

## ACTIVITIES

### Nepal Geographical Society

#### -Prof. Sharan Hari Honored

Prof. Sharan Hari Shrestha was honoured amidst a special dinner function held at Hotel Crystal, Kathmandu on May 16, 1978 for his dedication and contribution to promote the study of Geography in Nepal. General Secretary of the Society Dr. Mangal S. Manandhar narrated Prof. Sharan Hari's contributions and the Chief Guest Mr. Pasupati Shamsheer J. B. Rana, the State Minister of Education presented a letter of appreciation and a gift to Prof. Shrestha on behalf of Nepal Geographical Society and commended on his service in the teaching of geography. Dr. Harkha Gurung, State Minister for Tourism and Dr. Soorya Lal Amatya, President NGS highlighted the importance of geography in national building tasks and lauded the dedication of Prof. Shrestha for the improvement and modernization in this important field of study.

#### NGS GENERAL MEETING:

The General Meeting of Nepal Geographical Society was held at Padma Kanya Campus on June 30, 1978. In the meeting presided over by Dr. Soorya Lal Amatya, the general report of the Society was presented by Dr. Mangal S. Manandhar, Secretary NGS.

#### TALK PROGRAMMES:

a) Dr. S. T. Wong, Associate Professor at Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok gave a talk on February 17, 1978. The topic of his talk was 'Geographical Research in Canadian Universities.'

b) Prof Eric Ross of Canada, gave a talk to Nepal Geographical Society on "Historical Geography of Canada" on November 1977.

c) Prof. Punyasiri of University of Zambia visited Kathmandu in December 1977 and gave a talk on 'Land Use Studies and its relevance to planning.'

seismicity map (p. 29). Still more fantastic is the irregular interval of scale as 0-15-30-60 miles. Even the position of caption in the map appears quite queer. The unit of measurement, preferably metric system, should have been used at all places; but instead, kilometers and mile and meters and feet have been used at random. On the other hand, no unit of measurement has been given for the figures placed under the legend of relief map and rainfall map (p. 16). Likewise as the shadings under the legend of relief map are not properly graded, they are liable to cause much confusion about altitudinal zones. Again, the symbols and shadings used in maps are neither fine nor regular. These errors in maps are enough to reflect at once an utter lack in the author of cartographic skills, techniques and principles.

As far as geographic features are concerned, the alignment of rivers is far from accuracy. The placement of Pokhara between 10,000'-15,000' is just like a child's play (Relief Map p. 1). Another ridiculous point is that the month of May has been reckoned twice in the hydrograph of the Bagmati River (p. 52)-a case of utter carelessness on the part of the author. In addition, the inclusion in the relief map of certain irrelevant place names like Kodari Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, Jajarkot, Helambu etc bears no sense at all. The total area of Nepal, on the basis of the report published by the Development of Survey, HMG, is 1,45,302 sq. km. But the author presents it as 1,41,000 sq.k. m. To continue further, the Tarai area on his version covers 1/3 of the total areas of Nepal. In fact, it represents not more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the total area of Nepal. According to him, the N-S breadth of Nepal is 120 km. In fact, even the minimum width exceeds 120 km. That the Mahabharat Range is over 3300 meters (p. 3) is a gross mistake. It must be below that altitude. He has termed it as a hill. Actually it is not a hill, but a mountain. For him the Tarai is 30 km. wide throughout its length. He is unaware that it varies from place to place. His understanding that west Tarai is as broad as the east one is a geographic blunder. In page 7-8, he states "The 90 miles, wide and nearly same length as that of Himalayas, the Indo-Gangetic basin consisting of alluvium nearly 5000 feet deep was filled with clastics derived from the Himalayas". In reality, the basin is not only 90 miles long. It is about 2000 miles long and the depth of alluvium ranges from 1000 'to 15,000'. No less serious than these are the mis-spelt place names such as: Semikot', for Simikot, 'Manalu' for Manaslu, 'Helmbu' for Helamu or Helmu, 'Chapkot' for Hyumat and many others. These gloomy features

expose that the author possesses very limited depth of knowledge on the geography of Nepal and India. Before commencing to use his pen, he should have equipped himself with detailed and authentic information.

There exists another anomalous aspect of the book. The preface of the book has been amazingly preceded by contents which is just like putting the cart before the horse. Moreover, even the reference titles under bibliography have been kept neither in alphabetical order nor in conventional system. The absolute absence of footnotes and sources of data poses ample ground for suspicion. Had the author carefully surveyed the technique applied in some other books, such discrepancies would not have crept out.

It may not be out of place to illustrate some of the fantastic or unreasoned expressions. That "Nepal utilises only 28% of rain water" may be a myth rather than a reality. Similarly, that "the population in the Kathmandu Valley is multiplying each year and with same rate houses are being built" (p. 52) is his own imagination perhaps, in the form of a joke. What is true that their number have been increasing rapidly, but not actually multiplying. He states that the velocity of rivers increases in the summer night (p. 11). It is quite absurd. Similar is this statement "To reduce the intensity of rainfall in a wide area forest will help" (p. 48). In fact, forest does not reduce the intensity of rainfall. To the utmost, it simply helps reduce the intensity of soil erosion and floods. He says, "Productivity of land in tarai can be increased to six times" (p. 54). He does not point out how it is to be materialised.

Equally miserable feature of the book is the abundance of numerous vague, meaningless or wrong statements such as the following:

"Fauna flora become rare at the same time extinct" (p. 52) "Nepal required 75% of the total rainfall for the productive survival" (p. 49) "To grow horticulture rather than cereals" (p. 48) "In this varied climates horticulture should be developed in areas which, if feasible" (p. 48) the "soil is easily eroded and makes deep gullies and furrows" (p. 18) "wide scale afforestation programme should be planted" (p. 54) "river erosion is also significant due to heavy head" (p. 55) "the soil give rise to deep gullies" (p. 62) "Rs. 40 million is considered to be way below the normal"

(p. 63) "victory of orogeny" (p. 7) "seeing the river mountainous as well as boundary" (p. 71) "the length increases at the same time adds more bridges and culverts (e. 72) "the rivers started filling up the detritus mostly from the north" (p. 7).

In addition, language is full of grammatical errors pertaining to syntax, punctuation, articles, spelling, lettering etc. Certain evidences would make the point clear:

"Each of the above contribute" (p. 5), "The following are the detailed analysis" (p. 34), "Similar to the Bhaktapur" (p. 78), "The effected area of the Bagmati River" (plate. 8), "Cannot spare to loose in three ways" (p. 5), "in the central Nepal" (p. 9), "an woman was buried" (p. 76), "a new river terraces is left" (p. 76), "Unless programme is not lounched" (p. 75), "Places where the sea were the sea were located in millions of years back is now occupied by the mountains" (p. 7), "the elevation is one of the factor" (p. 8), "the major factors like main boundary fault has east-west trend" (p. 8), "main Himalayan range were thrown out first" (p. 8), "it does not closely follows it" (p. 73), "South face of himalayyas" (p. 10), "property worth several millions were damaged" (p. 18), "That include wild bore" (p. 53), "Soil which are in the Slope" (p. 18), "Perenial spring water are found" (p. 19), "All variation are found" (p. 34), "Nepal is loosing hydropomer" (p. 45) "In a erratic river" (p. 61), "The details of dam was as follows" (p. 67) "Many families tried to settle" (p. 61), "Drinkidg water, facilities" (p. 61), ".....prevent the soil erosion which in fact map help to check the erosion" (p. 75)

There are several compound words which are unnecessarily disjoined, e. g., under ground, rain fall, super imposed, play ground, under cutting, land slide, wide spread, all together, same times and so on.

Finally, the text contains still more mis-spelt words such as: 'arbitariy' for arbitrarily, 'deteorieted' for deteriorated, 'developrs' for develops, 'thorough out' for throughout, 'Superincombent' for superincumbent, instantaneously, 'proceeding years' for preceding years, 'programme' for 'instataneously' for programme, 'retaintion' for retention, 'sizeble' for sizable, 'unfertile' for infertile, 'preceous' for precious, 'giological' for geological, 'collapased' for collapsed, 'diety' for deity, 'oxidized' for oxidized, 'leakege' for leakage, 'concedes' for coincides, 'descrepancies' for discrepancies, 'precuation' for

precaution, 'begining' for beginning, 'coalace' for coalesce, 'debirs' for debris, 'caleareous' for calcareous, 'suceptible' for susceptible, 'through study' for thorough study, 'climatological feature, for climatic feature, 'disasterous' for disastrous, 'deers' for deer 'setteled' for settled, sceintifically for scientifically and so on.

Provided the aforementioned defects are ignored, the book, I think, is worth reading. Its get-up and print are quite fine as well as attractive. At the same time, its cover is well-bound and looks pleasing enough. Above all, the photographs of landslides and land subsidence are highly appealing. But the book, for its next edition, demands substantial improvement of maps, materials and language.

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## REVIEWS

-Dr. Soorya Lall Amatya

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Geographical Journal of Nepal brought out into circulation in August 1978 by Geography Instruction Committee of the Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences, T. U. is highly commendable. The journal contents five articles, abstracts of Degree (M. A.) dissertations and a book review. Out of five articles four deal mainly on varied aspects of Nepal; location of headquarter in Bajura District, effects of price level on service areas of market centres in Arniko Rajmarga Area, regional variation of primary school density in Nepal and a study of Settlement in the Kathmandu Valley in ancient period. The fifth article reviews the effectiveness and practicability of the techniques of economic base and input-output analysis.

Upto August 1978 twelve dissertations were submitted for partial fulfilment of degree (M. A.) in Geography, abstracts of only ten dissertations were included in the journal. It is appreciable to include the abstracts of dissertations in such journal of the Geography Instruction Committee, which clearly indicates the fact that diverse aspects of Nepal have been taken by degree students for their research works.

The design of the journal is impressive and the printing has been done very carefully. However, the reviewer would like to mention the following short comings of the journal with the view that the mistakes will not be repeated in the next issues. Figure 3 in page 18 has been reduced in such a way that the symbols are not easily readable and this figure seems to be very important since the analysis of the impact of price levels in shaping the service areas is based on this figure. In the footnote 5 in page 29 it should have been Lichhavi Kalka Abhilekh and not Abhilekh Lichchhavi; and the Institute of Nepal and Asian Studies and not Research Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies.

Footnote 12 should have been printed on Page 15 and not on page 16 and quite a few spelling mistakes (like boundry in figure 3 in page 18, poulation in page 19, very in page 39, skrikingly in page 25, ragional in page 42, disseration in page 46, Mandhar in page 51 and others) could have been easily avoided if a due care was taken in proof reading. Since the journal is an annual publication, number 1 was not necessary and volume series would serve the purpose.

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