Association. This year, a person from the school

home has been on a course to learn how to attend a nursery that he will start in our village.

It takes several years before the trees will bear fruit, but we hope that the power of the good example will inspire more villages to plant fruit trees. We have, as reported in previous newsletters, received indications that the latest plantations have evolved well both at the School Home and in the affected villages.

In the long term, major efforts are needed in Upper Humla to reforest land that has been devastated for decades on its forests. *(The picture on the left shows a slope outside the village of Yangar that before was a forest that now is completely bare.)* But then it is not primarily fruit trees, but the species that previously formed the basis for the forests of Humla that will be planted. But these are projects of completely different dimensions than KMCH can or intend to work with. With our project TPP, we hope, however, to "pull our little straw into the stack".

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Greetings from the Board of

KMCH Support Group

by

Hans



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