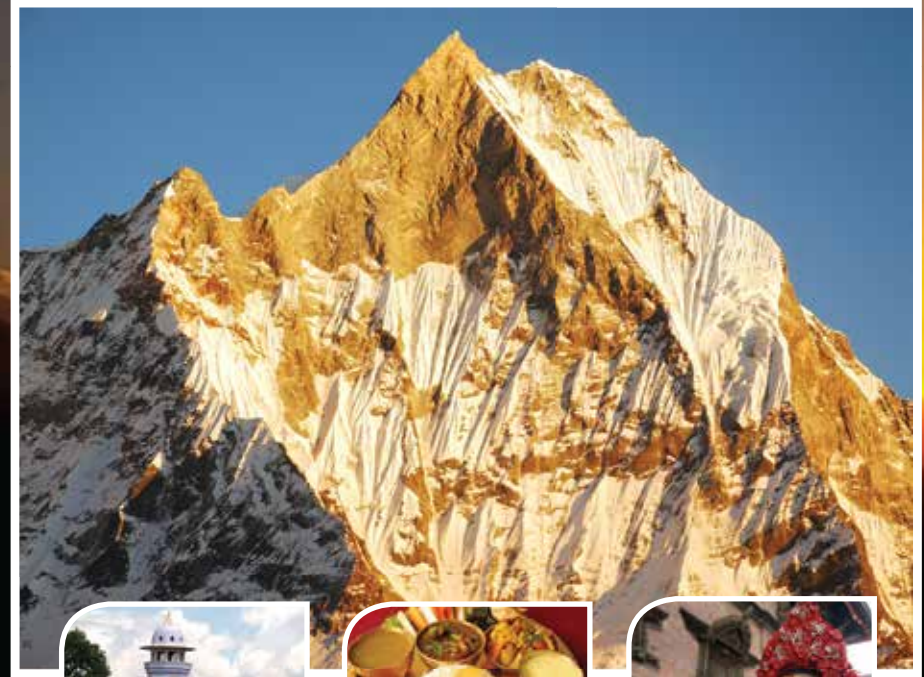
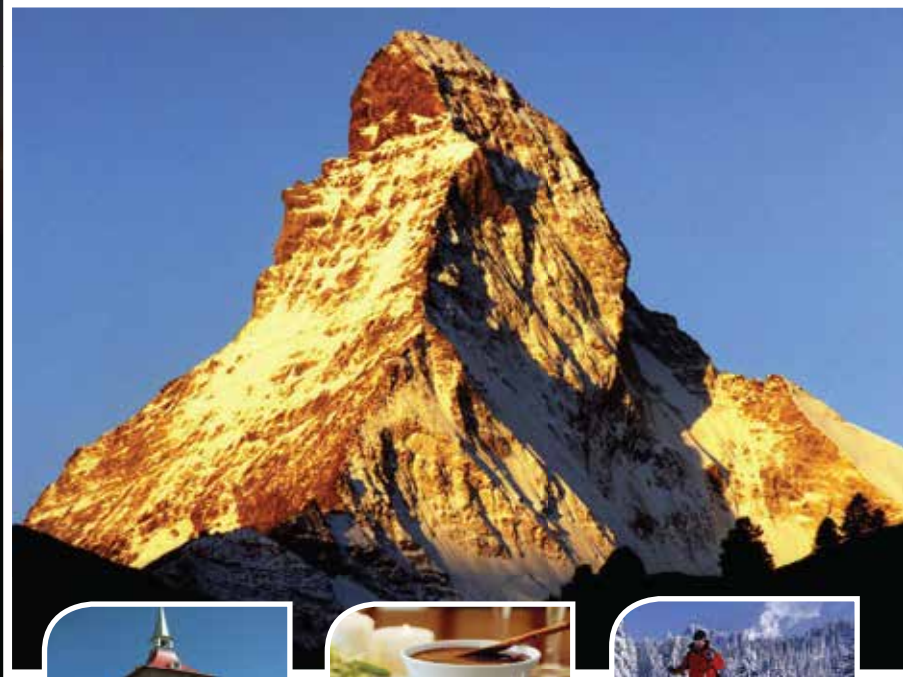


# Meeteri

... beyond friendship



**Special Edition on the**

**Occasion of Swiss National Day**

**August 1, 2014**

**Kathmandu, Nepal**



**NSFS**



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Nepali Village



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## Message from NSFS President, Mr. Bishnu Bhusal

It is my pleasure to present you the third edition of Nepali Swiss Friendship Society (NSFS) Souvenir, "Meeteri" on the occasion of Swiss National Day. "Meeteri" is a Nepali word and in English it is called "Beyond Friendship". NSFS regularly brings out this annual Souvenir, which is expected to serve as information sharing platform on culture, friendship and other activities between Nepal and Switzerland. "Meeteri" is widely circulated in Nepal and Switzerland among the friends of Nepal and Switzerland. Already in the third year of publication, "Meeteri", is widely accepted by our Swiss and Nepali readers as well as the organizations who help us by providing their valuable advertisements.

Among many similarities between Nepal and Switzerland, both countries are also famous for their mountains. Both countries draw lots of tourists from around the globe for the mountain related tourism products. Accordingly, the revenues generated through the mountain based tourism activities contribute significantly to the economy of both nations. Though both countries are landlocked, but they are blessed with the beauty of the mountains. At the cover page of this magazine you will find the tourist activities in the snow capped mountains of Nepal and Switzerland. In Swiss part, people are enjoying skiing and in Nepali part, you can see the high altitude mountaineers with their porters. At the bottom part of the front

page, there are also pictures of landscapes, cities and cultural aspects of both countries. The articles in the magazine are related to Nepal and Switzerland.

Last year passed very encouragingly for us. We were able to increase the membership base of NSFS. This year also, we are continuing to reach the prospective members, who value the friendship between our two countries. All the legal registrations formalities including the Social Welfare Council (SWC) and PAN registration, their renewals were carried out during this period. Our registered office is located at 42, Naya Basti Marg, Baluwatar, Kathmandu and is well equipped to cater the needs of NSFS and its visitors. We have hosted, together with Embassy of Switzerland, the celebration of Swiss National Day at Ekanta Kuna like previous years. Some the photos of the event are presented in this magazine. As part of our cultural activities, last year, we have organized Art Exhibition at NAFA hall at Naxal together with Lumbini Peace Foundation (LPC). Nepali and Swiss artists have contributed their paintings for this exhibition, which was inaugurated by H. E. Dr. Urs Herren, Swiss Ambassador to Nepal. NSFS will be willing to support such exhibitions also in Switzerland through Swiss Chapter of Friendship society.

NSFS has its sisterly ties with the Swiss Chapter of Friendship Society, i.e. Swiss Nepali So-



ciety (SNS). I am pleased to inform you that I have been elected to the Board of Directors of SNS this year as well. Both organizations are committed to promote economic, friendship and cultural ties between the two countries. NSFS is working to promote Nepal-Switzerland Chamber of Commerce through its members, who are presently engaged in trade and commerce between Nepal and Switzerland.

Coming year, in addition to its regular activities, NSFS is planning to carry out small community development initiative related to environment friendly income generation of the communities at Arba, Kaski district. We have chosen Arba community for our first community development program because of past Swiss involvement there. Arba village is at the top of a mountain overlooking the magnificent





Annapurna and Manaslu mountain ranges. About 30 years ago, Swiss Engineers had constructed drinking water supply at Arba. Tapping was far difficult to intake from other mountain, which was blessing to the people at that time. This system is very well maintained by the communities and is in good condition. Though they have clean drinking water at their disposal, but the socio-economic status of that community needs to be improved. Building on the good gesture of Swiss engineers, we are planning to introduce the capacity building program as well as support the communities to engage on organic off seasonal vegetable farming and market their products in nearby cities. We will welcome any helping hands of interested persons/ organizations for this initiative. We can provide further information to interested persons upon request.

This is fourth year of NSFS and like in the past, we are organizing Swiss National Day (August 1<sup>st</sup>) celebration in Kathmandu. NSFS family is pleased to celebrate this day with our Swiss friends here in Nepal. Also this year, we will celebrate it at the premises of Embassy of Switzerland in Ekanta Kuna. We are thankful to H. E. Dr. Urs Herren for extending helping hands and agreeing to host it jointly. After the establishment of Embassy of Switzerland in Nepal, NSFS is pleased to enjoy continued cooperation for the promotion of friendship and culture between our two nations.

I would like to specially thank H. E. Dr. Urs Herren, Ambassador of Switzerland to Nepal, for encouraging us and extending his support to "Meeteri" with his valuable advice and message to the magazine. The tireless effort of NSFS Editorial team deserves big

appreciation to bring this magazine to this shape in limited time. After its publication, "Meeteri" will be posted at our website [www.nepalswiss.org](http://www.nepalswiss.org). Please visit our website for regular NSFS updates.

I hope you will enjoy reading this magazine. We will appreciate your feedbacks and suggestions so that we can improve our future issues. If you have any feedbacks, please send me your emails at [bhusal.bp@gmail.com](mailto:bhusal.bp@gmail.com). Happy reading!

Thank you.

Bishnu Bhusal  
President  
Nepal Swiss Friendship Society (NSFS)

Kathmandu, August 1, 2013



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## Message from H.E. Mr. Urs Herren



H.E. Mr. Urs Herren  
Ambassador  
Embassy of Switzerland

### MESSAGE

Dear members of the Nepali Swiss Friendship Society  
Dear readers of Meeteri

I would like to take this occasion to congratulate the NSFS for its efforts to further promote the close ties that exist between Switzerland and Nepal. I am pleased that six decades of friendship and cooperation find their expression in the third edition of Meeteri.

After one year as Ambassador of Switzerland in Nepal, I continue to be impressed by the large number of long-standing friendships and collaborations, which very often have also resulted in privately sponsored initiatives for the social and economic development of Nepal and for assistance to the most vulnerable and marginalized sections of Nepal's society. Together, they make a significant contribution to development and well-being of many people.

In 2013-14, the official Swiss development cooperation program has further expanded and will reach USD 45 million in 2014. The Embassy has been busy – together with our national partners – to develop a new generation of more than 10 initiatives, mostly in agriculture, transport and vocational education and training. Unfortunately, trade and investment between Switzerland and Nepal have remained at a low level over the last year, but I am confident that with the increased political stability achieved after the very successful Constituent Assembly elections of November 2013, new opportunities in the economic sphere will emerge.

In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to the NSFS for the joint organization of the Swiss National Day celebration also in 2014. I wish all of you much success and good health over the coming year.

Yours sincerely,

  
**Urs Herren**  
Ambassador



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Swiss Village



## Swiss Inspirations!

Interview with Maurizio Folini: by *Khem Lakai*

**Y**ear 2013, Captain Maurizio Folini, a pilot, was in Nepal on one of his many rescue missions. A call from Fishtail Air, informed me that I had a gift from Switzerland from Dr. Floris Tichler an emergency doctor from St. Moritz. Maurizio was delivering a package of *Appenzeller Bieberli*, my favorite delicacy from Switzerland. Hoping to meet the famous pilot I rushed to pick up my gift, but I was minutes short as he had already left for a life saving mission in the Khumbu region. However later, on December 6, 2013, I did get to meet him in St. Moritz. I would like to share, as he shared with me, his inspirational story through "Meeteri"

Maurizio Folini is a world record holder rescue pilot who has saved many lives in the remote areas of the Himalayas. He had been silently doing these godly rescue acts, until on 19<sup>th</sup> of May, 2013 he became famous. On this day he carried out the world's highest long line rescue operation, on Lhotse at 7800m. Anyone knowing about mountain rescues knows this is an almost impossible task due to the elevation and the inability to hold lift. Maurizio was the pilot and his crews were Simone Moro and Armin Senoner. In another mission, they rescued a Romanian National, Alex Gavan from the Camp 2 of **Dhaulagiri along with 12 other climbers. Similarly, he** also helped to collect and dispose various materials and rubbish left by the expedition teams that either became



victim or witness of the April 18 avalanche that claimed the lives of 18 Sherpas; a dark day in the climbing history of Nepal.

Born in Sondrio Italy, since his childhood Maurizio was fascinated by the mountains. He attended the agricultural school in Chur (Switzerland) which was very difficult for him because he had to learn to speak German. He took on the challenge as he knew that taste of hardship was what was needed

to unleash his potential. He wanted to be a mountain Helicopter pilot.

This is his story in his own words.

### 1. How did you start your journey to become a world-famous rescue pilot?

My father first introduced me to the beautiful Valtellina Mountains. Exploring mountains was first my passion but after some years it changed into a profession. In 1989, I became an Inter-





national Mountain Guide. My mother grew up in Milano during the Second World War; she taught me the values of life. For example, you must be willing to give up something of yourself for the lives of others. This particular teaching has stayed central in my life. As a helicopter pilot with a passion for mountain exploring and flying I was challenged to learn more about mountains, winds, terrain and the ability of the helicopter. After some experience with paragliding and flying gliders I decided I wanted to go to flight school and eventually, in 1995 I received my Commercial Helicopter Pilot licence from Flight School in California. I began to work as Pilot for a Swiss Company and later on I also flew in Italy, Austria, and Germany. For the past 4 years I am flying in the Nepalese mountains during the climbing season (April/May/November). I have already totalled 10,000 flight hours mostly from cargo and passenger transport and mountain rescue.

## 2. What inspired you to travel all the way to Nepal and train others?

Nepal is a beautiful country with amazing mountain. I am a pilot and mountain guide, it was a dream for me to come to Nepal since my childhood, now I have the possibility to visit Nepal as a Pilot and as a climber, isn't it just great!

In the Alps we have years of experiences in helicopter mountain rescue, with some friends I decided to share this in Nepal, it is very important to know and to learn all the rescue techniques to avoid problems and Nepal is certainly the country where I could apply my expertise.

If I may add, everything matters. For instance, we got involved in a cleaning up camp after a tragic avalanche because I noticed the release of kerosene fuel, from discarded tanks

would cause soil and water contamination: water in the lower areas inhabited by people that depends on terraces and the water. How could I leave the mess knowing that I could clean it up, with a small effort?

## 3. When you learned that you have made a world record for a rescue at such a high elevation - how did you feel about it?

During this rescue mission I was concentrated on the mission: searching for people, calculating the necessary helicopter power for the rescue, and considering the risk of bad weather. You don't have that the luxury to check exactly your altitude, when you know every second counts and you could save one more life. I soon realized I was flying very high, but in that moment making a record wasn't relevant. We were prepared to save lives and endure the hardship technically, physically and mentally. Fortunately, the weather and wind condition



allowed me to perform this miraculous rescue operation. Behind the success of my mission is also a strong competent team, made up of Italians, Swiss and dedicated Nepalis. The aim wasn't to set a record but to save lives. We were from another country and the entire world was already talking about us and perhaps we should have been more careful about the altitude, but we focused on our mission, which was to rescue human lives.

#### **4. What was your impression about Nepal in your first visit?**

Katmandu is a very special city, may be in the first visit you do not know what to expect, so

you are a little shocked but after a while you start to love this place and the people. But in the mountains, I found a fantastic world! I was overcome with the beauty at every turn with the majestic mountains showing so many colors and shapes and of course all the fantastic people that make the mountains their home.

In the Khumbu Valley, where I spend most of my time, I have made many friends and it is a pleasure to be regularly invited to stay in their homes for tea or a short rest or a meal.

#### **5. What is your next plan?**

I truly believe that Nepal will create in the next 5-10 years a professional rescue organization. This will be staffed by trained, Nepali pilots and Nepali mountain guides. During this period, I plan to continue my support to teach as many pilots and guides as possible. I have a plan to start a similar project to train Pakistani Rescue Pilots in the same skills, but I need some more time to be ready.

I truly hope that decisions are made to reduce the amount of traffic: people and equipment as the underlying risk that these commercial expedition places on the mountain is a disaster waiting to happen. The entire "circus" that revolves around the Everest business, with a government that is interested in "numbers" is senseless and hopefully one day responsible actions will replace unending greed. Unfortunately the climbing ability level of Everest "ascenders" has fallen dramatically; however on the other hand this is happening in the Alps, too. Up until a few years having climbed Mont Blanc meant something, now you're

just one of many, exactly like on Everest. But we should not accept this as standard; Everest is a dangerous mountain and should be respected with controls for the environment and the people that climb.

#### **6. If you were not a pilot, what would be your next favorite profession?**

I'm a mountain guide and Helicopter pilot, my next favorite profession is: Mountain guide and helicopter pilot, I love my job therefore can't think of doing anything else.

#### **7. What have you treasured from all these exciting events in your life?**

I adore everything I have experienced in my life. The technical and cultural approach to organizing a rescue in the Himalayas is a huge challenge. All the people I have come to know during this period, from different countries, enrich a huge and wonderful wealth of experience to me.

#### **8. What message do you have for millions of youth who want to live their dream but don't quite know how?**

It is relevant to remember *Walt Disney* saying "If you can dream it, you can do it" In the last few years the youth worldwide are somehow missing the opportunity to dream big and set their target. If you lack the goal, you automatically lack the roadmap. I have a big hope and I believe in youth very much. There are millions of ideas and dreams that can change our world for better. They must dream them and have the bravery to pursue what they dream. I would say; do not let the dreams rot in the closet, but live by them.



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## Unique flags of Nepal and Switzerland

- By *Bishnu Bhusal*

**A** national flag is more than just a piece of fabric hanging off a flagpole; it's the symbolic representation of the nation's character itself. A flag reflects the pride and spirit of the nation that it represents, and its design is inspired by the history, culture and people who make up the nation over which it hangs. And usually flags are rectangular, which is also worth noting. Keeping all those points in mind, let's take a look at the national flags of Nepal and Switzerland. Both countries among so many similarities also don't belong to the usual rectangular flags club of nations but rather they have their own unique flags different from other countries. There is a saying; when Switzerland joined the United Nations, its unusual flag was discussed and the example of Nepal's flag had rescued it from further discussions at the United Nations. It may be recalled that Nepal had joined the United Nations club way before Switzerland.

Some facts on the flags of Nepal and Switzerland are given below:

### Nepal

The flag of Nepal is the only world flag that is not rectangular or square shaped in size. Instead, this flag has the shape of one triangle on top of another. It is red in color, symbolizing the rhododendron, the country's national flower. Red is also the sign of victory in war. The flag is bordered in blue, the color of peace and harmony. The sun and the crescent moon appear on each triangle. These depictions of celestial bodies represent permanence and the hope that Nepal will last as long as the sun and the moon. It comprises of a sun and a moon which had previously human faces but the images were removed when the flag was modernized in 1962.

The national flag of Nepal is the only non-quadrangular national flag. The flag is a simplified combination of two single pennants that represent, for some, the mountains of Nepal while for others the Hindu flags. The flag was adopted, with the formation of a new constitutional government, on December 16, 1962. The individual pennants had been used for the last two centuries and the double pennant since the 19th century.

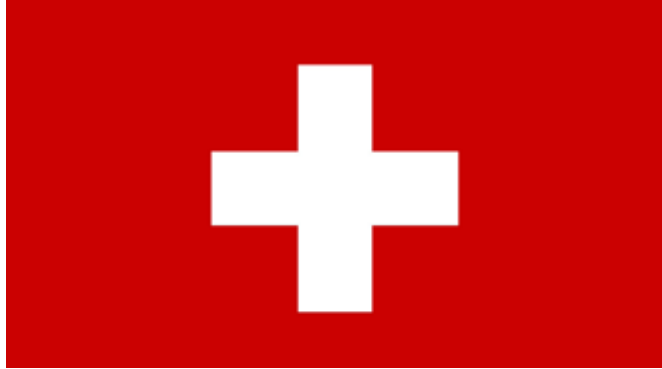
The flag has been in use in Nepal for centuries, from the time of the Malla dynasty that preceded the Shahs and the Ranas. As an exam-



ple, the Golden Gate, Bhaktapur (1753 AD) which is ornamented with a metal Nepal flag. Such flags are installed at the doorways of many temples in Kathmandu; some have the sun and moon design and some don't.



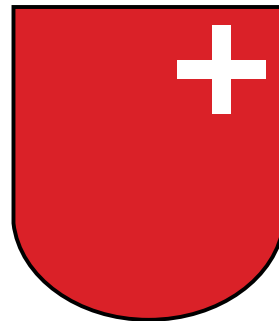




## Switzerland

Switzerland's national flag is a red square (not a rectangle!) with a white cross on it, whose arms do not reach the borders. Until 1890 the arms of the white cross had the same width as their length, but then it was decided that they should be one sixth longer than wide. The Swiss Cross, as it is often called by the native population, is a generalization of the coat of arms of canton Schwyz, one of the three founding members of the Swiss confederation back in 1291.

**Schwyz**, one of the three cantons [federal states] that founded the old Swiss Confederacy in 1291 apparently played a leading role in



Canton Schwyz  
Coat of arms



the early days, so its name soon was being used for the confederacy as a whole. When the old Swiss went to battles, the soldiers of each federal state had their own style of clothing and carried their own cantonal banner with them. As the confederation grew, they needed a common symbol to recognize friend from foe and applied white stripes in the form of a cross on their clothes and helmets.

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Mr. Dawa Tshring Sherpa  
(Liaison Officer, Lukla, Everest region since 2011)  
Embassy of Switzerland



## Bishnu Raj Upreti

Bishnu Raj Upreti holds a PhD in Conflict Management (1998-2000) from the Wageningen University the Netherland and PostDoc (2001-2003) from the University of London (King's College) UK and enriched with more than three and half decades of professional experience in the field of development and research/teaching. Until June 2013 he was South Asia Coordinator of a global research programme called Swiss National Centre of Competence in Research (NCCR) North-South. He is currently working as Executive Director of Nepal Centre for Contemporary Research (NCCR). Dr. Upreti's broad research engagement are in the field of conflict, peace and unconventional security (water, food, health, environmental security issues); governance and state building; small arms, and trans-disciplinary partnership research. He has published 40 books (written and co-edited), more than 500 articles in journals, books, and proceedings on the issues of his research interests. He is nationally and internationally known in his field of work. Besides research, he is teaching conflict course and supervising PhD and masters students at School of Arts, and School of Management at Kathmandu University and engaged as Visiting Fellow in several universities in Europe and USA. EDr Upreti is the Executive Member: Asia Pacific Peace Research Association (2012 to date); Member of Board of Trustees of International Foundation for Science (2014 to 2017), Member of Advisory Board of Centre for Unconventional Security Affairs, of University of California, Irvine (2009 to date), Life Member of the Nepal Swiss Friendship Society and many other organisations. In his study and professional career, he has visited 102 countries. His corresponding email address is: bupreti@nccr.wlink.com.np.

## Investing in capacity development through research partnership: Contribution for sustainable development

- By **Bishnu Raj Upreti**

"Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day; show him how to catch fish, and you feed him for a lifetime"

-the Chinese axiom

### The context

Reflecting the Swiss engagement in research capacity building in Nepal, it can be said Switzerland has internalised the above Chinese axiom. Swiss support in Nepal goes beyond the construction of physical infrastructures and investment in thematic development issues like forestry, agriculture and given emphasis on developing human resources. Examples of the Swiss investments in developing human resources are: initiation and expansion of Balaju and Jiri Trade Schools, scholarship for higher education from the Education Sector of Integrated Hill Development Project, vocational career path development and skill testing and lately the investment in the research programme activities of the Swiss National Centre of Competence in Research (NCCR) North-South in Nepal. NCCR North-South was a long term dedicated partnership research programme for capacity development of academic institutions and individual researchers around the world and Nepal was one of the focus countries.

### Reflecting on research partnership

Research partnership is defined as a professional collaboration between the research partners (institutions and individuals) based on the shared vision and objectives, common interests, mutual respects and collective sharing of rights, resources and responsibilities. Therefore, research partnership is a social construction shaped by common interests, collective understanding, mutual benefits and concerted efforts. In this context NCCR North-South research partnership was inherently different from conventional externally funded research projects. NCCR North-South's partnership had focused on (i) advancing research insights and capabilities, (ii) the suitability and meaningfulness of research to the everyday practice of people, development practitioners, politicians and decision makers engaged in the improvement of the existing situation for better livelihoods of people; and (iii) capacity building of the young researchers and research/academic programmes/institutes.





### Why partnership research?

Effects of global changes are not only limited to developing countries, their implications are risky for developed countries as well. Developed societies, according to Beck (1992), are 'risk society' because of new challenges. Hadorn et al. (2008, p 19) state that "modernization itself induces hazard and insecurities, which call for precautionary and systematic ways of dealing with hazards as essentially political issues". Hence, challenges posed by global changes are the collective concerns of both North and South and need concerted efforts (in research and development) from both developed and developing countries. New agenda of action to deal with new challenges need new understanding, which research could bring only by developing competent local human resource through educations and research.

In practice, research partnership ranges from simply sharing of information to substantial engagement for concerted action, reflection, learning and sharing mutual benefits Blagescu and Young 2005. In the context of collaborative research, Johnson and Wilson (2006, p 71) have emphasized that partnerships can be "collaboration based on equality and mutually beneficial processes and outcomes" but can also "involve highly unequal power relations and determination of means and ends". Hence, partnership is a dynamic process through which partners have the potential to learn and thereby promote new forms and practices (Upreti et al., 2012).

#### Box 1: The KFPE 11 Principles of Research Partnership

1. Set Agenda together
2. Be responsive
3. Clarify responsibilities
4. Create transparency
5. Promote mutual learning
6. Enhance capacities
7. Share data and networks
8. Disseminate results
9. Pool profits and merits
10. Apply results
11. Secure outcomes

Source: (KFPE, 2011)

The 12 years of experiences of the NCCR North-South research partnership show that success or failure of research partnership are determined by establishing and maintaining relationship, attitude (joint commitment), shared vision, mutual respect, compatible interests, acknowledgement of reciprocal rights and obligations, accountability and transparency, sharing information, mutual benefits and result-oriented independence (Upreti, 2012a).

North-South research collaborations are often developed with the context of skewed resource base (in terms of knowledge, information, technology, and finance). Hence, partnership between the north and the south are often characterised by unequal relations. This is what Johnson and Wilson (2006) term 'mutuality gap'. It is anticipated

that if research is jointly conceptualised and designed, and collectively implemented and monitored, it enhances mutual learning and consequently contribute to minimise the mutuality gaps (Upreti, 2012b; Upreti, 2012c). Based on the 12 years of NCCR North-South experiences, it can be confidently said that the degree of interrelationship between resource base, and capability and engagement is positively correlated to the degree of success of research partnership, and degree of interrelationship between commitment and trust, and shared goals/objectives is positively correlated to, again, the degree of success of research partnership.

#### NCCR North-South research partnership in Nepal

NCCR North-South research partnership in Nepal was managed through its South Asia Regional Coordination Office (RCO). RCO took disciplinary, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research approaches. Disciplinary research approach is an inquiry process by the experts of individual disciplines. In this approach, solutions of the problems are explored by the single discipline. Multidisciplinary approach of research deals on the issues through the combination of range of disciplines. by team of individuals that integrates information, data, techniques, tools, perspectives, concepts and/or theories from two or more disciplines of bodies of specialised knowledge to advance fundamental understanding or to solve problems

whose solutions are beyond the scope of a single discipline or area of research practice (Hadorn *et al.*, 2008, p 28). Transdisciplinary research approach is goes beyond the disciplinary or scientific or expert knowledge to tackle with the societal uncertainties or problems by bringing societal actors to grasp complexity of dealing with different perception of life-world situations together with scientific perception of problems (Pohl and Hadorn, 2007).

#### **Focus on generation of different types of knowledge**

Knowledge, as defined by the businessdictionary.com, is a human faculty resulting from interpreted information; understanding that germinates from combination of information, experience, and individual interpretation. It is a capacity of individuals to act effectively. Though knowledge is contextual, often, the purpose of generating knowledge is debated into two ways. The first school of thought focuses on knowledge for understanding (generally anthropological perspective). The second one goes beyond the understanding and focuses on 'knowledge for understanding and understanding for action'. Hence, the second school of thought is directly related to the development-oriented research. Different categories of knowledge is required to deal on the social issues such as systems knowledge (understanding functioning of system in a society), target knowledge (understanding specific problems to find solutions), and transformation knowledge

(changing situation through corrective actions) (Pohl and Hadorn (2007). NCCR North-South research partnership had focused in all categories of knowledge.

#### **Research focus: quality and capacity development**

NCCR North-South partnership in Nepal had focused on the academic programme (masters and PhD package with strong emphasis on the quality and capacity development of the young researchers (by joint supervision from local and Swiss academics; compulsory publication of the peer reviewed articles in international journal, thesis examination by the 2 external reviewers with at least one reviewer from Europe or North America, compulsory participation of the PhD students in the international and regional training courses and research methodology course & scientific writing workshops, etc). RCO had invested in this way for more than 100 Nepali masters and 9 PhD students in addition to several German and Swiss students conducting research in Nepal. Further NCCR North-South partnership in Nepal produced more than 200 publications (books, peer reviewed journal articles, chapters in the edited volumes policy briefs and discussion papers). Dissemination was an integral part of research partnership, as RCO in collaboration with the research partners regularly organised national workshops inviting academics, political decision makers, government's policy makers, researchers, media, civil

society leaders and students to share and debate the research findings, validate the research finding and contribute to the national policy process. In addition, NCCR North-South contributed the institutional capacity building of partners. For example, the PhD programme at the School of Arts (SoA) of Kathmandu University was the outcome of NCCR North-South research partnership. The Swiss Universities granted the certificate to PhD graduate of SoA/ KU for meeting the quality standards of the Swiss universities.

#### **Conclusions and lessons**

Based on my engagement in as development professional (1980 to 1996, in the government and different aid agencies and projects) and researcher, teacher, and regional research manager (from late 1996- to date, out of which a decade in Europe), I came to conclusion that research capacity building of both the research institutions and individual researchers is a fundamental basis for sustainable development. Sustainable development cannot be achieved without investing in developing capacity of people. Hence, international development partners (aid agencies) of Nepal need to invest more on research and higher education to develop competent human resources, instead of sending their experts to help Nepal. Sending experts will ultimately create dependency instead of helping Nepal. Hence, the Chinese proverb is highly relevant for our international development partners who really want to support Nepal.





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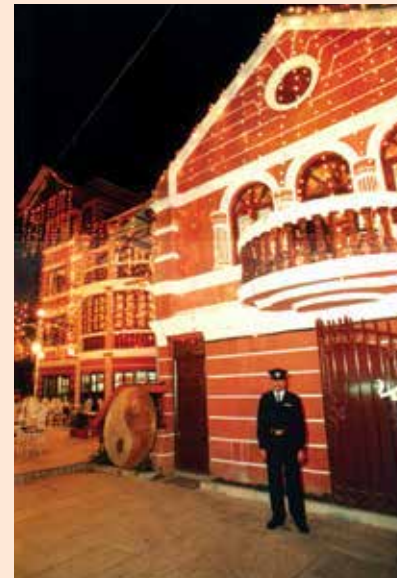
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A background image showing several black graduation caps (mortarboards) falling through a bright blue sky filled with soft, white clouds. The caps are scattered across the frame, some near the top and some near the bottom, creating a sense of motion and celebration.

# *Feature Alumni*

- ◆ **Mr. Bishan Shah**
- ◆ **Ms. Amy Sakya**

## Reminiscence.....

- By *Bishan Shah*

**N**amaste, Bonjour, Hallo, Ciao my name is Bishan Shah currently working as COO at Meconopsis Boutique Hotel, I also work as consultant for Summit Hotel, Hotel Kido and Airport Hotel.

It was back in the year 2000 I had just finished my high school and was not sure till then what to pursue further as my career. I was lucky enough to be given a choice of studying Hospitality Management at Glion, Switzerland. I thought, that it was great-eat, drink, parties, events and meeting cheerful people every day. Well I was wrong to assume that but I could not be happier to have chosen Hospitality Industry as my career path, Glion as my education institute and Switzerland as place to kick start my career & passion towards hospitality industry.

I completed my Diploma in Hotel and Restaurant Operation from Glion Institute of Higher Education in 2003 and completed my Degree in Hospitality Management from University of West London. Getting exposed to the very best in the industry where Switzerland sets the benchmark and Glion to educate me which is ranked as one of the top 3 hospitality schools in the world has set a sturdy platform for my future.

It was an eye opener in terms of how vast, detailed and precise this industry is and the level of excellence that can be achieved. I learned from the very best while completing two internships one in Zurich and other at Luzern then later having worked for Savoy Hotel and for Chef Gordon Ramsey.

The best thing for me about studying in Glion, Switzerland from academic and professional point of view was being taught by the best in the industry about operational and management skills, hands on approach of learning and being able to use the best equipment's, products and learn from them. On the other hand I cherish the opportunity of being able to make friends from all corners of the world and cultural background. Getting to know them and exchanging ideas while being under the same roof was a great experience.

I also enjoyed free public transport with my student card after 7pm and visited new places and met new people in most of the weekends .The Swiss Alps through my window every day was inspiring. I also loved being able to try out food from different parts of the world in the school as well as during my internship. Being able to enjoy Swiss cheese, chocolate ,wine



and dreaming one day Nepal can be as good as this. Although there is a long way to go for Nepal, I hope one day we can achieve what Switzerland has achieved in terms of Hospitality Industry and society as well. We already have beautiful mountains and landscape. If only we could make everyone here more professional at what they do, and do it in time as the Swiss do , Nepal can be trademark in itself !







Hills of Nepal



## Think Globally Act Locally

- By Amy Sakya

**B**orn into a family that is involved in the hotel industry (KGH Hotels and Resort), I naturally expected to take over the family business. Switzerland is the birthplace to hospitality where the knowledge to produce the highest level of excellence is one of many qualities that is needed in Nepal. The exceptional natural beauty and the mountains are features that Switzerland and Nepal both share.

Les Roches is an exceptional university, which is accredited as one of the top international hospitality management schools in the world. It provides a unique curriculum that provides students to learn from a demanding academic study and with professional hands-on experience. This enables students to be more prepared by encouraging innovation, practical discipline and leadership qualities that ensure a successful career. Throughout my education at Les Roches I was required to apply my studies while



working in the Food & Beverage department at Vienna International Hotel in Paris and as a Guest Relations Manager in Le Sutra Hotel in Bombay. Having started from the bottom it ensured that I acquired all skills to work with the Park Village Hotel.

Les Roches was a unique atmosphere to be part of. One of its main charms would be the multicultural environment, every student would rank Les Roches "internationalism" as a top quality to attend the university. The multicultural environment is further seen as Les Roches gained a title in the Guinness Book of World Records for having the most number of nationalities in a swimming pool at one time, and I was fortunate to be able to represent Nepal. One of the most exciting events held by the university is "Cultural Night" where many nationalities are represented and get to show off their culture through a traditional dance, local delicacies and customary decorations of the stalls. This guarantees each student has more cultural fluency and adaptability making him or her global citizens.

Living in Switzerland has also fulfilled my love for travel and given me more of a global perspective in hospitality. All the skills and



experience I have been fortunate to have, I would like to adopt it in KGH Group Hotel and Resort and go a step beyond in our facilities and services.

There are many unique experiences and memories that Les Roches has given me which are absolutely priceless!





Picture perfect Switzerland





## Tulasi Nepal

**Team Leader, Trail Bridge Support Unit  
HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation, Nepal**

Tulasi Nepal is presently leading the team of Trail Bridge Support Unit in Nepal. He has earned several academic degrees ranging from Business Administration to Rural Development and Conflict Transformation Studies. Having more than one and half decades of experience in diverse field such as rural development, conflict transformation and peace building; Tulasi has also gained exposure working outside Nepal including Cambodia, Sri Lanka and India (Orissa and Manipur). He has also produced manuals on Social Mobilization and Training on Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding.

## Celebrating the Record: 5000+ Trail Bridges in Nepal

- By *Tulasi Nepal*

### **Backdrop**

Nepal has unique topography, within a vertical distance of 193 Km; the elevation of the country varies from 60 m to 8850 m above mean sea level. The topography of the country is extremely rugged and criss-crossed by numerous untamable rivers and streams. The rugged topography coupled with aggressive river hydrology has made the development of transport sector extremely difficult and costly. Until mid-twentieth century, trails and mule tracks were the only means of transport throughout the country. Till date only 21,455 Km of all weather and seasonal roads have been constructed, which are concentrated mostly in Terai (plain South) and lower hills. More than half of the rural roads do not become functional during monsoon due to lack of proper crossings over the rivers.

During monsoon, whole area of hinterland are cut off from road network and thus from the supply of basic needs such as food, health facilities, schools and access to markets. With the given topographic and geological challenge this condition is likely to be perceived for many years to come. Therefore, the socioeconomic activities of these places will continue to depend largely on trail based transportation sys-

tem with trail bridges being the most reliable river crossings for decades to come.

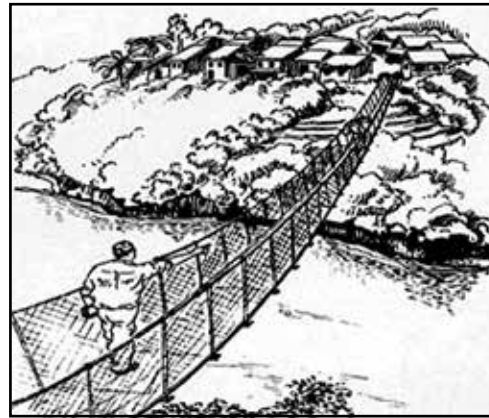
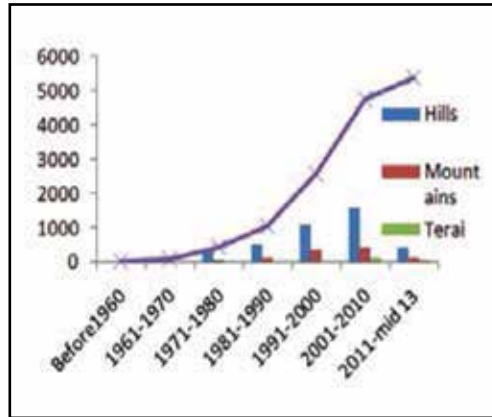
### **Milestones**

With over 6,000 rivers and streams in the country, Nepal has been an evolving ground for construction of trail bridges for the last 50 years or so. Planned and engineered trail bridge building in the country started only in around 1960s.

Nepal now has over 5,000 pedestrian trail bridges scattered over the country's landscape -in the high Himalayas, in the lush mid-hills and the plains of the Terai. They are scattered from East Mechi to West Mahakali and includes the longest one of the world – the 1.5 km long Dodhara Chadani in the far west and the one at the highest elevation on Earth is Kangla bridge in Manang at an altitude of 4700 meters above mean sea level. Whereas a mere 20/25 bridges could be constructed with difficulty in the 1980s this year we have a milestone output – 325 standing sturdy crossings in 365 days flat . . . .

What the over 5,000 bridges means is that on an average one whole millions of us cross them daily - safely, conveniently and on our own schedule, saving some 2 mil-





lion hours for not having to make detours to the next nearest crossing facility. If we will have used only half of the time savings for manual labor, it still gives us a staggering output worth NRs. 50 million at base government rates for VAT purposes - daily! Truly, Trail bridges link us all together in Nepal with all our diversities . . . .

The graph below shows ecological region wise construction of trail bridges over the decades. The purple curve represents the cumulative of the total bridges completed.

The contribution of the GoN and its entities (SBD, DDC, RADC, LTBP, PAF), SDC, DFID, USAID, WB, ADB, Care Nepal, KAAA-BGN, USADP, HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation and SNV have an immense contribution in the evolution of technology of the sub sector. The contribution from Swiss forms a major one in marching towards different milestones.

#### Before 1960s

People used indigenous technology for making river crossings made up of wooden logs. During Rana epoch, the rulers took the initiative to construct modern bridges. These bridges were manufactured in Scotland dispatched in parcels to Nepal and subsequently erected at the site.

#### 1960s- Planned Development

- The United States Operation Mission (USOM) was the first to launch trail bridge building programme in Nepal.
- HELVETAS Engineer built pilot bridge in Marsyangdi valley at Jubing.
- The government established Suspension Bridge Division (SBD) in 1964 which still functions as a project office

#### 1970s- Central Planning Approach

- A cooperation was signed between GoN and SATA (Swiss Agency for Technical

Assistance) later named as SDC, in 1972. Since then SDC has been providing technical assistance and financial grants for construction of trail bridges. HELVETAS as an implementing agency of SDC established Suspension Bridge Project. USAID also continued to provide financial grants for Trail bridge construction.

- Nepali engineers worked together with Swiss experts for transfer of know-how. Trail bridge steel parts were fabricated at Balaju Yantra Sala (BYS) through skill training at Mechanical Training Center (MTC).
- Huge demands for trail bridges construction began to be received.

#### 1980s- Technology Standardization and initiation of Community bridges

- Standard survey, design, construction and drawings were developed
- District main trail maps (MTM) and central service maps were prepared. These MTMs were digitized and Transport Infrastructure Maps (TIM) were prepared
- Planning and monitoring information system (PMIS) and central bridge register (CBR) were developed to keep the records of bridges
- Intensive trainings were provided. The lead responsibility was taken by national experts. The number of Swiss experts gradually reduced
- Long span trail bridges were built mostly on the main trail at a rate of up to 20

bridges per year. Although this was a significant improvement compared to the past, it was still not enough to meet the high demand for local bridges connecting the numerous settlements. Moreover, the sturdy long span bridges were too costly for the poor communities. Consequently, HELVETAS developed another bridge type that was modeled after traditional bridges that used to be built in the District of Baglung and is adaptable to the community approach. The bridge type that emerged is based on reviving traditional skills, optimizing usage of local materials and skills while minimizing the negative impact on the environment in order to ensure its replication nation-wide. Communities reciprocated by submitting unprecedented requests for initiating and undertaking the construction of local bridges. Span for these community bridges are up to 120 meters and are popularly known as Short Span Trail Bridges.



- These bridges are built and maintained by the community people themselves. Thus there is greater ownership, accountability and transparency observed in bridge building process. Besides, significant local employment is generated benefiting local people and enhancing their capacity through transfer of skills. Because of its significant impact on socio economic condition of local setting, the trail bridge building continued uninterrupted even during the time of heightened conflict.
- Need for maintenance was realized. The concept of carrying out routine maintenance through bridge wardens was initiated

#### 1990s- Decentralization of Trail Bridge Building

- Bridge designs were optimized, manuals revised by national experts
- Galvanized steel decks replaced wooden decks
- Routine maintenance manual developed and routine maintenance trainings were imparted
- Local bodies took the lead in trail bridge construction and NGOs were entrusted for providing technical and social inputs to the community
- The longest pedestrian bridge in Asia (1.5 Km) over Mahakali river was constructed
- Bridge records were compiled in district bridge record (DBR) and compiled in Nepal trail bridge record (NTBR)

#### 2000s onward- Technology demarcation and Sector wide Approach

- Policy demarcation for long span trail bridge (LSTB) and short span trail bridge (SSTB) were prepared
- Standard manuals for SSTB were prepared, social organizational support guidelines were prepared
- SBP and BBL were merged forming Trail Bridge Support Unit (TBSU) mandated for providing technical support for all types of pedestrian bridge building
- Trail Bridge Strategy was prepared and enforced since 2006
- Trail Bridge Programme is being implemented through Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) modality since 2009
- Emerging social and thematic concerns were integrated
- Trail Bridge strategy Information System (TBSIS) was developed for monitoring application of Trail Bridge Strategy

#### 5000th Trail Bridge

On the occasion of completion of 5000+ Trail bridges in the country, a special programme for the celebration of the record was organized. The major purpose was to disseminate the current status, learning and future scope of the programme to wider audience. The celebration programme included bridge inauguration of the 5000th bridge over Dudh Koshi river in Khotang district, organization of photo exhibition in three Durbar Squares within the valley, Dharan, Butwal





and Dhangadi. It also included radio and television talk show programmes. A special journal on trail bridges was published by DOLIDAR on this occasion and launched by the then Deputy Prime minister and minister for Federal Affairs and Local Development Narayan Kaji Shrestha.

#### Lessons for the Future

Till recently, maintenance had been the most neglected part but after a few cases

of fatal accidents, the value of maintenance has been realized. Since trail bridge construction has a long history in Nepal, reinforcing maintenance is an urgent need. Over the period, several efforts have been made to introduce effective maintenance. Updating district bridge records with present condition of the bridge, preparation of maintenance guidelines, imparting routine maintenance training to the Bridge Wardens, clustering of routine maintenance

works and increasing the allowances for the bridge wardens include some of them.

Trail bridges do not have a long history in the case of terai districts, but the demands are on the rise. Difficulty in construction of temporary bridges due to flat terrain and meandering pattern of the river has led to the increased demand of permanent trail bridges in the terai. Therefore, technological adaptation suitable to Terai Geology and Hydrology is also equally important.

## Nepalese flavours to Switzerland

- By *Kumar Chalise*

First of all I would like to thank the editorial team of **Nepali Swiss Friendship Society** souvenir named "Meeteri" on the occasion of Swiss National Day. This is an important platform on culture, friendship and other activities between Nepal and Switzerland.

Words are insufficient to explain the natural beauty, peacefulness, real human hospitality, and picture perfectness of Switzerland. The first thing I noticed about Switzerland besides the lovely landscape was the amazing infrastructure. The roads were built for life, not for few months and were used in a systematic way. Switzerland has been on top of my traveling list as it is considered one of the best travel destinations in the world. Another beautiful advantage of Switzerland is that it is bordered to Germany, France and Austria. Therefore, I also had the opportunity to visit a part of Germany and France. The head of SSTH, Mr. Knut G. Rupprecht invited me to his home in Geneva. I experienced the European lifestyle first hand and I felt very lucky and very happy to be there. People I met in Switzerland made me feel comfortable. In my observation, the Swiss are very helpful and hardworking people and we Nepalese can and surely should learn a lot from them.

My Nepali delicacies soon become local favorites at the food festival, which was set to sizzle at Swiss school of tourism and hospi-

tality/SSTH, Passugg, Switzerland on 3<sup>rd</sup> may 2014. A smorgasbord of gourmet delights from 18 different countries including cooking demonstrations, workshop and enticingly decorated food stalls – awaited more than 2000 foodie visitors, presented by the graduating class of the German program "Dipl. Hotelier Restaurateur HF" in association with Swiss school of tourism and hospitality. The food festival was titled with fascinating title and food culture imagination. The leading food festival of the Switzerland was aimed at those with a sense of adventure and a passion for tastier side of life. The 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2014 food festival marked the twelfth consecutive year of celebration of food.

Depending on what taste sensations happen to be tickling in the palate on the day, everyone had options among eighteen themed foods from different countries. When selecting the culinary delicacies; elegant, indulgent, fresh exotic and local and plus, for the first time, Nepalese stall played proud to the festival scene. Passionately, I demonstrated culinary excellence in the festival inspired by local culinary insight. My experiences during festival: Chicken momo and vegetable Chatamari were the focus of attention in the whole festival, I enjoyed the chance to look around the surroundings, chat with the locals and exposed people to what my food philosophy and style was all about. I also learned so many



hospitality matters with Swiss expert in Swiss school Chur, Passugg, Switzerland.

When I was leaving SSTH, words just didn't come out in front of Knut G. Rupprecht (Director - SSTH) and David Puser program manager of SSTH. I never realized I could be emotionally attached with SSTH in such a small span of time. I'm thankful to GATE founder Khem Lakai who is also the SSTH alumnus. GATE is introducing me and some more senior management team with our mother organization. I'm truly honored for the respect they have shown.

I am privileged to be part of the team that successfully implemented Food Festival-2014 project and there are many people here that have helped me make my time memorable. I'd like to thank each and every department of SSTH, you are all appreciated. I'd like to particularly thank my





team member Chef Patrick, Chef Hans, Chef Sigi, Tarzsius Caviezel, Die Sudostschweiz news paper team, Bundner woche news paper team, and Nepali Patra from Australia, Davos tourism board hotel association, Zurich university team, EHL team, Christine Boni, Subha Elmer Lama, Moana Dusci, Cyrill Amherd, Thomas Winder and Jasmine Karlen. All of them have listened to me and definitely played a huge role to achieve our goal. I'd also like to thank Chef Patrick Ogheard, Chef Mike's who indirectly helped us by providing leadership to design food stall and the food preparation for the Festival.

I'd also like to take an opportunity to thank their amazing team leaders and especially the purchase department. For their guidance and leadership and commend new generation's the students of SSTH with their tireless energy. I would like to thank local people and organizations as well.

I am surprised and still remember David Sir, Mike's chef, Christine Boni working late till night. Again they had early class next morning. If I hadn't joined GATE, I could have worked in one of the hotels in Nepal and met some nice people but I might not have sat together with amazing Swiss hospitality leaders who held the heart of a lion and of course the University of Zurich team, it was like a dream come true for me. I wish to replicate the similar team spirit at my office.

Finally, I wish all the best for Nepal Swiss Friendship Society team.

Chef Kumar Chalise, Head Instructor – GATE Vocational (Mandikhatar, Kathmandu)

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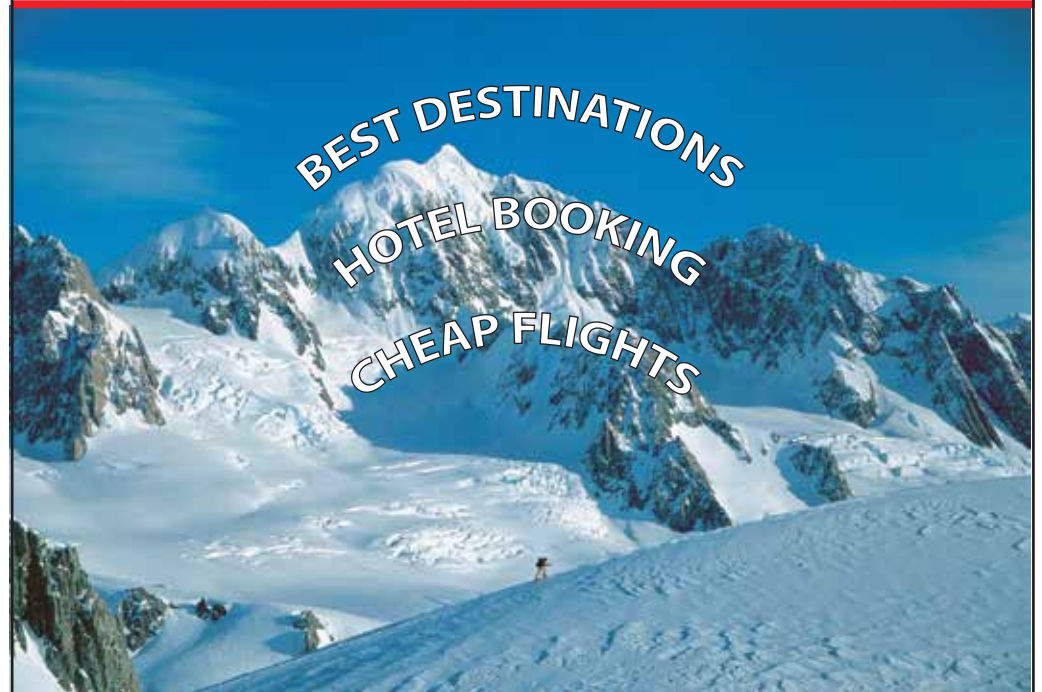
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## Safer Migration for Nepalese workers – Switzerland supports the better protection of labour migrants

- By **Barbara Weyermann**, Advisor for Migration and Development, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

Every year over 400,000 Nepalis emigrate to the Gulf and Malaysia for work. While foreign employment has greatly contributed to a reduction of poverty at the household level, this often comes at a high cost. According to a World Bank study, 12% of all Nepalis who go out to work regret that they migrated and 30% are not satisfied with their migration experience. Every day three to four bodies from the Gulf and Malaysia are brought back to the airport in Kathmandu.

The SDC-funded Safer Migration Project (SaMI), implemented by HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation Nepal and the Ministry of Labour and Employment, aims to support the Government of Nepal and the migrants and their families to improve the protection of Nepalis heading for foreign employment and to address the negative effects of migration. SaMI works through district-based Information and Counseling Centers (ICCs) with the mandate to better prepare migrants for their work abroad. Here are a few recent examples of SaMI's work:

"I have been promised Rs. 40,000 to work as a butcher in Malaysia which will include remuneration for 4 hours of overtime per day," said Moinuddin Ansari to the ICC counselor in Kailali. "Actually, I am a tailor, I make around Rs 20,000 per month in my shop, but I thought

I should not miss this opportunity. What do you think?" Moinuddin Ansari had been asked by the local agent to pay Rs. 150,000 for this job. The counselor explained to Moinuddin Ansari that not only does the Department of Foreign Employment (DoFE) recommend

Unlike a fully skilled worker like Ram Dev Yadav, they will only earn about Rs. 16,000 and yet often pay Rs 100,000 and more for the recruitment process.

that a maximum of Rs. 80,000 should be paid for a job in Malaysia, it was also not at all likely for a Nepali to earn more than Rs 20,000 in that country. The information about overtime is incorrect as most companies in Malaysia don't have such regulations regarding overtime. Moreover, why would a tailor be asked to migrate as a butcher? Moinuddin Ansari left the ICC convinced that it was better to continue working in his tailoring shop.

SaMI runs Information Centers in 5 districts and will expand to 18 districts over the next

two years. Passport applicants are briefed about possible traps that await the workers throughout the migration cycle, including psychosocial support for returning women migrants in a shelter in Kathmandu and social workers who provide counseling to mostly women left behind by their husbands. The ICCs also help migrants who face difficulties abroad. For example, Ram Dev Yadav:

Ram Dev Yadav went to Saudi Arabia as a welder, a profession that he had practiced many years in Nepal. He was promised Rs. 50,000 a month. Upon arrival he was told that he would only earn Rs. 30,000; further, he was not paid for the first two months. He decided to stay on anyway. After 8 months, the employer shifted him and three other Nepali workers from welding to another job. When the workers refused, the employer beat them up and sent them away. The group contacted the Nepali Embassy in Riyadh and the ICC in Sarlahi. In daily phone conversations, the SaMI staff advised them to go to the labour court and guided them step by step in the process. The effort paid off: the labour court ordered the employer to apologize and to pay the two months' outstanding salaries and the return ticket. The labour court provided them a letter that allowed them to work legally in Saudi Arabia until their return.



Once the group returns, SaMI will provide them legal aid to file a complaint against their recruitment agency in Nepal for the differential in the salary promised and the salary they were in fact paid.

About 75% of the labour migrants from Nepal are unskilled and work as labourers in the Gulf and Malaysia. Unlike a fully skilled worker like Ram Dev Yadav, they will only earn about Rs. 16,000 and yet often pay Rs 100,000 and more for the recruitment process. SaMI thus encourages migrants to attend the 2 months' vocational skills training courses in eight construction-related trades that the project offers through its partner F-Skill. The training qualifies the migrants to pass the skills test in the destination countries and to earn at least Rs. 25,000 per month. In addition, skills trainees can avoid the layers of village and district based agents since the training institutes facilitate job placement through reputed recruitment agencies. This significantly reduces pre-departure costs. In the rare cases that workers experience difficulties in spite of the preparation, the training institutes support the resolution of the problem or they help to facilitate repatriation.

There are limits, however, to what can be done to address the problems in Nepal.

Therefore, it is vital that groundwork is done in the destination countries with the respective governments and employers to improve the implementation of labour laws and standards. To that end, SDC's Global Programme for Migration and Development has recently started work in the Middle East. These efforts have been boosted by the increased advocacy of human rights and migrant rights organizations for migrant rights in the Gulf countries, particularly in Qatar, site of the FIFA World Cup 2022.

There has been a visible impact. The government of Qatar has announced initiatives that improve working conditions of foreign workers, who make up 87% of its population. For example, companies are requested to pay workers through bank accounts which will prove how much a worker actually gets paid. Qatar has also assigned a greater number of labour inspectors to monitor working conditions and to regulate employers. The semi-private Qatar Foundation which presently funds construction projects involving 35,000 workers has gone further. The Mandatory Standards for its contractors and sub-contractors are intended to comprehensively address conditions of employment, accommodation and recruitment. According to these stand-



ards, "workers shall not be charged any Recruitment and Processing Fees or Placement Fees." Qatar Foundation staff recently visited Nepal to explore ways of enforcing this clause for Nepali workers.

The visit of a Chinese company to SaMI partner F-Skill is most probably a direct result of the public discussion about labour standards: For its projects in Qatar, the company was looking for 1000 trained workers who would not be paying any fees. Not being a recruitment agency, F-Skill was not able to comply with such a demand, but the fact that the Chinese company put down such a condition has lifted spirits in SaMI. Demand for fair recruitment practices by destination countries employers could go a long way in supporting efforts to better protect Nepali migrant workers.





## Dr. Poorna Kanta Adhikary

Advisor, Nepal Swiss Friendship Society (NSFS)

Dr. Poorna Kanta Adhikary was born in Dura Danda, Lamjung. He studied in Nepal, India and USA. Dr. Adhikary is very well known planner, peace-builder, educator, trainer and facilitator nationally and internationally. He has conducted more than 1000 training programs in Nepal as well as in different parts of the globe. Currently, Dr. Adhikary is the Chairperson of Institute for Conflict Management Peace and Development (ICPD), Enterprises Development Company (EDC), Lamjung Skill Development Foundation (LSDF), National Skill Development Foundation (NSDF). In addition to these organizations, he is also involved in the different other social sector organizations because of his passion for social service in Nepal.

Dr. Adhikary is also the Advisor of Nepal Swiss Friendship Society (NSFS).

## My First Taste of Fondue

- By Dr. Poorna Kanta Adhikary

I arrived in Geneva Airport from London in January 1972 on my way back home to Nepal after completion of my graduate studies in the United States. My friend Othmar Kaufmann, whom I had met at Indian University, Bloomington, Indiana, USA received me at the Airport and took me to his apartment, which was my home for the next four months when I was working on an internship for my post-doctoral studies with Prof. Paulo Freire. This was also my home for several times later when I passed through Europe on my way back and forth from the Americas, Africa and Asia. Whenever I needed some rest from such a trip I made a point to visit Geneva and recuperate from tiresome work or make a reflection on myself or think through while making an important decision to change the course of my life. I have visited Geneva several times since then to experience the beauty of all four seasons comprising activities like skiing in the Alps, driving through the Valais and visiting farmers up in the high land, sailing in the Lac de Genève, and walking through the streets, gardens and the lake shore, spending often nights in the sail boat at the lake shore across the French side. Later on often during my business and/or pleasure trips I travelled with Swiss friends extensively around Switzerland through its French, German, Italian and Romansh territories. The valleys, rivers, lakes, mountains and plain areas of Switzer-

land always reminded me of Nepal as the two countries shared many similarities and some differences as well. The Swiss Valleys are of U-shape with higher latitudes and lower altitudes where as the Nepalese ones are of V-shape with lower latitudes and higher altitudes, which provide different vegetation and climatic conditions.

Othmar, having M.B.A from Indian University was then a sales representative of Caterpillar Company based in Geneva and covering Northern Africa and the Middle East. He was also a very good cook and enjoyed hosting friends for dinner and picnicking over the weekends. I mingled very well with the Swiss friends through whom I got to understand about the Swiss problems and prosperities, ethnicity and cultural identity, governance and politics. One thing that amazed me all the time was their sincerity with precision on sense of time, quality service and product, which was common among all these mountain and valley or rural and urban people irrespective of their French, Italian, Romansh or German cultural and language background. One evening in January 1972, Othmar asked me if I ever had Fondue, which is a traditional Swiss winter food. I said "No!" Realizing my interest to taste, he offered to make it during the following week-end and invited some friends including a farmer to join us for dinner at his apartment.



The farmer came with a bag of cheese which was made in his own village and was good for making the Fondue. Othmar put on the middle of the table a small spirit lamp type of stove called rechaud, usually used for warming food. He rubbed the inner surface of a ceramic cooking pot of the shape like that of *tapke* called caquelon with a couple of cut pieces of garlic and put it over the rechaud. Then he poured dry white wine in it and heated it until it was about to simmer. Then he poured into the warm wine handful of grated cheese and a bit of salt and black pepper, pieces of garlic, some spices and corn starch mixed in white wine, and stirred the liquid well until the cheese is all melted. He had asked us to make pieces (chunks) of French bread (*baguette*) which we speared them one by one in each of the long fondue fork and each one of us dipped it into the thick simmering liquid. Now the Fondue was ready to eat. After moving the fork for a while until the bread was covered by the liquid cheese, we took it out and ate the Fondue while it was warm and gulped it with a glass of another set of white wine. Woh! The taste was fantastic. It was really filling as the cheese was very heavy while the wine helped to digest it. I really enjoyed the Fondue—a very simple but fantastic food indeed! In Switzerland the Fondue is made out of Gruyere or Emmentaler



cheese, whereas in Nepal it could also be made from Yak cheese as well.

While we were enjoying the Fondue we also got engaged in all sorts of discussion including the need for something like United States of Europe to compete economically with the United States of America and the status of Switzerland in the changed scenario. The concern expressed

then was that how Switzerland would fair in this changed scenario. The pain of the World War II had not gone as yet as I discovered during my travel of Western Europe the animosity between the Germans and French and the Germans and Dutch was still quite high. The Spanish, Portuguese and Italians felt that they had more in common with the people of the Third World countries than with those of north-



ern Europeans as they were not treated differently than those from Greece, Turkey and North Africa. One could observe easily such a scenario in the streets of Paris, Geneva, Amsterdam, Frankfurt and Stockholm. Thinking about European Union, one single currency among them and one single visa for me to visit these countries at that time was quite remote and the debate in favor of it or its contra was very intense indeed. The necessity is the mother of invention as shortly European Union came into existence, without which the Europeans could not prosper collectively. Here they had to compete globally and to build up strength to collaborate regionally. The European Union has given this platform to all the member states. I also wish ever since then that

we South Asians could also follow the EU example as we need to compete globally and collaborate regionally if we really want to change our collective identity from poor nations to that of the prosperous ones.

While listening to all the above discussion among friends over the Fondue dinner my mind was also taken back to Nepal. In the 1950's while I was at school at Shanti Vidya Griha in Lainchour, Kathmandu we youngsters were curious to taste the chilled milk and cheese from Dairy and bread (*pau roti*), which were very new things in Nepal then. Many of us had difficulty to like their tastes as we could not think of drinking cold milk and the bread (*pau roti*) was nowhere near the *sel roti*. The first taste of cheese for us

then was not only horrible but also smelled terrible. With four and half years of stay in the US during the late sixties and camping with sleeping bags in Rocky Mountains and Pacific coasts with wine, cheese and French bread for snacks and at times even for supper, I began to like it so much that the Fondue in Geneva tasted fantastic indeed. Since then whenever I go to Switzerland I like to go for a Fondue dinner, although it may not be quite suitable during the summer time. I also felt that the Fondue cooking has a root similar to *Ageno* culture in Nepalese villages, where people sit around the fire in winter time and have either pop corn, snacks or dinner with the family or among friends. Cooking *dhido* at *Ageno* seemed to me very similar to cooking Fondue for communal eating, which perhaps was the practice in remote Swiss villages earlier on when they had to depend upon fire wood for cooking and heating the space within the homes. I also remembered how we used to sit around the *Ageno* at our home in Duradanda, Lamjung when my mother used to make *sel roti* and let us eat while it was quite warm. Cooking regular meal at *Ageno* is still a practice in many non-Brahmin communities like *Gurung*, *Tamang*, *Magar* ... This practice still exists in Nepalese villages with slight change here and there as per the practices in the diverse ethnic cultures and societies. That is perhaps why many of the Europeans and Japanese feel that they are walking back into their own history when they visit Nepal where they find that their own old tradition is still being lived here today.



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## Dr. Sujan Malla

**Vice-President, Toni Hagen Foundation Switzerland**

Dr. Sujan Malla is a Nepalese structural engineer working since 2007 in the Dam Safety Department of Axpo Power AG, Baden, Switzerland, where he is responsible for numerical modelling, earthquake analysis and safety monitoring of dams. He received his M.Eng. in Structural Engineering from the Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok, Thailand in 1988 and his Dr.Eng. from the University of Tokyo, Japan in 1991. From 1992 to 2007, he worked for Poyry Energy Ltd. (formerly Electrowatt Engineering Ltd.), Zurich, Switzerland, where he was involved in the analysis and design of various civil engineering structures.

Dr. Malla is the Treasurer of the Swiss-Nepalese Society and the Vice-President of the Toni Hagen Foundation Switzerland.

## Hydropower Development in a Seismically Active Region: Nepalese Context

*- By Sujan Malla*

**W**ater is probably the most important natural resource in Nepal and its proper utilization will play a key role in the future economic progress of the country. In particular, a rapid development of hydropower generation will be the most straightforward way to solve the ongoing electricity crisis and to make the country less dependent on imported fossil fuels.

The first hydropower plant in Nepal was built at Pharping in 1911 AD already during Chandra Shamsher's rule, but even after more than a century, only about 1% of the hydropower potential of the country has been developed so far. While Pharping was

among the first hydropower plants in Asia, Nepal is now lagging behind as compared to most of the other Asian countries in this field. The main blame for the hitherto unsatisfactory progress in the development of hydropower in Nepal lies with the protracted political crisis, which does not help to attract investments from the neighbouring countries India and China, although both of them are now major powers with rapidly growing economies.

The hydropower stations in operation and currently under construction in Nepal are almost exclusively run-of-river plants, with the exception of Kulekhani, which has the only





storage reservoir in the country. As rainfall in Nepal is highly seasonal with about 80% of the annual precipitation occurring during a 4-month period from June to September, the hydropower generation during the remaining months is usually considerably below the installed capacity. The climate change and the resulting shrinkage of glaciers are likely to worsen the situation in the future. The acute shortage of electricity during the dry season regularly forces load shedding of up to 16 hours a day.

For seasonal water management, it will be necessary to build at least a few dams to create reservoirs to store water not only for electricity generation, but also for irrigation,

water supply and recreation. Of course, efforts must be made to minimize the environmental impacts of dam construction.

The high seismicity of the Himalayan region is also a major issue for the development of hydropower in Nepal. It is needless to say that each dam site should be selected only after a very thorough geological investigation. A dam must be founded on a sound and stable rock formation without any potentially active faults.

It should be noted that properly engineered dams have an excellent earthquake safety record all over the world and have performed well even when subjected to very

strong ground shaking. Quite a few dams have already been subjected to strong seismic shaking and some have even suffered various degrees of earthquake damage, but there are very few recorded instances of dam failures due to earthquakes. For example, although the magnitude 8.0 Wenchuan earthquake of 12 May 2008 in China affected more than 2500 dams and some of them were even substantially damaged, there was no dam failure resulting in an uncontrolled release of water. Seismic shaking has not yet caused the failure of a concrete dam. Only a few relatively small embankment dams are known to have failed due to earthquakes because of deficient design and construction.



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Swiss  
*Recipes*



# Basic Swiss Spätzle Pasta - 4 Persons

<u>Amount</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Ingredients</u>
300	gm	flour
3	gm	salt
0.3	gm	nutmeg
3	pcs	eggs
1.5	dl	milk / water, half & half

1. Measure all ingredients
2. Mix flour with salt & nutmeg in a large bowl
3. Mix eggs, milk / water mix & oil in another bowl
4. Add this mixture to flour
5. Beat with your hands till it blisters
6. Rest for 30 minutes

## Cooking the Spätzle

<u>Amount</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Ingredients</u>
2	lts	water
20	gm	salt

1. Cook up the water
2. Press portion by portion through spätzle sieve or a large holed sieve
3. Let cook till spätzle rise to the surface
4. Take out, drain well
5. Lightly roast in roasting pan in butter, serve
6. You can add roasted onions, mushrooms, grated cheese to enhance the taste

**Chef**  
Alfred Gafner



# Swiss Rösti Potatoes - distinctive national dish of Switzerland

## Serves

4 as a side dish,  
2 as a main course

<u>Amount</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Ingredients</u>
4	pcs	waxy potatoes

1. Parboil the potatoes in salted water until just tender, but not soft
2. Allow to cool, place overnight in fridge
3. Coarsely grate the potatoes

## How to cook

1. In a heavy-based frying pan, add oil / butter, heat up
2. Add grated potatoes, roast on medium heat, shape
3. Continue to cook for about 10 to 15 minutes until golden and crisp
4. Place a plate on top of the pan and invert it so the cake sits, cooked-side up, on the plate
5. Add oil / butter to the pan and, when hot, slide the potato cake back into the pan the other way up
6. Roast for another 10 to 15 minutes
7. You can add chopped onions, bacon, ham, herbs to enhance the taste





# Plum Claffoutis

- By *Béatrice Cuenod*

Plum Claffoutis is a traditional French dessert which is widely prepared and consumed throughout Switzerland. The main ingredient that is ripe plums are layered without its stone, covered in a light batter and then baked in the oven. Plums are at their best in season that varies in different climate but August/September is the best time in Europe.

## Ingredients

Milk	125ml
Eggs	2 regular sized
Plain flour	3 tbsp
Butter	30gm/1oz
Plums cut in half, stones removed	500gm
brown sugar	2 tbsp
flaked almonds (optional)	30gm/1oz

## Preparation method

1. Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas
2. Pour the milk, into a pan and boil for a minute. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool.
3. Tip the eggs and sugar into a bowl and beat together until light and fluffy. Fold the flour into the mixture, a little at a time.
4. Pour the cooled milk onto the egg and sugar mixture, whisking lightly then set aside.
5. Place a little butter into an ovenproof dish and heat in the oven until foaming. Add the plums and brown sugar and bake for 5 minutes, then pour the batter into the dish and scatter with flaked almonds, if used.
6. Cook in the oven for about 30 minutes, until golden-brown and set but still light and soft inside.
7. Dust with icing sugar and serve immediately. (Can also be consumed with cream as per taste).





Nepali  
*Recipes*



# Twakka Aloo

## Course: Snacks

No. of portion: 3  
Portion Size: 150 gm  
Preparation time: 5 minutes  
Cooking time: 15 minutes

**Chef**  
Kumar Chalise



## Ingredients

Boiled potato dice cut	10 pc
Sandeko masala	10 gm
Garlic julienne	5 gm
Ginger julienne	5 gm
Spring garlic julienne	3 gm
Hot sauce	10 gm
Salt & pepper	To taste
Coriander julienne	3 gm
Tomato julienne	10 gm
Mustard oil	8 gm
Green chili	2 pc
Side salad	30 gm

## Preparation method

1. Arrange all tools and equipments properly
2. Boil potato peel and cut into dice
3. Wash peel and julienne cut greens vegetables
4. Like coriander, spring garlic, tomato, ginger and garlic
5. Prepare hot sauce
6. Prepare sandeko masala
7. Take a mixing bowl
8. Add dice cut potato
9. Add sandeko masala, hot sauce, julienne cut vegetables and herbs
10. Seasoning properly
11. Mix gently and serve warm or cold with side salad



# Syakhini Chatamari

## Course: Snacks

No. of portion: 1  
Portion Size: 200-250gm  
Preparation time: 15 minutes  
Cooking time: 25 minutes

Chatamari is crepe made out of rice flour and topped with chopped meat or vegetable with seasoning. Chatamari is similar to Italian open pizza. In the traditional recipe, the meat is cooked over the rice flour pancake and adds seasonal slice vegetable and egg.

### For Base:

2 cups rice flour  
3 eggs (beaten)  
1 cup water (depends on consistency)  
1 cup ghee or butter for glaze  
Pinch of salt Salt to taste

### For Toppings:

40gm chopped/minced of typical Nepali local chicken  
(any other meat can be used)  
½ cup finely chopped onions  
½ cup chopped tomatoes  
1 teaspoon garlic paste  
Freshly ground black pepper Salt to taste  
Seasonal slice vegetables  
40ml cooking oil/butter

### Method:

1. Heat oil.
2. Fry onions, garlic and ginger until light brown.
3. Add minced meat cook for few minutes.
4. Add tomatoes just before it's done.



### Rice Base(Rice pan cake):

1. Mix rice flour, eggs, water and a pinch of salt to make -like-batter. Heat butter over the pan. Pour batter and spread out into a thin crust.
2. Add cooked mince meat mixture over thin crust, coriander chop, and julienne cut capsicum and broke whole egg on top of mixture.
3. Cover the pan and cook just on one side for few minutes. Don't turn onto the other side.
4. Put the topping over it and cook for few minutes again with lid.
5. Serve hot with spicy Achar or normal herbs base sauce or chutney.

**Plating system:** Full plate

### Utensils:

Sauce pan, cutting station, mixing bowl, gas range, iron tawa with cover and slicer.





## Mr. Khem R. Lakai, CHE

Vice-President (NSFS)

Khem Lakai is the founder of GATE – Global Academy of Tourism & Hospitality Education established in 2007. He is a powerful and straightforward thinker with a vision for change. As the CEO, he seeks fresh perspectives to generate learning environments that prepare students for the Global Hospitality industry. GATE won the “Most Innovative Training Program - Paris 2011”. He is a Certified Hospitality Educator who has had his own 20 years hospitality career in Europe, North America and Asia.

Through Entrepreneurship, Leadership, Personal growth and Crossing Cultural borders, Khem encounters new ideas and new platforms that open up doors for the students he supports. He takes the opportunity to meet the global hospitality leaders to set the direction for the industry. In 2013 he participated in the “World Tourism Forum - Switzerland”, and “World Hospitality Think Tank - Paris”. He is putting Nepal on the Global Map for Excellence in Hospitality Training.

## History & Mystery of Swiss Chocolate!

- By *Khem R. Lakai, CHE*

Year 1998, was the year I obtained my Swiss Study Visa from the Office of the Swiss Consulate which is the Embassy of Switzerland today. I was determined to take every opportunity to know what I might expect upon arrival in my new home. After saying goodbye to my workplace in Durbar Marg, I was walking down the street when I noticed the Nepali cinema star Rajesh Hamal having coffee in Hot Bread. I quickly went in to say good bye. I had made his acquaintance when he worked out every morning in Kathmandu Physical Fitness in Lazimpat. We both were usually the last to leave. When I told him about my study trip, he told me that I must not forget to return with “Swiss Chocolate”! This was perhaps the 5<sup>th</sup> time people associated Switzerland with “Chocolate”. I went to Switzerland with full of curiosity about Switzerland and Swiss Chocolate. I am delighted to share this Swiss Chocolate story to “Meeteri”, the friendship magazine.

What I know about chocolate as a child doesn't qualify: It was only “candy”. It's the same as many use the word “wine” to describe the entire alcoholic beverage! Thus my learning about Chocolate – started from when I arrived in Switzerland.

According to the current statistics by Swiss Association of Pastry Chef and Confectioners, over 5,000 employees are engaged in chocolate making. Most of them are in full-

ly automated factories, 50% of total Swiss chocolate production is exported through Switzerland's 20 plus manufacturers yielding over \$1.5 Billion contribution to economy. To make this quantity, over 2, 00,000 tones of chocolate powder is used. However, it is only 1% of the total global coco bean harvest that ends up in Switzerland.

The history of European chocolate goes back to 16<sup>th</sup> century and Switzerland was not the first country to start this venture. A cocoa based drink was part of the limited royal household blended with honey and herbs. This drink was believed to enhance the libido for men. Switzerland was one of the first countries after Belgium to manufacture chocolate. It took nearly another 200 years before it created the chocolate bar in 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Italy was the first to master the art of chocolate making, spreading interest around Europe. The Italian chocolatiers moved around Europe with their mastery, taking skills as manufacturing businesses to other cities: Amsterdam, London, Copenhagen Stockholm, Frankfurt, Hamburg, and Strasburg.

Gradually the knowledge and skills for making chocolate treats arrived in Switzerland and pioneering chocolate legends, who little by little evolved the entire chocolate business turning into big factories making Switzerland the synonym to Chocolate na-





tion it is known today. In 1697, the Mayor of Zurich, Heinrich Escher, went to Brussels where he first learned about the potential of chocolate production. There, he drank chocolate and returned home with news of the new sweet secret drink. The prerequisite of good chocolate production was milk. The cocoa beans were already available in Europe therefore Switzerland had

all it needed: milk and coco powder to go into production.

You would be surprised to know why it took almost another 100 years to take off as a business. The trial phase of chocolate making in Zurich, the German speaking part of Switzerland, had to overcome the religious practitioners proclaimed fear that

all men would go wild because of their improved sexual libido. The chocolate was immediately termed the Devil's drink. Of course, the promotion had to be stopped. Fortunately for all chocolate lovers, the French speaking part of Switzerland who were more liberal, embraced this chocolate elixir into their coffee houses. In 1819, the first Swiss chocolate pioneer was born: Francois-Louis Cailler. It was Cailler who opened the first Swiss chocolate factory in a former mill near Vevey. It is believed that he learned the secrets of chocolate making in Italy. Although commercial success was a long time in coming, the young Cailler created the basis for industrial- scale production (the rotary grater for cocoa beans) and offered sixteen different sorts of chocolate with a variety of additional ingredients, including cinnamon and vanilla.

Later, in 1875, after eight years of experiment, another pioneer, Daniel Peter started producing the first milk chocolate. Then four years later Rodolphe Lindt, in the Swiss capital Berne produced the first chocolate, which melts on the tongue. Lindt constantly improved his mixing and grating machines until he had developed a method for producing a soft melting chocolate, which he called "chocolatsurfin". It was the first chocolate that melted in the mouth, and signaled the birth of modern chocolate.





Also in Berne, Jean Tobler (1830-1905) ran a confectionery shop in which he sold his own specialties alongside chocolate made by producers like Lindt. In 1899, he founded the Tobler Chocolate Factory. We have his son Theodor to thank for inventing Toblerone, the most famous of all Swiss chocolates, in 1908. It is a favorite treat today that people purchase in Duty Free shops and bring home to the delight of their children.

These are the following legendary Swiss Chocolate Pioneers:

**Philippe Suchard (1797-1884)**

In 1824 Suchard set up confectioner's business in Neuchatel, and later a chocolate factory in Serrieres, producing 25 and 30 kilo-

grams of chocolate a day. Later, in 1880, he opened a branch producing chocolate in Lorrach, Germany.

**Henri Nestle (1814 - 1890)**

Henri Nestle perfected the making of condensed milk. It was with this condensed milk that Nestle allowed Daniel Peter to industrialize the production of milk chocolate.

**Daniel Peter (1836 - 1919)**

Daniel Peter was responsible for the invention of milk chocolate. In 1875 he combined milk with chocolate, and the rest is history...

**Rodolphe Lindt (1855 - 1909)**

Rodolphe Lindt was responsible for producing the first melting, or fondant, chocolate.



The refining effect, which we know today as "conching", was first noticed by Lindt while processing chocolate over several days in a narrow mixing trough. He incorporated this into his production method, developing equipment on principles still used today.

Why does Swiss Chocolate dominant the global market? Just like so many other Swiss made innovations: Swiss watches, Swiss knives, Swiss cheese. It is in their attitude of surpassing excellence and ensuring constant innovation that keeps Switzerland always on the top of the world. The rest of the world certainly rejoices in the precision of the Swiss effort in maintaining quality and consistency. Innovations are still occurring. People have figured out that the scope of chocolate making is not limited to traditional cow milk. Qatar now produces the best Camel milk chocolate that is believed to have an impact on boosting the human immune system. Chocolate production and consumption is on the rise as is the diversity of chocolate varieties. Wouldn't it be great if someone here in Nepal could produce our own exclusive YAK – Milk Chocolate?

*(Statistics and research references, Association of Swiss Chocolate/Swiss review vol.6/individual stories from Swiss nationals)*





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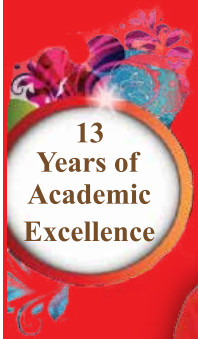
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## Mr. Bishnu Bhusal

President Nepal Swiss Friendship Society (NSFS)

Mr. Bishnu Bhusal worked in Nepal, Switzerland, US and other countries in the field of human rights, peace-conflict, environment and development field for more than 25 years. He has been teaching and lecturing on Human Rights issues, Nepal's conflict transformation and peace process both nationally and internationally. Through his association with different Swiss NGOs and his positioning as the Board of Directors of Swiss Nepali Society (SNS) and President of Nepal Swiss Friendship Society (NSFS) he is overseeing different economic peace building programs in Nepal. At the political peace building front, he is a member of team of the faculties from within Tufts University, Harvard University, CM Partners; Karuna Center for Peace building, all Boston based institutions, and ICPD Nepal.

He is the President of Nepal Swiss Friendship Society (NSFS); Chairperson of Steering Committee of Lamjung Skill Development Foundation (LSDF); Chairperson of Swiss supported Hamro Sunshine School, Kathmandu; General Manager of Enterprises Development Company (EDC); General Secretary of Institute for Conflict Management Peace and Development (ICPD), Lumbini Peace Foundation (LPF), National Skill Development Foundation (NSFS), and Election Observation Joint Forum (CAEOF Nepal). He has led more than 1000 training programs during his association with ICPD and other organizations.

## A community initiation for good quality education for disadvantaged children

- By Mr Bishnu Bhusal

During early 2002 few young Swiss and Nepali volunteers were touched seeing the conditions of children around Boudhanath area, who were regular to the soup kitchen established by one Swiss Organization. The soup kitchen provides soup and some food during certain time of the year in Boudhanath area of Kathmandu to the street children. Especially, these young volunteers, teachers by profession, were very much concerned on the education of such soup kitchen frequenting children and they thought of do something to educate them. At the beginning such children were gathered and were given lessons outdoors, sitting on the ground.



Now, Sunshine School has its own building on this land at Kapan, Kathmandu. The School house is now in operation. It offers more space, and brighter and larger classrooms with sufficient play ground.

The Sunshine School now focuses on children with a different condition or more or less of semi orphan status and provides them with good education. At present, about 150 children from the ages of 7 to 17 are taught by 18 local teachers (of whom five are former pupils). Some of the Swiss Volunteers also contribute to train the teachers and upgrade the teaching of methods. The Sunshine School is officially recognized as a school run by public trust through NGO, i.e. Hamro Sunshine School Foundation. The Foundation is registered with Government



of Nepal and also has its affiliation with Social Welfare Council. The Foundation enjoys the facility of Tax Free organization. The School is also registered with District Education Office of Kathmandu. Sunshine School Foundation is a registered Swiss NGO and has partnership to support the School with Nepali NGO. There are frequent interactions and communication between the members of Board of both Organizations.

The School aims to provide children in the school with a good basic education. The ultimate goal is to nurture independent adults capable of taking care of themselves and their families. Mathematics, English, Nepalese and the natural sciences are the main subjects taught. Additionally, value is placed in encouraging arts classes like gymnastics, singing, drawing and dancing. The language of instruction, except for the very youngest, is English. At midday all the pupils receive a warm meal: dal, bhat and seasonal vegetables. In 2012, the costly tenth-grade class was instructed for the first time. This last step means that the School can now provide the full range of schooling necessary to acquire the full range of schooling necessary to acquire the School Leaving Certificate (SLC). The children go to School with a sense of joy and pride. They often stay longer at School to play or do homework. The older among them have realized that they have received a unique chance to break out of the cycle of poverty

with the help of their School education. They are, therefore, highly motivated and hard working.

The children all come from the poorest of circumstances. They often live with six or seven others in a small room without basic facilities. Frequently the father lives either not at all or only occasionally with the family. Heavy alcohol consumption is a widespread problem with the male parent. Most of the older pupils previously attended the state school for one or two years, but had to leave the school because the parents were not able to pay the school expenses. Before a child is admitted to the school, the teachers first clarify the respective situation of the potential pupil's family situation.

Few students have graduated from the School since a couple of years. Already in the initial stage the graduates of the School have already demonstrated their leadership for their future careers. Some of them are teaching in the School itself, some have good jobs and some are already turning into good entrepreneurs. Some of our children also take part in beauty pageants and other leadership building programs and get prizes and titles frequently. This is matter of pride for the School. Despite, their family background, they are showing leadership in different spheres of life. Over the coming years, the School is also planning to introduce vocational and technical education along with



the regular education so that dedicated students can plan their career in technical fields.

Attendance at the Sunshine School is free of charge for the children. The School is entirely financed by donations and membership fees.

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## Alumni chapter of SSTH in Nepal

Small but regular number of Nepalese students has been travelling all the way to Switzerland since a long time. Switzerland is regarded as a benchmark for the excellent hospitality education. The world's first hospitality academy was also established in Switzerland in 1893 named Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne (EHL) founded by Swiss Hotel Association (SHA). EHL is still voted No. 1 in the world as a pioneer in education that has inspired the world of hospitality and created a unique professional community of 25,000 global industry executives who share the same values based on EHL's distinctive heritage.

Recently the SHA and EHL has taken over yet another reputed academy Swiss School of Tourism & Hospitality (SSTH) that has 48 years of excellence in German speaking part of Switzerland close to the famous holiday destination such as Davos and St. Moritz. As part of the Swiss education culture, EHL

There are 19 Nepalese students who have successfully graduated from SSTH and it is estimated that there are over 250 hospitality graduates from Switzerland.



*Left to right*

Knut Rupprecht, Prakriti Sherchan Pradhan, Khem Lakai, Unntai Shrestha Pradhan, H.E. Mr. Urs Herren, Kunal Lama

has 70 alumni chapters around the world providing a valuable support to students and graduates to find a job, learn the ropes in a new country, or create new personal and professional relations. EHL has one of the most international, professionally experienced and socially active alumni networks of any hospitality management school in the world today.

Following the tradition of motherhouse in Switzerland, the first Alumni Chapter of SSTH graduates have been officially formed in Nepal in the Embassy of Switzerland witnessed by the Swiss Ambassador to Nepal

H.E. Mr. Urs Herren. The Director of SSTH Mr. Knut Rupprecht invited the first chapter team lead by chapter President Mr. Khem R. Lakai, who is also the founder of award winning academy GATE College in Nepal. The chapter board members are alumnus Mr. Kunal Tej Bir Lama, Ms Prakriti Sherchan Pradhan and Ms Unnati Shrestha Pradhan among others. There are 19 Nepalese students who have successfully graduated from SSTH and it is estimated that there are over 250 hospitality graduates from Switzerland. Nepali chapter will enjoy the benefit from the larger global network of the motherhouse Switzerland.

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