

Bhutanese in Australia - A New Beginning: *By Bhanu Adhikari*

Bhutan, referred to as 'the Last Shangrila', is a tiny Himalayan country sandwiched between the two giants, India and China. It has a total area of 48,000 sq km and a population of around 800,000. For the last 100 years, Bhutan has been ruled by absolute monarchs. Till the beginning of 2008, there was no constitution, independent judiciary or rule of law. From 1988, the human rights situation aggravated, when Royal Government enacted

discriminatory policies to depopulate the Lhotshampas - Southern Bhutanese of Nepalese origin, predominantly Hindus.



The Royal government treats Lhotsampas as second class citizens. They are persecuted, discriminated and denied the most basics like access to education and health facilities. They are deprived of their cultural rights and are forced to adopt the cultural tradition, costume and language of the ruling elite. In the late eighties, the Royal Government adopted retroactive citizenship legislation and started to disenfranchise and depopulate the Lhotshampas. Tens and thousands of them were forcibly evicted, who ended up in the United Nations established refugees camps in Nepal.

For last 17 years, Bhutanese refugees remained in the UNHCR assisted camps with a



hope to return to their respective homes and farms in Bhutan. Having failed to see the possibility of repatriation, a vast number of Bhutanese refugees have accepted the offer given by Australia, Canada, Denmark, Netherland, New Zealand, Norway and United States for third country resettlement.

So far, over 700 Bhutanese have been resettled in Australia. They are extremely grateful to the people and government of Australia for allowing them to resettle and begin a new life in this great country.

Having already resettled in Australia, we hope to gradually traverse from the dark and traumatic past into the sound and optimistic future. Australia has given us a real opportunity to begin a new life. All Bhutanese must, therefore, strive hard to make their life purposeful and meaningful.

Service to community, Service to nation - Editorial

Man is born free but there ends his freedom. It is not by undue suppression from rulers rather by the community errands and social responsibilities that govern rest of his life. The community service and social engagement generally aims at easing the life. They bring in respect, love and humanity ultimately letting us live a dignified life.

Australia hates hatred, that's what we learnt in one year we landed in this wonderland. Lives overshadowed by uncertain future, depression, hatred and humiliation back in Nepal, rather far back in Bhutan, have all been cleansed to set a new and refreshed destiny. The new generation's dream of a dignified, prosperous and truly a humane life has generously sprouted here at last.

Our community here is expanding. New comers are settling gradually while those arrived earlier have honour to welcome and serve them. Children have shifted their forced classroom learning into enjoyable education. Those tired of seeing murky future and diminutive earnings have seen new horizons of life and those exhausted of their miserable life have found a solace of Australian humanity.

Our ancestors have long served our nation, seven seas away. Now, let's serve our community here for now. We have triple responsibilities: serving our small community, the Australian community who adorned us with safe heaven and above all our nation. Additionally, we are obliged to keep intact our long history of Bhutanese society characterized by bonds of sympathy, love and mutual support which kept us together even at the extreme stumbling block.

These characters of ours should not live simply here in Australia rather connect with other friends who live far off places in America or Canada. This newsletter hopefully will serve to that extent to keep us together in this virtual world.

Support New Residents - Social Developmental Program

City of Salisbury, Department of Immigration and Citizenship and Social Settlement mentors brought 12 weeks social settlement program for Bhutanese people - new entrants with information and services necessary for successful settlement in Australia.

New arrivals like us are often subject to hardship and suffer extreme emotional trauma prior to arrival. Upon arrival they face the challenge of fitting into unfamiliar surroundings that lack the social and cultural networks of their home country. Settlement can be further impaired due to barriers to social inclusion, such as lack of: English verbal and literacy skills, recognition of previous education and work experience, understanding of Australian customs and way of life and financial support.



started on 24 March 2009 and ends on 24 June 2009. We are attending the program every Tuesday from 5:00 pm to 7:30 pm. During the session Salisbury Council attempts to provide the information related to housing, driving, computing and jobs. Besides these social integration is the main objective to organize such program. This has helped us to interact with new people from different community and even to develop social relations. It has created high chance for us to establish new friend circle. Similarly, on 21 April 2009, we had whole day bus tour to locate different areas in the city of Salisbury. All Bhutanese in Salisbury and Elizabeth were benefited by this tour.

The program is encouraging us to recognize each other's backgrounds, circumstances, needs and preferences. This has given opportunities for us to participating equality in Australian society and to understand the rights and responsibility. It develops a sense of belonging for everyone by helping communities work towards a spirit of inclusiveness and shared identity as Australian.

Kamal Dahal



Salisbury Council and its mentors are offering a helping hand that guides families and individuals toward government services and community based organizations that can assist with a smooth transition toward permanent settlement. City of Salisbury is able to assist humanitarian entrants to access mainstream services, exchange local knowledge, build relationships and share different cultural understandings with long-term services. For humanitarian entrants, this free community program is providing with opportunities to meet residents of Salisbury who can help to point us in the right direction. This has given us an opportunity to learn more about the program, meet new people, learn new skills and understand more about our new home.

Bhutanese in Salisbury and Elizabeth area are involved in the program (social settlement program) headed by Social Development – Project Officer - Julie Fyfe. This program was



A
C
T
I
V
I
T
I
E
S

Youth Programme

Organisation like MRC, ARA and our own Bhutanese Community are now a days organising and will be organising different youth programme which is always beneficial for us.

Let me talk about the training called *BE SAFE AND BE STRONG* which was organised by ARA in the UNISA West Terrace Campus. It was three days training for girls and the next three days was for the boys. It was attended by 24 girls and 22 boys respectively.

The next significant programme was the Youth Camp in Blair organised by MRC. It was attended by 22 youths of our community.

On our own initiative we are planning to set up a dance practice class every Sunday. Our youths nowadays are busy with some sporting event like football, basketball, swimming etc.



I would like to request all my youths friends to take active participation in all the youth programmes and activities. I myself was involved in many activities and came to know many useful things which made me easy to cope up with the Australian way of life in our new country of adoption. *Chandra Subedi*

EDUCATION – An Opportunity in Australia: *By Bala Ram Bhattarai*

The education system in Australia is open to all people. It offers an opportunity for all age groups and levels of ability. You can get into any level of education if you have the entry requirements. If at first you do not reach the entry standard, then you can do other study to get to the standard. Help is available for all people who suffer disadvantage.

Schooling is compulsory for all children aged between five and eighteen years. These ages may vary slightly in some states. The government provides public schools which is free but users pay fees for private schooling.

The positions in higher education have entry levels that students must achieve to get them. The people most likely to succeed get the positions first. Some students start tertiary education when they finish high school while others study later as an adult.

Many employers provide training that helps their employees to do their job. People in Australia are encouraged to join in and gain more education throughout their life.

In Australia the education system comprises of primary, middle school, secondary or high school and tertiary levels. And each state has a Vocational Education and Training (VET) or Technical and Further Education (TAFE) which prepares people for work in careers that do not require a university degree. Despite minor differences in education systems in each state, major learning areas being the same, study done in one state gains the same status in another.

In the work places; employers use agreed courses and outcomes to set standards of training for employment. Many parts of industry and business provide ongoing work place training for their employees. Some of this training can count towards an accreditation and qualification. This also helps people educated overseas to gain recognition of their prior learning for further employment.

In Australian higher education system; Australian citizens, New Zealand citizens and the holders of Australian permanent residency status are classified as 'domestic students' who are eligible to apply for financial support provided by the Australian government for higher education. Government provides two types of study loan schemes to help domestic tertiary students pay their education fees. They are HELP (Higher Education Loan Program) and HECS (Higher Education Commonwealth Support). Through HECS – HELP; eligible students can defer their student contribution and repay it later through the taxation system.

Aus Study is something that Centrelink helps tertiary students financially for those eligible to receiving the Centrelink allowances as long as they study in University.

Bhutanese Community in Adelaide and Their Progress in Education

Bhutanese community is a newly emerging community in Australia. These are people originally from Bhutan who were seeking asylum as refugees in Nepal for the last seventeen years and coming to Australia in small numbers since May 2008. By now approximately a thousand Bhutanese people have settled in different states of Australia of which about 300 individuals are in Adelaide alone. By 2010 the size of their population is expected to toll up to 5000 at least.

Since their times in refugee camps and in Bhutan in the past, Bhutanese are the lovers of education. They are always keen towards getting modern education.

Currently in Adelaide, majority of the 300 Bhutanese are enrolled to some or the other type course. Most adults who had never been to school in the past, had little schooling or had incomplete qualifications from overseas are doing English learning through Adult Migrant Education Program (AMEP) in different English as Second Language (ELS) schools of TAFE and some in LM Training Specialists. Besides English, especially in TAFE schools they are also studying a wide range of certificate courses in computing/IT, accounting and aged care. They are hard working and most students are said to have been coping with their studies more easily than expected. This ease which teachers are finding to teach lessons to the Bhutanese is mainly because they brought their studies up so far from Nepal and Bhutan was all in English medium schools where the medium of instruction and the text books were all in English except for their native language studies.

Around 30 students below 18 years of age are studying in Adelaide Secondary School of English which serves for up skilling their learning skills, English proficiency and provides transitional pathway to their future studies in local high schools and acclimatizes towards Australian schools' multicultural environments.

Another category of approximately 25 children are studying at various primary and middle school levels at their respective suburbs with higher concentration in Salisbury North Primary school and Bellevue Heights Primary School. Responses from their school administrations and their teachers are very positive about their overall conduct.

Similarly approximately 20 students are studying in Thebarton Senior College as to prepare themselves for moving into University for tertiary studies or into TAFE courses in future.

Besides these a few are getting world class standard education from high schools and universities too.

The Bhutanese who had been living under deprivation from various opportunities since they were subject to discriminatory rule of the Bhutanese regime followed by their living in refugee camp for 17 years are now looking forward to seeing meaningful life in Australia much optimistically than ever before.

भिक्टर हार्वर- यात्रा एक, अनुभव अनेक : नारायण भट्टराई

यात्रा सबैलाई रमाइलै लाग्छ। सायद यस्ता व्यक्तिहरु कमै पाइएलान् जो नयाँ ठाँउ र परिवेशको यात्रामा रमाउन नसक्नुन्। यस सन्दर्भमा मैले यहाँ उठाउन खोजेको प्रसंग हो एउटा छोटो एकदिने भ्रमणको। जो भ्रमण थियो एडिलेडदेखि भिक्टर हार्वर सम्मको।

प्रत्येक दिसम्बर महिनाको १७ तारिक मनाइने कम्प्युनिटि डे को अवसर पारी गत वर्ष सामुदायिक स्नेह, सद्भाव र समन्वय बढाउने उद्देश्यले भिक्टर हार्वर समाजबाट भूटानी समुदायलाई समेत त्यस तर्फको भ्रमणको लागि निम्ता आयो। जान रहर गर्नेहरु धेरै जना भए पनि भूटानीहरुबाट ३० जनाको मात्र संख्या सीमित भएकोले सबैलाई सो अवसर मिलेन। जम्मा करिब ५० जना जतिको सहभागिता रहेको सो समुहमा रहल अन्य समुदायका व्यक्तिहरु परेका थिए। लैजाने र ल्याउने जिम्मा Australian Refugee Association ले लिएको हुँदा बिहान सबेरै यसको प्राङ्गणमा चढ्न रहै लाग्दा ठूलो र अग्लो बस तयार थियो। सायद हामी मध्ये धेरैजनाको लागि यो पहिलो अनुभव नै थियो होला जो यस्तो फरक किसिमको बस चढेर यात्रा गर्दथियो।

धेरै दक्षिण हुँदै पूर्वतर्फ हामीहरुको यात्रा अघि बढ्यो। मेरियन सपिङ्ग सेन्टर काटेर गाडी उकालो लागेपछि सायद कसैको पनि क्यामेरा र मोबाइलहरु खालि रहन पाएनन् होला। भेडिगोट, पातलो जंगल, अल्प अल्प भए पनि हरियाली अनि अझुरका ठूला ठूला बगैँचाहरु, यी सबैको फोटो आआफ्नो क्यामेरामा कैद गर्न सबै व्यस्त देखिन्थे। गाइबस्तुका बथान देखा कतिलाई भूटानको गोठाले जिन्दगीको याद आयो होला। ऐसे लुका बोटहरुले कतिलाई साथी सङ्गीसंग लुकामारी खेलेको स्मरण गरायो होला। तर म भने आफ्नै कल्पनामा डुबिरहेको थिएँछु। त्यो मरुभूमि जस्तो सुख्खा डाँडामा पनि फ्रफ्रक गर्नु फलेको, रातै स्टुबेरी र टमाटर पाकेको अनि लहलह भएर आलुका बोटहरु पलाएको देखा मेहनत गरे के नहने रहेछ, र, हुंगामा पनि सुन फल्छ भनेको सत्य रहेछ, भन्ने कुराले मलाई शोचमन बनाइरहेको रहेछ। फ्रट्ट मन फर्कियो यथार्थ स्थिति तिर। धेरै जना भएपछि त्यही त हो, हाँस-खेल, रेला-ठट्टा त भइँनै हाल्छ। अष्ट्रेलियाका गाईको पनि सिङ्ग त पलाएकै हुँदा रहेछन्। अनि यी लामा लामा घाँटी भएका भेडा चाँहि ऊँटकै शाखा सन्तान वा भाइ भतिजा होलान्। यस्तै ठट्टौली एकातर्फ चलिरहेको थियो भने अर्का तर्फ डाइभरले माइक्रोफोनबाट दिएका जानकारीहरु पनि त्यस ठाँउको इतिहास बुझ्न चाहनेहरुका लागि धेरै लाभप्रद थिए। ती ठाँउहरुमा दूध र फलफूलको उत्पादन धेरै हुने भएकोले गुणस्तरीय किसिमको चिज (छुर्पी) उत्पादन हुने, त्यस्तै रक्सि बनाउने उद्योगहरु चलाइएको अनि उद्योग

क्षेत्रमै जाने हो भने त्यहाँ उत्पादित सामानहरु केही सस्तो मुल्यमा पाइने जानकारी समेत हामीले त्यहीबाट पाएका थियौं। यी सबै जानकारीहरुले त्यस ठाँउको महत्वलाई अझ प्रष्टयाउन थप मद्दत गरिरहेको थियो। आँखाभरि नयाँ नयाँ दृष्य र रमिता हेर्दै जाँदा कति छिटो वाटो काटिएछ थाहै भएन। एकैचोटि स्थानीय व्यक्तिहरु गाडीको ढोकामा भिडियो, क्यामेरा लिएर आउँदा मात्र थाहा भयो कि हामी त गन्तव्यमा पुगिसकेका रहेछौं अनि उनीहरु त हाम्रो स्वागतको लागि पो त्यहाँ उपस्थित भएका रहेछन्। त्यसै पनि नयाँ ठाँउहरु रमाइलै हुन्छन्। त्यसमा पनि समुद्रकै किनारमा अवस्थित भएको ले भिक्टर हार्वर अति नै सुन्दर नगरहरु मध्येको एउटा नमुना शहर होला। जास्तो लाग्यो। हाम्रो लागि भेटघाट र खानपान आदि सबै कुराहरुको व्यवस्था एउटा हरियो, फरक खुल्ला चौरमा गरिएको रहेछ। पुग्ने बित्तिकै मेयरले राख्नुभएको मन्तव्य, ससाना नानीहरुले गाएको गीत, अनि अन्य व्यक्तिहरुले हामी प्रति देखाएको उत्सुकता आदि कुराहरुले नयाँ समुदाय, उनीहरुसंगको सम्बन्ध र पर्यटन जस्ता विषयहरुलाई यहाका व्यक्तिहरुले कति महत्व दिदा रहेछन् भन्ने कुरा प्रष्टयाइरहेको थियो। यो हामीहरुका लाजिंग उनीहरुबाट सिक्नुपर्ने एउटा पाठ पनि हो। छोटो चिया पान र भाग्यशाली उपहारको नतिजा प्रकाशन पछि हामीहरुलाई शहरका केही महत्वपूर्ण ठाँउहरु देखाउने उद्देश्यले घुमाउन निकालियो। यस क्रममा हामीहरुलाई केही स्थानीय व्यक्तिहरुसंग निकटबाट परिचय गर्ने अवसर समेत मिलेको थियो। फर्किएपछि भाइ-बहिनीहरुका लागि छोटो समयको फुटबल र Cycling पनि मनोरञ्जनका महत्वपूर्ण दुई विधाहरु बनेका थिए।

खानापछिको सेकेन्ड हाफ अथवा मध्यान्तर पछिको समय अझ रमाइलो र स्मरणीय भएको थियो। Horse Tram (बयलगाडी) चढेर पुल पारि नजिकै रहेको एउटा सानो टापुमा घुम्न गयौं। त्यस टापुमा रुखहरु चढ्दै, हुंगाहरुमा खेल्दै घुम्दाको मनोरञ्जन आफ्नै किसिमको छ भने आर्कातर्फ क्षितिज पारि पनि आँखाले भ्याएसम्म पानी नै पानी देखा वास्तवमै कहीं नौलो ठाँउमै पुगेभैं अनुभव भइरहेको थियो।

त्यसपछि पुनः हामी उही पुरानो ठाँउ (खाना खाएको चौर) मा फर्कियौं। हल्का चिया खाजा भयो। अन्त्यमा हाम्रो तर्फबाट उनीहरुलाई मनोरञ्जन दिलाउनको लागि चित्राखर गौ तम्बाट गीत गाइयो। बलराम भट्टराई र लक्ष्मण योगीले धन्यवाद व्यक्त गरे।

यसरी उनीहरुसंगको यात्रालाई अझ लम्याउने चाहना हुँदाहुँदै उनीहरुलाई पनि छुट्टिने रहन नहुँदा नहुँदै हामीलाई विदाइको हात हल्लाउन बाध्य भएका थिए, कारण- समयले विदा लिइसकेको थियो। तर त्यो विदाइले हामीहरुको परिचय सम्बन्धलाई कहिल्यै विदा गरेन बरु अझ बढाएर नै लय्यो। किनकि त्यसपछि पनि उनीहरुले भूटानी समुदाय (एडिलेड) लाई स्मरण स्वरुप १० वटा साइकलहरु प्रदान गरे भने त्यसदिनको हाम्रो भ्रमणको भिडियो सिडि तयार भएकोले त्यसको पनि एक कपि उपलब्ध गराइदिएका छन्। समग्रमा यो भ्रमण छोटो भए पनि अत्यन्त मनोरञ्जनात्मक र ज्ञानवर्धक समेत भएकोले ज्यादै फलदायी साबित भएको छ। यसरी सन् २००९ को समुदाय दिवसका दिन भिक्टर हार्वर समुदायसंग गाँसिएको हाम्रो सामुदायिक सम्बन्ध भूटानी समुदाय रहेसम्म बाचिरहोस्। यही कामना गर्दछु।

तितामिठा अनुभवहरु : सुशील पोखरेल

भापाको शरणार्थी शिविरको दुई दशक लामो बसोबास अब दिनदिनै सपना भैँ हुन लागिरहेछ। भूटान फर्कने लामो अभियान अब अझ आकाशको तारा जस्तै भयो। आफन्त, साथी सबै भिन्न देशमा आवाद हुन थाल्दैछन्। आफू अस्ट्रेलिया आइयो। कुनै समय तेस्रो मुलुकमा पुनर्वास हुनुपर्दा अस्ट्रेलिया नै रोज्ने इच्छा थियो। मैले किन रोजें अस्ट्रेलिया ? यसको उत्तर मसंग थिएन। मैले अस्ट्रेलिया बारे केही अध्ययन गरेको पनि थिएन। तर, यहाँ आइपुगेपछि सबै ठिक लाग्यो। ठूलो शहर, ठूलोला सडक, चिल्ला गाडीहरुको लस्कर तर शहरको समग्र गति खुबै व्यवस्थित। सुन्दरताको वर्णन गर्न सकिन्न, गरेर पनि निश्चयनै साध्य हुनेछैन। सभ्यताको सीमा छोएको समाज यहाँको।

अब हिजोको चिन्ता भन्दा भोलिको चिन्तनलाई प्राथमिकता दिनुपर्ने खाचो अनुभव गर्न थालेको छु। हामी एशियाली मुलुकमा बस्नेहरु धार्मिक, सामाजिक र सांस्कृतिक पक्षमा खुबै सम्बेदनशील हुने हुनाले पनि उपर्युक्त पक्ष हाम्रा निमित्त सधैं सबल भएर रहने छन् भन्ने कुरामा म आशावादी छु। उपर्युक्त पक्षले हाम्रो परिचय दत्ते बनाएर राख्ने छ, यस मुलुकमा। हुनत हामीले भूटानमा हाम्रो नेपाली जातीय संस्कृतिलाई सधैं अक्षुण्ण राख्ने प्रयाश गर्छौं। हाम्रो संस्कृति संसारकै एउटा धनी संस्कृति हो। भविष्यमा यस संस्कृति मार्फत यस देशलाई पनि धेरैकुछ दिन सक्ने प्रशस्तै ठाउँ देखिन्छ। हाम्रो क्षमता, लगनशीलता, इमान्दारिता र सोभोपनले यस देशमा पनि हामीले अनेकौं उदाहरण प्रस्तुत गर्न सक्ने छौं।

कहाँ जन्म्यौं, कहाँ हुक्यौं अनि कहाँ आएर आवाद हुनुपर्ने। जीवनक्रमका यी दिनहरु एउटा अशेष संस्मरण मात्र भएर रहे अब। शरणार्थी शिविरका भोगाइहरु र अस्ट्रेलिया सरकारको हामीप्रतिको न्यानोपना हाम्रो निमित्त आकाश पातालको अन्तर छ। अब त नेपालमा छोडिएका आफन्त र बन्धुबान्धव बाहेक अर्को कुरो शोचन पनि मन लाग्दैन। सारै खुम्चिएर बस्नुपरेको थियो शिविरमा। भित्रैदेखि मौलाउने कसैले पनि अवसर पाइएन। भखेरै भाषा हेर्दै आएका यी आखाले अस्ट्रेलियाको समग्रतालाई हेर्ने निश्चय नै समय लाग्ने छ। यहाँ खुशीको सीमा छैन। समयान्तरमा यहाँका बासिन्दा सरह सबै कुरामा समानान्तर हुनसक्ने आशा साँचिएको छ। तर नेपालमा २ दशक लामो बसाइँमा कोही आफ्नो हुन सकेन र केही आफ्नो भएन पनि। शुरुका दिनदेखि शिविर छोडेर हिड्दा दिनसम्मको मूल्य चुकाउनु परेको कुरो कुन भूटानीले बिसन सक्ला र। तर यहाँ त्यस्तो छैन। प्रत्येक व्यक्तिले सोध्छन्- “तिमी अस्ट्रेलिया आएर खुशी छौं” यस अभिव्यक्तिका आफ्नोपना र प्रेम पाइन्छ। प्रेमको भाषा र भाव बुझ्न हामी भूटानीहरुलाई गाढे पढेन, कारण हामीले जीवनभर घृणा र तिरस्कार मात्रै पाएका छौं। प्रेमपूर्ण अभिव्यक्ति हाम्रो हृदय सजिलै छुन्छ। यहाँको बोलीमा मिठो भाव, आत्मीयता र सत्यता छर्लंगिएको पाइन्छ। भाषामा शरणार्थीको निमित्त बजारमा मूल्य नै बेग्लै थियो, गाडीमा भाडा भिन्नै थियो अनि व्यवहार, बोली पनि खस्रो थियो। हामी अरुको निमित्त पेट पाल्ने साधन बाहेक अरु केही थिएनै। हुन त यस्तो कट्ट अनुभव अरु देशका शरणार्थीहरुको पनि हुनसक्छ। हाम्रो जस्तै दुर्दान्त दिनहरु उनीहरुले पनि भोगेका हुन सक्छन् तर हाम्रो २० वर्ष लामो भोगाईले हामीलाई अवश्य पनि परिपक्व तुल्याएको छ।

हिजो आज हामी अस्ट्रेलियाका सडकहरुमा अरुसित हात मिलाएर भोलिको सुदर कल्पना गर्न थालेका छौं। दिनले अवश्य पनि कोल्टे फेरेको छ। अब हामीले आफ्ना छोराछोरीको सुन्दर भविष्यको निमित्त पनि काम गर्नु छ, अनि आफ्नो जातीय संस्कृति, भाषा र समुदायको हितको निमित्त असल योगदान दिनु छ।



हामीले अस्ट्रेलियाको सुदर कल्पना गर्न थालेका छौं। दिनले अवश्य पनि कोल्टे फेरेको छ। अब हामीले आफ्ना छोराछोरीको सुन्दर भविष्यको निमित्त पनि काम गर्नु छ, अनि आफ्नो जातीय संस्कृति, भाषा र समुदायको हितको निमित्त असल योगदान दिनु छ।

Namaste ! Dhanyabat !

The Migrant Resource Centre of SA (MRCSA) warmly congratulates the Bhutanese Community on the release of your first community newsletter in South Australia!

The MRCSA is proud to assist the settlement of the first Bhutanese community in South Australia. Since then, your community has eagerly embraced Australia as your new country like a fish to water and embarked on the journey of community development. The MRCSA is very pleased to be assisting you in this process.



The Bhutanese community has achieved many outcomes in the short time since your arrival. You have organised the first ever Bhutanese community event "Starting a New Life in Australia" in October 2008 in which you showcased the Dashan Festival and the Tika ceremony which is a most significant festival, much to the delight of all who participated. Most recently you have organised an Interim Committee to begin to form an association. This is a most critical development as it will guide your community's settlement and participation.

We are pleased to provide support in training the Bhutanese leadership in Community Governance. We have also provided employment and training pathways through volunteering, for many in your community. Additionally we have a number of support groups for your young people and women. As your community grows, we hope this support will assist your leadership in your pursuit of self-reliance and participation in the broader South Australian community.

The MRCSA congratulates the Bhutanese Community for your settlement achievements so far and looks forward to working with you, as you and your children achieve your dreams in South Australia.

Eugenia Tsoulis OAM

Chief Executive Officer
Migrant Resource Centre of SA

Message to Bhutanese Community

Congratulations from everyone at ARA Jobs to all members of the emerging Bhutanese Community in South Australia on the occasion of the first anniversary of the new life in Australia.

At ARA Jobs we feel privileged to have had the opportunity to work so closely with so many members of the community here in South Australia. There is the sense amongst staff at ARA Jobs that a special relationship is developing between ARA Jobs and the emerging Bhutanese community. We recognise a very special community group with a vibrant and dynamic culture. We see resilient people with a very positive, determined and joyful engagement with life and many individual skills and qualities that will be a wonderful contribution to the fabric of life in Australia. The future looks very good and we hope we can continue to build on our relationship and do the best we can to assist and support the establishment of employment and career paths for members of the community connected to our service.

It may benefit members of the community seeking assistance through our service to know that from July 1st all Job Networks nationally are being changed to Job Services Australia. This may mean some folk who are 'connected' to ARA now will be 'connected' to another provider during the change period from May to July. It is important for people who want to remain connected to ARA Jobs to know they can choose to stay with us if they wish wherever they live in Adelaide. Of course we hope everyone will want to stay with ARA Jobs but it is everyone's choice which provider of Employment services they wish to be connected to. If you have any questions or concerns about this change please speak to us. We are happy to assist.

Again, congratulations to the Bhutanese community on the first anniversary of settlement. ARA Jobs trusts it is a time of joy for everyone involved.

Peter Lawrie

Manager
ARA Jobs Kilkeny



To the Bhutanese community in Adelaide

The Staff here at ARA wish to congratulate you on this first anniversary of your arrival here in Australia. We have really enjoyed getting to know you during these past months, and we feel you are making an important contribution to our city. You have done well to achieve so much in a short time. There are many comments about the positive attitude of your community members, how active you are in seeking services, and attending gatherings. When Bhutanese people say they will do something, they do it!

For many of us here in Adelaide you are the first Bhutanese we have met, so you are good ambassadors for your country.

Please remember that our doors are open to you. We have a broad range of services available, including employment, housing and migration assistance, along with a 'Help-desk' open during work hours where help is available, without an appointment, to deal with basic needs that come up from day to day.

Another service that is available is our Family Support Program -we have hundreds of volunteers who welcome new arrivals to the city. If you are interested we can try to arrange a person to visit you at home to help with English or other studies, or even things like shopping and running your household. If you would like this service just contact our office on 83542951, or discuss it at the Helpdesk.

Your friends at ARA

Craig Heidenreich
Settlement Officer
Australian Refugee Association Inc



Bok's top 5 tips for securing private rental

Renting a property is always a challenge for any new arrivals. Preparing right papers and applying with correct information is key to secure any property for rent. Here are Bok's top five tips to do so:

1. Make sure you have enough ID to go with your application (100 points plus your income statements)
2. Don't bring any children to inspections (children can get bored easily and start making too much noise)
3. Get your application back to the agent as quick as you can
4. At the inspection, dress formally (if you dress neat and tidy, your house should be neat and tidy)
5. Only look for houses that are large enough for your family (no landlord will rent a 2 bedroom house to a family of 5)

Adrian Bok works for ARA where he provides workshops, advice, assistance and referrals with finding, accessing, and maintaining tenancies, providing support letters to Housing SA and Real Estate Agents, application letters to Community Housing and referrals to other services as appropriate, and assistance to connect the utilities. ARA's Donation Centre can help provide household goods, to refugee arrivals and asylum seekers establishing their first home.

Speak to Bok at ARA if you need any help looking for accommodation: 81613310

Support for Victorian Bush Fire Victim

Resettled Bhutanese in Australia have donated AUS\$ 2493.00 to the local Red Cross committee as part of their support for the victims of recent bushfire in Melbourne.

Chitra Bhandari in Lancelton alone donated AUS\$200.00. When asked him why he wanted to donate such a big amount, Bhandari said, his life is a donation given by Australia and what ever is in his pocket is from the Australian people, including the ones who has died and effected by fire.

Worst in the history of Australian Bush fire, the ferocious ablaze on February 7 killed at least 172 people, destroyed 200 homes and left 7,000 people displaced. The fire had begun on Melbourne's hottest day on record, fanned by 50mph winds and fuelled by tinder-dry leaf litter.

Adelaide Ganesh Temple



This temple is located in 3A Dwyer Road, Oaklands Park.

It was established in 1986 and there are more than 24 deities enshrined in the temple and the temple is named after the principal deity Lord Ganesha.

The temple was constructed under the guidance of Chief Stapati Shri S Nagarajan from India. The opening hours of the temple are as follows:

Monday to Thursday - 7.00 am to 8.00 am; 7.00 pm to 8.00 pm
Friday - 7.00 am to 8.00 am; 7.00 pm to 9.00 pm
Saturday - 7.00 am to 8.00 am; 7.00 pm to 8.00 pm
Sunday - 10.30 am to 1.00 pm; 6.30 pm to 8.00 pm

For further details please visit www.adelaidetemple.org

Forming a Community Organization - Avishek Gazmere

It has been only a year since former Bhutanese have arrived in Adelaide, and an environment to give birth to a formal organization of the community is evident from the efforts being contributed from all facets of the group that has already progressed from a loose group to a community preparing a draft constitution to incorporate the community as well as an interim committee to govern its communal activities until the next permanent committee is chosen by vote. There could be no other pretext than this to give an opinion regarding how we should move ahead with our organization.

In event of arising needs of preservation of culture, thousands of communities of the world have always established, community organizations and the process will never stop for culture requires practice to safeguard its use and understanding. And whatever may be its means, the end motive cannot be observed, unless there is sufficiency and persistence in those practices by a sound population. Salmond's idea flourishes wherever possible and we need not repeat that culture is a habitual practice which requires persistence for its survival.

Sometimes however, due to changing economic, social or political circumstances, like immigration or resettlement, increasing needs of a community organization cannot be overlooked and it becomes obviously pressing to go beyond traditional scopes while forming a community organization.

MacIver defined a community as a group of people, living together with common objectives. His definition is indeed broad and which illuminates a huge scope for community organizations. For the shared objectives could vary from preservation of common heritage or religious practices to providing common welfare or consolidating common political beliefs. Most communities are bound by religion. European communities rely on different churches while Asian communities associate in ethnicities or like groups practicing various sects of culture and religion. Hence community organizations always need a role, in exclusion to the roles played by individuals or small groups, in furthering the interests of a community as a whole. Or else its existence would apparently seem meaningless. Hence when a community organization is formed, the shared objectives must remain important throughout the existence of the organization.

In the specific context of the Bhutanese Community residing in the whole of Australia, in my opinion it is important to take into notice the mentioned key aspects to form a community organization. I shall not be dealing with the formal procedures for incorporation, but rather I would be focusing on the more important bases on which this community organization has to be built.

The ideas I mentioned above are very basic and need ample consideration to sort out the specificities of each proposal while the process of incorporation of the community organization moves ahead. However in my opinion multiculturalism within the Bhutanese would be my foremost agenda as a youth.

Editors Note:

Please note the views represented in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of BCSA.

Contact Details:

Bhutanese Community of SA

C/O MRC-SA, 59 King William Street, Adelaide SA 5000

Email: bhutaneseesa@gmail.com
www.bhutaneseesa.blogspot.com