

Jubilee of Nehru's visit

Agreement has reached between Bhutan and India authorities to jointly celebrate the golden jubilee of Jawaharlal Nehru's first visit to Bhutan next year.

India's first Prime Minister visited Bhutan in September 1958 that paved the beginning of a new relationship between these countries. The visit opened up the Bhutan to outside world, ended its century long isolation and delved the path to economic development. The decision was taken during a meeting between the Indian and Bhutanese officials held in Thimphu.

No movements

Refugee Coordination Unit (RCU) under Home Ministry had imposed restriction on movements of people inside camps in Beldangi after 7 pm some time ago.

Raj Kumar Lamichane, District Police Superintendent of Armed Police Force base-camp in Beldangi informed that the decision was taken taking into consideration the fragile security situation in the camps. The decision came at a time when a pamphlets, claimed to be posted by the Communists Party of Bhutan (CPB-MLM) had been distributed threatening at least 12 individuals to leave the camps or face physical action.

SAHR concerns

The South Asians for Human Rights (SAHR) has expressed concern over the delay in democratization process of Bhutan.

In a statement issued on December 7 at the end of its regional meet held in Kathmandu, the regional human rights group called for speedy democratization in Bhutan.

It further demanded for effective guarantees for human rights in the country and a fair settlement of the crisis.

30 civilians to spend 9 years jailbird life

Bhutan News Service
Kathmandu, September

The Samtse district court has given its verdict in favor of sending 30 southern Bhutanese to jail for five to nine years on charges of involving in seditious activities.

The court after five months long proceedings sent 30 people, who are blamed to have joined the Communist Party of Bhutan (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist), to jail.

The accused were sentenced in accordance with the provisions of the National Security Act of Bhutan, 1992, and the Penal Code of

Bhutan, 2004.

The government mouth piece Kuensel quoted the court officials saying that using a religious façade called the Srijana Sanskrit Sangathan, the group had held several meetings to discuss Maoist ideology and to collect money and food grain for the Communist Party of Bhutan. People who attended the meetings were made to fill up membership forms.

The meetings were held in Katarey and Ugyentse villages in Samtse where they are accused to have designed plans to recruit local people in their mission.

Further the court said they have set up camps in the forest for armed training to locals on

use of weapons and explosives.

The court said, two Class XII students, had connected with the Bhutanese in exile to attend briefing sessions on Political and Ideology Training conducted by the cadres of the CPB. The government also claimed that the Nepal Maoist and Communist Party of Nepal, Bhutan Peoples' Party, Druk National Congress, and Bhutan Gorkha National Liberation Front were also involved in imparting training and briefing these people for use of arms.

Some of the defendants are also accused to have supported Bhutanese in exile, and forming secret groups like

Pragathisel Sanskriti Pariwar, Srijana Sanskriti Pariwar and Saipatri Sanskriti Pariwar which are formed to strengthen the communist ideology in the country.

Police claimed they recovered detonators and other materials used for making improvised explosive devices, membership forms of the Party and All Bhutan Revolutionary Student Union, note-books containing revolutionary lyrics and coded membership lists, coded names and addresses of donors and five numbers of Nepali textbooks on Communist Party from the arrested people.

The police had arrested 39 people. The status of other nine still is unknown.

BNS extends support to fire victims

TBR Correspondent
Beldangi, December-1

Bhutan News Service (BNS) and Nepal FM Network have distributed an estimated 1,700 pieces of clothes to fire victims in Beldangi-I camp on November 30 amidst a special function.

UNHCR representative from its sub-office in Damak, Camp Committee Members among other representatives of the aid agencies were present on the occasion.

Editor of the BNS, T. P. Mishra and representative of Nepal FM Network Krishna Dahal formally handed over the clothes to camp secretary of Beldangi-I T. B. Gurung.

Addressing the distribution function, Mishra demanded the management of fire brigadier near the camps to prevent from such huge loss in future

incidents.

Similarly, Dahal expressed gratitude over getting an opportunity to extend support during such an emergency period.

Meanwhile, Fire Victims Relief Committee in Kathmandu comprising Ashok Gurung (Khudunabari), Mishra (Beldangi-II), Som Subedi (Beldangi-I) and Deepak Giri (Khudunabari) distributed Nepalese currency 29, 321 that was collected from Bhutanese and their well-wishers staying in Kathmandu.

The committee with consensus from CMC and other aid agencies distributed Rs. 425 to each family whose huts were completely and partially damaged by the fire.

Gurung over a telephone conversation with the BNS expressed gratitude to all contributors for helping people in camps during emergency pe-



A fire victim woman receiving support from representative of Nepal FM Krishna Dahal. Editor of BNS, in jacket, holds cash meant for distribution. Photo: BNS/Jeetan Subba

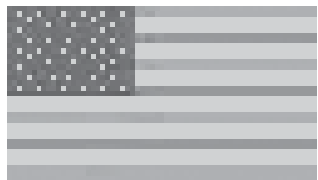
riod. "Relief Committee in Kathmandu thanks all who contributed to fire victims", said Gurung, adding that the support extended by the UNHCR and other organizations to deliver those clothes

on the hands of fire victims was always praiseworthy.

At least 68 huts were damaged both completely and partially when the fire broke out in Beldangi-I camp on November 9.

US begins formal interviews

As part of speeding up the resettlement process, the second stage of interviewing of the exiled Bhutanese interested to third country resettlement by the US government officials has begun. The files of those people interviewed by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has been handed over to the US government's Department of Home Security (DHS). The DHS takes the final decision on individual cases if one is suit for the program. The interviewing process began at the IOM field office in Damak. First batch of people face the interview on the same day. A person appear-



ing the interview while talking to Bhutan News Service said he hopes to fly to the US by mid January. According to him, those expressing extra interest in third country resettlement and making contacts with UNHCR and the IOM are expected to be chosen in first batch to fly to the US.

"I neither am under protection case due to torture in Bhutan nor with



vulnerable case identified by the UNHCR. Yet I am called for the interview twice within last one week," he said.

The DHS team will be in Damak for two weeks taking finals decision on some thousands people to be flown in the next few months.

The health check up for these Bhutanese interviewed by the DHS will be done in December. BNS

Indian MPs delegation to visit Thimphu

A delegation of Indian MPs is scheduled to visit Thimphu and take an account of the preparation of the first democratic elections in Bhutan. A release issued by Anand Swaroop Verma of Bhutan Solidarity disclosed this fact. The decision was made unanimously in a seminar organized by Bhutan Solidarity in New Delhi on November 22. The seminar also decided to offer a chance to exiled Bhutanese to participate in the democratic process in Bhutan.

"Another resolution of the seminar took the problem of



Anand Swaroop Verma Photo: BNS

not only a problem between Bhutan and Nepal, but India is also involved with this issue very closely, and demanded a tripartite dialogue between Nepal, Bhutan and India to solve the problem" said the release. BNS

EDITORIAL

Condemning Atrocities

At a time when election date is drawing closer in the country, the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGOB) has yet again flickered signals of continued atrocities and suppression upon innocent Nepali-ethnic Bhutanese. Even the history has left several rooms to prove such atrocities and suppressions upon innocent pro-democratic Bhutanese.

The state-directed court announced jail terms ranging from 5-9 years to 30 innocent civilian from southern district of the country claiming their involvement in Communist Party of Bhutan (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist). The RGOB has claimed that the accused ones had carried out subversive activities against Bhutan. How could the RGOB claim such things when it does not hold 'Independent Judiciary' system in the country? The question of undergoing all norms of fair trial in the name of delivering justice to those detainees remained a farce in the context of Bhutan. This is yet an instance of Bhutan's tactics to derail the repatriation process.

It is a matter of 'shame' on the part of the RGOB to transform innocent civilians to 'jailbirds' for such a long time despite their innocence. Is this what 'democratic exercise' mean? Besides, the condition of hundreds of such detainees of early 1990s peaceful demonstration in the country still remains unheard to the international community.

The atrocities of the RGOB have really crossed the limitation thereby leaving enough space to raise questions on the advocacy level of international rights bodies and the so-called big democracies of the world. Isn't this Bhutan's 'villain' role in the eyeball of international communities in the name that it would soon step towards democratization process?

There is always necessity on the part of the world community including international rights bodies to initiate noteworthy and stronger measures to furnish fair justice to those innocent civilians. The RGOB shouldn't be led freed from delivering entire justification to continued atrocities since centuries.

Opinion & column

A Century of Suppression

Struggle for justice continues

"The second barbaric nature of Wangchuk dynasty, whose fourth descendant formulated the fallacies of Gross National Happiness, was unveiled in 1990 when he termed thousands of his loyal citizens as 'terrorists'."

UNFORTUNATE enough, despite Lhotsampas toiled for it, this month we are celebrating the centenary of the establishment of monarchy in Bhutan, as refugees here in Nepal. Proud to state, Bhutan's monarchy would not have survived in present form had there been no cooperation from the southerners. Yet, it were they who faced the filthiest hatred from the regime.

December 17 completes a circle of Wangchuk dynasty ruling over the most isolated human settlement. Changes have been restricted, freedoms are torn and humanhood looted. Lhotsampas prayed Kings were the reincarnation of the Lord Vishnu, but in reality it turned to be the demon that seized the virginity of Nepaliness. The voices for equality suppressed, the heads held high were chopped off and hands raised against brutality tied back. We did receive a whirling stone in response to banquet thrown.

The decent way towards sustainability and prestige has to go on. We have been shy to out mission yet we are not out of it.

During these hundred years, being suppressed, we lost many of our great leaders. The journey started with the murder of Garja Man Gurung in 1917. The murder of Gurung the then Paro Penlop still remains a mystery. Neither the rulers spoke of it, nor we searched the cause. The murder of Gurung is the beginning of the black days for Lhotsampas in this dragon kingdom.

Putting an end the Nepali rule in southern district, the Bhutanese regime of Wangchuk elite imported a moderator for us from India. To trace out, the Dorjis who have support the Ugyen Wangchuk in his mission for establishment of monarchy like we did, came from Kalimpong in India, received special privileges in royal family and ruled us for years. The last of powerful member of this family died last year – Lhendup Dorji who once had faced the fate like ours.

The Dorjis, who came from Nepali dominated Kalimpong maintained links with southerners. This was natural since they were specially mobilized to look after the

administration of the southern district.

The Wangchuks did not like this to happen. Jigme Palden Dorji had maintained the relation of Mit (friend-in-law) with Mahasur Chhetri. Unscrupulous suspect of the Wangchuk regime Dorjis forging alliance with southerners against the Thimphu palace further dwindle the status of Lhotsampas.

During the early 1950s, we lost Chhetri, to whom we can term the bravest son that Lhotsampas even had. Enlightened personalities like D. B. Chhetri, D. B. Gurung had to flee the country in search of safer place for life. The attempt in 1950s was for equality, freedom, end of ill treatment and opening up the statement mercenaries for benefit of all Bhutanese. Yet, the regime assumed the nation has been the hereditary property and gift for them.

The exclusion of Lhotsampas was no merely an incident. The project was planned since the inception of monarchy in this nation. We have a popular idiom: kam paryo bhando, aaphal tero thando. It was only the Nepal, nearest nation, that had monarchy in power when Wangchuks assumed similar status in Bhutan. The Wangchuks thought it was important to maintain good relation with Lhotsampas to get positive nod from the Nepal monarchy for establishment of Wangchuk dynasty as hereditary line in Bhutan.

During this century, we have been swept twice. Still we have survived our hopes for justice. The first was in early 1950s when the regime cleared the southern districts. Thousands of Lhotsampas evicted during that time live in India. The demand for justice was responded with barbaric nature of the hill caste bhotes descended from the other side of Himalayan range – Tibet, the Bhot.

The second barbaric nature of Wangchuk dynasty, whose fourth descendant formulated the fallacies of Gross National Happiness, was unveiled in 1990 when he termed thousands of his loyal citizens as 'terrorists'. The story started with a mere incident when then royal councilor Tek Nath

Rizal reported the prevailing of rampant corruption in the bureaucracy.

Interestingly, the ULFA and BODO militants operating armed struggle against the Indian establishment were friendlier to the Wnagchuk dynasty compared to sentient villagers in the south.

In 1974 during his speech in Gelephu, the fourth monarch had said, 'the people in the south are neither from Nepal nor from Kalimpong in India. They are the real Bhutanese.' Within years he stated this, the plan for eviction was formulated. In a period of 15 years, the king interestingly termed these 'real Bhutanese' to be the economic migrants who entered Bhutan to grab the opportunities.

The pages are short to mention the stories of hindrances and challenges that we faced while transforming the Bhutan nation from isolation to modern one. The regime cannot repay the debt we clamped on him.

We toiled to unite the kingdom since Shabdrung Ngawng Namgyal shoulder us with the responsibility in 1624. It was our ancestors and the Shabdrung who paved the way for establishment of Bhutan as an independent nation state. By the end of four centuries, the country has begun to split. Large section of the southern part was given to India in 1865 by Jigme Namgyal, father of Ugyen Wangchuk. The process continues till today. Recent reports revealed that plans are underway to chop off southern district to cede into India and large part in un-demarcated northern districts into China.

The presence of Chinese influence in Bhutan was shocking for India who took unexpected initiatives in recent months to express its dissatisfaction over the decision of the Bhutanese regime to allow China enter the Bhutanese territory.

The story might not end, but to end up this write up, what we must confess now is not to let the regime take another opportunity to play with our life and dignity, not to let the regime fulfill its political interest by selling land to India and China. The struggle for justice should continue, with hope that the day will come when we receive the relief.

(The writer is President of APFA – Bhutan)

Matter of concern

THE distribution of 'refugee identity card' jointly by the team of UNHCR and Nepal government officials has already begun from Sanischare camp. Authorities concerned have yet again failed to include those Bhutanese, undeclared as refugees, who are languishing in different belts of Nepal and India under the census team's priority.

A significant portion of Bhutanese refugees, approximately 50, 000, are staying in different cities of India including West Bengal, Assam etc and in Jhapa and Morang districts of Nepal as non-registered refugees. Majority of this populace have neither obtained citizenship identity cards nor has any concerned authorities taken initiatives for declaring them as refugees from Bhutan.

They still posse a heavy load of adequate documents to prove themselves as genuine Bhutanese citizens— forcible evictees of early 1990s and thereafter. If authorities concerned still ignore this population to declare them as 'refugees from Bhutan' then there left no alternatives for their safe and dignified lives ahead.

The expectation for being their predica-

ment addressed by the UNHCR and government of Nepal yet again remained unheard. The non-registered refugees are sure to be barred from receiving refugee identity cards as concerned authorities haven't yet flashed green light for their registration process. And, this ironically implies that they are likely to be in quandary thereby dashing their lives towards further dilemma. If such a situation crops-up then non-registered refugees will neither be measured as citizens of India or Nepal nor do they fall under any probable option's priority including third country resettlement.

The UNCHR is uniformly concerned on their problem too, as this population cannot simply return to their original homeland, Bhutan despite having fear of being persecuted by the absolute Druk oligarchy. If this population is neglected further there are chances on their behalf to be refugees once more. They should at least be recognized as Bhutanese refugees thereby issuing them refugee identity cards. This initiative of the UNCHR would certainly help non-registered refugees to be qualified for any possible solution in the near future.

The Ignored Refugees



By T P Mishra

The UNHCR including concerned government authorities, more precisely Nepal and India, have superior role in addressing the problem of non-registered refugees. Or else, these government authorities shouldn't step backward to provide them with the citizenship identity cards in a legal means but only should they wish for.

The problem of non-registered, undeclared as refugees, should not be left to fester. It should be regulated in a manner that their choice is given high priority. (Mishra is also President for Bhutan Chapter of Third World Media Network)

From Regime ECB disqualifies a party

The Election Commission of Bhutan has said the leaders of the Bhutan People's United Party (BPUP) have no vision, goals and aspirations for a democratic Bhutan. The ECB, but, did not explain under what rationale the party leaders have been termed so. In a notice, ECB said it cannot under the present criteria register BPUP as a political party of the country.

Incidentally, the party lacks

any persons having direct link with the royal family like Sangey Ngedup of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and Jigme Thinley of the Druk Phuensum Tshokpa (DPT).

"It lacks credible leadership of the calibre that is needed to run and manage the affairs of the nation. It lacks both maturity and the appropriate mix and strength in terms of its membership," the press statement

by the ECB said.

The ECB claimed more than 80 percent of the members of the party are students having left their education career incomplete.

BPUP is the first party to be announced in the country after the king authorized establishing political parties.

The ECB release further said, "The charter submitted had no clear ideology, vision and mission, indicating the lack of leadership with capability to envision goals and objectives of the group."

The party said it will file an appeal against the decision of the commission. **BNS**

Facts Behind The Scene

Domestic Impact of Refugee Admissions in US

The demographic characteristics of arrivals from the 20 largest source countries (which contributed over 99 percent of Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 arrivals into the United States) illustrate the variation among refugee groups. Median age ranged from 18 years for arrivals from Burundi to 33 years of age for arrivals from Cuba. The median age for all refugees resettled in FY 2005 was 24 years. Fifty-five percent of refugees from Liberia were female. Fifty-two percent of refugees from Sierra Leone and the former Yugoslavia were female. Fifty-one percent of refugees from Columbia were female; and close to fifty-one percent of refugees from Rwanda, Laos, and the former Soviet Union were female.

Males were proportionately the majority of refugees from several other countries, namely, Eritrea (76



Vidhyapati
Mishra

percent), Iraq (60 percent), and Sudan (59 percent); while male refugees from the remaining countries are represented by a range of 45 percent to 55 percent of the total.

Considerable variation among refugee groups can be seen among specific age categories. Arrivals under the age of five varied from a high of 18 percent of the Laotians to a low of 3 percent of those from Iran. Arrivals of school-age children (five to 17 years of age) varied from a high of 38 percent for those from the Congo (DROC) to a low of 12 percent for those from Eritrea. Arrivals of working-age refugees (18 to 64 years of age) varied from 82 percent for those from Eritrea to a low of 41 percent for those from Laos. Arrivals of

retirement-age (65 years or older) varied from a high of 7 percent for arrivals from the former Soviet Union to a low of less than 1 percent from Rwanda, Burundi, the Congo (DROC), and Eritrea.

For all arrivals, 10 percent were under the age of five, 28 percent were of school age, 56 percent were of working age, and 4 percent were of retirement age.

Resettling States

During FY 2005, 77 percent of newly arrived refugees resettled in 16 States. California (14 percent) resettled the largest number of refugees, followed by Minnesota (12 percent), Florida (9 percent), Texas (6 percent), Washington (5 percent), New York (5 percent), Arizona (3 percent), Georgia (3 percent), and Wisconsin (3 percent). The States of Ohio, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Massachusetts, Virginia, and North Carolina respectively resettled just under 3 percent of the newly arrived refugees.

Source: *Proposed Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2007*

Declaration Dé Exile

**BHUTAN HAS NOT DONE
ENOUGH FOR PRESS FREEDOM**

On Press Freedom and Freedom of Speech and Expression in Bhutan

Jointly by : Bhutan Press Union (BPU, Third World Media Network (TWMN) Bhutan Chapter and Association of Press Freedom Activists (APFA) Bhutan

Series 1

Background

Press Freedom and freedom of speech and expression were never incorporated into national policies of Bhutan all through the ages. Fundamentally, freedom of expression and speech was termed anti national approach and access to media was regarded an attempt to destroy the long preserved culture of closed society. The Bhutanese rulers never prescribed that media would be the best means to educate people and a good partner for the good governance. Despite it signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the rights conferred by this international

legal instrument, Article 19 we stress, were ignored by Bhutanese authorities.

TV was banned until 1999. All media outlets were strictly controlled and censored by the government until recently when it opened up way for private media as part of the king's efforts to democratize his regime.

When the struggle for human rights, democracy and equality began in early 1990s, the political parties formed at that time to lead the movement included press freedom in their demand list. Subsequently, the deployment of the military force in southern districts silenced the voices for freedom of speech and expression and freedom of the press. Those

supporting this justifiable demand were called anti nationals and were evicted. Thus led the strengthening of the fight for freedom of speech and expression and the freedom of the press. Thus, we support, in broader sense, the demand for establishment of democracy and human rights in the country considering that press freedom is impossible in their absence.

In Bhutan's rapidly changing socio-economic, cultural and political scenario, information technology and media are already vital forces that touch all national priorities.

To be Continued

File download available at:
www.bhutannewservice.com

Exile Voice

People threatened in camp, CPB-MLM denies involvement

**Bhutan News Service
Damak, November 12**

A pamphlet, claimed to be posted by the Communists Party of Bhutan (CPB-MLM)-affiliated All Bhutan Revolutionary Students Union (ABSRU) and Bhutan Republican Youths Organisation (BRYO) in Beldangi-I camp has 'blacklisted' at least 12 individuals and carried warning to take people's action against them.

The pamphlet is reportedly learnt to be signed by the Vice-president of the ABSRU and president of the BRYO.

The pamphlet has also accused Chabi Lal Thapa, Moti Khar Gurung, Arjun Subba, Dillip Kumar Dahal, Ram Rai, Toya Nath Nepal, Bhim Subba, Kiran Subba, Lok Nath Adhikari, Buddhi Man Gurung, Sakun Subba, and N. P. Koirala of Beldangi-I camp of advocating for third country resettlement.

The pamphlet has also issued ultimatum that the accused ones should either leave camps within 15 days or apologies before CPB-MLM.

Meanwhile, those who were 'blacklisted' in the pamphlet have appealed to the Camp Supervisor in Beldangi-I requesting for an urgent security.

In an application filed to the supervisor, they have stated the ABSRU and BRYO have said, through pamphlet, that incase of non-compliance of their notice, they have to bear either kidnapping, physical assault or may have to face the death penalty.

"There is a possibility of attacking on us any time. we are really worried and mentally tortured about our safety and security inside the camp", reads the appeal.

Arjun Subba, one of those blacklisted in the pamphlet, over a telephone response to the BNS query said they were feeling unsecured after the pamphlet was posted. "We are confident that it was posted by the MLM-affiliated ABSRU and BRYO", said Subba, adding that there was a need to create secured atmosphere for them in camps.

However, in a press statement issued on Monday, Coordinator of Exile Coordination Committee-Nepal of the CPB-MLM Tara Gurung has refuted posting any such pamphlets. The statement has further said that the party does not have such policy.

Meanwhile, 'Binod' of CPB-MLM, who denied revealing his party position, over a telephone conversation with Bhutan News Service (BNS) from undisclosed location, claimed that the pamphlet as such would never be done by their party as it is beyond their party policy.

"This may be a forceful pressure from the regressive elements to make innocent people in camps to opt for the option of third country resettlement", said Binod, adding, "Those people are simply trying to fall under the UNHCR criteria of protection so that they could fly to the US at the earliest".

Binod also sought attention of Nepal government and the UNHCR officials in probing into the facts by maintaining 'balance' during the investigation process.

THIRD VOICE

Unless they are enough communistic, demure and dauntless, they should be dominated and deprived because if they are freed from these hazards, they can still do nothing.

If women must be free from the societal barriers backed by male dominance and chauvinism, they should posse by demure and dauntless; beside womanish must be their motto. Unless a woman is proud by heart for being a woman member of the society restoration of equal status is impossible. A woman who is woman by fate should be equally woman by profession and must also be the woman by philosophy and ideology. A woman who is such is a real woman being lacked by Bhutan.

A woman should argue how she can be machine by just reproducing the young ones? And why can't she be the God who does a godly deed? This is the first symptom of womanish. Secondly, despite cursing their fate, women must jointly try to build the collective effort so that they



PURANAGHARE

can transform the devils in to the boon. They must again be dauntless in their pace and demure in their approach to the up-liftment of womanhood.

The age is too modern and tough, one who is not cautious and aware of the prevailing facts finds difficulties to survive and let male or female be the survivor. A woman who is out of womanish, demureness and dauntlessness will just only become the slave of her counterpart, negligent in the eye of the society and go unrecognized forever. Therefore, let us be updated according to time and upgraded as per the need of the situation. If we try from today we can make heaven out of hell and if we just remain ignorant today we will make hell out of heaven tomorrow.

Association of Medical Doctors of Asia (AMDA) having primary objective of contributing for development of health sector in Nepal, took the responsibility of primary health care for exiled Bhutanese in January 2001 shouldering all activities of Save the Children, UK.



Since 2001, it has been running Primary Health Care Project for Bhutanese Refugees with an objective to provide health and nutrition services. Vidhyapati Mishra of Bhutan News Service talked to Project Director, **Dr. Nirmal Rimal** on various aspects of the project. Excerpt:

What are the current activities of AMDA Nepal?

AMDA-Nepal was established in 1990 as a national NGO. It is registered with Government of Nepal (GoN) and affiliated with Social Welfare Council. It is a chapter of AMDA International based in Okayama, Japan.

We have AMDA Hospital at Damak. It is also the primary referral center for exiled Bhutanese from western camps. There is Siddhartha Children and Women Hospital in Butwal and AMDA Mechi Hospital at Dhulabari under construction. Besides these, we have AMDA Nepal mental health program, Thankot Satellite Clinic, Dental and Specialist Clinic at Jorpati, Geriatric Centre at Pashupati and Street Children Program in Hattigauda. Further, we have various human resource development programs.

What does PHCP for Bhutanese Refugees do?

Primary Health Care Project (PHCP) for Bhutanese Refugees is being implemented by AMDA Nepal under UNHCR's fund and material support of World Food Program (WFP) since January 2001.

Primary objective of the program is to provide health and nutrition services to exiled Bhutanese living in seven different camps in eastern Nepal. Beneficiary population as of September are 8,490-under five, 98,601- over five and 10,7091- general population.

What are the main areas that are funded by UNHCR?

We primarily have four projects. First is the food and nutrition program where we focus on supplementary food commodities. Secondly, we have domestic needs and household support that is relief assistance. Other two includes sanitation- vector and pest con-

Health indicators are satisfactory: Dr. Nirmal

trol, and health and nutrition where we prioritize general health service, community health service, prevention and combating HIV/AIDS and sector support management.

Whom do you target supplementary feeding in camps?

Our supplementary feeding includes dried skimmed milk, eggs, fresh fruits, oil, and premixed uniloto. The beneficiaries are malnourished children, pregnant and lactating mothers, and tuberculosis (TB) patients and elderly sick. Malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies are maintained

at low level. There is food basket monitoring system in camp under WFP support. Pre-mixed uniloto and oil are supplied by WFP.

What are domestic needs and household support?

We have provision of sanitary napkins four meter and two pieces under garment to all women of reproductive age. We provide baby blankets to all newborn and sick babies. Bhutanese Refugee Women Forum produces these supplies in the camps.

What is the achievement of sanitation programs?

Incidence of communicable diseases and the morbidity are reduced drastically. Hygienic environment is maintained in all camps. Treatment of malaria cases is quick and we have seen it very effective. We receive medicines for TB and malaria from GoN. Treatment for falciparum malaria and microscopes has been procured for effective malaria diagnosis and treatment.

For vector and pest control, we have ultra-violet laser facility (ULF) fogging up to three rounds in all camps when the case of Japanese encephalitis is reported in the community. Residual spray at the places where cluster of falciparum malaria is noted or Kala-zar is identified in the camps.

How does AMDA manage general health services to people in camps?

We adopt the principle of primary health care. We run curative health services through 10 health centers in camps. All PHCP are well equipped with new furniture, all Maternal and Child Health (MCH) units have provision of new delivery bed and other necessary items. We have good malaria diagnosis laboratory and sufficient drugs for chronic diseases, STI (Sexually Transmitted Infection) patients and child illness. We provide immediate territory referral services to needy patients.

MCH units of health centers provide reproductive health services. We provide psychological and mental health services and referral to primary, secondary and tertiary level of hospitals. Primary

referrals go to AMDA hospital-Damak, Mechi Eye Care Center and Mechi Zonal Hospital and we make secondary referrals to Koshi Zonal Hospital. As tertiary referrals needy patients are sent to Dharan (BP Koirala Memorial Hospital) and Kathmandu.

We have targeted to bring crude mortality rate under four and achieved the target as 3.6 as projected. We have conducted delivery by trained other than Trained Birth Attendants (TBA) and our achievement is 96 percent. Furthermore, we have 95 percent immunization coverage and crude birth rate is 16.6 as projected.

We strongly administer community health services. Health education, cleaning campaign, mass activities like de-worming of school children, mass polio, vitamin A distribution, TT (Tetanus Toxoid) programs and mass nutrition monitoring activities viz yearly weight screening and nutrition survey are regular in our project.

That means you are satisfied with project's achievements?

This is an undeniable fact. MCH, mental health, OPD (Out Patient Department), emergency, family planning, supplementary feeding, vaccination and immunization and community health services are satisfactorily managed. Still, medicine supply has been regularized. Overall indicators of health sta-

tus of camp population are satisfactory as per the given indicators. Reproductive health is extended to school and community. Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) service has been initiated in all camps.

How do you address such a large number of patients?

Maximum number of patients is managed in camp level. People with chronic medical conditions who need tertiary medical referral services have been accordingly facilitated.

What are the future activities?

We hope to strengthen 24-hour emergency services with training and provision of supplies. We want to manage three ambulances, one for eastern and two for western camps for effective referral service. We are planning to conduct refresher trainings on voluntary counseling and testing services for HIV and provide adequate medicines with a focus on Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) and Opportunistic Infections (OI) except anti-retroviral. Additionally, we conduct school HIV/AIDS awareness programs, explore vocational trainings as staff nurse and health assistant besides ANM, CMA and lab assistant, and ensure the availability of PEP, Hepatitis B vaccines and emergency contraceptives along with essential drugs and pharmacy management system.

On what basis does AMDA decide secondary and tertiary referrals?

We have a special board to make necessary referrals. We need to work under the guidelines set by UNHCR for making such referrals. We have representatives from UNHCR, AMDA, Mechi Zonal Hospital, Bhutan Health Association, health program officers and health service sub-committee under camp management committee in the board that discusses the cases we receive and make a final decision.

There are reports of gross negligence in making prompt referrals to higher centers.

I really don't agree on this. We have never denied the needy cases. But, it should be understood that there are limitations in our referral guidelines as set by UNHCR. I do agree that there are patients who need immediate referrals but their cases do not fall under our policy. Ours is a primary health care project. So, patients requiring expensive treatment as heart surgery are said to have been denied and there are around 200 such patients. But, this is our compulsion. Statistics as of September reveals that we made 14,325 primary referrals, 1,011 secondary referrals and 270 tertiary referrals.

What is the best part in PHCP for Bhutanese Refugees?

I am very happy to inform that on average a refugee visits a doctor 5.7 times a year. This is the best indicator of good health that we ensure to the refugee community.

Refugees Around Us

Two of Sudan's 'Lost Boys' return home from Cuba

JUBA, Sudan, November 29 (UNHCR) – Lots of people have heard about the "Lost Boys of Sudan" who ended up in the United States after years on the run in their war-torn country or stuck in refugee camps in surrounding countries. Not many know about the lost boys who ended up in Cuba.

For the first time, two of them have returned home with UNHCR help after more than two decades in the Caribbean island nation. Following weeks of preparations, Michael Bol Deng, 36, and Archangelo Kuech Gur, 37, reached Juba on November 15 after a two-day journey from Havana via Paris and Nairobi. Met on their arrival by staff of the UN refugee agency and government officials, the two men said they hoped to track down relatives and build a new life in a country whose culture and language they have almost forgotten.

"We wish to welcome you warmly to participate in the development process with the skills you have learned while overseas," William Chan, deputy chairman of the South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, told the returning sons. "After I secure a job, I will then go to trace my family members whom I have not heard



Archangelo Kuech Gur (left) and Michael Bol Deng pose by a UNHCR vehicle in South Sudan.

Source: UNHCR

from for the last 23 years," said Gur, who hopes to use his doctorate in veterinary medicine to help build South Sudan's animal husbandry sector. Deng is a trained agronomist, a skill sure to be in demand in the predominantly agricultural south. In the immediate future, both returnees plan to stay in Juba where, remarkably, they soon found long-lost relatives or friends to stay with. Gur said he hoped their example might encourage other skilled Sudanese to return to help rebuild a region devastated by years of war and still lacking vital infrastructure and basic services after three years of peace.

"Peace has come and I see no reason why qualified and well-trained colleagues should remain outside," he said, calling specifically on compatriots in Australia, Canada and the United States "to come back home and

face the challenges of development."

He might have added his own cradle of education, Cuba, where hundreds of other lost boys still live. UNHCR hopes that they too might be encouraged to return to South Sudan with their expertise. It is estimated that more than 20,000 Sudanese boys were orphaned or separated from their homes and families by the conflict in the south between 1984 and 2005. In 2001, the United States took in some 3,600, who were sent to cities around the country. But Cuba had offered homes to youngsters from South Sudan much earlier. In 1986, the Cuban government agreed to take in a group of 600 teenage boys and provide them with primary, secondary and university education in Havana. Deng and Gur, who fled to Itang Refugee Camp in Ethiopia in 1984, were among this group.

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